



SUMMONS TO ATTEND COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 10 November 2025 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: 31 October 2025 (republished on 5, 7 and 10 November 2025)

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

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[Council meetings and decision making | Brent Council](#)

Limited space will be available at the meeting for the press and public to attend or alternatively it will be possible to follow the meeting 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 - 48

To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the previous Council Meeting held on Monday 15 September 2025.

(Agenda republished to include the attached minutes on 10 November 2025)

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

To receive any announcements from the Mayor.

5 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies and Appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs

49 - 50

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

(Agenda republished to include the attached item on 10 November 2025)

6 Deputations (if any)

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

Members are asked to note that two deputations are due to be presented at the meeting, relating to the following issues:

- (a) Update on progress being achieved through One Kilburn alongside the strong working relationship with Brent and Camden Council (to be presented by Stephane Goldstein, Co-Chair of One Kilburn Co-ordinating Group)
- (b) Gambling Harm and support for work being led by Brent Council (to be presented by Matt Smith, Betknowmore UK)

(Agenda republished to include notice of deputations on 5 November 2025)

7 Questions from Members of the Public & Brent Youth Parliament 51 - 58

- 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 three public questions have been received, which have been circulated as part of 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 circulated as part of the agenda along with the written response provided.

8 Petitions 59 - 60

For Members to consider any petitions with more than 200 signatures for which a request has been received for their presentation, in accordance with the Council's petition rules and Standing Order 66.

Members are asked to note that the following petition is due to be presented at the meeting:

Reopen public toilets in Roundwood Park

The supporting details on the petition have been attached, for reference.

9 Motions 61 - 70

To debate the Group motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 41.

Members are asked to note:

- The motions submitted for debate have been attached.
- 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.

(Agenda republished to include the Group motions submitted for debate on 5 November 2025 along with an amendment submitted by the Labour Group on the Conservative Group motion on 10 November 2025)

10	Reports from the Leader and Cabinet	71 - 86
	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.	
	(Agenda republished to include the attached report on 5 November 2025)	
11	Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members	87 - 96
	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	97 - 110
	12.2 Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee	111 - 118
	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	Report from the Vice Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee	119 - 122
	To receive a report from the Vice Chair of the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee updating Council on the work of the Committee, in accordance with Standing Order 37.	
14	Non Cabinet Members' Debate	123 - 124
	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.	

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

Broken Promises and Failing Finances – Brent Deserves Better than Labour’s Short-Term Thinking

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

15 Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28

125 - 218

To receive a report from the Corporate Director of Children, Young People & Community Development providing an overview of the purpose and rationale for creating the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-28 and outlining how youth justice provision in Brent contributes to strategic and Borough Plan priorities, alongside the partnership aims and commitments that will shape the Brent Youth Justice Service (YJS) partnership over the next three years.

Members are asked to note that the Plan was approved and referred to Council for formal adoption by Cabinet on 13 October 2025.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Contact Officer: Serita Kwofie, Head of Early Help
Tel: 020 8937 1747
serita.kwofie@brent.gov.uk

16 Representation of Political Groups on Committees

219 - 226

Following a change in the political balance on the Council, to receive a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources reviewing (under Section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989) the allocation of seats on Council Committees and other relevant bodies.

(Agenda republished to include attached report on 7 November 2025)

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Contact Officer: Amira Nassr, Deputy Director Democratic & Governance Services
Tel: 0208 937 5436
amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk

17 Constitution Update - Function & Procedure Rules West London Economic Prosperity Board

227 - 246

To receive a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources detailing a change in membership on the West London Economic Prosperity Board (on which Brent participates as a member) along with associated changes to the Boards Function & Procedure Rules, as

referred to within the Terms of Reference included within Brent's Constitution

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Contact Officer: Amira Nassr, Deputy Director
Democratic & Governance Services
Tel: 0208 937 5436
amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk

18 Exclusion of the Press & Public

No items have been identified in advance of the meeting that will require the exclusion of the press and public.

19 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](#)

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LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 15 September 2025 at
6.00 pm

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Ryan Hack

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Narinder Singh Bajwa

COUNCILLORS:

Aden	Afzal
Agha	Ahmadi Moghaddam
Ahmed	Akram
Benea	M Butt
S Butt	Chan
Chappell	Choudry
Clinton	Conneely
Crabb	Dar
Dixon	Donnelly-Jackson
Ethapemi	Gbajumo
Hirani	Hylton
Johnson	Kabir
Kansagra	Kennelly
Knight	Long
Lorber	Mahmood
Matin	Maurice
Miller	Mistry
Mitchell	Moeen
Molloy	Nerva
J.Patel	M Patel
Rajan-Seelan	Rubin
Shah	Ketan Sheth
Krupa Sheth	L.Smith
T.Smith	

1. Mayors Introductory Statement

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.

2. Apologies for Absence

The Mayor reported that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Begum, Collymore, Farah, Fraser, Grahl, Kelcher and Tatler.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Matin & Rajan-Seelan.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the of the Council meeting held on Monday 7 July 2025 be approved as a correct record.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Lorber declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 9.2 (Liberal Democrats Motion – Standing United against Racism & Xenophobia in Brent) and Agenda Item 14 (Non Cabinet Member Debate – Deterrence, Integration & Accommodation Impacts of Illegal Immigration on Brent) as someone who had initially entered the UK as a refugee.

There were no other declarations of interest made during the meeting.

5. **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor made the following announcements:

(i) **Passing of The Duchess of Kent**

The Mayor began his announcements by taking the opportunity, on behalf of the Council, to extend his sincere condolences to all members of the Royal Family on the passing of The Duchess of Kent.

In recognising Her Royal Highness for the lifelong dedication to public service, support for charitable causes and enduring commitment to the arts and education, the Mayor felt it important to acknowledge the wide respect in which she had been held alongside her compassion and grace and with her legacy remembered with great admiration.

In honouring her memory, the Mayor offered his deepest sympathy to the Royal Family on behalf of the Council.

(ii) **Brent Student Exam results**

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor then moved on to congratulate young people across the borough for the recent success achieved in their exam results.

In taking the opportunity to commend the results achieved, the Mayor felt it important to acknowledge that this reflected not only the hard work and determination displayed by young people but also the incredible support from their teachers, school staff, parents and carers with Brent's schools continuing to inspire excellence and the students recognised as a credit to their communities.

The results achieved were also felt to highlight not only the commitment of students across the borough but also the strength of Brent's education system, with pride expressed in all young people and Mayor looking forward to seeing all that they would accomplish in future.

(iii) Petitions

As a final announcement, the Mayor referred members to the list of current petitions tabled at the meeting, in accordance with Standing Orders which also detailed the action being taken to deal with them.

6. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies and Appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs

The Mayor referred members to the list of changes circulated in relation to appointments to Council Committees, Sub Committees and other bodies.

Having considered the changes outlined it was **RESOLVED**:

(1) To approve the following changes in committee membership:

- (a) Councillor Long to be replaced by a vacancy as Vice-Chair of the Brent Connects – Willesden Forum.

(2) To note the following changes in the membership on outside bodies:

- (a) The appointment (by the Leader of the Council) of Councillor Mili Patel as the Council's full member representative on London Councils Grant Committee with Councillor Rubin appointed as one of the Council's two Deputy Members.

7. Deputations (if any)

The Mayor advised that no requests had been received for the presentation of any deputations at the meeting.

8. Questions from Members of the Public

The Mayor advised that two questions had been received from members of the public, for consideration at the meeting, which were as follows:

Question 1 from L.Varsani regarding enforcement against cycling on pavements

Question 2 from R.Furness enforcement against untaxed and abandoned vehicles on the public highway.

The Mayor advised that those members of the public who had submitted questions had been given the opportunity to attend the meeting to ask a supplementary question. As both individuals had unfortunately advised they were unable to attend the meeting, the written responses provided in relation to their questions by the Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement were therefore noted without further comment.

With no further questions to be considered, the Mayor advised that concluded the public question session.

9. **Petitions**

The Mayor advised that he had accepted requests for the presentation of two separate petitions at the meeting, which had met the threshold for consideration at Full Council based on them containing more than 200 signatures.

The petitions to be presented, were highlighted as follows, with the Mayor advising that unless otherwise indicated by members, he intended to allow up to five minutes for the presentation of each petition by the lead petitioner before then providing the relevant Cabinet Members up to two minutes to respond on each matter and then providing any other members who indicated they would like to speak with an opportunity to contribute (within the overall time limit available).

- 1st petition – Retain the heritage Victorian Villa (Altamira) as part of the redevelopment at 1 Morland Gardens
- 2nd petition – Save Welsh Harp Education Centre

(1) Retain the heritage Victorian Villa (Altamira) as part of the redevelopment at 1 Morland Gardens

As no objections were raised on the approach outlined, the Mayor then moved on to welcome Philip Grant to the meeting to present the first petition (representing the Willesden Local History Society). Prior to the petition being presented, Philip Grant welcomed the approach outlined by the Mayor in enabling other members to contribute and speak as part of the approach in considering the petition and also referred members to the photograph of the Villa circulated as part of the agenda text.

In thanking the Mayor for the opportunity to present the petition, Philip Grant began by taking the opportunity to remind members of the history of the Altamira building which he described as a beautiful, Italianate-style Victorian villa built 150 years ago, at the entrance to an estate called Stonebridge Park which had subsequently given its name to the area. Members were advised that the Council had bought the building in the 1990s and restored it as home to an Adult Education college and inspiring place of learning in one of the borough's most deprived areas.

In highlighting the buildings status as a high value locally listed heritage asset, he pointed out those who had signed the petition felt this had not been recognised by the Council when in January 2020, the Cabinet had been persuaded to approve a project which included its demolition. Referring to the hundreds of objections submitted by local residents in response to the subsequent planning application determined in 2020, as well objections from the Victorian Society, he reminded members that these had also been supported by a Professor of Architecture whom he quoted as having written:

“1 Morland Gardens is not just any nineteenth-century villa, but a characteristic work by an architect of genuine and lasting significance. Its destruction would be a

terrible loss, not only to the local environment, but also to the architectural heritage of Victorian Britain.”

It was also pointed out that Councillor Aden (representing the local Stonebridge ward councillors) had also spoken against the demolition at the 2020 Planning Committee meeting, and asked the Council to think again, so it was with regret that the Committee had subsequently approved the Plans. Referring to what the petitioners had felt to be the many faults in the scheme, Philip Grant advised it was no surprise that the planning consent had expired in October 2023, without construction having begun. This had led to an urgent review of plans for the future of the site with officers being provided with evidence, as part of this process, in support of retaining the heritage building. This had been supported, as part of a December 2024 consultation, with details on how it was felt the Villa could be retained for community use, while still providing nearly 30 Council homes on the site.

Confirmation was provided that this supporting evidence had also been provided for Councillor Benea (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property) and, as a result, those in support of the petition hoped the Council would now be able to confirm it would seek to retain Altamira, as part of the future plans for Morland Gardens, also supported by the following statement within Brent’s adopted Local Plan which Philip Grant ended by highlighting:

“Once a heritage asset is demolished, it cannot be replaced. Its historic value is lost forever to the community and future generations.” it concluded “The effective preservation of historic buildings ... and their stewardship is ... fundamental to the Council’s role.”

The Mayor thanked Philip Grant for presenting the petition and then invited Councillor Benea, as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property to respond.

In response, Councillor Benea began by thanking Philip Grant and the other signatories of the petition for taking the time to make their views known with the Council acknowledging the sentiments expressed in support of retaining the locally listed Altamira building at 1 Morland Gardens.

Referring to the more recent report considered at Cabinet on 16 June 2025, the petitioners were advised that the Council was proposing a site use option of affordable homes and youth facilities for the 1 Morland Gardens site with an assurance that any redevelopment proposals would be subject to a full planning application that would consider the relevant planning and heritage considerations.

In summing up, the petitions were advised that no decision had been made on either the demolition or retention of the Altamira building and that any decision on the building would therefore be subject to a future Cabinet report following the necessary design, site investigation works, and viability assessments having been undertaken on the Cabinet approved mixed-development site use option of affordable homes and youth facilities.

Having thanked Councillor Benea for her response, the Mayor then invited comments from other members on the petition, with the following contributions noted:

Councillor Lorber, in opening the contributions felt it important to recognise that this was not being raised as a new issue given the redevelopment of Morland Gardens had been subject to a previous call-in. In highlighting concerns relating to the outcome of funding already allocated to the redevelopment proposals without any new homes yet being delivered on site, he outlined what he felt to be a need for leadership in taking the scheme forward in order to deliver much needed homes whilst also seeking to preserve Altamira Villa as an important historical and heritage asset.

Councillor Maurice also spoke in support of the petition, recognising the importance in preserving the borough's heritage assets and taking the opportunity to highlight his opposition to the original redevelopment proposals when serving as a member of the Planning Committee and in support of retaining the frontage of the building.

Following on, Councillor Mistry highlighted what she also regarded as the importance in recognising the historical context of the Altamira Villa and need to do all possible to avoid its loss as a valuable heritage asset as part of any future redevelopment plans for the site.

As a final contribution, Councillor Ethapemi also spoke to welcome the comments made by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property in response to the petition regarding the additional feasibility review outlined. Whilst also supporting the need to retain and preserve the Victorian heritage Villa, it was hoped this could be achieved in a way that would not prevent much needed housing also being delivered as part of the redevelopment of the site.

Having thanked members for their contributions the Mayor advised that concluded consideration of the first petition and then moved on to deal with the second and final petition submitted.

(2) Save Welsh Harp Education Centre

The Mayor then welcomed Martin Francis to present the second petition, seeking support for the continued use of Welsh Harp Education Centre to deliver an Environmental Education programme. In thanking the Mayor for the opportunity to present the petition, Martin Francis began by advising that the petition was supported by Brent Parks Forum as well as Brent Friends of the Earth and contained 487 signatures.

In highlighting how the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre had been closed following the withdrawal of funding by Thames21 at the end of the summer term, reference was made to the difference the lack of primary aged school children visiting the centre was having in terms of the excitement created and motivation provided (as had been famously highlighted by David Attenborough) in children seeking to tackle the climate and ecological emergency and preserve the natural habitat without them being able to experience it on a practical level and first hand basis. The petitioners were therefore keen to highlight the important and valued role the centre had played in enabling school children to gain that type of

experience working with up to 300 pupils a week and recognising that the vast majority of the borough's primary schools did not have the grounds to match the experience offered by the woodlands and ponds available to access via the Centre.

As further support, reference was also made to the Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021-2030, which it was pointed out has also specifically recognised the importance of the Centre by stating:

"The council has secured funding to improve the Educational Centre on the site, to bring residents, schools and communities closer to nature and to help improve biodiversity."

Whilst Brent Cabinet in May 2023 had therefore agreed to delivery of post -16 SEND provision in a new building on the site, it was pointed out this had been on the basis that:

"The proposal would enable the Environmental Education programme to schools to continue to be delivered as part of the wider building use alongside the post-16 horticultural use."

It was, therefore, with concern that comments made at a recent Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee, had been noted with those present advised at the meeting that the building would be fully utilised during curriculum time by the Post 16 provision and only available for other groups outside of that time and it reported that the design of the new building would include no space for a primary classroom and no time of primary school visits. The petitioners were also concerned that despite a long list of organisations identified as being consulted on the new building, these did not appear to include Primary Schools. Referring to the loss making aspect of the Centre being cited as a reason for Thames21 withdrawal, it was pointed out that a proportion of these losses was attributable to the high heating and maintenance costs of the previous cabin style classrooms which had been addressed as part of the design of the shared new building.

The opportunity was also taken to outline the work undertaken by those in support of the petition in bringing together a consortium to use the building outside of school hours in an effort to provide a reliable income stream to help subsidise the Centre moving forward, with the main cost identified now relating to staff salaries.

As a result of these efforts and the concerns highlighted, Martin Francise ended by advising that those in support of the petition were therefore calling on the Council to undertake a full scoping exercise, in order to find a new organisation to run the Centre including the potential inclusion of local industry such as Careys to enhance their green credentials or a voluntary organisation such as the Canal and Rivers Trust, with the following three assurances sought in response to the petition:

- (1) That the Environmental Education Centre would have space in the new building.
- (2) That the council would make an all-out effort, driven by a passionate commitment to environmental education and the urgent need to address the climate and ecological emergency, to find a new partner to run the WHEEC.

- (3) That the curriculum and activities offered by the Centre would continue to enrich the science curriculum on life processes and living things with first-hand experience, in an attempt to recognise the passion identified and address indifference to the lack of any ongoing provision.

The Mayor thanked Martin Francis for presenting the petition and then invited Councillor Benea (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property) in the absence of Councillor Grahl (as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools) to respond.

In response, Councillor Benea began by thanking the petitioners for highlighting their support for the Welsh Harp Education Centre, recognising the depth of feeling outlined whilst also welcoming the opportunity to clarify a number of issues relating to the current position on the Centre.

As a starting point, Councillor Benea opened by placing on record the Council's thanks to Thames21 (with a particular focus on their volunteers) for the time and energy devoted to inspiring the next generation on the importance of the natural environment. This was in recognition of the role Thames21 had played, since December 2016, in the delivery of a wide ranging and valued programme of activity with schools whilst occupying the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre and which it was acknowledged had helped countless local children to learn, first-hand, about the value of the environment and need to protect it, for which the Council and all those who had benefitted were grateful.

Councillor Benea felt it was also important to recognise the way in which the Council had sought to support Thames21 in their work, including the provision of a rent-free period and financial contribution towards their running costs in the hope that this would have given them the platform to achieve longer-term financial sustainability. Despite this, however, Thames21 had unfortunately taken the difficult and voluntary decision to end their work at the centre and, as a result, had vacated the site on 31st July 2025.

Referring to the poor condition of the building, Councillor Benea highlighted this had been assessed as being at the end of its life and requiring significant capital investment to ensure it was maintained. Given the Council's responsibility to think about how the site could continue to best serve the borough over future years, Cabinet in May 2023 had therefore approved a major capital investment to develop a new Post-16 Skills Centre on the site designed to provide a high-quality horticultural facility for young people with SEND, with opportunities for work experience, volunteering, and also wider community use.

In response to the petition, an assurance was provided that the new centre would not be closed off to the wider community with it noted that from the outset the design brief had included flexible space for community groups including, as an example, Scouts, Guides, Woodcraft Folk and groups with a focus on environmental education and countryside management. The new facilities would also include a multi-use room, storage space, a small kitchen, fully accessible facilities and, crucially, outdoor access all co-designed with a range stakeholders, including Thames21, local schools, parents, and carers, to ensure the centre was able to reflect the needs of the borough's diverse communities. Subject to planning and construction milestones being met, Councillor Benea advised the new Post-16

Skills Centre was due to open in the 2027-28 academic year and in summing up, once again took the opportunity to recognise the invaluable contribution made by Thames21 and their volunteers.

In closing her response, Councillor Benea felt it important to reflect on the work undertaken to lay the foundations for what would come next and in seeking to build on that legacy, to ensure that the Welsh Harp site would continue to be a place where education, inclusion, and environmental stewardship was able to thrive for generations to come.

Having thanked Councillor Benea for her response, the Mayor then invited comments from other members on the petition, with the following contributions noted:

In opening the comments, Councillor Mitchell took the opportunity to thank the petitioners along with Councillor Benea for raising and seeking to address the concerns raised, recognising the challenges currently faced in seeking to provide opportunities for children from across the borough to access and engage with the natural environment in response to the biodiversity crisis and also urban nature of Brent. In supporting the need to continue provision of access to these opportunities, it was recognised that this would also need to be undertaken in a fiscally prudent manner with Councillor Mitchell advising of the commitment from the Welsh Harp local ward councillors to continue working with the relevant lead members to ensure that the delivery of the new facilities was designed to ensure the provision of as wide a range of opportunities as possible for the local community (including schools) to access Welsh Harp as a valuable local asset and in order to continue learning about the natural environment.

As a further contribution, Councillor Lorber also speaking in support of the petition, felt it important to highlight the need to ensure the provision of any new facility at the centre included continued access for local schools with the scheme identified as one that would potentially have benefitted from Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding. In outlining the previous use of NCIL funding to support community bids and previous advice around permitted use of that funding, concern was expressed that this approach appeared to have changed following the recent decision of Cabinet to approve the use of £8m worth of NCIL funding on schemes supporting public realm improvements, which he felt had been decided without the necessary choice by local residents and allocated on initiatives that should normally have been funded through the Council's revenue budget. As such he felt the approach adopted needed to be highlighted, falling as it did during a local election year.

With no further comments made, the Mayor once again thanked all those who had participated for their contributions and advised that as this had been the final petition for presentation he would now move on to deal with the remainder of the agenda.

10. **Motions**

Before moving on to consider the motions listed on the summons, the Mayor advised members that a total of 40 minutes had been set aside for consideration of the four motions submitted for debate, based on an initial allocation of 10 minutes

per motion. Should the time taken to consider the first motion be less than 10 minutes he advised that the remaining time available would be rolled forward for consideration of the remaining motions.

10.1 1st Motion (Conservative Group) – Addressing Safety and Fly-Tipping Risks in Bee Corridor Management in Brent

The Mayor invited Councillor Jayanti Patel to move the first motion, which had been submitted on behalf of the Conservative Group. Councillor J. Patel began by, highlighting the way in which the motion had been presented to reflect resident concerns about safety, hygiene, and accessibility of bee corridors and wildflower initiatives, with specific issues identified including fly-tipping, unmanaged vegetation, dumping of waste and litter often in areas adjacent to where children played. It was also pointed out that overgrown grass near footpaths and crossings, particularly around Kingsbury Roundabout, had created hazards for pedestrians and drivers with enhanced risks in relation to fire safety also identified as a cause for concern.

As an alternative approach, Councillor Jayanti Patel highlighted the way similar challenges had been addressed elsewhere, including the use of hanging baskets within Harrow with bee-friendly plants which had been installed across lamp posts and railings supporting the approach towards biodiversity and corridor links between green spaces. In summing up, he highlighted the call within the motion to ensure Brent's bee and wildflower corridors were managed in a safe, welcoming, and responsible way, which he hoped members would support given the concerns being raised by local residents.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Jayanti Patel for moving the motion and then drew members attention to an amendment submitted by Councillor Kabir on behalf of the Labour Group, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

In moving the amendment, Councillor Kabir began by highlighting the importance of the Council's commitment to environmental initiatives such as the bee and wildflower corridors across the borough as well as climate change action. Whilst acknowledging the importance in listening to concerns raised around the impact of green projects it was felt the original motion had failed to recognise the successful work being undertaken across Brent that was making a real difference in bringing cleaner air, flourishing wildlife, and a collective ambition to do better back to the borough. As an example, reference was made to over 7 miles of wildflowers having been sown across the borough since 2019 creating 22 wildflower meadows which have added bursts of colour to parks, as well as helping to reverse declining insect populations delivering real change which it was felt would have a material impact on the borough for many years to come.

In highlighting that the original motion had included reference to work being undertaken by a number of other Labour administrations across London in relation to the climate emergency, the need to ensure this activity was undertaken hand-in-hand with local residents was also acknowledged. In moving the amendment it was, however, felt that residents were already feeling the benefit of this action in Brent through access to more parks and open spaces, repair cafes and the introduction of school streets enabling children to breathe cleaner air and with the Council also just having awarded an additional £8m to local community projects

designed to further improve the future public realm across Brent. In accepting the need to ensure that action to tackle the climate change was balanced against the safety and overall look of the borough, it was felt that the amendment moved alongside the commitments already made would ensure this was the approach adopted moving forward. On this basis the amendment moved by Councillor Kabir was as follows:

To add the wording underlined and delete the wording indicated:

“Addressing Safety and Fly-Tipping Risks in Bee Corridor Management in Brent

This Council notes

- That ~~the Conservative Group~~ all political groups have supported and encouraged the environmental value of Brent’s bee corridors and wildflower initiatives in promoting biodiversity and supporting pollinator populations.
- The Council’s commitment to doing everything in its power to offset the impacts of climate change; and to protect biodiversity across the borough.

This Council further notes, however

That the recent ~~unmanaged~~ long grass and overgrown vegetation along designated bee corridors in our parks and open spaces along with uncut grass verges have in some cases led to increased instances of:

- Fly-tipping of cans, bottles, and concealed waste such as dog fouling, which poses hygiene risks where children play and track contamination into homes.
- Residents reporting reduced visibility near footpaths, crossings, and residential boundaries — notably along Fryent Way, creating hazards for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Fire risks during dry periods, as evidenced by the fire in Roe Green Park on 25th August.
- Concerns raised by residents regarding safety and accessibility, particularly in overgrown areas such as Eton Grove Park, Queensbury Station Parade, Kingsbury and other roundabouts in Brent.

This Council recognises

That similar challenges have been addressed successfully elsewhere:

- Newham Council’s fly-tipping campaign used pavement stencils, “crime scene” tape, and community-led clean-up events to reduce dumping by over 60%.
- Camden Council’s visibility motion mandated regular trimming near junctions and crossings, supported by resident-led audits to identify problem areas.

- Brent's own corridor strategy has previously trialled rotational sowing and visible placement of wildflower zones to balance biodiversity and public engagement.

And that Brent Council has introduced a number of successful initiatives in recent years to tackle these issues, such as the popular Community Skip scheme, and Green Corridors and Neighbourhoods in Church End, Roundwood, and Kingsbury.

This Council, therefore, resolves to request that the Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement produces a report to explore:

- (1) Implementing a zoned maintenance strategy, ensuring continued regular trimming near pedestrian routes, junctions, and residential grass verges while preserving biodiversity in core areas — such as the open spaces on Fryent Way away from built-up zones.
- (2) Introduce Increasing the amount of clear signage and QR-coded educational materials, which are already in place by all of Brent's bee corridors, to inform residents about the purpose of bee corridors and discourage illegal dumping which residents across Brent are witnessing.
- (3) Republishing a transparent annual maintenance schedule and designate points of contact for reporting fly-tipping and safety concerns arising from these bee corridors, which was made available to residents when the bee corridors were launched and sets out the cycle of maintenance and how to raise concerns with fly-tipping or safety.
- (4) Engage The ways in which the Council already engages with local communities, "Friends of" groups, and residents to co-develop monitoring and feedback mechanisms, ensuring resident voices shape future bee corridor management.
- (5) Exploring creative deterrents such as pavement stencils, visual markers, and community-led stewardship initiatives to discourage fly-tipping and promote shared responsibility through our Don't Mess with Brent campaign."

The Mayor thanked Councillor Kabir for moving the amendment before inviting other members to speak, with the following contributions received.

In opening the debate, Councillor Mistry, highlighting her personal background and commitment to environmental causes, felt it was important to seek a collaborative approach in support of addressing the environmental challenges identified. Whilst supporting the work being undertaken by the Council around biodiversity, the need to recognise the concerns outlined within the original motion were highlighted as important in terms of adjusting the approach and focussing the creation and maintenance of the corridors and meadows across core areas. In expressing support for the original motion, it was hoped the use of alternative methods such as encouraging borough-wide front garden competitions would also be considered to engage children and other local residents in the process of environmental improvement.

As a further contribution Councillor Krupa Sheth welcomed the debate, which she felt further highlighted the success achieved through the introduction of Bee and wildflower corridors in Brent in boosting biodiversity and contributing towards the Council's Net Zero 2030 target. At the same time it was pointed out, however, in response to the original motion that much of the action being sought was already being delivered including systems in place to sow low-growing plants to keep sight lines clear, the early cutting of verges being undertaken when needed and fire breaks being mowed during heatwaves to protect public safety. Members were also advised that each Bee corridor already included signage explaining their purpose with a well-established system in place to respond to concerns around fly-tipping or safety via the Fix My Street app.

In addition, the Parks Service was also involved in regular engagement and collaboration with Friends of the Parks Groups and the local community, including support on community litter picks and, it was pointed out, remained open to continued partnership work going forward. This activity was also being undertaken alongside the Council's Don't Mess with Brent campaign which had been designed to combat the issues and nuisance created by fly-tipping and (members were reminded) had been recently praised both within Parliament and by the Secretary of State for Environment and Rural Affairs during a recent visit to the borough. Whilst pleased to note the motion had therefore recognised the value of this work, alongside efforts being made by other Labour Councils across London, it was felt Brent had already demonstrated a lead in seeking to reverse the impact of austerity and improve Public Realm ensuring this continued to be well communicated and residents remained engaged. On this basis, Councillor Krupa advised she would be supporting the amendment moved in seeking to continue the work outlined.

As a final contribution. Councillor Lorber sought to challenge the approach outlined by Councillor Krupa Sheth in responding to the motion, especially across areas such as Alperton which he felt had not been subject to the activity required in relation to management of the corridors. Concern was expressed that, once established, the areas were left to become overgrown with weeds and full of rubbish, which was also a trend he felt being witnessed across parks and grass verges throughout the borough, with residents having to endure the resulting mess and nuisance.

At this stage, the Mayor advised that the time limit allocated for debate on the motion had been reached. In drawing the debate to a close, he therefore invited Councillor Jayanti Patel (as mover of the original motion) followed by Councillor Kabir (as mover of the amendment) to exercise their right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Jayanti Patel queried the current approach towards the provision of bee corridors particularly in the Kingsbury area and whilst recognising the way in which they symbolised the Council's commitment to biodiversity felt this also needed to be balanced against the concerns raised by local residents regarding their maintenance. In Queensberry Ward, as an example he once again reiterated the way in which unmanaged growth had led to fly-tipping, fire risks, and poor visibility near crossings and homes and in commending the motion, as originally moved, felt that the concerns raised by local residents required urgent action.

As Councillor Kabir advised she did not wish to exercise a right of reply in relation to the amendment the Mayor, having thanked councillors for their contributions,

then moved to the vote on the motion starting with the amendment moved by the Labour Group.

The amendment, as set out above, was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

The Mayor then moved on to put the substantive motion, as amended, to a vote which was declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to approve the following motion:

“Addressing Safety and Fly-Tipping Risks in Bee Corridor Management in Brent

This Council notes

- That all political groups have supported and encouraged the environmental value of Brent’s bee corridors and wildflower initiatives in promoting biodiversity and supporting pollinator populations.
- The Council’s commitment to doing everything in its power to offset the impacts of climate change; and to protect biodiversity across the borough.

This Council further notes, however

That the recent long grass and overgrown vegetation along designated bee corridors in our parks and open spaces along with uncut grass verges have in some cases led to increased instances of:

- Fly-tipping of cans, bottles, and concealed waste such as dog fouling, which poses hygiene risks where children play and track contamination into homes.
- Residents reporting reduced visibility near footpaths, crossings, and residential boundaries — notably along Fryent Way, creating hazards for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Fire risks during dry periods, as evidenced by the fire in Roe Green Park on 25th August.
- Concerns raised by residents regarding safety and accessibility, particularly in overgrown areas such as Eton Grove Park, Queensbury Station Parade, Kingsbury and other roundabouts in Brent.

This Council recognises

That similar challenges have been addressed successfully elsewhere:

- Newham Council’s fly-tipping campaign used pavement stencils, “crime scene” tape, and community-led clean-up events to reduce dumping by over 60%.

- Camden Council's visibility motion mandated regular trimming near junctions and crossings, supported by resident-led audits to identify problem areas.
- Brent's own corridor strategy has previously trialled rotational sowing and visible placement of wildflower zones to balance biodiversity and public engagement.

And that Brent Council has introduced a number of successful initiatives in recent years to tackle these issues, such as the popular Community Skip scheme, and Green Corridors and Neighbourhoods in Church End, Roundwood, and Kingsbury.

This Council, therefore, resolves to request that the Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement produces a report to explore:

- (1) Implementing a zoned maintenance strategy, ensuring continued regular trimming near pedestrian routes, junctions, and residential grass verges while preserving biodiversity in core areas — such as the open spaces on Fryent Way away from built-up zones.
- (2) Increasing the amount of clear signage and QR-coded educational materials, which are already in place by all of Brent's bee corridors, to inform residents about the purpose of bee corridors and discourage illegal dumping which residents across Brent are witnessing.
- (3) Republishing a transparent annual maintenance schedule and designate points of contact for reporting fly-tipping and safety concerns arising from these bee corridors, which was made available to residents when the bee corridors were launched and sets out the cycle of maintenance and how to raise concerns with fly-tipping or safety.
- (4) The ways in which the Council already engages with local communities, "Friends of" groups, and residents to co-develop monitoring and feedback mechanisms, ensuring resident voices shape future bee corridor management.
- (5) Exploring creative deterrents such as pavement stencils, visual markers, and community-led stewardship initiatives to discourage fly-tipping and promote shared responsibility through our Don't Mess with Brent campaign."

10.2 2nd Motion (Liberal Democrats Group) – Standing United against Racism and Xenophobia in Brent

The Mayor then invited Councillor Lorber to move the second motion, which had been submitted on behalf of the Liberal Democrats Group. As context to the motion, Councillor Lorber began by highlighting his personal background and commitment in seeking to stand against racism and expressed concern at what he described as the recent horrific scenes with police being attacked by self-described proud nationalists and also at the foreign intervention of powerful individuals from America in seeking to challenge the legitimacy of the democratically elected UK government. Referring to his background as a refugee, concern was also expressed at the attacks being witnessed across the UK on individual's homes and in hotels where asylum seekers had been placed. In recognising the increase in

what he regarded as racist and xenophobic rhetoric and use of inflammatory language designed to scapegoat migrants and minority communities alongside Brent's status as one of the most diverse and welcoming boroughs in the UK, Councillor Lorber advised that the motion had been presented to emphasise the need as a community to stand up and show leadership in making clear that the type of behaviour being witnessed was unacceptable and would not be tolerated in the borough, with confirmation provided that the amendment submitted by the Labour Group was also supported.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Lorber for moving the motion and then drew members attention to an amendment submitted by Councillor Benea on behalf of the Labour Group, previously referred to and circulated in advance of the meeting.

In moving the amendment, Councillor Benea began by thanking the Liberal Democrat group for bringing forward the original motion as an important antidote to the divisive headlines witnessed over recent weeks in relation to migration and refugees. In terms of the proposed amendment, it was pointed out this had not been designed as a political point-scoring exercise but to highlight the work already being undertaken by the Council and in seeking to ensure that the position of councillors position as democratically elected local representatives was used to counter hatred and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the refugee and migrant communities in Brent in order to send a clear message that the Council stood with them.

As a first-generation migrant from Romania, Councillor Benea shared her personal experience of leaving home to start a new life in the UK, making it her purpose to ensure this remained a safe and credible option for others searching for a new beginning. In highlighting the privilege felt in being part of an organisation that was committed to demonstrating its support for migrants, the opportunity was also taken to remind members of the motion she had previously moved which had committed Brent to becoming a Borough of Sanctuary, as a place proud of its vibrant and diverse history and one which would always strive to do more for those fleeing persecution. In recognising how this sentiment had been reflected in support being provided for refugees around housing and welfare, employment and immigration advice and through the efforts to close health inequality gaps exposed by the Brent Poverty Commission, Councillor Benea ended by commending the amendment to all members and hoping that all would join her in standing on the side of the borough's migrant communities. On this basis the amendment moved by Councillor Benea was as follows:

To add the wording underlined and delete the wording indicated:

“Standing United against Racism and Xenophobia in Brent”

In recent years, particularly after the Brexit referendum, there has been a disturbing rise in racist and xenophobic rhetoric in public discourse, much of it amplified by political parties and figures on the far right and reactionary elements who seek to divide our communities. These groups have used inflammatory language, scapegoating migrants and minority communities, in a calculated attempt to stoke fear and resentment for political gain.

Brent is one of the most diverse boroughs in the UK. Over many decades, people from across the globe – from South Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and beyond – have made their home here, contributing immensely to our local economy, public services, cultural life, and social fabric. Whether as NHS workers, teachers, carers, builders, artists, entrepreneurs, or community leaders, migrants have played a vital role in shaping modern Brent into the vibrant, resilient, and forward-looking borough it is today.

This Council believes:

- Racism, xenophobia, and all forms of bigotry must be challenged wherever and whenever they arise, including when they come from mainstream or elected political figures.
- The demonisation of immigrants and refugees not only undermines social cohesion but also endangers the safety and well-being of residents across Brent.
- Brent's diversity is not a challenge to be managed, but a strength to be celebrated.

Brent has always been stronger because of its diversity – not in spite of it. At a time when fear and hatred are being weaponised in national discourse, we in Brent choose a different path: one of solidarity, mutual respect.

As a result, this Council resolves to:

- (1) **Proudly reaffirm Brent's commitment to being an inclusive, anti-racist borough through our affirmed status as a Borough of Sanctuary and a proud signatory of the Unison Anti-Racism Charter**, where all residents – regardless of background, nationality, or immigration status – are welcomed, valued, and protected.
- (2) **Publicly condemn the racist and xenophobic rhetoric** being spread by Reform UK and other groups on the far/right and make clear that such divisive narratives have no place in our borough or our politics.
- (3) **Celebrate the contributions of immigrants to Brent**, through public awareness campaigns, community events, and educational initiatives that promote understanding, solidarity, and historical awareness as part of the Council's refreshed approach to EDI, and as historically celebrated during Brent's Borough of Culture status in 2020.
- (4) **Encourage all councillors and community leaders** to speak out against hate speech and misinformation targeting migrants and to work proactively to build unity across all of Brent's communities.
- (5) **Continue to support migrant and refugee communities** through council services, advocacy, and partnerships with local organisations working on inclusion, integration, and support; as well as working to close the health inequality gaps exposed in the 2020 Brent Poverty Commission through initiatives such as Brent Health Matters."

The Mayor thanked Councillor Benea for moving the amendment before inviting other members to speak, with the following contributions received.

In opening the debate, Councillor Mistry felt it important to acknowledge that the original motion appeared to reflect the national mood rather than the specific situation in Brent welcoming the borough's vibrant, multi-ethnic character and decades of peaceful coexistence between various diverse communities. At the same time, however, concerns were outlined in relation to the impact the influx of recent economic migrants arriving via unsafe channel crossings were having in terms of the asylum system and pressures being experienced across Brent in relation to the supply of temporary housing accommodation. In clarifying that the position adopted was not aimed at demonising migrants or refugees but in seeking transparency and accountability in relation to what the Conservative Group felt was a failing asylum system, she highlighted a need for compassion to be matched by capacity, warning that not addressing the strain on housing risked further undermining social cohesion.

As a further contribution, Councillor Mili Patel, in providing historical context to the debate referred to an article in the Daily Mail from the 1930's reacting to the Kindertransport which had saved thousands of Jewish children from Nazi persecution which had argued government policy at the time should not be "ruled by misguided sentimentalism". Reference was also made to the proposals in the 1970s offering refugees funds to settle elsewhere or provide alternative options for resettlement following the displacement of many East African Asians who were left homeless by regimes led by the likes of Idi Amin. As a contrast Councillor Mili Patel felt it important to recognise that Brent had hugely benefitted from the migration and assimilation of many of these migrant communities, with it pointed out that many of those currently serving as councillors would not be here if steps had not been taken to accept refugees fleeing persecution. It was therefore with disappointment that she felt the subject presented for the Non Cabinet Member debate later on the agenda had been framed in a way which looked at migration as an insurmountable challenge rather than a celebration of how it had contributed to the development and history of Brent. In thanking the Liberal Democrats Group for the original motion and support of the amendments moved, it was felt this would assist in placing humanity back at the centre of a national conversation spiralling out of control, recognising the impact on those affected and fact that Brent had been stronger because of its diversity, not in spite of it. In ending, Councillor Mili Patel advised she was therefore proud of the work being undertaken by the Council to support refugees who had chosen to make Brent their home with Brent continuing to be a place of sanctuary and seeking to treat all residents with the respect and dignity deserved rather than supporting what was felt to be the current dangerous and divisive rhetoric when it came to migration.

As a final contribution, Councillor Clinton then spoke in support of the motion and amendments moved by Councillor Benea also highlighting a need for political leadership against racism, hate, and division, which he was pleased to note many different members of the local community had recognised as unacceptable behaviour.

At this stage, the Mayor advised that the time limit allocated for debate on the motion had been reached. In drawing the debate to a close, he therefore invited

Councillor Lorber (as mover of the original motion) followed by Councillor Benea (as mover of the amendment) to exercise their right of reply.

On the basis of the debate and amendment moved having been accepted, both Councillor Lorber and Benea advised they did not wish to exercise a right of reply.

Having thanked members for their contributions the Mayor then advised that as the amendment moved by the Labour Group had been accepted, he would move straight to the vote on the substantive motion (as amended)

The Mayor then moved on to put the substantive motion, as amended, to a vote which was declared unanimously **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to approve the following motion:

“Standing United against Racism and Xenophobia in Brent

In recent years, particularly after the Brexit referendum, there has been a disturbing rise in racist and xenophobic rhetoric in public discourse, much of it amplified by political parties and figures on the far right and reactionary elements who seek to divide our communities. These groups have used inflammatory language, scapegoating migrants and minority communities, in a calculated attempt to stoke fear and resentment for political gain.

Brent is one of the most diverse boroughs in the UK. Over many decades, people from across the globe – from South Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and beyond – have made their home here, contributing immensely to our local economy, public services, cultural life, and social fabric. Whether as NHS workers, teachers, carers, builders, artists, entrepreneurs, or community leaders, migrants have played a vital role in shaping modern Brent into the vibrant, resilient, and forward-looking borough it is today.

This Council believes:

- Racism, xenophobia, and all forms of bigotry must be challenged wherever and whenever they arise, including when they come from mainstream or elected political figures.
- The demonisation of immigrants and refugees not only undermines social cohesion but also endangers the safety and well-being of residents across Brent.
- Brent’s diversity is not a challenge to be managed, but a strength to be celebrated.

Brent has always been stronger because of its diversity – not in spite of it. At a time when fear and hatred are being weaponised in national discourse, we in Brent choose a different path: one of solidarity, mutual respect.

As a result, this Council resolves to:

- (1) **Proudly reaffirm Brent's commitment to being an inclusive, anti-racist borough through our affirmed status as a Borough of Sanctuary and a proud signatory of the Unison Anti-Racism Charter**, where all residents – regardless of background, nationality, or immigration status – are welcomed, valued, and protected.
- (2) **Publicly condemn the racist and xenophobic rhetoric** being spread by Reform UK and other groups on the far/right and make clear that such divisive narratives have no place in our borough or our politics.
- (3) **Celebrate the contributions of immigrants to Brent**, through public awareness campaigns, community events, and educational initiatives that promote understanding, solidarity, and historical awareness as part of the Council's refreshed approach to EDI, and as historically celebrated during Brent's Borough of Culture status in 2020.
- (4) **Encourage all councillors and community leaders** to speak out against hate speech and misinformation targeting migrants and to work proactively to build unity across all of Brent's communities.
- (5) **Continue to support migrant and refugee communities** through council services, advocacy, and partnerships with local organisations working on inclusion, integration, and support; as well as working to close the health inequality gaps exposed in the 2020 Brent Poverty Commission through initiatives such as Brent Health Matters."

10.3 3rd Motion (Labour Group) – Backing healthy, sustainable high streets in Brent

The Mayor then invited Councillor Agha to move the first motion submitted by the Labour Group. In moving the motion, Councillor Agha began by highlighting what he regarded to be the key duty of a local authority in seeking to protect and deliver for its residents by building long standing, sustainable communities. As such, he advised the motion had been designed to recognise the importance of high streets at the heart of local communities, providing essential services, creating local employment, and serving as places where residents were able to meet and connect as well as providing a reflection of the communities served in terms of their character and way in which they represented the diverse and vibrant mix of businesses across the borough. Concern was, however, expressed at the impact being felt across many high streets as a result of the previous Government's programme of austerity, with many businesses struggling as a result of rising costs and the proliferation of certain types of businesses such as fast food outlets and adult gaming centres taking their place. As a result, he pointed out the motion was proposing action designed to redress the balance and place power and pride back at the heart of local communities recognising the need to prioritise the safety and health of residents and ensure businesses were able to feed back into the local economy. In recognising the responsibility on the Council to act, the current constraints on them being able to do so were also highlighted, which the motion had sought to address. In summing up, Councillor Agha therefore expressed his pride in working with colleagues to not only call for a change in the law on gambling premises but to ensure that local residents voices were also heard in seeking to tackle the unsustainable clusters of businesses currently appearing across specific

high streets in the borough, enhancing the Local Plan and establishing a dedicated multi-agency task force to crack down on unlawful activity in support the borough's independent businesses and as part of the process in building a fairer, more resilient future for Brent.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Agha for moving the motion before inviting other members to speak, with the following contributions received.

In opening the debate, Councillor Hirani supported the need to recognise the importance of thriving healthy high streets but expressed concern to avoid initiatives such as the dedicated new multi-agency taskforces and other interventions leading to the imposition of additional unnecessary costs, creating inefficiencies, and diverting resources from existing frontline services. Whilst highlighting the Conservative Groups support for the motion, the opportunity was taken to advocate for a more balanced approach which, whilst designed to support local enterprise, would also ensure public funds were being used effectively. As examples, reference was made to the potential adoption of a one-hour free parking scheme in town centres (as had successfully been adopted across Harrow), reduction of business rates and enforcement against illegal trading as measures that would provide an immediate impact in supporting local businesses and high streets, with implementation being funded through the collection of appropriate fines through enforcement action. In highlighting the work being undertaken in collaboration with the Kenton Traders Association in terms of the type of support that could be provided, it was hoped (in supporting the vision identified within the motion) that consideration would also be given to the measures outlined during implementation.

Councillor Ethapemi, also spoke in support of the motion, endorsing the comments made by Councillor Agha and supporting the concerns raised about the impact being created by the proliferation of gambling premises on the borough's high streets and surrounding areas and communities.

As a further contribution, Councillor Johnson (also speaking in support of the motion) also highlighted the importance in ensuring the views of local residents and the communities represented were fully reflected within the approach adopted towards supporting the boroughs high streets and tackling the harm being created by gambling. Expressing pride at the proactive lead being taken by Brent nationally in seeking to highlight and tackle the harm being created by the proliferation of gambling premises across the borough, he was keen to support the call being made as a result for the Government to provide local authorities with the necessary power to control the provision of these types of premises on high streets, ensuring residents had a real say over their local environment. In addition, support was expressed for the proposed focus on review of the Local Plan to strengthen policies that would limit over-concentration of uses like adult gaming centres and fast-food outlets while also protecting green spaces. Reference was also made to the proposals outlined within the motion to explore new and innovative ways to support and promote legitimate local businesses in terms of the targeting of business grants, skills training and marketing campaigns with the overall approach also supported by the proposed development of a Brent Hight Streets Charter in offering a shared vision for safe, clean and vibrant high streets. In highlighting the support also expressed for the approach outlined by Dawn Bulter as a local MP in Parliament he ended by expressing hope that the campaign and lobbying being led by Brent working with the Social Market Foundation in relation to the harm created

by gambling premises on local communities would have the necessary impact in terms of the urgent reform being sought.

As a final contribution, Councillor Mistry also spoke highlighting concern at the impact of the current parking restrictions on local businesses in town centres across the borough when compared with the approach adopted by other Council's, such as Harrow, in introducing a free parking period given the benefits experienced by local businesses. Whilst supporting the motion, she therefore hoped members would also recognise the need to consider and address the issue as part of the overall approach outlined in seeking to support the borough's high streets and local businesses.

At this stage, as the time limit for debate had been reached, the Mayor then invited Councillor Agha to exercise his right of reply. In thanking members for their support and comments, Councillor Agha ended by once again highlighting his support for the proposals within the motion including establishment of a dedicated multi-agency taskforce to actively identify and take action against businesses operating illegally and calls for a change in the law on gambling premises to ensure that local residents voices were also heard in seeking to tackle the unsustainable clusters of those type of businesses appearing across the borough and in order foster a supportive environment in which business could flourish supported by their local communities.

Having thanked all members for their contributions, the Mayor then moved to put the motion to a vote which was declared unanimously **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to approve the following motion:

"Backing healthy, sustainable high streets in Brent

This council notes:

- That our high streets and local town centres are the heart of our communities, providing essential services, employment, and social spaces for Brent residents.
- That a diverse and vibrant mix of businesses, from independent shops to established retailers, is crucial for the economic and social well-being of the borough.
- That the proliferation of fast-food outlets and the rise of cash-intensive businesses, alongside high concentrations of Adult Gaming Centres, can impact the character of our high streets, create unfair competition for legitimate traders, and pose risks to public health, safety, and consumer welfare.
- That Brent Council has a responsibility to protect its residents and support the growth of a sustainable and prosperous local economy.
- That Brent Council is already taking a leading role in this fight, having partnered with over 40 local and combined authorities to lobby central government for urgent gambling reform, and working with the Social Market

Foundation to research the true impact of these businesses on our communities.

This council believes:

- That a proactive approach is needed to foster a supportive environment for legitimate businesses to flourish.
- That clamping down on illegal and illicit trading activities is essential to creating a level playing field for all businesses and to safeguard our communities.
- That strong collaboration between the Council, local businesses, residents, and the police is key to tackling these issues effectively.

This council resolves:

- (1) To develop and implement a Brent High Streets Charter in consultation with local business groups and residents, outlining a shared vision for safe, clean, and vibrant high streets and our ambition to declutter inaccessible spaces.
- (2) To establish a dedicated multi-agency task force, including officers from Trading Standards, Licensing, the police and other law enforcement agencies, to actively identify and take action against businesses that operate illegally, sell counterfeit goods, or engage in other illicit activities.
- (3) To review and, if necessary, amend Brent's Local Plan to ensure a more balanced and diverse mix of businesses on our high streets, with a particular focus on addressing the over-concentration of certain types of businesses, such as takeaways and adult gaming centres.
- (4) To explore local measures to deal with high-risk cash businesses, to address any risk of financial crime and/or community harm.
- (5) To explore new and innovative ways to support and promote our borough's legitimate businesses, including targeted business grants, skills training, and marketing campaigns.
- (6) To launch a public awareness campaign to inform residents about the dangers of using illicit services and purchasing illegal products such as disposable vapes and snus, and to encourage them to report suspicious business activities.
- (7) To contribute to the Mayor of London's Plan for London consultation, feeding Brent's voice into the future of the capital's high streets."

10.4 4th Motion (Labour Group) – Breathing new life into Brent's transport infrastructure projects

The Mayor then invited Councillor Lesley Smith to move the second and final motion submitted by the Labour Group. In moving the motion, Councillor Lesley Smith advised that she had originally settled in Brent as a result of the Bakerloo

line, which she had used ever since and with the local businesses which had flourished around Queen's Park station also demonstrating its strength as a commuter starting point and attracting people to the borough. In highlighting the impact which the Bakerloo line had had in transforming Queen's Park as a destination, the opportunity was taken to recognise the number of young people now arriving to use the various cafes, bars and other facilities in the area delivering jobs and prosperity. Brent was also noted to have more Bakerloo stations (ten) than any other borough located within its area, running from Kilburn Park to Kenton but in recognising this fact it was also felt more could be done in terms of the service provided. Referring to the stock used on the line being some of the oldest on the Underground and operated in the UK, issues were identified in terms of the lack of air conditioning and its general maintenance with the motion therefore highlighting support for the announcement of the latest TfL settlement provided by the Chancellor in seeking to make new rolling stock a reality and to extend the line in order to spread its benefits beyond their current reach.

In moving the motion the opportunity was also taken to express support for the funding required to deliver West London Orbital, given the difference it would bring not only to Brent but also across the wider West London region in terms of providing access for up to half a million people to the new station at Old Oak Common as well as supporting the creation of up to 39,000 jobs and 22,000 homes across Brent Cross, Wembley, and Cricklewood. This would be in addition to the benefits created in terms of reducing car use and emissions and in support of providing new step-free access to Neasden and Harlesden stations and elsewhere in the borough, something it highlighted as also needed in Queen's Park. In summing up, confirmation was also provided that the amendment submitted by the Liberal Democrats Group in support of the urgent upgrade identified as required to the Uxbridge branch of the Piccadilly line (in order to ensure this met the same standard as the Heathrow branch) was also supported as part of a coordinated approach in seeking to meet the needs of residents across Brent.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Lesley Smith for moving the motion and then drew members attention to the amendment submitted by Councillor Clinton on behalf of the Liberal Democrats Group, as previously referred to and circulated in advance of the meeting.

In moving the amendment, Councillor Clinton began by thanking the Councillor Lesley Smith for bringing forward the original motion and confirming the acceptance of his amendment which, whilst also supportive of the upgrade being sought to the Bakerloo line and commitment to West London Orbital, had been designed to highlight the case in support of upgrading the Uxbridge branch of the Piccadilly as another critical transport link within the borough. In highlighting his personal experience of the poor reliability of the service on that branch of the Piccadilly line along with increasing demand on the existing service, given the level of development in the surrounding area, Councillor Clinton ended by outlining what he felt was the need to ensure provision of an expanded, resilient and interconnected transport network for residents across the borough regardless of which line they used and once again thanked the Labour Group for their support of the changes outlined within his amendment.

On this basis the amendment moved by Councillor Clinton was as follows:

To add the wording underlined and delete the wording indicated:

“Breathing new life into Brent’s transport infrastructure projects

This Council notes:

- That a robust ~~and integrated~~ transport network is fundamental to the economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and social well-being of Brent's residents.
- The significant challenges posed by climate change and the urgent need to transition to more sustainable modes of transport, reducing reliance on private cars.
- The Government's £2.2bn multi-year ~~capital~~-funding settlement to ~~Transport for London~~ TfL earlier this year, which made note of support for high priority new rolling stock and signalling procurements on the Bakerloo Line.
- That both the ~~proposed~~ Bakerloo Line Extension and the ~~West London Orbital (WLO)~~ projects have been identified as key ~~strategie~~ transport schemes that would deliver transformative benefits for Brent ~~and the wider region~~.
- The compelling economic case for both projects, delivering ~~on~~ tens of thousands of new homes and jobs, and unlocking growth ~~in key areas~~ across the borough. ~~and beyond, including creative and cultural hubs in Park Royal and Soho.~~
- That reports estimate upgrading the Bakerloo line will ~~create capacity for an additional~~ increase capacity by 150,000 daily journeys, connecting some of London’s least served areas to the TfL network.
- That the Council has ~~already~~ demonstrated its commitment to the ~~West London Orbital, WLO~~ having approved with a contribution of £465,516 plus a £150,000 contingency from its Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy to fund the next stage of its development, in collaboration with the West London Alliance.
- That the ~~upcoming~~ Autumn Budget presents ~~an crucial~~ opportunity for the Government to demonstrate its commitment to investing in strategic transport infrastructure.
- The poor reliability of tube services and the lack of night tubes on the Uxbridge branch of the Picadilly line.
- The thousands of (much needed) flats being built on that branch, increasing demand on existing services.

This Council believes:

- The Bakerloo & Picadilly lines are Line is critical transport links an iconic part of London's underground, its history, and culture, connecting landmarks from Wembley to the West End and beyond.
- The ~~West London Orbital~~ WLO is a crucial, ~~shovel-ready~~ rail link that would connect strategic growth areas in West and North West NW London, providing a sustainable transport corridor, reducing congestion on local roads, and offering our residents new, direct journey opportunities.
- The combined delivery of both projects, and improvements to tube services would create a resilient and interconnected transport network that serves the needs of our current residents and supports the sustainable growth of our borough ~~for decades to come.~~
- The delivery of these projects aligns with the Labour Government's policy of creating a unified, simplified, and publicly accountable rail network, as outlined in its commitment to establish Great British Railways.

This Council resolves:

- (1) To ~~formally and~~ unequivocally support the delivery of both the Bakerloo Line Upgrade and Extension and the ~~West London Orbital~~ WLO projects.
- (2) To ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Mayor of London, the Secretary of State for Transport and the Chancellor to express Brent's strong support, and to urge the Government to use the ~~upcoming~~ Autumn Budget to deliver on its rail commitments, and prioritising inge funding for these critical projects.
- (3) To ~~commit to working collaboratively with Transport for London~~ TfL and other partners to ensure that Brent's interests are at the forefront of the planning and implementation of these schemes, including ~~additional~~ lobbying ~~on~~ providing for step-free access at transport stations across the borough.
- (4) To also ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Mayor requesting:
 - Services on the Uxbridge branch line be on par with the Heathrow Branch
 - The extension of the night tubes to the Uxbridge branch."

The Mayor thanked Councillor Clinton for moving the amendment before inviting other members to speak, with the following contributions received.

Speaking in support of the motion, Councillor Kennelly, in opening the debate outlined what he felt was the importance of the Bakerloo line extension as a key strategic transport scheme that would be able to deliver transformative benefits not only to the economy in Brent but also the wider region. Whilst welcoming the Government's TfL funding settlement and priority for new rolling stock and signalling along the existing line, he also supported what he regarded as the compelling economic case presented for extension of the line and in ending also expressed support for the amendment moved highlighting the need for improved

services on the Uxbridge branch of the Picadilly line, given the impact this would also have on Brent residents, including himself, served by that line.

As a further contribution, Councillor Maurice also spoke advising that whilst supportive of the improvement and upgrade of public transport, he felt this needed to be undertaken on the basis of need and funding having also been identified. Querying the direct benefits of the proposed Bakerloo Line extension, specifically within Brent, he felt the main advantage to be provided would be in terms of the provision of new rolling stock (recognising the ageing nature of the current stock) and signalling improvements. Whilst welcoming the benefits associated with West London Orbital, Councillor Maurice identified what he felt to be a significant issue in terms of the new station at Brent Cross West having been designed and built without provision for WLO. Recognising that TfL was also in a process of financial recovery, he ended by highlighting the significant lobbying that he felt would still be required to attract the necessary support and funding for the expansion of the Bakerloo line and improvements also being sought, through the amendment, to the Picadilly line which he pointed out had always been prioritised on the basis of access to Heathrow.

As a final contribution Councillor Nevra, also speaking in support of the motion, felt it was important to respond to the issues raised by Councillor Maurice in terms of the importance of the improvements being sought to both the Bakerloo and Picadilly line by residents relying on those services and living in the surrounding areas, recognising not only the compelling economic case but also wider impacts in relation to environmental sustainability, social well-being and wider transport connectivity. In welcoming the near unanimous cross party support expressed during the debate, he hoped all members would support the motion (as amended) in seeking to secure the necessary commitment to both the upgrade and expansion of the Bakerloo line and enhancements to the Picadilly line in terms of the prioritisation by the government for funding to deliver these critical projects.

At this stage, the Mayor advised that the time limit allocated for debate on the motion had been reached. In drawing the debate to a close, he therefore invited Councillor Lesley Smith (as mover of the original motion) followed by Councillor Clinton (as mover of the amendment) to exercise their right of reply.

In thanking members for their support, Councillor Lesley Smith (in exercising her right of reply) felt it important to challenge the comments made by Councillor Maurice on behalf of the Conservative Group during the debate, highlighting the significant benefits it was felt the expansion and upgrade of the Bakerloo line and improvements being sought in the service along the Uxbridge branch of the Picadilly line would deliver within Brent in terms of new homes, jobs, being able to unlock additional growth and prosperity and attract additional interest and investment from outside the borough given the range of areas served by the stations along both lines across the borough. Whilst recognising the extensive lobbying required to secure the necessary investment and ensure Brent's interests were at the forefront in terms of the delivery of these schemes as key strategic transport infrastructure projects, she felt confident the approach outlined in the motion and amendment would support this process backed by the commitment, investment and support already provided by the Council and cross party support also highlighted, and as such hoped all members would support both the motion and amendment as moved.

On the basis of the debate and amendment having been accepted, Councillor Clinton advised that he did not wish to exercise any right of reply.

Having thanked members for their contributions the Mayor once again advised that as the Labour Group had indicated there were in acceptance of the amendment moved by the Liberal Democrats Group he would move straight to the vote on the substantive motion (as amended). The Mayor then moved on to put the substantive motion, as amended, to a vote which was declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to approve the following motion:

“Breathing new life into Brent’s transport infrastructure projects

This Council notes:

- That a robust transport network is fundamental to the economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and social well-being of Brent's residents.
- The significant challenges posed by climate change and the urgent need to transition to more sustainable modes of transport, reducing reliance on private cars.
- The Government’s £2.2bn multi-year funding settlement to TfL earlier this year, which made note of support for high priority new rolling stock and signalling procurements on the Bakerloo Line.
- That both the Bakerloo Line Extension and the WLO projects have been identified as key transport schemes that would deliver transformative benefits for Brent.
- The compelling economic case for both projects, delivering tens of thousands of new homes and jobs, and unlocking growth across the borough.
- That reports estimate upgrading the Bakerloo line will increase capacity by 150,000 daily journeys, connecting some of London’s least served areas to the TfL network.
- That the Council has demonstrated its commitment to the WLO with a contribution of £465,516 plus a £150,000 contingency from its Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy to fund the next stage of its development, in collaboration with the West London Alliance.
- That the Autumn Budget presents an opportunity for the Government to demonstrate its commitment to investing in strategic transport infrastructure.
- The poor reliability of tube services and the lack of night tubes on the Uxbridge branch of the Picadilly line.
- The thousands of (much needed) flats being built on that branch, increasing demand on existing services.

This Council believes:

- The Bakerloo & Picadilly lines are critical transport links.
- The WLO is a crucial rail link that would connect growth areas in West and NW London, providing sustainable transport, reducing congestion on local roads, and offering our residents new, direct journey opportunities.
- The combined delivery of both projects, and improvements to tube services would create a resilient and interconnected transport network that serves the needs of our current residents and supports the sustainable growth of our borough.
- The delivery of these projects aligns with the Labour Government's policy of creating a unified, simplified, and publicly accountable rail network, as outlined in its commitment to establish Great British Railways.

This Council resolves:

- (1) To unequivocally support the delivery of both the Bakerloo Line Upgrade and Extension and the WLO projects.
- (2) To ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Mayor of London, the Secretary of State for Transport and the Chancellor to express Brent's strong support, and to urge the Government to use the Autumn Budget to deliver on its rail commitments, and prioritise funding for these projects.
- (3) To work with TfL and other partners to ensure Brent's interests are at the forefront of the planning and implementation of these schemes, including lobbying for step-free access at stations across the borough.
- (4) To also ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Mayor requesting:
 - o Services on the Uxbridge branch line be on par with the Heathrow Branch
 - o The extension of the night tubes to the Uxbridge branch."

11. Reports from the Leader and Cabinet

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, to introduce the report updating members on the work being undertaken across each Cabinet portfolio in order to provide ongoing support and services to meet the needs of residents across the borough.

Following on from the debate on the final motion, Councillor Muhammed Butt began by assuring members of the Council's ongoing commitment to continue lobbying for the improvements being sought along both the Bakerloo and Picadilly lines as well highlighting the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) investment already provided to support the ongoing development of West London Orbital (in collaboration with the West London Alliance) given the wider benefits identified in

relation to strategic growth, economic prosperity and the provision of more sustainable transport links.

Moving on, the opportunity was also taken to thank all members of the Cabinet for the work being undertaken across their portfolios to continue supporting and safeguarding local residents in line with the Council's core strategic priorities, recognising the ongoing nature of the financial pressures faced by the Council. In commending the work being undertaken to manage demand and address the pressures identified whilst also delivering on their commitments, members were assured that the need for continued financial discipline and careful stewardship had also been recognised to sustain and ensure the Council's ongoing financial sustainability. As part of this approach, reference was made to the recent decision made by Cabinet to allocate what he felt was a transformational £14.5m of investment to revitalise Brent's roads, parks, and public safety infrastructure funded through SCIL which, he pointed out, had been designed to deliver real improvements for residents across the borough on an everyday basis and build on the £15m of funding already invested since 2022 focussed on creating a cleaner, safer, greener borough where residents felt connected and proud to live.

As part of the update, members were also asked to note (as tabled at the meeting) the Executive decisions which had been taken under the Council's urgency procedures, since the previous update provided for the Council meeting in July 2025.

The Mayor thanked the Leader for the report and it was **RESOLVED** to formally note the update provided.

12. **Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members**

Before moving on to consider the questions submitted by non-Cabinet members, the Mayor reminded Members that a total of 30 minutes had been set aside for this item, which would begin with consideration of the written questions submitted in advance of the meeting along with any supplementary questions. Once these had been dealt with, the remaining time available would then be opened up for any other non-Cabinet members to question Cabinet Members (without the need for advance notice) on matters relating to their portfolio.

The Mayor advised that five written questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting for response by the relevant Cabinet Member and the written responses circulated within the agenda were noted. The Mayor then invited supplementary questions on the responses provided:

12.1 No supplementary question was raised by Councillor Kennelly with the written response provided by Councillor Grahl (as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools) on the protection of vulnerable children noted, as circulated with the agenda.

12.2 No supplementary question was raised by Councillor Choudry with the written response provided jointly by Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement) and Councillor Farah (as Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs & Skills) on the provision of additional CCTV enhancements via SCIL investment noted, as circulated with the agenda.

- 12.3 Councillor Kabir thanked Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (as Cabinet Member for Housing) for the written response to her question seeking an update on the impact of the Housing Benefit subsidy gap and in welcoming what she felt to be Brent's innovative approach towards tackling homelessness and addressing the pressures on temporary accommodation asked if a detailed breakdown on the numbers of families and single people who had presented as homeless to the Council could be provided from 2021 onwards to highlight the ongoing challenges being faced.

In response, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson advised that she would be able to provide a detailed breakdown on the figures following the meeting and in response to the ongoing pressures and challenges highlighted, took the opportunity to outline a number of initiatives currently being pursued. These included consultation being undertaken on a new Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy which had been developed in partnership with Crisis, who it was pointed out also chaired the Homelessness Forum and had recently been shortlisted for a London Homelessness Award for their work with refugees facing homelessness. Reference was also made to development of the Build for Zero approach, which used real-time data to respond to the needs of homeless people alongside the Council's Radical Place Leadership pilot focussed on how the Council could develop and work more effectively with partners in the delivery of more joined up services. The provision of access to the GLA's Council Homes Acquisition Grants Programme (CHAPS) was also welcomed in supporting the delivery of new temporary accommodation units, as a further way in assisting to reduce subsidy loss. Finally, all those involved in delivery of homelessness services being provided through the New Horizons Centre and Turning Point were commended for the real difference being made and opportunity provided to ensure that those facing homelessness were treated with dignity and received the support needed.

- 12.4 In noting the written response provided to his question regarding the strategy to close the funding gap and prioritise footway repairs, Councillor Jayanti Patel as a supplementary question, asked Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement) for a detailed breakdown of the planned £11m footway maintenance spend referred to within her response, which he understood was being funded from the £15m additional investment in maintenance provided as part of the three-year programme running from 2023 to 2026. In order to support transparency and ensure residents were kept informed of progress, details were also sought on a breakdown of total spend for 2023, 2024 and to date during 2025 along with the remaining balance allocated for 2026 with Councillor Jayanti Patel expressing disappointment that it appeared in total only seven miles were scheduled for reconstruction during 2025 and 2026, which he pointed out comprised less than 1.5% of Brent's total network. With 88% of pedestrian injury claims linked to footway defects, he also ended by seeking confirmation as to whether the Council would publish an annual Accessibility Impact Statement identifying high risk areas for disabled residents and parents with young children.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth advised that due to the detailed nature of the information being sought she would need to liaise with officers to arrange a response on the available information following the meeting.

- 12.5 In noting the response provided by Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement) to his written response regarding the use of SCIL to fund local infrastructure and Public Realm projects, Councillor Lorber felt it important to recognise that this had been an approach recommended by the Liberal Democrats Group over previous years as part of their alternative budget proposals but which had been rejected on a consistent basis as not allowed and financially irresponsible. The initial question raised had therefore sought clarification about the basis on which this decision had been made, given the previous advice received. Whilst the decision to invest SCIL funding in the areas identified was welcomed, it was pointed out this had also come as no surprise during an election year. In observing a pattern where significant investment programmes continued to be announced in advance of local elections Councillor Lorber, as a supplementary question, asked whether the Cabinet Member would be willing to lobby for annual local elections as a means of providing a more consistent programme of investment for the benefit of local residents.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth acknowledged the support expressed for the programme of investment identified, which it was pointed out would also directly benefit residents in Sudbury as well as across the remainder of the borough in terms of addressing key priorities and public realm need.

Having thanked members for their written questions and Cabinet Members for the responses provided to the supplementary questions, the Mayor advised that he intended to move on with the remainder of time available being used for an open question time session to the Cabinet. Questions relating to the following issues were raised and responses provided, as set out below:

- (i) As a member of the Brent Pension Fund Sub Committee Councillor Ahmadi Moghaddam, referring to further advice received in relation to the Council's Pension Fund obligations regarding divestment from companies linked to the ongoing conflict and alleged human right violations in Gaza and queries from residents seeking urgent action on this issue, sought an update on the progress being made by the Council towards meeting its commitment to divest and in taking steps towards pursuing more ethical investments. In support of the strength of feeling on this issue, members were also reminded of the petition which had been presented to Council during the previous year seeking a commitment towards divestment and follow up deputations presented to the Council's Pension Fund Sub Committee highlighting the need for urgent action to be taken.

In response, Councillor Mili Patel (as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) thanked Councillor Ahmadi Moghaddam for his question and advised that the Council was mindful of the additional legal notice recently circulated to all LGPS administering authorities, and of the strength of feeling locally. In continuing to support the stance taken by the government that the remaining hostages needed to be released and in seeking a clear pathway towards an enduring peace in relation to the conflict

in Gaza, Councillor Mili Patel advised that the Council had also recognised the growing documentation of human rights violations in Palestine and echoed the international consensus that the status-quo could not continue to hold. In terms of the position adopted by Brent in relation to divestment, the opportunity was taken to remind members of the balance needing to be achieved in terms of the fiduciary duty to the 22,000 members of the Pension Fund and wider social and ethical responsibilities. As a result, officers were carefully reviewing the position paper supplied by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and working with the LGPS Scheme Advisory Board (SAB), who were seeking further guidance from the Government, with the Council continuing to draw on the SAB's advice, legal counsel and best practice from other local authorities.

In addition, members attention was also drawn to the implications arising from the government's "Fit for the Future" reforms, requiring all Pension Fund assets to be managed through the London CIV by March 2026. As Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, Councillor Mili Patel advised she would also, therefore, be writing to the LCIV to call for a more robust framework that would enable future the exclusion of investments linked to conflict, military occupation or genocide. In providing further assurance, confirmation was also provided of the Council's commitment to responsible investment, with all Pension Fund investment managers signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) considerations also integral to the overall investment strategy and approach. Over the coming months work would also continue with fund managers to disclose pension fund investments in companies listed by the United Nations OHCHR.

In ending her response, members were advised that the Leader & Deputy Leader had also formally requested the preparation of a plan to explore practical and legally sound options to advance divestment, so that, following the May 2026 local elections, the next Administration would be in the strongest possible position to take a clear, robust, and legally watertight decision that would not only safeguard the financial interests of the Fund's members but would also provide a firm commitment towards ethical divestment. Whilst this work continued, it was also pointed out that Brent Labour were also exploring the inclusion of a codified election pledge in their forthcoming manifesto to pursue options to divest from companies implicated in breaches of either international law or worldwide human rights with the pledge also made to ensure members were kept updated on progress as the work outlined continued.

- (ii) Councillor Mitchell seeking further details on how the allocation of SCIL and NCIL funding was being used to assist in tackling the climate emergency and addressing climate change in Brent.

In response, Councillor Rubin (as Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Community Power) provided a brief explanation of the way in which NCIL was generated through receipts from developers linked to developments across the borough which could then be reinvested to support a range of community and infrastructure projects. In addition to a range of cost of living support, he pointed out that Cabinet had also recently approved an ambitious and

extensive programme of NCIL investment designed to respond to priorities identified by residents in relation to the public realm, including a range of measures focussed around addressing the climate emergency. These included the introduction of four new school streets designed to reduce pollution and encourage more active modes of travel around schools, the planting of 1,500 new trees, the provision of funding to deliver green corridors in Church End and Kingsbury making those areas some of the greenest and climate friendly areas in Brent. In addition, funding had been provided to support a habitat bank to rewild the borough, new rain gardens, park upgrades and community planting schemes along with the provision of four new repair cafes and investment in walking and cycling routes again to encourage more sustainable modes of transport. Taken together, it was felt this investment would significantly contribute to the Council's net zero climate goals while saving residents money and also improving their quality of life.

- (iii) Councillor Long seeking further details on the design of Cycleway 23 between Wembley and Willesden junction, as a result of safety concerns regarding the layout (adjacent to the North Circular Road section) requiring those needing to access buses to cross the cycle land before doing so. As a result, clarification was sought as to whether the design plans would be presented to the Disability Forum, Pensioners Forum and the Willesden, Harlesden and Wembley Brent Connects Forums with details also sought as to when the next Lime Bike Forum was due to be held.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement) advised that the date for the Lime Bike Forum had now been arranged, on which members would be advised and details publicised shortly. In relation to the cycleway, members were advised that discussions were currently ongoing with TfL to finalise the design and once available these would be shared with the relevant Brent Connect and other Forums.

- (iv) Councillor Kennelly, who in expressing concern at the recent decision of the London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust to close the hydrotherapy pool at Northwick Park Hospital, sought further detail on any engagement with the Council by the Trust regarding the rationale in support of the decision, consultation with stakeholders and alternative provision noting the concern and disappointed which had been expressed by local residents. Whilst appreciating that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Leisure (who also chaired the Health & Wellbeing Board) had written to the Hospital Trust to highlight the concerns being expressed locally, details were also sought on what further action it was felt could be taken in seeking to get the Trust to review their decision and ensure proper consultation was undertaken with residents around future decision on service provision.

In response, Councillor Nerva (as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Leisure and Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board) confirmed that he had written to the Chief Executive of London Northwest University Healthcare NHS Trust seeking clarification on the rationale behind the decision to close the service, decision-making process and consultation undertaken along with plans for any alternative provision. Whilst advising that the response provided had been disappointing and reminding members that the Council held no direct Executive responsibility for the provision of NHS

services he reminded members of the powers available to the Council's scrutiny function and suggested this may also be an issue they identified for review.

- (v) Councillor Mistry, highlighting concerns regarding the regular upkeep and maintenance of Eton Grove Open Space in Queensbury. Highlighting the work being undertaken by a volunteer to maintain the green space, including the clearing of grass verges and litter, pruning of bushes and branches and clearance of weeds it was felt the green space was being neglected by the Council despite these issues having been previously highlighted. Details were therefore sought on when the Council planned to address the concerns identified and undertake the necessary clearance and maintenance of the open space.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement) advised that if details of the issues highlighted could be sent direct to her following the meeting she would arrange for officers to follow up and investigate any action required.

- (vi) Councillor Kansagra seeking further details on the Council's approach to the provision of support for local business as part of the wider regeneration of the borough's high streets. Drawing on his personal experience as a small business owner the opportunity was taken to highlight concerns being raised by local shop owners in relation to safety, shoplifting and also local parking restrictions. Highlighting the impact of these issues on the sustainability of local high street businesses and wider economic prosperity of the borough he therefore asked what the Council's plans were to address them as investment priorities.

In response, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as the Leader of the Council) felt it important to remind members of the recent £14.5m programme of SCIL investment which had been agreed by Cabinet to revitalise Brent's roads, parks and public safety infrastructure alongside the £8m programme of NCIL investment made with a focus on local neighbourhoods in direct response to residents priorities. In addition, he highlighted how the Council continued to work in collaboration with the GLA and Camden to ensure businesses in the south of the borough, including Kilburn, received support. As an overall package of measures, he felt this demonstrated how Brent was investing and working to support existing and encourage new businesses into the borough to ensure the borough remained open for business both now and in the future.

- (vii) As a final question Councillor Lorber who, in highlighting concerns regarding the impact and disturbance being created for local residents by roadworks taking place across the borough, sought details on whether detailed information could be published about when and for how long major roadworks were scheduled across the borough for the next 18 months. As specific examples of the difficulties being caused for local residents, reference was made to the congestion caused by recent roadworks undertaken by Affinity Water to repair a burst water pipe on East Lane when combined with roadworks in the vicinity of Northwick Park Hospital, Alperton and Wembley Central due to construction linked to redevelopment schemes in those areas.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement) reminded members that they should already be receiving details as part of the Members Bulletin on all current works on the public highway scheduled across the borough, with details of all approved permitted planned utilities works on the public highway already available via the One. Network website. [Causeway one.network](#). It was, however, pointed out that notice of emergency works would be more difficult to provide in advance due to their nature.

At this stage in proceedings, the Mayor advised that the time available for the open question session had expired. He therefore thanked all members for their contributions and advised that the meeting would move on to the next item.

13. Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees

The Mayor then moved on to deal with the updates from each Scrutiny Committee Chair, reminding members that the time set aside for this item was 12 minutes, with each Chair having up to three minutes in which to highlight any significant issues arising from the work of their Committees. Once these updates had been provided, he advised the remaining time available would then be opened up for any other non-Cabinet members to question (without the need for advance notice) the Scrutiny Committee Chairs on matters relating to the work of their Committee.

Councillor Conneely was then invited to introduce the update report on the work being undertaken by the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee, with the following issues highlighted:

- The wide-ranging nature of scrutiny activity undertaken by the Committee since the last update, as set out within the update report circulated with the agenda which had included a focus on housing, recycling and the provision of affordable housing.
- In response to concerns identified in relation to underperformance around complaints relating to housing repairs the Committee had sought to challenge officers and the contractor on performance, recognising the impact on tenants. As a result of their review the Committee had welcomed the changes outlined in terms of enhanced contract accountability, introduction of transparent resident led performance monitoring (including establishment of the Housing Board) along with the strengthening of financial protection when services broke down as part of the approach in developing a clear plan for improvement for tenants on which the Committee would continue to closely monitor progress.
- As part of their focus on recycling, the Committee continued to monitor performance in relation to the improvements being sought in recycling rates, again welcoming the shift towards the development of improved infrastructure for food waste and communal recycling along with the enhanced tracking of households missing out and efforts being made to address corporate waste, including lobbying for limits on single use plastic bags by independent retailers on the high street. The Committee had also identified the need to ensure a cohesive plan was developed for any investment being made available through the Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme.

- The Committee had also considered arrangements for the provision of affordable social housing as part of the upcoming Local Plan review. Whilst recognising the need to provide alternative options for delivery, the Committee had questioned the inclusion of Shared Ownership and Student Accommodation as genuine affordable housing products and also identified, as part of the review of the Local Plan, a need for land value mapping, the provision of more sustainable options for affordable housing along with enhanced incentives for social housing partners supported by the need to secure essential supporting infrastructure as part of future developments and the need for greater challenge in terms of viability assessments. The establishment of the Local Plan Member Working Group had also been welcomed in this respect.
- The ongoing monitoring of Brent's overall financial position based on detailed updates regarding the financial outturn position for 2025-26, current financial forecast and the medium-term financial outlook with the Council continuing to operate in a challenging financial environment with an uncertain funding outlook and the potential for significant ongoing spending pressures in demand-led services. These would again be issues focussed on by the Budget Scrutiny Task Group, with members keen to ensure the focus on any savings identified avoided impacting on social care and youth services and with support expressed for the continuation of lobbying efforts seeking urgent reform of local government finance in order to provide local authorities with greater options for how they raised and spent resources, including the use of the community infrastructure levy (CIL) and use of Council assets to meet social need.
- The ongoing focus and work of the Committee in seeking to encourage, where identified as required, change and improvements in the way services were being delivered for local communities across the borough and thanks expressed to members and other key stakeholders for their engagement in the work of the Committee to date.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Conneely for her update and then invited Councillor Ketan Sheth as chair of the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to introduce the update report on the work being undertaken by that Committee, with the following issues highlighted:

- Since the previous update, the Committee had finalised its work programme for 2025-26 with its first meeting being held in July which had considered two key safeguarding reports. The first of these had been the Brent Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report 2024–25, which had been presented by their Independent Chair Nicola Brownjohn who had outlined the progress being made in terms of development of the new SAB Strategic Plan 2024–26. The Committee had noted and welcomed the significant reduction in the backlog of safeguarding reviews from the period related to the pandemic along with the update on strengthened governance, improved performance, audit standards, and enhanced collaboration between statutory partners as well as the success of a Community Engagement Project, supported by Healthwatch, which had improved resident engagement and community

connections. Progress on transitional safeguarding was also highlighted and welcomed by the Committee.

The second update had been on the Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024–25, presented by Independent Scrutineer Keith Makin who had outlined the Partnership's role and achievements in ensuring strategic alignment between Health, Police, and the Council. Plans to strengthen youth engagement were welcomed, particularly the introduction of young scrutineers and collaboration with Brent Youth Parliament, with members also informed of continued joint working with the Safer Brent Partnership and the SAB on transitional safeguarding. Updates were also provided in relation to the introduction of Lead Safeguarding Partners and preparations for the Children's Wellbeing and Education Bill with the Committee having welcomed the priorities identified for the coming year including online safety, enhanced data analysis, and a focus on neurodiversity.

- The significant work scheduled on the Committee work programme for the remainder of 2025-26, with the next meeting in September due to focus on Children's Oral Health, Period Dignity and the Impact of Youth Service Delivery in Brent.
- In recognising the flexible and broad ranging nature of the Committee work programme, the opportunity was taken to specifically acknowledge and welcome the continued contribution and engagement of Brent Youth Parliament to ensure the views of young people across the borough were included as well as engagement with a range of other key stakeholders including local health providers, housing, social care and the local community.
- The ongoing and active engagement of the Committee in the work of the North West London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee Brent, which Councillor Ketan Sheth continued to Chair. This had included a review of proposals relating to maternity provision across North West London including outcomes and equity across the region, Adult Mental Health and the impact arising from reconfiguration of the ICB. The next meeting was scheduled for November with the Committee due to review Special School Nursing, the future of Place Based Partnerships, Dentist Commissioning and Children's Dental Health.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Ketan Sheth for the updated provided and it was **RESOLVED** that the contents of both reports be noted.

Following the updates provided, the Mayor advised that the remainder of time available would be open for questions from non-cabinet members to the Scrutiny Chairs. The Mayor reminded members of the need to ensure that questions raised were focused on the updates provided or the work being undertaken by the relevant Committee. Questions relating to the following issues were raised and responses provided, as set out below:

- (i) Following on from the question he had raised earlier in the meeting, Councillor Kennelly asked Councillor Ketan Sheth if he could confirm that the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee would be seeking to review the decision

taken by the Northwest University Healthcare NHS Trust to close the hydrotherapy pool at Northwick Park Hospital and when that was likely to be scheduled.

In response, Councillor Ketan Sheth (as Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee) thanked Councillor Kennelly for the suggestion and advised it was a matter about which he and the Committee were aware and would be looking to review at the earliest possible opportunity. Once this had been scheduled, he advised members would be informed of the relevant details.

- (ii) As an initial comment in relation to the response on the previous question, Councillor Lorber felt there would be a need for the Committee to carefully consider the arrangements when undertaking the review, given the need to ensure independence following an article by the Chair as part of his regular column in the local press on the closure, which he felt appeared to repeat the response provided by the NHS Trust.

Moving on, in welcoming the focus provided by the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee on what he felt should be regarded as the failure to provide an adequate housing service for tenants, Councillor Lorber, referring to similar issues and the response of the leadership within another London Borough, questioned whether it would be reasonable to seek a similar level of executive accountability from the leadership at Brent.

In response, Councillor Conneely (as Chair of the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee) advised that the consensus of the Committee when reviewing housing performance had been that they were satisfied, at this stage, with the improvement plan in place particularly in view of the additional protection and engagement with tenants and independence and role of the Housing Board in the process. It was pointed out, however, that the Committee intended to keep progress under review including the response provided in relation to the Council's self-referral to the Social Housing Regulator.

With no further questions raised, the Mayor advised that he would move to the next item and thanked all members for their contribution.

14. Report from the Vice Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee

The Mayor invited Councillor Chan, as the Vice-Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee, to introduce the report updating members on the work of the Committee.

In terms of issues highlighted Councillor Chan once again drew members' attention to the important role and work undertaken by the Committee in relation to monitoring and advising on various governance matters relating to audit activity, the Council's finance, accounting and regulatory framework and members standards of conduct.

The importance of the Committee's role was also highlighted in terms of the wider financial challenges, risks and pressures being faced by the Council with a focus

provided in relation to delivery of the Internal Audit Plan and Council's risk management structure and strategic risk management process including not only the effectiveness of governance processes but also Council's financial resilience given the ongoing financial pressures faced and challenging nature of decisions required to address the position and ensure the Council was able to continue delivering a balanced and financial sustainable budget. In outlining the range of work being undertaken members were advised that the Committee had also sought assurance on the activity being taken in response to the Council's self-referral to the Social Housing Regulator as well as an update on progress with the review of the Council's commissioning and procurement arrangements in an effort to drive further value for money and also focus on the approach towards delivering social value and community wealth building. This was alongside an ongoing focus on delivery of the more flexible and agile risk based Internal Audit Plan, Council's emergency planning arrangements and development of the Strategic Risk Register. In concluding his update, Councillor Chan took the opportunity to assure members of the Committee's continued focus on the adequacy of the Council's governance, risk and control arrangements in order to provide assurance and confidence on compliance and control of the Council's key governance, financial management and accounting arrangements.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Chan for the update provided and it was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

15. **Non Cabinet Members' Debate**

In accordance with Standing Order 34, the Mayor advised that the next item on the agenda was the non-cabinet member debate, with the subject chosen for consideration being "Deterrence, Integration and Accommodation Impacts of Illegal Immigration on Brent".

Members were advised that the motion submitted as the basis for the debate had been circulated with the agenda and that the time available for the debate was 25 minutes. Prior to the debate commencing the Mayor felt it important to remind everyone of his focus in seeking to celebrate the diverse nature of the borough and recognise the peaceful relationships that existed between the many different communities residing in Brent, reflecting the strong level of community cohesion across the borough. As such he hoped all members participating in the debate would take these principles into account when speaking to ensure any contributions made were done so in an appropriate manner, also recognising the requirements placed on all members under the Code of Conduct, for which he thanked everyone in advance for their support.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Kansagra to introduce the motion which had been submitted as the basis for the Non-Cabinet Member debate. In moving the motion, Councillor Kansagra began by welcoming the comments from the Mayor in terms of highlighting the need for a serious and at the same time honest debate on the growing pressures being experienced across the UK and within the borough as a result of illegal immigration. Whilst emphasising the need for sensitivity, compassion and the creation of safe and legal routes for the most vulnerable it was also felt more robust deterrence and control was required in relation to the asylum system. In raising the matter for debate, Councillor Kansagra advised that he was aware the current challenges in relation to immigration had not materialised in

isolation and reflected a wider approach in relation to international foreign policy and intervention by governments in regions across the globe, including Libya, Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan with lessons needing to be learnt as a result focussed around the provision of support and aid to affected nations rather than direct military or political interference.

In terms of the impact across the UK and within Brent, the pressures being created on the supply of housing, education and the police along with health services were all cited as significant challenges and felt to be contributing factors to the recent civil unrest experienced across the UK. As such, Councillor Kansagra highlighted what he felt to be the urgent need for practical action to restore public confidence in the integrity of the asylum system underpinned by an honest and open debate on the challenges faced.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Kansagra for introducing the motion and then opened up the debate for contributions from other members.

Opening the debate Councillor Lorber spoke first, highlighting what he felt to be the misinformed nature of the motion presented and request made to the Conservative Group in advance of the meeting for them to consider withdrawing it. Outlining the basis of the request, he felt it important to clarify the reference to illegal immigration and implication that those migrants and refugees currently being housed in hotels having gained entry through irregular routes were of that status. Referring to the 1951 International Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees he felt it important to note that under this Convention, a person situated outside their country of nationality who possessed a well-founded fear of persecution on grounds of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion should in fact be classified as a refugee rather than illegal immigrant. He pointed out the Convention further acknowledged that the pursuit of asylum might necessitate contravention of a particular nation's immigration laws and stipulated that those entering in such circumstances should not be penalised for irregular entry. As a result, he advised those arriving in the UK and being placed in Brent should not be characterised as illegal immigrants but rather as asylum seekers, pending their application being assessed and right to remain established. In ending his comments, Councillor Lorber highlighted what he regarded as the root cause of the current challenges in relation to the asylum system, which he felt had been the persistent failure of the previous Conservative Government to properly administer and resource the asylum system leading to a backlog of claims whilst focussing on more costly and unworkable options, including the Rwanda scheme. As such he advised neither he or the Liberal Democrats Group would be supporting the motion moved as the basis for the debate.

As a further contribution Councillor Clinton, also speaking in opposition to the motion, expressed concern at what appeared to be the alarming increase in hate crime throughout the UK over recent weeks, recounting numerous accounts of offences committed against individuals from a range of diverse backgrounds. He felt this had been fuelled by an increase in the level of uninformed, anti-immigration rhetoric. As such, he felt the motion moved as the basis for the debate would only serve to contribute to this wider rhetoric and had the potential to further increase hostility being directed towards those individuals seeking asylum. In highlighting the range of current significant challenges faced across the country and within Brent, including the ongoing pressures arising from the pandemic, Russian invasion

of Ukraine, cost of living crisis, previous Conservative Government's economic policies, other geopolitical challenges (including US trade tariffs) as well as the lack of provision of affordable social housing, UKs ageing population and impact of climate change, he felt it clear that none of these issues had been created by migrants or refugees. In contrast, he took the opportunity to highlight the positive contributions being made by immigrants to society through employment and taxation and the key roles they often played in supporting the construction industry and NHS. As such, he advised he would also be opposing the motion and hoped all members would take the same stance.

Also speaking against the motion, Councillor Afzal expressed concern and reservations about the way it had been framed and presented, perceiving it to be opportunistic in nature. In support of the previous comments made, he felt it was deplorable to target asylum seekers and refugees who were seeking safety and sanctuary. Drawing parallels between the current increase in rhetoric being witnessed nationally and those previously employed by the far right, Councillor Afzal observed that whilst currently concealed beneath humanitarian sympathy and arguments concerning burdens upon taxpayers and cultural tensions, the implicit element of this ideology remained evident and characterised the calls within the motion for immigration restrictions predicated upon housing shortages as hypocritical, noting the previous Conservative Government's failure in relation to the delivery of affordable social housing provision. Rather than focussing on immigration, Councillor Afzal attributed the current housing crisis to the previous Conservative Government's programme of austerity, housing deregulation, inadequate funding, privatisation, and economic policies favouring the rich and landlords. In highlighting that refugees existed as a consequence of war, poverty, famine, disease, colonial legacy, and the ongoing exploitation of poorer nations globally by the West, he concluded by affirming that Brent had consistently been an inclusive borough and expressed pride in the commitment to maintaining this character both presently and in the future.

Speaking next, Councillor Maurice responded to the concerns raised, acknowledging the propagation of hatred by far-right elements in recent weeks whilst equally condemning hatred disseminated by the left. This latter phenomenon was, in Councillor Maurice's view, particularly evident amongst those participating in demonstrations in support of Palestine. He then turned to the matter of hotel accommodation for asylum seekers feeling that this did not provide an appropriate solution for either those seeking asylum or families currently waiting to be housed across the borough living within unsuitable temporary accommodation who he felt were also being overlooked, notwithstanding that they met the necessary criteria. As such, Councillor Maurice advised the motion was seeking to advocate for the equitable treatment of those individuals, contending that the placement of people in inadequately managed Houses in Multiple Occupation as well as those in hotels was unacceptable. Concern was also expressed at the current Government's attempts to deter illegal and unsafe channel crossings, which were also felt to be inadequate with the need identified to establish a more robust and equitable system, incorporating genuine and tangible deterrents. To support the process he felt reform of the asylum system was required to enable faster decision making, ensuring that those seeking asylum were not waiting for clarity on their immigration status for long periods of time and that a process was established enabling firm humane returns for those with no right to remain supported by the establishment of safe and legal routes for the most vulnerable with clear caps linked to local

capacity. Councillor Maurice referred to the examples of other nations implementing such measures set out within the motion as ways in which appropriate deterrent and processing measures could be established without the need to veer into more extreme policy measures and concluded by advising that on this basis he would be supporting the motion in seeking the adoption of a fair and more transparent approach to immigration.

Councillor Nerva then spoke, advising that he felt compelled to contribute having also listened to the tone of the debate and urging those in support of the motion to recognise the composition of the chamber and how Brent celebrated diversity. Highlighting the range of backgrounds from which a majority of councillors had been drawn and the experience of many of their parents or grandparents in seeking to enter the UK, he outlined his objective as a councillor in supporting the promotion and development of community cohesion, which he knew most members would also support. Referencing the unanimous support for the earlier motion, which called for support in combating racism Councillor Nerva hoped all Members would once again honour that spirit in seeking to oppose the motion moved as the basis for the current debate. He also felt it important to recognise what he felt had been the role of Brexit in precipitating the current crisis, noting that the UK's withdrawal from the European Union had complicated and delayed the mechanisms available for managing the refugee situation more effectively. In concluding, Councillor Nerva expressed his unequivocal support for refugees across the UK and those currently being placed in hotel accommodation and hoped that all members would join him in voting against the motion.

Moving on, Councillor Mistry also spoke in support of the motion taking the opportunity to highlight the value placed on community cohesion and contribution made by those seeking to settle in the borough. At the same time, however, it was felt that the concerns being expressed by many residents regarding the increasing number of migrants being placed in the borough also needed to be reflected in terms of the growing pressure on housing, primary care and policing given what were often regarded as a lack of shared values and increasing concern around incidents of assaults against women and girls allegedly being perpetrated by certain individuals being located within hotels whilst awaiting assessment of their asylum claims. In contrast it was felt the Ugandan refugee resettlement scheme had demonstrated how such a scheme could be successfully established and operated in order to achieve successful integration and assimilation into British society rather than those individuals being regarded as a burden, which was seen as a failure of the current asylum system. In highlighting the current number of asylum claims being received within the UK, the need was identified for urgent reform of the system and the introduction of appropriate deterrent (such as the Rwanda scheme) to ensure that those in genuine danger and at risk of persecution were protected and those with no right to remain were dealt with humanely and swiftly.

Speaking next, Councillor Chan addressed the motion, acknowledging the existence within society of individuals indifferent to the welfare of their fellow human beings. Notwithstanding this observation, he was pleased to acknowledge that such persons constituted a negligible minority. In acknowledging the importance of friendship, family, safety, history, belonging and culture, Councillor Chan further observed that the British populace were not lacking in discernment and had taken note of the disposal of the nation's historic assets, the implementation of austerity measures, the outsourcing of public services, privatisation, and the imposition of

enforced competition by previous Government's which he felt had left many with a feeling of them being of no consequence and seeking a sense of belonging. In echoing comments made by Dawn Butler MP that 'strangers are often those waiting to be friends' he also supported the need identified for the Government to renew, restore, and rebuild the UK's institutions to address this state of affairs. Whilst acknowledging that such an undertaking would necessitate substantial investment and resources, Councillor Chan expressed confidence that, as a nation possessing considerable skill and potential, this objective could be realised provided these resources were distributed equitably and therefore concluded, in opposing the motion, by advocating for a fair and just redistribution of wealth, skill, and potential.

As a final contribution, Councillor Moeen also spoke to express her opposition to the motion highlighting the need to recognise the humanitarian nature of the situation faced by those seeking refuge and fleeing persecution. She contended that the application of enhanced deterrence measures and unfulfilled commitments would prove ineffective in preventing migration and would only serve to render vulnerable individuals more susceptible to exploitation by criminal elements. In reminding members of Brent's history in relation to Irish migrants, she identified the diverse nature of communities who had subsequently chosen to settle in the borough and their associated integration as a positive attribute and a source of strength for the borough. Supporting the view that the current pressures being experienced in relation to the supply of housing were a consequence of previous government failures and inadequate funding rather than being attributable to those seeking refuge, safety and opportunity she felt the attempts to blame migrants should therefore be regarded as a deflection from the substantive issues, namely the requirement for equitable housing policies and appropriate government support. In drawing the debate to a close Councillor Moeen ended by highlighting the way in which she felt inclusion and compassion were the means necessary to foster trust, diminish exploitation, and strengthen community cohesion as opposed to deterrence and scapegoating.

In view of the remaining time available the Mayor then invited Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (as Cabinet Member for Housing) to summarise and close the debate.

In closing the debate, Councillor Donnelly Jackson (Cabinet Member for Housing) began by reasserting the view that the motion on which the debate was based had been predicated upon a false premise, claiming that the use of hotels for people seeking asylum was somehow the cause of Brent's housing crisis, which was strongly refuted. Highlighting that the housing crisis had been developing over decades and as a direct consequence of the previous Conservative Government's failure to invest adequately in affordable housing and to protect social housing stock driven by policies such as Right to Buy. As a result, she hoped members would avoid falling for dehumanising rhetoric that oversimplified complex issues and demonised entire groups of people, highlighting the way in which the previous Government had allowed the asylum system to collapse leaving the people affected in limbo, unable to work or integrate and stranded in hotels with substantial financial resources having been committed on unworkable schemes like Rwanda resulting in chaos rather than focussing on seeking to build competence and fairness into the asylum system.

The importance in recognising and focussing on the human aspect of the issue was also highlighted, with members reminded that those seeking asylum had fled

conflict, persecution and danger in seeking safety and of the Uks proud record in offering sanctuary as well as the moral and legal duty created as signatories of the Refugee Convention to act with humanity and fairness. As a result, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson felt that rather than seeking to scapegoat people seeking refugee the asylum system required comprehensive reform and proper resources, including the provision of new safe and legal routes, noting that the Labour government was committed to restoring order and humanity to the system with faster and fairer decisions, an end to the reliance on hotels, and a proper plan that communities including those within Brent could trust.

In concluding, Councillor Donnelly Jackson also took the opportunity to thank the charitable organisations, faith groups, and volunteers supporting asylum seekers across the borough for their invaluable contribution, advice, education, friendship and reassurance reflecting the best of Brent as a borough. In rejecting the politics of fear, members were urged to stand up for a system that was competent, fair and humane and, in rejecting the motion, to reaffirm Brent's pride in its status as a Borough of Sanctuary.

Having thanked members for their contributions, the Mayor then moved to the vote on the motion moved as the basis for the Non-Cabinet Member debate which was declared **LOST**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to reject the following motion as the outcome of the non-cabinet member debate:

“Deterrence, Integration and Accommodation Impacts of Illegal Immigration on Brent

Background:

Brent has seen growing pressures on its housing stock, primary care and policing, in part due to hotels used for those arriving by irregular channel crossings by boats.

Hotels are used by the Home Office to place asylum seekers and those who arrive through illegal routes. This burdens the wider public purse and taxpayers and may create resentment towards those who follow these illegal routes.

There is currently no clear policy to integrate people arriving illegally, leading to cultural tensions, fears and safety concerns. Although not in Brent, the high-profile case of sexual assault by a recent arrival has amplified public anxiety.

This Council Notes:

- Illegal immigrants increase the demand for emergency hotel accommodation, diverting resources from Brent residents in need.
- Brent households face extended waits for temporary housing while hotels remain filled with asylum claimants which could include those arriving by small boats.

- The answer is deterrence to stop the boats, faster decisions that ensure people are not waiting for clarity on their immigration status for long periods of time and firm humane returns for those with no right to remain.
- Safe and legal routes should exist for the most vulnerable, with clear caps linked to local capacity.
- Other European countries have adopted deterrent and processing measures without veering into extreme policy e.g.
 - Italy agreed with Albania to process arrivals in centres under Italian jurisdiction, moving decisions away from beach landings.
 - Denmark legislated for third country processing, explored partnership with Rwanda while seeking a path that fits with European rules.
 - The European Union has struck migration partnerships with Tunisia and Egypt to curb dangerous journeys upstream.

This Council Believes:

- Genuine refugees fleeing persecution deserve protection and swift humane processing.
- The integrity of our asylum system must be upheld by deterring dangerous journeys and prevent abuse of legal channels.
- Faster decision-making is required to process asylum claims and that people arriving illegally should be deported. Quick humane returns for those with no right to remain will restore public confidence.
- Those in genuine danger should be protected and shown the integrity of the system.
- That residents should not be made to subsidise national policy failures which result in inflated rental costs and overstretched public services.
- The Government has removed the Rwanda option without putting a credible solution to remove illegal immigrants in its place. This does not serve the national interest.
- If a workable model can cut the pull of illegal routes, a serious government should test it and be honest about results.

This Council therefore resolves:

- (1) To publish data on the number of hotels used for asylum accommodation in Brent and, once they are granted leave to remain, the impact on the housing waiting list.
- (2) To secure monthly data from the Home Office and an exit plan for hotel use in Brent with dates and milestones."

16. Treasury Management Outturn Report 2024-25

As the final item of business on the agenda, the Mayor then invited Councillor Mili Patel, as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, to introduce a report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources updating members on the Council's Treasury Management Activity during 2024 - 25.

In introducing the report, the Deputy Leader felt it important to recognise Brent's ongoing commitment to financial transparency and scrutiny and importance of the Treasury Management function in managing and planning for the level of funding required to support the Council's activities, services and affordability of the capital programme. In noting that the Council was only able to borrow for capital investment and not to fund operational day-to-day expenditure or offset the increasing pressures being experienced across Council budgets members were also advised of the careful financial stewardship and activity being undertaken to optimise the effect of borrowing costs and investment income whilst managing the associated risks in line with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators.

The opportunity was also taken to highlight the Council's continued commitment, as part of the approach outlined, to borrowing in as prudent and sustainable a way as possible to deliver on infrastructure projects for residents, without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio with officers thanked for their support in providing clear direction around the Treasury Management activity.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Mili Patel for introducing the report and as no other members indicated they wished to speak and no need was indicated to exercise a right of reply, then moved to put the recommendations in the report to the vote which were declared **CARRIED**.

Council therefore unanimously **RESOLVED** to note and approve, following its consideration by Audit & Standards Advisory Committee on 23 July 2025 and Cabinet on 8 September 2025, the 2025 - 25 Treasury Management outturn report in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice.

17. **Exclusion of the Press & Public**

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

18. **Urgent Business**

There were no urgent items of business raised at the meeting so the Mayor, in closing the meeting, thanked all members for their co-operation and support and advised that he looked forward to seeing everyone again in person at the next Full Council which would taking place at 6pm on Monday 10 November 2025.

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm

COUNCILLOR RYAN HACK
Mayor

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Full Council – 10 November 2025

Agenda Item 5 – Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

Standing Order 30(g) states that, if necessary, Full Council is required to agree appointments to committees and outside bodies. In addition to the changes listed Council is being asked to confirm the appointment of an Independent Person

Such appointments are set out below:

Committee Membership

- (1) Vacancy to replace Councillor Rajan-Seelan (in his capacity as a former Labour member) as a full member of the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
- (2) As a result of the outcome of the political proportionality review to replace Councillor Rajan-Seelan (in his capacity as a former Labour member on the Licensing Committee) with Councillor Maurice in order to fill the reallocation of the seat on that Committee to the Conservative Group.
- (3) Vacancy to replace Councillor Rajan-Seelan (in his capacity as a former Labour member) as a substitute member on the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee
- (4) Vacancy to replace Councillor Rajan-Seelan (in his capacity as a former Labour member) as a substitute member on the Planning Committee.
- (5) Vacancy to replace Councillor Rajan-Seelen (in his capacity as a former Labour member) as a substitute member on the Employers Joint Consultative Committee



Brent

- (6) To replace Councillor Rajan-Seelan (in his capacity as a former Labour member) with Councillor Donnelly-Jackson as a member on the Service User Consultative Forum – Disability

Please note: If required, any further membership changes notified at the meeting



Item 7.1: Questions from Members of the Public

Full Council – 10 November 2025

1. **Question from Giulia Karkhoff to Councillor Harbi Farah (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills)**

Can the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills advise of the powers available to the Council and action being taken (in partnership with other relevant agencies such as the police) to address reoccurring issues of anti-social behaviour which have been reported on a number of occasions by residents along High Street Harlesden.

Response:

The Council addresses crime in the locality through the Brent Joint Action Group (BJAG). The problem-solving panel uses a multi-agency approach, comprising statutory agencies such as the Police and Brent Council, as well as voluntary agencies, to discuss crime in specific areas or locations and to resolve or mitigate problems.

Harlesden Safer Neighbourhood Team and Harlesden Town Centre Team have conducted mini operations with targeted patrols, such as:

- Op Blandway involving patrols around the wider area, as opposed to just combat robberies and serious violence across the cluster.
- Op Kirvin involving several operations with shops that suffer a high level of theft. The operation involves plainclothes officers working in collaboration with the shop's CCTV room. During this operation, six arrests were made. High visibility patrols to tackle ASB and robbery, with some shifts dedicated to licencing checks on licensed premises.
- Op Mop up involving early morning covert patrols to tackle drug-dealing hotspots in Harlesden town centre.

These operations led to the execution of drug warrants, resulting in closure orders for one commercial and four residential properties.

Recently, a Dispersal Order was authorised on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th October 2025 as a trial to tackle ASB within the immediate roads around Fortunegate Road, St Mary Road, Leopold Road, Glynfield Road, Bolton, NW10. Partner agencies also collaborate with the police by offering individuals the opportunity to discuss issues

and make suggestions, and by referring them to appropriate services for support. The order resulted in 11 people being dispersed, with 2 Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) being issued to those who were street drinking.

Harlesden remains a challenging hotspot due to underlying vulnerabilities that act as a catalyst for repeat offending. Brent is committed to understanding the underlying drivers of crime, addressing concerns, and improving safety in the ward with our early intervention and public health approach. We will continue working with schools to guide young people away from crime and will commission outreach services, such as VIA, to support individuals with complex needs. To tackle rising retail crime in Harlesden Town Centre, we also encourage local businesses to join the Safetynet Radios initiative to help improve community safety.

2. Question from John Poole to Councillors Jake Rubin (Cabinet Member for Climate Action & Community Power - in response to Question 1) & Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement – in response to Question 2)

Brent's latest performance report shows strong progress on the climate agenda.

Can the Cabinet Member for Climate Action & Community Power & Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement explain:

- (1) How the Council is cutting emissions while facing financial pressures; and
- (2) Following new government data showing that London's nitrogen dioxide levels have fallen below legal limits for the first time since 2010 (also confirmed by Brent's two Breathe London nodes/monitors which record daily NO2 and PM2 levels) - a milestone credited to the Mayor's ULEZ expansion - what difference will this achievement make to the health and futures of Brent's children, and how will the Council build on it locally.

Response:

Question 1: Response from Councillor Jake Rubin

The council has made great strides in tackling climate change at a local level since we declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 and adopted a long-term Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy in 2021. As a council, we have reduced our own Carbon Footprint as an organisation by a further 16% between 2019-2025, taking our overall emissions reduction to 72% since 2010. It is also very pleasing that the most recent carbon emissions total for the borough (2023) show that emissions at a borough-wide level have also reduced by 16% since 2019.

This shows we are heading in the right direction, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to do all we can as an organisation to rise to the challenge of tackling climate change, and to lead by example in working with all of Brent's communities to join us on this journey.

Like many council programmes, access to funding remains one of our most significant challenges but we have shown ambition in seeking to counter a difficult economic context by maximising an array of different funding streams to support the delivery of our climate programme, this has included:

- Securing just under £17m in external grant funding since 2020 (including £6.6m for domestic and non-domestic retrofit schemes).
- Recently investing £3.2m of NCIL funding into environmental sustainability projects across the borough.
- Investing £3m SCIL of funding towards Green Corridors in the Church End and Roundwood Green Neighbourhood; and

- Successfully allocating 81% of the Brent Carbon Offset Fund to carbon reduction projects and retrofit schemes across the council's housing stock, maintained schools and corporate buildings estate.

The council's climate programme seeks to comprehensively address not only emissions-reduction, but also tackle the ecological emergency to make the borough greener and more biodiverse; plus also looking at what is required to adapt and make the borough more resilient to the risk posed by extreme weather through a new Climate Adaptation and Resilience Framework. Tackling climate change is also cross-cutting, and we continue to actively seek to harness the wider co-benefits that come from taking decisive action on environmental sustainability to support our residents more broadly and in alignment to wider council priorities.

Question 2: Response from Councillor Krupa Sheth

In Brent, we measure pollution across the borough, and data from our Air Quality Annual Status Report ([Air quality monitoring and reports | Brent Council](#)) shows that air quality is generally getting better. The improvement in air quality offers a healthier environment for children, reducing their exposure to harmful pollutants linked to asthma, respiratory issues, and developmental impacts.

The Council is actively working to sustain and amplify the progress through its Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) which outlines the actions we will take to reduce air pollution and raise awareness of its health impacts.

Brent has historically faced challenges with air pollution, particularly nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and we are building on progress through targeted local initiatives, including clean air routes to schools, School Streets, and active travel programmes, all designed to support cleaner air, healthier lifestyles, and long-term wellbeing for our youngest residents.

We currently have 33 School Streets zones across the borough; these timed road closures restrict parents from driving in the zone during school drop off and pick up times. They aim to discourage local traffic in the area and encourage active travel, walking and cycling. These efforts align with evidence showing that active travel reduces physical inactivity, improves cardiovascular health, and contributes to lower emissions. There is an annual programme to develop schemes to introduce new school streets and expand existing school street zones.

The Council's participation in the Breathe Clean initiative has developed healthier walking and active travel routes for schools. An interactive map helps families choose lower-pollution paths to help children walk healthier and safer streets to school. The project has raised awareness among pupils and staff, at school assemblies and through providing schools with tailored maps of clean air routes, and resources.

Brent Council remains committed to working with health partners, schools, and the community to ensure that air quality improvements provide lasting health benefits for all, particularly the borough's youngest and most vulnerable residents.

3. Question from Marc Harris to Councillor Teo Benea (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property)

Can the Cabinet Member Regeneration, Planning & Property provide an update on progress towards step-free access at Alperton and Queen's Park stations, and how this supports the Council's wider accessibility and equality goals?

Response:

Alperton Station

At its meeting on 19 May 2025, Brent Council's Cabinet reaffirmed its commitment to improving transport accessibility across the borough by agreeing to contribute up to 50% of the costs — capped at £5 million — from the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) towards step-free access improvements at Alperton Station, which is owned and managed by Transport for London (TfL).

This significant investment demonstrates Brent's ongoing dedication to ensuring that all residents can access reliable and inclusive public transport. TfL has now commenced detailed design and procurement work, which is expected to be completed by late Spring 2026. Subject to final approvals and full funding confirmation, construction is due to begin in Summer 2026, with completion anticipated by Summer 2027.

This project represents a major step forward in delivering a more accessible borough and in supporting sustainable, inclusive growth for the Alperton community.

Queen's Park Station

Queen's Park Station, owned by Network Rail (NR) and served by both Transport for London (TfL) Underground and Overground services, remains a key focus for Brent's ongoing efforts to secure step-free access across the transport network.

Network Rail previously commissioned feasibility and design work for accessibility improvements at the station and is now collaborating with TfL on a peer review of these plans to explore how best to integrate accessibility upgrades within a potential wider redevelopment of the station. Brent Council is also engaged in discussions with both partners regarding a possible joint development of land to the south of the station, which could deliver a new or upgraded entrance — improving connectivity for local residents and businesses alike.

At present, there is no confirmed funding to advance the step-free access scheme. However, the Council will continue to work closely with TfL, NR and the Department for Transport (DfT) to identify opportunities through the Access for All programme and other funding streams.

Brent remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that accessibility is at the heart of future transport investment in the borough.

As discussions progress, the Council will ensure that residents and members are kept fully informed of developments and opportunities to engage, maintaining transparency and community involvement throughout the process.



Item 7.2: Questions from Brent Youth Parliament

Full Council – 10 November 2025

1. Question from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Gwen Grahl (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools)

Following the Council's announcement of a £4 million investment to upgrade youth centres across Brent ([Youth Centres to get massive 4 million pound upgrade | Brent Council](#)) what steps will the Council take to ensure that young people are actively involved in shaping how these upgraded spaces are designed and used?

Additionally, how will the Council ensure that these improved youth centres support wider priorities identified by young people, such as access to mental health support, employment and skills opportunities, and safe spaces to tackle issues around youth crime and safety?

Response:

Thank you for your important question.

The Council's £4 million investment in youth organisations across Brent is rooted in a commitment to co-production with young people. From the beginning, we have ensured that young people are not just consulted but are central to decision-making.

As part of the SCIL grant, we brought together a diverse panel of young people including those with lived experience from youth justice, care leavers, Brent Youth Parliament, Early Help, and the voluntary sector. These young people played a key role in shortlisting and scoring applications, hearing presentations from organisations, and were core at shaping the final selection of the five projects that will receive funding.

This collaborative approach will continue throughout the delivery phase. We will work closely with the funded voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to ensure that young people remain actively involved in shaping how these upgraded spaces are designed, used, and sustained. We are encouraging all organisations to embed youth voice in their governance, planning, and delivery as part of the grant making process.

To support this, we will signpost organisations to the Young Brent Foundation and other partners for help with capacity building, funding, and youth engagement best practice.

We also recognise that upgraded buildings alone are not enough. Young people have told us that their priorities include access to mental health support, employment and skills opportunities, and safe spaces to address youth crime and safety. These

priorities are embedded in Brent's Youth Strategy, and we are working with VCS partners to ensure their programmes reflect and respond to these needs. Importantly, young people also have a seat at the Brent Youth Strategy Delivery Group, ensuring they have a direct voice in overseeing the implementation of the wider strategy.

We want to continue hearing directly from young people, to know their opinions for how they want to stay involved in shaping and evaluating these projects. This is an ongoing partnership, and we are committed to making sure that youth voice remains at the heart of it.

List of Petitions to be presented at Full Council - 10 November 2025:

(1) Re-open Roundwood Park toilets

Lead Petitioner - Amandine Alexandre. Petition currently contains 229 signatures but is due to close on 31 October 2025.

Statement:

We the undersigned petition the council to re-open Roundwood Park existing toilets and work on the design of modern toilets, less prone to attract anti-social behaviour.

Justification:

Roundwood Park users have been deprived of public toilets since July 2022.

The lack of public toilets in Roundwood Park is affecting absolutely everyone - parents with children, disabled people, older people, people with health issues etc. It prevents lots of residents from using the park as much as they would like and it stops too many people from coming to the park altogether.

It's particularly an issue for women of all ages. Women, spend less time in parks than men and that affects their health and sense of well-being in a very negative way. Reversely, having access to inclusive green spaces boosts health. For example, girls are less likely to be anxious and depressed when they spend time in green spaces.

On August 2nd, local residents gathered in the park to ask for the re-opening of the public toilets. Again, our request fell on deaf ears and we were told by Cabinet member Krupa Sheth that we should use the cafe toilets.

This is not an appropriate answer and fails to understand that the cafe toilets cannot be a replacement for public toilets and that the closure of the public toilets is creating a health issue for residents.

As Brent Council is about to spend £3 million on Green Corridors in Roundwood and Church End to encourage more people who live in Church End to use Roundwood Park and fight against health inequalities, now is the time to re-open the existing public toilets or build new toilets in a different, better location in the park where there will be a reduced risk of anti-social behaviour taking place.

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Item 9.1

Full Council – 10 November 2025

Conservative Group Motion

Holding Highways Contractors and Utility Companies Accountable for Unsafe and Substandard Reinstatement Works

This Council notes with concern the increasing number of highways works, and substandard reinstatement activities carried out by utility companies across Brent — particularly on Kingsbury Road, Westmoreland Road, and Dryburgh Gardens. These works have led to unsafe footways, prolonged disruption and unacceptable conditions for residents, businesses and road users.

This Council further notes:

- That on Dryburgh Gardens, outside several properties, Thames Water subcontracted a company whose backfill works failed to meet required standards. The ground has since sunk, leaving footways hazardous for pedestrians.
- That on Kingsbury Road, the footway was excavated near a BT chamber and reinstated with concrete rather than the original paving slabs. When contacted, Brent's Highways team confirmed no permit had been issued for these works. This raises serious concerns about illegal excavation, lack of oversight and whether Brent Council is maintaining a record of roads being dug up without authorisation and left in a dangerous state.
- That outside Morrison Patrol Station, two clear breaches have been identified and reported:
 - A footpath originally laid with paving slabs has been reinstated with low-grade asphalt;
 - A double yellow line across the carriageway has not been reinstated following trenching works.
- These reinstatement failures breach the “like-for-like” standard and pose trip hazards to pedestrians.

This Council further notes:

- That defects identified under the New Road and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) Section 81, where apparatus is unsafe or unrepaired, are subject to strict response timelines yet often remain unresolved due to disputed ownership.

- That defects identified and that come within Section 72 of the NRSWA — where reinstatement fails to meet prescribed standards—are enforceable and chargeable, yet enforcement remains underutilised.

As a result, this Council therefore resolves to:

- (1) Publish a public-facing defect tracker for Section 72 and Section 81 of the NRSWA, detailing timelines, responsible parties, and enforcement actions.
- (2) Escalate enforcement under Section 72 of the NRSWA for all confirmed defective reinstatements, including chargeable inspections and remedial permits.
- (3) Report quarterly to Full Council on progress, enforcement outcomes, and resident feedback.
- (4) Reaffirm its commitment to public safety, transparency, and holding highways contractors and utility companies accountable for the quality and timeliness of their works.

Councillor Suresh Kansagra
Kenton Ward

Full Council – 10 November 2025

Amendment submitted by the Labour Group to the Conservative Group Motion

Proposed amendment – To add the wording underlined and delete the wording indicated:

Holding Highways Contractors and Utility Companies Accountable for Unsafe and Substandard Reinstatement Works

This Council notes with concern the increasing number of highways works, and substandard reinstatement activities carried out by utility companies across Brent — particularly on Kingsbury Road, Westmoreland Road, and Dryburgh Gardens. These works have led to unsafe footways, prolonged disruption and unacceptable conditions for residents, businesses and road users.

This Council further notes:

- After decades of underinvestment through their model of privatisation, Thames Water are now finally undertaking major upgrade works across Brent – work that should have been delivered years ago. While these long-overdue improvements are essential, they are also causing significant congestion and disruption on local roads.
- That on Dryburgh Gardens, outside several properties, Thames Water subcontracted a company whose backfill works failed to meet required standards. The ground has since sunk, leaving footways hazardous for pedestrians.
- That on Kingsbury Road, the footway was excavated near a BT chamber and reinstated with concrete rather than the original paving slabs. When contacted, Brent's Highways team confirmed no permit had been issued for these works. This raises serious concerns about illegal excavation, and lack of oversight and whether Brent Council is maintaining a record of roads being dug up without authorisation and left in a dangerous state adherence to public realm safety management from utility companies operating in Brent.
- That outside Morrison Patrol Station, two clear breaches have been identified and reported:

- A footpath originally laid with paving slabs has been reinstated with low-grade asphalt;
 - A double yellow line across the carriageway has not been reinstated following trenching works.
- These reinstatement failures breach the “like-for-like” standard and pose trip hazards to pedestrians.

This Council further notes:

- That defects identified under the New Road and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) Section 81, where apparatus is unsafe or unrepaired, are subject to strict response timelines yet often remain unresolved due to disputed ownership.
- That defects identified and that come within Section 72 of the NRSWA — where reinstatement fails to meet prescribed standards—are enforceable and chargeable, yet enforcement remains underutilised difficult without transparent public ownership and accountability of these utility companies.

As a result, this Council therefore resolves to:

- (1) Publish Explore new options within out Transformation programme to publish a public-facing defect tracker for Section 72 and Section 81 of the NRSWA, detailing timelines, responsible parties, and enforcement actions, as well as making reporting easier.
- (2) Escalate Maintain strict enforcement under Section 72 of the NRSWA for all confirmed defective reinstatements, including chargeable inspections and remedial permits.
- (3) Report ~~quarterly~~ annually to Full Council on progress, enforcement outcomes, and resident feedback.
- (4) Reaffirm its commitment to public safety, transparency, and holding highways contractors and utility companies accountable for the quality and timeliness of their works.
- (5) Invite Thames Water’s senior leadership to attend a Brent Council Scrutiny Committee to present their new investment plan, explain current disruption, and set out how they will deliver lasting local benefits.
- (6) Write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, expressing Brent’s support for continued reform of Thames Water and other utility companies, and urging that any future restructuring of Thames Water prioritises a transparent pathway toward a publicly accountable, sustainable model of ownership.

Councillor Krupa Sheth
Tokyngton Ward

Full Council – 10 November 2025

Liberal Democrats Group Motion

Affordable Homes for Brent – Standing Up to Labour’s Failure and the Mayor’s Retreat on Housing

For years, Brent Liberal Democrats warned that Labour-run Brent Council and the Labour Mayor of London are failing on housing.

Despite endless press releases and photo opportunities, the delivery of *genuinely affordable* and *council-owned* homes has fallen well short of what is needed. Developers have been allowed to dictate terms, pushing up their profits while the Council accepts watered-down deals that do little to help local people.

In a move that is a retreat from responsibility, the Mayor of London has announced that he will lower the affordable housing target from 35% to just 20% for new developments seeking fast-track planning approval. This decision represents a complete capitulation to developer pressure and a betrayal of Londoners who were promised a fairer, more affordable city. Instead of standing up for communities, Labour in London is bending to corporate interests, allowing “viability” arguments to trump the moral imperative of providing homes people can actually afford.

This Council notes:

- The Mayor of London has reduced the GLA affordable housing requirement for major developments from 35% to 20% to “unblock” stalled sites.
- This comes at a time when tens of thousands of Brent residents are struggling with housing costs, and over 25,000 people remain on the borough’s housing waiting list.
- Brent’s Labour Council has consistently failed to deliver on its own council housing targets, while approving developments that contain too few genuinely affordable homes and too many at so-called “affordable” rents far beyond local incomes.
- Brent Liberal Democrats have long campaigned for stronger requirements on developers, for investment in new council homes, and for affordability standards based on what people *actually earn*, not arbitrary percentages of market price.

- That while the building sector faces cost pressures, cutting affordable housing obligations is not the answer, it merely passes the problem on to those already priced out.

As a result, this Council believes:

- That the Mayor's decision represents a serious backward step that will reduce the number of homes affordable to Brent residents, deepen inequality, and damage public trust in the planning process.
- That Labour, both locally and at City Hall, has chosen to side with developers instead of Londoners.
- That *targets for their own sake* mean nothing if the homes being built are unaffordable to the people who need them most.
- That national government must also shoulder responsibility, its "*build, build, build*" slogan rings hollow when councils lack the powers and funding to build the right homes.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (1) Oppose the Mayor of London's decision to reduce affordable housing targets.
- (2) Request the Leader of the Council publish within three months a detailed plan setting out how Brent will:
 - (a) Increase the number of new council homes built or acquired each year;
 - (b) Enforce stronger Section 106 obligations to deliver genuinely affordable housing;
 - (c) Publicly report on how viability assessments are used and challenge developer claims.
- (3) Call on the Government to provide sufficient funding for council-led building and land acquisition to support a new generation of council homes.

Councillor Paul Lorber
Sudbury Ward

Full Council – 10 November 2025

1st Labour Group Motion

Supporting Labour’s 30 Hours of Free Childcare – A Better Start for Every Brent Child

This Council notes:

- The Labour Government’s pledge of 30 hours of free childcare per week for working parents of children aged 9 months to school age, ensuring affordable, high-quality childcare for families.
- Evidence that investment in early years education improves children’s life chances, narrows attainment gaps and supports economic growth by enabling parents – particularly mothers – to return to work.
- Brent is home to over 73,000 children and young people under 18, representing 22% of the borough’s population. Yet 35% of children aged 15 and under live in poverty after housing costs – one of the highest rates in London. For many families, the cost of childcare has been a barrier to work and a major contributor to hardship.
- The previous Conservative Government’s neglect left parents facing some of the highest childcare costs in Europe, with many local providers struggling to recruit and retain skilled staff due to chronic underfunding.
- Brent’s Family Wellbeing Centres, which reached over 7,400 residents in just one quarter of 2024/25, are a cornerstone of our local early years system – bringing together health visitors, early education, and family support to give children the best start in life.

This Council believes:

- Labour’s 30-hour offer will be transformative for Brent, easing the cost-of-living pressures faced by local families, reducing child poverty, and giving thousands of parents better support.
- Delivering this reform successfully requires sustained national funding and local flexibility – recognising the higher operational costs faced by London providers and the importance of valuing and retaining the childcare workforce.

- Brent's experience through its Family Wellbeing Centres and Early Help partnerships provides a strong foundation for implementing the new entitlement locally, ensuring wrap-around support for children with additional needs and for parents seeking employment or training.
- This expansion represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rebuild a fair, universal early years system rooted in community, equity and opportunity – helping to ensure that every Brent child can thrive, regardless of background or circumstance.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (1) Welcome and support the Labour Government's childcare reforms and commend the decisive action to make childcare affordable, accessible and fair.
- (2) Celebrate Brent's leadership in early years and family support through its network of Family Wellbeing Centres and Children's Centres, which are already delivering measurable impact and providing vital early intervention.
- (3) Work with local nurseries, schools, and childminders to ensure Brent is fully ready to deliver the expanded offer from 2025 onwards, identifying any workforce pressures, training needs or gaps in provision.
- (4) Write to the Secretary of State for Education to:
 - Welcome the policy and reaffirm Brent's readiness to deliver;
 - Emphasise that funding must reflect London's higher cost base and ensure sustainability for local providers; and
 - Highlight the importance of linking childcare expansion with wider Family Wellbeing and Early Help reforms.
- (5) Commit to convening a local childcare partnership forum, bringing together providers, parents, trade unions and council officers to oversee delivery, share best practice, and ensure that every Brent child benefits from Labour's promise of a better start in life.

Councillor Rita Begum
Kilburn Ward

Full Council – 10 November 2025

2nd Labour Group Motion

Reforming the Two-Child Limit – A Fair Deal for Families, Funded by Fair Gambling Reform

This Council notes:

- That the two-child limit and household benefit cap are among the most punitive welfare policies in recent history, pushing hundreds of thousands of children into poverty and disproportionately affecting single parents and larger families.
- Nationally, over 1.6 million children are impacted by the two-child limit, with affected families losing around £3,500 per year, while 115,000 households are affected by the benefit cap, most of them single-parent families.
- Research from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) shows that removing these two policies would lift around half a million children out of poverty overnight, at a cost of around £3 billion a year.
- The IPPR and former Prime Minister Gordon Brown have proposed a credible and fair funding route – a reform of gambling taxation, raising around £3 billion per year by increasing duties on online casinos, slot machines and general betting, ensuring gambling companies contribute more to repairing the social harms they may help create.
- In September 2025, the Chancellor confirmed that reforming the two-child limit is “on the table”, signalling a welcome willingness to consider compassionate and fiscally responsible reform.
- Brent continues to experience some of the highest child-poverty levels in London, with around 35 per cent of children under 15 living in poverty after housing costs, and many families struggling with food and fuel insecurity.

This Council further notes:

- Brent’s leadership in tackling gambling-related harms, including our partnership with the Social Market Foundation (SMF), to examine how high-street gambling impacts communities and to develop evidence-based solutions.

- The recent Brent Council and SMF report, recommending reform of the licensing objectives that underpin the Gambling Act 2005 and the “aim to permit” principle – so that councils and communities have greater powers to protect public health, fairness and local wellbeing.


This Council believes:

- That no child should grow up in poverty because of the number of siblings they have or where they were born.
- That reforming the two-child limit and benefit cap, funded through fair taxation of the gambling industry, offers a responsible way to reduce child poverty while remaining fiscally disciplined.
- That gambling firms should contribute their fair share, linked to their profits, toward addressing the harm, in line with the principles of prevention, responsibility and fairness.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (1) Write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and to the Chancellor, expressing Brent’s support for reforming the two-child limit and benefit cap, funded by progressive gambling-tax reform.
- (2) Reaffirm Brent’s leadership in tackling gambling harms, building on our work with the Social Market Foundation to strengthen local licensing powers and protect communities.
- (3) Share this motion with Brent’s Members of Parliament and the Local Government Association, urging them to support a fair, compassionate and fiscally responsible approach to ending child poverty.
- (4) Contact all landowners in Wembley to encourage them to replicate the Council’s advertising policy, which prevents gambling operators from advertising in the public realm.

Councillor Jumbo Chan
Harlesden and Kensal Green Ward

 Brent	Full Council 10 November 2025
	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 Equity, 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 – Councillor Muhammed Butt

Top news since my last report:

- **Pride in Place Impact Fund:** I'm delighted to share that Brent has been awarded £1.5 million from the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund – a welcome boost that will help us deliver visible, lasting improvements to our high streets, town centres and public spaces.

We know that pride begins on the high street – in the way our streets look, feel and function. This funding gives us a real opportunity to invest in the visible public realm changes that residents will see and feel every day: cleaner, greener, safer spaces that make people proud to call Brent home.

We are now considering how best to target this investment to maximise its impact – focusing on those high streets and local centres where improvements will be most visible, and where they can support local businesses, strengthen community life and encourage more people to spend time locally.

This £1.5 million investment is a fantastic opportunity to put pride back into every corner of Brent – and I'm excited to see how, together, we can make our public spaces shine.

- **Building a Better, Bolder Brent – our Autumn Budget call:** The Deputy Leader and I made a submission to HM Treasury ahead of the Autumn Budget, setting out six quick wins that would deliver visible progress in communities and contribute to the Government's missions of growth, fairness and pride in place.

Within the Council, we are proud to have been leading on campaigns to reform gambling legislation, back the West London Orbital overground line, support the upgrade and extension of the Bakerloo Line, and to implement a visitor levy on hotel and short stay accommodation, with revenue reinvested back into frontline services such as cleaner streets, community safety, and tackling the cost-of-living crisis.

As our internal Budget discussions develop, we continue to pride ourselves on careful financial stewardship of this Council, making every penny count and exploring exciting, innovative ways to boost investment in Brent.

- **Deprivation in Brent:** The latest Indices of Deprivation 2025 provide a sobering reminder of the scale of the challenge we face in Brent. Our borough now ranks 12th in England for income deprivation, reflecting the growing pressures faced by households whose earnings simply do not keep pace with rising living costs. Brent also experiences some of the highest levels of housing barriers in the country – from high rents and overcrowding.

We welcome the Government's decision to update the methodology behind this year's indices to take further account of housing costs. It gives a more accurate reflection of life in places like Brent, where the cost of housing is the number one driver of the cost-of-living — from mortgages to rents — and absorbs so much of household income. Recognising this link is an important step forward, and it strengthens our resolve to tackle it head on.

Over the past five years, more than 4,000 affordable homes have been delivered across Brent, including 758 directly by the Council, with a further 1,074 currently on site and due for completion by 2028. These include major schemes at Cecil Avenue and Ujima House in Wembley, the Alperton Bus Garage redevelopment, Watling Gardens, Church End, and continued transformation across South Kilburn, where hundreds of new homes, community facilities and open spaces are being created.

But we know there is still much more to do. The updated data lays bare how deeply the housing crisis affects our residents and why we must redouble our efforts to build more homes, and crucially, more affordable homes. We will continue to push for long-term investment and the flexibilities councils need to accelerate delivery, so that everyone in Brent has a secure, affordable place to call home.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Muhammed.Butt@brent.gov.uk

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

Top news since my last report:

- **Budget 2026/27:** Our Finance team are continuing to work through the details as we look to the next financial year, ensuring that Brent's careful financial stewardship and relative stability are not endangered as we continue to face a wave of challenges. From increased reliance on Adult Social Care to an unrelenting housing waiting list of over 30,000 people, the work continues once more to set out the blueprint for the Council's finances.
- **Gambling Harms Campaign:** Brent Council is leading the national call for urgent reform of the Gambling Act 2005, whose outdated "*Aim to Permit*" duty ties the hands of local authorities and makes it extremely difficult for councils to refuse new gambling premises – even in areas already saturated with them.

With the grassroots voices of residents in Harlesden, Wembley and beyond, Brent has made this a national issue, joining forces with over 40 other councils, combined authorities and mayors, including Greater Manchester's Andy Burnham, to urge the Government to act. Our message is simple: local leaders know their communities best, and it's time to give councils the power to say no where new premises may risk harm.

To build the evidence base for change, Brent commissioned the Social Market Foundation (SMF) to produce an independent report, *High Streets at Stake*. The findings are stark: the number of Adult Gaming Centres (AGCs) has risen by 7% nationally between 2022 and 2024, with a third of all AGCs now located in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods. Residents surveyed in Brent described AGCs as a source of anti-social behaviour, linked to crime, debt and the normalisation of gambling among young people.

The report sets out a clear plan for reform — calling on the Government to strengthen local powers and close loopholes in the Gambling Act by:

- Granting greater licensing powers to local authorities, including the use of cumulative impact assessments to limit clustering;
- Including Directors of Public Health as statutory consultees in the gambling licensing process, as they are for alcohol;
- Reviewing the current premises licence classifications, particularly where AGCs are operating under bingo licences;
- Raising the annual licensing fee cap from £1,000 to at least £2,000 and ensuring annual review;
- Clarifying enforcement responsibilities between councils and the Gambling Commission; and
- Ultimately removing the "Aim to Permit" rule from legislation altogether.

This is about fairness, accountability and local democracy. Our high streets should be places that foster community pride, not vulnerability. Brent will continue to campaign alongside national partners and residents until the law reflects that principle and gives councils the powers they need to protect local people and restore pride in our town centres.

- **Celebrating Diversity Fund:** I'm delighted to announce the launch of Brent's Celebrating Diversity Fund, offering grants of £1,000–£5,000 to support local projects and events that showcase the richness of our borough's communities.

This fund is all about bringing people together – celebrating the different cultures, faiths and stories that make Brent such a special place to live. We want to see visible, community-led celebrations that strengthen connections and build pride across every neighbourhood.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Mili.Patel@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power – Councillor Jake Rubin

Top news since my last report:

- **Brent continues to tackle climate change through community power:** Brent Council has continued its strong partnership with the London School of Economics, building on last year's Faith and Climate event, with another successful event this month which focused on the role of faith in developing Climate Resilient Communities. Opportunities and challenges for co-producing climate policies were discussed, with conversations centred around how Brent can prepare and adapt for the potential of more extreme weather.
- **Brent partners with Think & Do to promote upcycling:** We are partnering with Think & Do to deliver a series of Sharing Space events this autumn across St Raphael's Estate and South Kilburn Green Neighbourhoods. These pop-up community spaces offer residents the chance to have items repaired, swap toys and clothes, and get practical advice on environmental sustainability and energy saving.
- **Brent's bringing more Repair Cafes to you:** We are continuing to build on the successes of the ever-popular Repair Cafes – the most recent of which took place on Saturday 11th October at the Pakistani Community Centre in Willesden. Residents were able to repair clothes with TRAIID workshops, fix small electrical appliances with the Restart Project, have their bike repaired with Peddle My Wheels, and donate unwanted bikes or purchase refurbished bikes at the bike market. We have also partnered with West London Fixers and are offering two free hands-on workshops where residents can learn to repair small electric items themselves. A further three Re-use and Repair Cafes will be delivered before mid-March 2026.
- **Brent secures significant funding to heat homes:** Brent has successfully secured £1,082,353 in funding as part of a pan-London consortium from the government's Warm Homes Social Housing Fund grant. The funding will be put towards energy efficiency improvements to two council-owned Tower Blocks (the Oaks and Pharamond), enabling retrofit works aiming to lower carbon emissions and bills for residents. The preferred heat source is via ground source heat pumps, which will be complemented by cavity wall insulation to reduce the heat demand. The scheme will be supported with a £2,068,558 allocation from the Carbon Offset Fund and will be undertaken between now and 2028.
- **Brent exceeds Digital Support Fund commitments to digital exclusion:** Brent has exceeded its commitments from the Digital Support Fund device donation scheme. To date, 1626 devices have been delivered to digitally excluded young people in Brent. This includes to pupils across 8 secondary schools, 5 primary schools, and the virtual school.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Jake.Rubin@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture – Councillor Promise Knight

Top news since my last report:

- **Brent extends food voucher scheme for low-income families:** Brent has extended its voucher scheme until the end of the Easter holidays next year. Families earning under £7,400 annually will automatically receive support. Funded by the Household Support Fund (2025–26), the scheme helps during school holidays when free meals are not available, offering targeted assistance to low-income households across the borough. The voucher scheme is just one part of Brent's wider support offer for residents. Other initiatives include help with employment skills, debt advice, and energy costs, all aimed at building resilience and reducing long-term hardship.
- **Kilburn Music Mile Festival:** Following a successful NCIL award of £62k in September and an additional award from Public Health reserves of £25k, the Kilburn Music Mile festival will take place for a second year in November 2025. The festival celebrates Kilburn's rich musical legacy through live performances, heritage tours, and community-led programming. The festival will utilise local pubs and historic venues, boost the nighttime economy, and promote mental wellbeing through a dedicated music-based support programme. Led by Kilburn State of Mind with support from Brent Culture Service and Brent's Town Centre Management team, the initiative aims to foster community cohesion, elevate Kilburn's cultural profile, and provide inclusive access to music and creative experiences.
- **Brent Museum and Archives awarded £122k:** Brent Museum and Archives has received £122K from the Museum Renewal Fund to secure its future, enhance collection care, and improve visitor experience. The grant will fund a full collections audit, new contactless donation points, and upgraded technology for staff and volunteers, supporting Brent's cultural heritage and community engagement.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Promise.Knight@brent.gov.uk

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

Top news since my last report:

- **£4 million capital investment in Brent's Youth Section approved:** I am pleased to announce that our significant investment of SCIL funding for Brent's youth organisations has now been approved by Cabinet, with 5 grassroots organisations from across the borough set to benefit. This funding will help rebuild and refurbish crucial infrastructure for sports and activities, providing young people with the facilities they need to thrive.
- **New Wembley Manor SEND School welcomes its first pupils:** Our state of the art SEND school, designed specifically for neurodiverse children, has now opened and welcomed its first cohort in October. 150 children, predominantly with autism spectrum disorder, will benefit from the specialist provision, delivered with the RISE Partnership.
- **Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-8 approved by cabinet:** The Youth Justice Service carry out extremely valuable work supporting young people who have experience of the criminal justice system. Our annual report highlights the downward trend of both first time and re-offending, as well as detailing some other key achievements, such as work to address disproportionality, and our proposal for targeted intervention hubs.

Other news:

Progress Report on the London Protocol: A progress report on reducing criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers was presented on 13 October. Key developments included a joint accommodation protocol, de-escalation training for foster carers, advocacy training for Personal Advisors, and a staff forum on justice system support. Lived experiences were shared, prompting constructive discussion.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Gwen.Grahl@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure – Councillor Neil Nerva

Top news since my last report:

- **Brent Supervised Toothbrushing Programme:** On 13 October, Brent's Public Health Team packed dental kits for young people as part of the government's supervised toothbrushing programme. Brent received £70,000 and a five-year supply of products, including 3,148 toothbrushes, 9,444 toothpastes, and 6,296 packs. Each child will receive termly in-school kits and a take-home pack with brushing resources.
- **Community Health Pod Launch at Willesden Library:** Brent launched Community Health Pods at Willesden Library on 22 October as part of Brent Health Matters. These pods offer walk-in health checks with NHS integration and multilingual support in nine languages. Located in familiar community spaces, they aim to reduce health inequalities, support early detection, and ease pressure on hospitals and GPs through a tech-enabled, prevention-focused public health model.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Neil.Nerva@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement – Councillor Krupa Sheth

Top news since my last report:

- **Brent wins British Parking Award:** Brent has been recognised for the significant improvements that have been made to parking in the borough over the last two years, winning the 'Parking in Action' award. We have also been shortlisted for the British Parking Awards 'Back Office Award'.
- **Brent continues to make progress on cleaner, greener transport in the borough:** Installation of 20 Uber EV chargers is underway, adding to the 140 already installed. 17 new bike hangars are also being installed, taking us up to 170 in Brent, whilst progress is also continuing with Lime Bike parking – with 140 bays installed and consultation ongoing for another 50 bays to commence in November – all while we continue to hold Lime to account, ensuring users are mandated to park in bays, prevent stray bikes causing nuisance – tidying up our borough, reducing emissions, and promoting active travel simultaneously. We will continue to engage residents in the process, with the upcoming Lime Residents Forum to be held November 6th.
- **Progress on tackling food waste in Brent:** Except for St Raph's estate – which is undergoing a separate project, all Brent Housing Management communal properties now have Food Waste recycling, whilst work is being undertaken to ensure all privately managed communal blocks have food waste units installed over the next few months. September saw 28.32 tonnes of food waste recycled from our communal properties – an increase of 10% compared to this time last year.
- **Brent ramps up zero-tolerance approach to fly-tipping:** In our ongoing Don't Mess with Brent campaign against fly-tipping and littering blighting our borough, we have invested in brand new AI technology CCTV cameras in all Brent connect areas, to supplement our existing cameras.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Krupa.Sheth@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Housing – Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson

Top news since my last report:

- **Brent is clamping down on rogue landlords and protecting renters' rights through the additional HMO licensing scheme:** Our borough-wide HMO Licensing Scheme helps us raise standards and ensure that every property meets clear, consistent requirements. It creates a level playing field for landlords, while giving the Council the powers we need to act decisively where standards fall short. We have also strengthened engagement with tenants through our annual Renters' Fairs, the most recent of which was held last month, and received over 80% positive feedback. Likewise, our yearly landlord forums continue to promote good practice and collaboration across the private rented sector. Looking ahead, the new Additional Licensing Scheme, coming into force on 2nd February 2026, together with the new Renters' Rights Bill, will deliver even stronger protections for renters and fairer rules for responsible landlords. We have invested in staff training and robust operational systems to ensure we are ready for implementation from day one. These measures will help us drive up standards across Brent, tackle rogue landlords, and make sure that every resident has a safe and decent home.
- **Brent is ensuring local tenants benefit fully from the Government's Renters' Reform Bill:** The Renters' Rights Bill, which received Royal Assent this month, marks a once-in-a-generation reform of the private rented sector, bringing greater security for tenants, stronger powers against unfair evictions, and a fairer balance between renters and landlords. We are already preparing for its implementation, expected between April and June 2026. Dedicated projects are underway across both our Private Housing Services and Housing Needs teams to make sure Brent residents benefit fully from these long-overdue changes. Our teams are engaging closely in pan-London and subregional forums, sharing learning, and identifying opportunities to improve the quality of private rented housing, strengthen renters' rights, and prevent homelessness. We are also working closely with the DWP and our Housing Benefits teams to anticipate changes in income, affordability pressures, and Universal Credit delays, ensuring we can support residents through the transition. The Renters' Rights Bill represents a national turning point, and here in Brent, we'll make sure that it delivers real change for the thousands of renters who call this borough home.
- **Brent continues to tackle the Homelessness emergency head on:** The draft new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026 – 2031, is out to consultation until 3 November 2025, before being presented back to cabinet on 8 December for final approval before publication. The draft strategy was presented to key stakeholders at the Brent Homelessness Forum on 8 October and was presented at the Registered Provider Forum on 13 October and a Members' Briefing session on 14 October. We are also working to eliminate our use of B&B's as temporary accommodation, which is both costly to the Council, and destabilising for families. The B&B reduction plan aims to place more families in more stable and suitable accommodation fit for the long-term.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Fleur.Donnely-Jackson@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills – Councillor Harbi Farah

Top news since my last report:

- **Hate Crime Awareness Week (13–18 October):** Brent held a series of events during Hate Crime Awareness week. The Stop Hate UK session focused on online hate and reporting tools, with 20 attendees from various services. The Protection Approaches workshop explored the causes and impact of hate crime, engaging 22 staff in discussions on protected characteristics and community impact. Both sessions saw strong participation and valuable insights.
- **Brent Good Work Standard First Cohort Event:** Brent successfully completed the first-year cohort of the Brent Good Work Standard Programme in July and celebrated this milestone at the Civic Centre on Tuesday 16th September 2025 with 7 accredited businesses. We are now preparing to launch our 2nd cohort, starting Tuesday 11th November.
- **Anti-social Behaviour and Nuisance Patrol Officers NCIL Bid Secured:** The Community Safety Team was successful in a bid from NCIL funding to have four ASB Patrol Officers to provide a uniformed presence in Brent's town centres. The officers will primarily work on weekends and late evenings to engage with and respond to residents and businesses concerning anti-social behaviour and low-level crime. We hope to have these officers in post by mid-November 2025.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Harbi.Farah@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property – Councillor Teo Benea

Top news since my last report:

- **Brent prioritises developments that residents need most with managed pause on student accommodation:** Purpose-Built Student Accommodation has been a significant part of Brent's growth story — bringing investment, life, and vibrancy to the area. Students contribute enormously to Brent's economy, spending in our shops, cafés, and cultural venues, volunteering in the community, and enriching the fabric of our borough. But we are also listening to residents who have told us that the balance must now be recalibrated. With more than 3,800 student beds already delivered or approved, it is right that we pause and reflect on the kind of development Brent needs next. The housing challenges we face are deep and varied. We need more homes for families, key workers and older residents, as well as genuinely affordable housing that allows people to stay and put down roots in the communities they love. This temporary Planning Position Statement does exactly that — it creates breathing space while we review the Local Plan to ensure that future development supports a mix of housing that meets real local need. We are making it clear that Brent welcomes investment and development, but we expect partners to come forward with schemes that help us tackle the housing emergency, not add to it.
- **Brent continues to improve its Town Centres:** NCIL funded cleaner, brighter, and safer programmes are now underway to improve the look of our high streets and public safety during the darker months. Town Centres will also benefit from the NCIL Buskers Corner Project, beginning in the coming weeks across 7 centres.
- **Summer of events boosts Brent's economy:** Recent analysis by Lloyds Banking Group shows that Brent's businesses significantly benefitted from Wembley's summer of world-class events, in particular Oasis' string of seven concerts. Data highlighted that hospitality, pubs, restaurants, takeaways, and convenience retailers saw the strongest uplift, with higher average spends per customer linked to extended dwell times before and after concerts. Licensed premises benefitted from increased food and drink sales, while local transport and late-night services also reported higher usage.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by the email address below.

Contact: Cllr.Teo.Benea@brent.gov.uk

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Questions from the Opposition and Other Non-Cabinet Members

Full Council – 10 November 2025

1. Question from Councillor S.Butt to Councillor Grahl (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools)

Can the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools tell us more about the £4 million investment in youth facilities, and how young people themselves helped shape the projects being funded?

Response:

The Council's £4 million investment in youth organisations across Brent is rooted in a commitment to co-production with young people. From the beginning, we have ensured that young people are not just consulted but are central to decision-making.

As part of the SCIL grant, we brought together a diverse panel of young people including those with lived experience from youth justice, care leavers, Brent Youth Parliament, Early Help, and the voluntary sector. These young people played a key role in shortlisting and scoring applications, hearing presentations from organisations, and were core at shaping the final selection of the five projects that will receive funding.

This collaborative approach will continue throughout the delivery phase. We will work closely with the funded voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to ensure that young people remain actively involved in shaping how these upgraded spaces are designed, used, and sustained. We are encouraging all organisations to embed youth voice in their governance, planning, and delivery as part of the grant making process. To support this, we will signpost organisations to the Young Brent Foundation and other partners for help with capacity building, funding, and youth engagement best practice.

We also recognise that upgraded buildings alone are not enough. Young people have told us that their priorities include access to mental health support, employment and skills opportunities, and safe spaces to address youth crime and safety. These priorities are embedded in Brent's Youth Strategy, and we are working with VCS partners to ensure their programmes reflect and respond to these needs. Importantly, young people also have a seat at the Brent Youth Strategy Delivery Group, ensuring they have a direct voice in overseeing the implementation of the wider strategy.

We want to continue hearing directly from young people, to know their opinions for how they want to stay involved in shaping and evaluating these projects. This is an ongoing partnership, and we are committed to making sure that youth voice remains at the heart of it.

The government's Best Start in Life strategy sets out an ambition that local partners must organise and work together to achieve better outcomes for children in the short and long term. This includes family services and the wider early years sector, as well as the expansion of childcare entitlements for children from working families, which has been successfully rolled out in Brent.

We are still awaiting details of the funding allocations for both early years entitlements and the Best Start family services elements. It is anticipated that these announcements will be made later this term.

In the meantime, an overarching Brent early years strategy is being developed to deliver a universal and targeted framework of support from pre-birth to age five, which is crucial for reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for children and families. This local multi-agency strategy will also provide the framework for meeting the statutory targets set for Brent in the Best Start for Life strategy, which are measured through the new Local Government Outcomes framework. An action plan will be published in March 2026, setting out how these targets will be achieved.

2. Question from Councillor Hylton to Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (Cabinet Member for Housing)

Can the Cabinet Member for Housing advise how the renewal of Brent's borough-wide HMO Licensing Scheme will improve living standards for renters and strengthen protection against rogue landlords?

Can she also advise how is the Council preparing for the Government's forthcoming Renters' Reform Bill, to make sure local tenants benefit fully from these long-overdue national changes?

Response:

In respect of HMOs - Properties occupied by multiple households (HMOs) are often higher risk, with greater challenges around safety and management. Our borough-wide HMO Licensing Scheme helps us raise standards and ensure that every property meets clear, consistent requirements. It creates a level playing field for landlords, while giving the Council the powers we need to act decisively where standards fall short.

Under our previous Additional Licensing Scheme, which expired in January 2025, over 3,000 properties were licensed, alongside more than 3,800 larger HMOs under the Mandatory Scheme. That means over 6,000 homes were actively regulated, giving us direct contact with thousands of tenants and landlords, and enabling targeted support and enforcement where it was needed most.

We've also strengthened engagement with tenants through our annual Renters' Fairs, the most recent of which was held last month, and received over 80% positive feedback. Likewise, our yearly landlord forums continue to promote good practice and collaboration across the private rented sector.

Looking ahead, the new Additional Licensing Scheme, coming into force on 2nd February 2026, together with the new Renters' Rights Bill, will deliver even stronger protections for renters and fairer rules for responsible landlords. We've invested in staff training and robust operational systems to ensure we're ready for implementation from day one. These measures will help us drive up standards across Brent, tackle rogue landlords, and make sure that every resident has a safe and decent home.

In respect of the forthcoming Renters Reform Bill - the Renters' Rights Bill, which received Royal Assent this month, marks a once-in-a-generation reform of the private rented sector, bringing greater security for tenants, stronger powers against unfair evictions, and a fairer balance between renters and landlords.

We are already preparing for its implementation, expected between April and June 2026. Dedicated projects are underway across both our Private Housing Services and Housing Needs teams to make sure Brent residents benefit fully from these long-overdue changes.

Our teams are engaging closely in pan-London and subregional forums, sharing learning, and identifying opportunities to improve the quality of private rented housing, strengthen renters' rights, and prevent homelessness. We are also working closely

with the DWP and our Housing Benefits teams to anticipate changes in income, affordability pressures, and Universal Credit delays, ensuring we can support residents through the transition.

As someone who rents privately myself, and who represents a ward where 1 in 3 households rent privately, I know first-hand how much difference a safe, secure home can make. Ensuring every person has the foundation to build a better life is at the heart of why I am a politician.

The Renters' Rights Bill represents a national turning point, and here in Brent, we'll make sure that it delivers real change for the thousands of renters who call this borough home.

3. Question from Councillor Choudry to Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of the Council)

Can the Leader outline how the Council will use the £1.5 million ‘Pride in Place Impact Fund’ announced earlier this year to deliver visible improvements in our high streets and public spaces, helping to instil local pride today

Response:

The Government’s recent allocation of £1.5 million “Pride in Place Impact Fund” capital funding to Brent is welcome. It will build on the major £26.9 million upgrade we are already delivering across the borough – improving streets, parks, youth centres and public spaces. From smoother roads and greener parks to thriving youth clubs and safer high streets, residents will see and feel visible improvements in every part of Brent.

We are clear that pride begins in the high street - in the everyday places where people shop, meet and spend time. The look, feel and function of our streets set the tone for how residents and visitors experience Brent. That is why we are considering how best to target this funding towards visible improvements that strengthen the character, safety or vibrancy of our high streets and our wider borough. In doing so, we want to ensure every pound of this finite funding helps to build civic pride in the places people visit and value most.

The £1.5 million Pride in Place Impact Fund is capital only but can be used flexibly until March 2027 to support our locally identified priorities for public areas and high street enhancements (see: Pride in Place Impact Fund: prospectus – GOV.UK). Given the scale of investment already underway this year, we will take the opportunity over the coming months to consider how this new funding can best complement and amplify our existing plans. This includes exploring opportunities to leverage additional external funding to stretch every pound further for our communities.

I will provide further updates on progress in due course. By continuing to invest in a Better, Bolder Brent, we are putting pride into every corner of this borough — creating cleaner, greener, safer neighbourhoods that everyone can be proud to call home.

4. Question from Councillor Jayanti Patel to Councillor Benea (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property):

Residents in Queensbury Ward have raised deep frustration at the long-standing breach of planning conditions tied to the 2011 development of Callier House on Burnt Oak Broadway involving the planting of 11 trees along Burnt Oak Broadway (planning application E/23/0486).

As part of the planning permission granted at that time, the developer was required to plant 11 trees along the pavement between the former Mecca Bingo Hall and Cohen Court. This was not a decorative suggestion, it was a legally binding condition of the planning approval intended to ensure that the Broadway retained its tree-lined character and that the development contributed positively to the local environment.

Despite this, the condition still remains unfulfilled with the trees never planted.

Can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property therefore advise:

- (1) Why was a building control certificate issued for Calliers House despite the clear and continuing breach of planning conditions?
- (2) What specific enforcement steps will now be taken to ensure compliance, including whether a formal Breach of Condition Notice will be served with a 28-day deadline?
- (3) Will the Council commit that, should the developer fail to act within that period, it will commission the planting of the 11 trees directly and recover the full costs from Peabody without further delay?
- (4) More broadly, what steps will the Council take to ensure that this kind of failure does not happen again — that planning conditions are properly monitored, enforced, and verified before certificates are issued.

Response:

The developer was required, as part of their planning consent, to plant 11 new trees within the street in front of the development. However, this was not possible due to the presence of underground services beneath the footway. As a result, while the physical planting could not take place in that specific location, the development remains in compliance with its planning obligations.

Over recent months, both the Planning Enforcement Team and the Development Management Team have been in active discussions with the building owners, Peabody and Byond Homes. I'm pleased to confirm that the owners have agreed to make a financial contribution to the Council to cover the cost of planting these trees. Although it is not feasible to plant them directly outside the building, the trees will instead be planted elsewhere in the local area, ensuring that the community still benefits from the greening and environmental improvements originally intended. In short, the funding for these trees has been secured, and the Council is ensuring that this commitment is honoured.

It's also important to note that the Building Regulations process is entirely separate from the planning process. Building Control authorities do not have legal powers to withhold a Completion Certificate for non-compliance with planning conditions, and the issuing of such a certificate does not prevent the Council from taking further action where planning issues arise.

While the Council does not have the resources to routinely monitor compliance with every planning condition, it remains committed to upholding high standards across the borough. Any potential breaches of planning control are investigated in line with our Planning Enforcement Policy, and we continue to take proportionate and transparent action to secure compliance where necessary.

5. Question from Councillor Lorber to Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement):

Residents across Brent continue to experience significant disruption due to poorly coordinated road works taking place in the borough.

In areas such as Alperton (around the tall building zone), the Abbey Estate, Willesden Green ward (particularly close to the High Road) and across Northwick Park - to name but a few, unplanned and overlapping works are causing traffic congestion, noise, and accessibility issues for local people and businesses. The Council must do more to mitigate the impact of road works.

Can the Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement explain what steps the Council is taking to improve the coordination of road works and advise:

- (a) What, if any work is being done to ensure that utility and water companies properly reinstate roads after completing their scheduled works?
- (b) What action is being taken to ensure that Council-led upgrade projects are planned so as to align with other utility works to minimise repeated disruption for local people?
- (c) What measures will be put in place to monitor and enforce compliance so that Brent residents are not continually inconvenienced by poor planning and lack of coordination?

Response:

The Council's NRSWA (New Roads & Street Works Act) and Network team meet regularly with the various utility contractors, and our own contractors, to coordinate planned works to minimise disruption to the public highway network. For utility works classified as "emergency work", this is more difficult. We are not made aware of the works until they have commenced on site. The contractor will attend and commence excavation to identify the issue, notifying Highways Management two hours after works commence. At this stage they are unlikely to have any further information and so cannot confirm a timescale for the work. We will issue a retrospective permit based on the information at the time. This will be reviewed once the contractor has a better understanding of the actual problem. For emergency work we will react and seek to ensure the traffic management is effective and open dialogue with the contractor to ensure the works are executed in the quickest time possible. As we are reacting to the issue there will inevitable be delays in getting real time information out to the public.

In response to your questions:

- (a) The reinstatement of the Highway is covered by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and s71 of the Act introduces the Statutory Code of Practice that has been published by the Department of Transport called the 'Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways'. This is followed by all Utility Companies. Once a Utility Company closes their Permit it automatically creates two inspections to visit the location throughout their two-year guarantee period.

The first inspection is classed as a 'B' Inspection and creates an Inspection within the first 6 months of the end of the works. The next Inspection is a 'C' Inspections and happens before their two-year Guarantee period ends. However, our NRSWA Inspectors can visit any site at any time outside these two created inspections and fail the site, if required.

- (b) We have quarterly meetings with all utility companies to discuss upcoming projects and ongoing works to minimise clashes with our own works. Every Thursday a report is sent out to Councillors and certain Brent Officers listing all upcoming works, both Utility and our own works, for the next 12 months.
- (c) We assess every Permit to work that comes into us. We check for any conflicts within the vicinity with other road works that are ongoing or are planned to start eminently to reduce disruption to all road users. However, we cannot plan for Emergency Works that the utility companies must do. A Utility company can start work immediately under an Emergency Permit and they must inform us up to 2 hrs of starting the work, or if it's over a weekend then by 10am on the following Monday morning.

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 Brent	<p align="center">Full Council 10 November 2025</p>
	<p align="center">Report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources</p>
<p>Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Chair's Report</p>	
<p>Wards Affected:</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Key or Non-Key Decision:</p>	<p>Council</p>
<p>Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small></p>	<p>Open</p>
<p>List of Appendices:</p>	<p>Appendix 1 – Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025-26</p>
<p>Background Papers:</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small></p>	<p>Chatan Popat, Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Democratic and Corporate Governance 020 8937 5068 chatan.popat@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Amira Nassr, Deputy Director, Democratic and Corporate Governance 020 8937 5436 amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>James Kinsella, Governance and Scrutiny Manager, Democratic and Corporate Governance 020 8937 2063 james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk</p>

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 update to Full Council on 15 September 2025.

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).

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 Committee (NWL JHOSC). Councillor Ketan Sheth was re-elected as chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee at the Annual Council Meeting on 22 May 2024 and also continues to serve as chair of the NWL JHOSC.

- 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's 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 Committee's 2025-26 work programme is detailed in Appendix 1. In developing its work programme, Committee members have prioritised items based on a set of criteria. Prioritisation ensures that items included in the committee's work programme are (i) a strategic priority as set out in the council's 2023-27 Borough Plan (ii) of concern for a significant number of the borough's residents (iii) a significant cabinet decision or (iv) part of a forthcoming policy review or a new strategy being developed by the Cabinet. This is undertaken to ensure that scrutiny has a significant impact and adds value to the council's policy process. Statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny recommends that for scrutiny to be effective, scrutiny committees focus on conducting fewer in-depth reviews on 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 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee met for its second meeting of the 2025-26 municipal year on 17 September 2025. The meeting focused on an update from the NHS followed by three substantive reports. Pippa Nightingale, CEO of London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust provided an update to the Committee on significant improvements to Sickie Cell care in North West London, highlighting Brent's large patient population and the NHS's past shortcomings in meeting their needs. A redesigned care pathway, co-developed with patients and service users, included a new Acute Hub at Hammersmith Hospital offering direct access to specialists and a 24/7 triage service. The Committee were also informed that outpatient services at Central Middlesex Hospital have been extended, with plans to operate seven days a week. She also outlined proposed changes to the Urgent Care Centre at Central Middlesex Hospital, including earlier closing hours to align with radiology services and better resource allocation across sites. The Committee discussed capacity, staffing, and communication, and thanked her for her contributions.
- 3.2.6 The first of the reports presented to the Committee was on the topic of Children's Oral Health. The report presented by the Lead Member and Brent's Public Health team outlined the state of children's oral health in Brent, highlighting concerning statistics such as 43% of children experiencing dental decay by age five. Members were informed that despite historically high levels, recent trends show a slight improvement, attributed to targeted interventions like the oral health bus, supervised toothbrushing programmes, and educational campaigns. It was noted, however, that challenges do still persist due to entrenched beliefs, misinformation, and limited access to child-friendly dentistry. The Committee were pleased to hear that Public Health had been working to shift parental attitudes, improve early intervention, and collaborate across sectors to address these issues holistically. However, the Committee raised concerns about the effectiveness of interventions and the slow progress compared to similar boroughs such as Lewisham. Public Health acknowledged systemic barriers, including national NHS contract limitations and cultural factors, but emphasised ongoing efforts such as partnerships with schools, libraries, and Brent Health Matters. Future plans included expanding surveys to better understand needs, increasing outreach, and promoting dentistry as a career among youth. While Brent's oral health outcomes remain below national averages, improvements are anticipated over the next 5–10 years, especially with continued multi-agency collaboration and community engagement.
- 3.2.7 The second item discussed at the Committee meeting was the Brent Period Dignity Project, introduced by the Deputy Leader. This item was put forward in the Committee's work planning sessions by the Brent Youth Parliament. Members were informed that the project aimed to tackle period poverty by reframing it as a dignity issue and providing free menstrual products across Council-owned sites in Brent. Initiated in 2020 following the Poverty Commission's findings, the project collaborates with 'Hey Girls' to distribute products in libraries, Family Wellbeing Centres, food banks, and other community hubs. It also includes educational materials to reduce stigma and raise awareness. While recognising that measuring the scale of period poverty locally was challenging, uptake data indicates a clear need. The Committee

were informed that the Council plans to embed the initiative as a standard service and expand its reach, including to schools and care settings. The Committee, including Brent Youth Parliament, raised concerns about gaps in access for young people not in education, care leavers, and culturally sensitive communities. Officers acknowledged these gaps and committed to improving outreach, including through partnerships with Brent Health Matters and the voluntary sector. Monitoring was currently based on product uptake rather than detailed personal data, and staff training was being enhanced to address stigma. The Committee encouraged broader engagement, including with gyms and faith schools, and stressed the importance of universal access without judgment. The Council affirmed its commitment to evolving the project and welcomed suggestions for expanding its reach.

- 3.2.8 In the final report of the evening, the Committee were updated on the Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent. The report presented by Brent Council's Youth Justice Service (YJS) outlined a multi-agency approach to youth justice, highlighting successes in reducing custody rates, first-time entrants, and reoffending, though some data fluctuations were noted due to small cohort sizes and the impact of COVID-19. Members heard that the YJS has been rated as delivering at least a "good" service, with strong out-of-court disposal processes and a focus on restorative justice. However, challenges remained, particularly around disproportionality affecting Black Caribbean males and ensuring victim voices were heard. The Committee were encouraged when informed that preventative work was being strengthened through initiatives like the Targeted Prevention Hub and partnerships with organisations such as My Endz 2.0 and CAMHS, which provide early mental health support. The Committee did however raise concerns about data inconsistencies and the need for more preventative and culturally sensitive interventions. The team acknowledged the link between youth offending and factors such as deprivation, educational challenges, and undiagnosed mental health needs. Officers assured Members that YJS works closely with partners to divert young people from the criminal justice system, offering tailored support including education, employment, and apprenticeships. The service was also aligning its work with broader Council strategies like the Youth Strategy, SEND Inclusion Strategy, and Black Community Action Plan. Suggestions were made to explore successful diversionary programmes from other boroughs, such as community-led sports initiatives, to further enhance Brent's youth justice offer.

The Committee's continued focus on Housing

- 3.2.9 Each year, the Committee's work programme allocates equal time to all areas within its remit. Over the last two municipal years, the Committee has discussed numerous reports relating to Housing. Below is a brief summary on each of these items. Brent Housing Management Update (Nov 2023) - The Brent Housing Management (BHM) update highlighted key improvements and ongoing challenges in housing services, including significant reductions in void turnaround times, enhanced tenant engagement, and preparations for new Tenant Satisfaction Measures. The Committee discussed issues such as repairs, succession policies, fly-tipping, youth homelessness, and leaseholder compliance in mixed-tenure blocks. Recommendations included improving

cross-service coordination and better collection and sharing of recruitment and financial impact data. The Committee were encouraged to be informed that BHM aimed to deliver more proactive, community-focused services through restructured contracts, in-house support, and targeted engagement strategies.

- 3.2.10 New Single Homeless Prevention Service (Nov 2023) - The Committee were updated on Brent's Single Homeless Prevention Service, now rebranded as "Turning Point" and based in Harlesden. It detailed its transition from an online model to a face-to-face, multi-agency approach to better meet the complex needs of single homeless individuals. Funded through a £2.1 million outcome-based contract, Members were informed that the service collaborates with partners like Crisis and the DWP to improve accessibility and outcomes. The Committee explored homelessness drivers, service sustainability, and support for vulnerable groups including care leavers and young adults, while raising concerns about outdated communication channels. Recommendations included assessing the viability of in-housing the service by 2027, improving demographic reporting, correcting phone line messaging, and sharing data on accommodation refusals and discharge safeguards.
- 3.2.11 New Selective Licensing Scheme (Nov 2023) - The Committee discussed the then new Selective Licensing Scheme, which had launched in August 2023 across Dollis Hill, Harlesden & Kensal Green, and Willesden. It aimed to improve property standards and reduce anti-social behaviour in Brent's Private Rented Sector. Funded by a £640 five-year licence fee, the scheme had issued 1,000 licences from 3,000 applications and planned to inspect 50% of licensed properties, with increased staffing to support enforcement. Social housing was exempt, and Wembley Park was excluded due to its newer housing stock. The Committee discussed compliance strategies, the distinction from HMO licensing, and recommended better councillor communication and prioritised enforcement of unlicensed HMOs.
- 3.2.12 i4B and First Wave Housing (FWH) Performance Update (Nov 2024) - The i4B and First Wave Housing (FWH) performance update highlighted progress in property acquisitions, emergency repairs, and compliance monitoring, while identifying areas needing improvement such as tenant satisfaction, void turnaround times, and rent collection, particularly due to Universal Credit challenges. A deep dive into voids revealed delays across multiple stages, prompting plans to streamline processes and improve value for money. The Committee discussed anti-social behaviour, tenant wellbeing, and difficulties acquiring properties with private freeholders, endorsing a strategy to avoid such purchases. Recommendations included receiving detailed action and engagement plans, ensuring future reports specify mitigation actions when targets are missed, and enhancing communication to improve Tenant Satisfaction Measures.
- 3.2.13 Brent Housing Management (BHM) Performance Update (Nov 2024) - The Brent Housing Management (BHM) Performance Update focused on the newly introduced Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), revealing a gap between high transactional satisfaction and low perception-based satisfaction, particularly around complaints and anti-social behaviour. To address this,

Members were informed that BHM had introduced 25 Area Tenancy Managers to improve communication and tenant engagement. The Committee discussed void management, succession rights, eviction trends, and support for tenants with language barriers, alongside a review of IT systems to enhance diversity data and tenancy audits. Recommendations included incorporating health and safety considerations in future updates and providing data on tenant diversity.

3.2.14 Temporary Accommodation and Homelessness Prevention Service (Nov 2024) -

The Temporary Accommodation and Homelessness Prevention Service update highlighted Brent's growing housing pressures, with rising temporary accommodation (TA) numbers driven by a shrinking Private Rented Sector, landlord exits, and post-pandemic cost increases. The Committee discussed long-term TA stays, out-of-borough placements, and the effectiveness of Locata, while officers outlined efforts to bring empty homes back into use and the limitations of Compulsory Purchase Orders. Youth homelessness and employability support were raised by Brent Youth Parliament, though no youth-specific schemes currently exist. The Committee were assured that the Council continues to collaborate on pan-London strategies.

3.2.15 Housing Items scheduled to be reviewed in 2025/26 - During the 2025/26 municipal year, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee will be reviewing numerous Housing matters. Below is a current list of items scheduled:

- November 2025 - Response to Housing regulator findings and Brent graded at C3.
- November 2025 - Update from the Housing Improvement Board - This is a new agreed standing item following the recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge. The Committee will receive a mid-year report and a further update at the end of the municipal year.
- March 2026 - Housing Management: Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Brent Housing Management (BHM) performance.
- March 2026 - Area Tenancy Management Model and an update on Empty Properties.
- March 2026 - Temporary Accommodation, Supported Exempt Accommodation and Homelessness Prevention.
- March 2026 – End of Year Update from the Housing Improvement Board.

3.2.16 The Committee will meet for its third meeting of the year on 19 November 2025 where the Committee are scheduled to discuss Housing items listed above.

3.2.17 Councillor Ketan Sheth is Brent's representative and Chair of the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC). The second meeting of the municipal year has been rescheduled to 18 November 2025 and will be held at London Borough of Harrow where they will review Special School Nursing, The future of Place Based Partnerships and Dentist Commissioning and Children's Dental Health.

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:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director, Finance and Resources

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Appendix A: Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee: 2025/26 Work Programme

Confirmed Meeting Dates:

- Wednesday 02 July 2025, 6pm
- Wednesday 17 September 2025, 6pm
- Wednesday 19 November 2025, 6pm
- Monday 19 January 2026, 6pm
- Wednesday 04 March 2026, 6pm
- Thursday 09 April 2026, 6pm

Wednesday 02 July 2025

Agenda Item	Cabinet Members / Non-Executive Members	Corporate Directors / Directors	External Organisations / Participants
Brent Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024/25	Cllr Neil Nerva Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure	Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy	Nicola Brownjohn, Brent Safeguarding Adults Board Independent Chair Metropolitan Police NW London NHS
Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report 2024/25	Cllr Gwen Grahl Cabinet Member, Children, Young People & Schools	Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development	Keith Makin, Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Independent Scrutineer Metropolitan Police NW London NHS

Wednesday 17 September 2025

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Corporate Directors / Directors	External Organisations / Participants
Children's Oral Health	Cllr Neil Nerva Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure	Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy Melanie Smith, Director of Public Health	
Period Dignity	Cllr Mili Patel Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Finance and Resources	Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy	
The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent	Councillor Gwen Grahl, Cabinet Member, Children, Young People & Schools	Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development Palvinder Kudhail, Director, Early Help and Social Care	
Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2026/26	Councillor Ketan Sheth, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director, Finance and Resources	

Wednesday 19 November 2025

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Corporate Directors / Directors	External Organisations / Participants
Response to Housing regulator findings and Brent graded at C3	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson Cabinet Member, Housing	Tom Cattermole, Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services Spencer Randolph, Director, Housing Services	
Update from the Housing Improvement Board	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson Cabinet Member, Housing	Tom Cattermole, Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services Spencer Randolph, Director, Housing Services Laurence Coaker, Director, Housing Needs and Support	

Monday 19 January 2026

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Corporate Directors / Directors	External Organisations / Participants
Emergency Planning and update on Casey Review	<p>Cllr Muhammed Butt Leader and Cabinet Member, Regeneration, Planning and Property</p> <p>Cllr Krupa Sheth Cabinet Member, Public Realm and Enforcement</p> <p>Cllr Harbi Farah Cabinet Member, Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills</p>	<p>Jehan Weerasinghe, Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration</p> <p>Chris Whyte, Director, Public Realm</p>	
Update on poverty commission project and Brent's response to the Cost of Living Crisis	<p>Cllr Promise Knight Cabinet Member, Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture</p> <p>Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson Cabinet Member, Housing</p>	<p>Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy</p> <p>Tom Cattermole, Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services</p>	
Tackling Child Poverty in Brent	<p>Councillor Gwen Grahl, Cabinet Member, Children, Young People & Schools</p>	<p>Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development</p> <p>Palvinder Kudhail, Director, Early Help and Social Care</p>	


Wednesday 4 March 2026

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Corporate Directors / Directors	External Organisations / Participants
Housing Management: Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Brent Housing Management (BHM) performance	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson Cabinet Member, Housing	Tom Cattermole, Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services Spencer Randolph, Director, Housing Services	
Area Tenancy Management Model	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson Cabinet Member, Housing	Tom Cattermole, Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services Spencer Randolph, Director, Housing Services	
Temporary Accommodation, Supported Exempt Accommodation and Homelessness Prevention	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson Cabinet Member, Housing	Tom Cattermole, Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services Laurence Coaker, Director, Housing Needs and Support	

Thursday 09 April 2026

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Corporate Directors / Directors	External Organisations / Participants
Annual Setting and School Standards Achievement Report	Councillor Gwen Grahl, Cabinet Member, Children, Young People & Schools	Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director Children and Young People Shirley Parks, Director, Education, Partnerships and Strategy	Headteachers from Brent schools
Year 1 update on The Brent Youth Strategy	Councillor Gwen Grahl, Cabinet Member, Children, Young People & Schools	Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director Children and Young People Shirley Parks, Director, Education, Partnerships and Strategy	
Leisure and Physical activity	Cllr Neil Nerva Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure	Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy Ruth du Plessis, Director of Public Health	

*Placeholder slots have been saved as per the request of Lead Members and Corporate Directors

	Full Council 10 November 2025
	Report from the Corporate Director of Finance & Resources
Resources and Public Realm 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:	One Appendix 1 - Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025/26
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	<p>Jason Sigba, Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Democratic & Corporate Governance, Finance & Resources Jason.Sigba@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>James Kinsella Governance & Scrutiny Manager, Democratic & Corporate Governance, Finance & Resources James.Kinsella@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Amira Nassr, Deputy Director, Democratic & Corporate Governance, Finance & Resources Amira.Nassr@brent.gov.uk</p>

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 To present Full Council with progress updates on the activities of the Resources and Public Realm Committee since the last Full Council meeting held on 15 September 2025.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Full Council

- 2.1 Note the Chair's update confirming that there have been no significant developments since the last meeting, and to acknowledge the outline of forthcoming work.

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 set out in the Borough Plan 2023-2027. It seeks to ensure Council decision-making remains transparent, accountable and open, resulting in improved policies and services.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 Brent Council has two scrutiny committees; the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee and the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. The Council is also a member of the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC).
- 3.2.2 A scrutiny committee can look at anything which affects the borough or its inhabitants, subject to its remit.
- 3.2.3 Brent Council Standing Orders allow for the chairs of the scrutiny committees to report to ordinary Council meetings on the activities of their committees¹.

The Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee

- 3.2.4 The remit of the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee is set out in the Council Constitution under the Terms of Reference for scrutiny committees². The remit of the Committee includes:

Corporate policy, partnerships and resources; Budget; Customer services; Commercial services; Planning policy; Environmental policy; Public realm; Employment and skills; IT; Recycling; Regeneration; Transport and highways; Community safety; Property; Emergency planning and business continuity.

- 3.2.5 The Committee is also the Council's "crime and disorder committee" for the purposes of Section 19 of the Police & Justice Act 2006 and as such may review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of the crime and disorder functions by the responsible authorities (as defined by section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998) who make up the Safer Brent Partnership, in order to make reports or recommendations to Full Council.
- 3.2.6 Since the last update to Full Council on 15 September 2025, and as of the publication of this report on 31 October 2025, the Resources and Public Realm

¹ Brent Council Constitution, Part 2, paragraph 36.

<https://democracy.brent.gov.uk/documents/s123308/Part%202%20April%202022%20Procedural%20Rules.pdf>

² Brent Council Constitution Part 4.

<https://democracy.brent.gov.uk/documents/s123310/Part%204%20May%202022%20Terms%20of%20Reference%20.pdf>

Scrutiny Committee has not met. The next meeting of the Committee, scheduled for 4 November 2025, will consider the following items:

Budget 2025/26: In-Year Monitoring Update:

- 3.2.7 The Corporate Director of Finance & Resources will report on the Quarter 2, 2025/26 financial forecast for the General Fund revenue budget, Housing Revenue Account, Dedicated Schools Grant, and Capital Programme. Areas of discussion will include the current financial position, including savings realised, recorded slippages, key assumptions, significant risks, pressures, and emerging uncertainties, as well as the interventions and mitigations in place to manage identified concerns.

Draft Social Value Policy:

- 3.2.8 The Committee will review the Draft Social Value Policy, providing feedback on overall ambitions, definitions, priorities, and themes, while also considering the planned stakeholder engagement and consultation activities, as well as the proposed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- 3.2.9 As part of the examination, members will assess the current approach to social value, including performance data, key achievements, lessons learned, and opportunities, to better understand how these insights have informed the development of the Draft Policy and its proposed direction.

Draft Procurement Strategy:

- 3.2.10 The Committee will review the Draft Procurement Strategy, providing feedback on overall ambitions, definitions, priorities, and themes, while also considering the planned stakeholder engagement and consultation activities, as well as the proposed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- 3.2.11 To support an informed assessment, members will examine the current local and national context, the existing approach to procurement, key performance data, achievements, lessons learned, and opportunities that have informed the rationale for change and consequently the development of the Draft Strategy.

Funding and Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS):

- 3.2.12 The Corporate Director of Service Reform & Strategy will present a report providing a comprehensive overview of the Council's funding and support for the VCS, highlighting its impact on the sector's long-term sustainability and capacity.
- 3.2.13 As part of the review, members will consider the current and emerging needs of the VCS, the scope and distribution of funding and support, and the demonstrable impact on both the sector and local communities. This will involve an in-depth analysis of the Council's VCS grant programmes and commissioned services, to better understand key strengths, challenges, and

opportunities for continuous improvement in alignment with good practice across the country.

Next steps:

- 3.2.14 An update summarising the discussions on the above agenda items, along with any proposed Committee recommendations or suggestions for improvement, will be included in the Chair's Update Report to Full Council in July 2026.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 Members continue to be fully engaged in the development and delivery of the scrutiny work programme, which is intended to be a flexible, living document that can adapt and change throughout the municipal year in response to the Committee's needs. Please see Appendix 1 for the updated version, with changes highlighted in red.

5.0 Financial Considerations

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

6.0 Legal Considerations

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

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 There are no EDI considerations for the purposes of this report.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

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

9.0 Communication Considerations

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

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director, Finance & Resources

Appendix 1

Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025/26

16 July 2025

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Corporate Director	External Organisations
Committee Work Programme 2025/26	Cllr Rita Conneely, Chair of Resources and Public Realm Committee	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Recycling in Brent	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement	Alice Lester, Corporate Director – Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	
Budget 2025/26 Update: Medium Term Financial Outlook	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	

2 September 2025

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Corporate Director	External Organisations
Establishment of Budget Scrutiny Task Group	Cllr Rita Conneely, Chair of Resources and Public Realm Committee	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Local Plan Review	Cllr Teo Benea, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property	Alice Lester, Corporate Director – Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	

4 November 2025

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Corporate Director	External Organisations
Budget 2025/26: In-Year Monitoring Update	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Social Value Policy (Draft)	Cllr Jake Rubin, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power	Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director – Service Reform and Strategy	
Procurement Strategy (Draft)	Cllr Jake Rubin, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power	Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director – Service Reform and Strategy	
Funding and Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)	Cllr Jake Rubin, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power	Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director – Service Reform and Strategy	

21 January 2026

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Corporate Director	External Organisations
Budget Scrutiny Task Group Findings	Cllr Rita Conneely, Chair of Resources and Public Realm Committee	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Kerbside Management Scrutiny Task Group Findings	Cllr Mary Mitchell, Member of Resources and Public Realm Committee and Task Group Chair	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Approach to tackling ASB across Brent	Cllr Harbi Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills	Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director – Children, Young People and Community Development	

Community Engagement and Consultation	Cllr Jake Rubin, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power	Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director – Service Reform and Strategy	
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24 February 2026

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Corporate Director	External Organisations
Budget 2025/26: In-Year Monitoring Update	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Complaints Annual Report 2024/25	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Littering and Fly Tipping	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement	Jehan Weerasinghe, Corporate Director – Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	

2 April 2026

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Corporate Director	External Organisations
Allotments Management	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement	Jehan Weerasinghe, Corporate Director – Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	
Safer Brent Partnership Report 2025/26	Cllr Harbi Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills	Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director – Children, Young People and Community Development	Metropolitan Police

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	Full Council 10 November 2025
	Report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources
Audit and Standards Advisory Committee – Vice 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>	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Tel: 020 8937 4043 Email: minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report provides a summary of the activities carried out by the Council’s Audit and Standards Advisory Committee and the Audit and Standards Committee since the last update provided in September 2025.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 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 Background

- 3.2.1 The ASAC has met once since the last update was provided, and the ASC has not met. A summary of the items discussed and considered at this meeting is set out below.

3.2.2 Audit and Standards Advisory Committee – 25th September 2025

a. Standards Report (including gifts and hospitality)

The purpose of this report was to update the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee on (a) gifts and hospitality registered by Members (b) member training, and (c) a recent complaint concerning breaches of the Member's Code of Conduct at another Local Authority.

b. Self-Referral to the Regulator of Social Housing

This report provided a further update relating to the progress made to date following the Council's self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing in April.

c. Strategic Risk Register Update

This report provided the Committee with an update on the Council's Strategic Risks as of September 2025.

d. Performance and management of i4B Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd

This report provided the Committee with an update on the work of the Housing Companies, i4B Holdings Ltd (i4B) and First Wave Housing (FWH) to deliver against their business plans for 2024-25, which were agreed by the Council as Shareholder of i4B and Guarantor of FWH.

e. London Borough of Brent Interim Auditor's Annual Report 2024-25

This report provided a summary of all the work undertaken during 2024-25 by the Council's appointed external auditor. The core element of the report was the commentary on the value for money (VfM) arrangements.

3.2.3 Forward Plan Items

The following items are due to be presented to the next meeting of the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee on 3 December 2025:

- Interim Internal Audit Report
- Interim Counter Fraud Report
- Treasury Management mid-term report
- Treasury Management Strategy
- Statement of Accounts and Pension Fund Accounts
- Standards Report

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 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 None

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 None

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

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Full Council – 10 November 2025

Motion for Non-Cabinet Member debate

Broken Promises and Failing Finances – Brent Deserves Better than Labour’s Short-Term Thinking

16 months since the general election that promised “change”, the Labour Government has failed to deliver the financial support that local authorities like Brent urgently need. Instead of providing sustainable funding allowing councils to plan properly, invest in essential services, and rebuild local infrastructure, ministers have continued the same pattern of uncertainty, offering only one-year settlements and short-term sticking plasters.

In Brent, the Labour Council’s response has been unacceptable. Rather than standing up for local residents and demanding a fair deal, the Council has meekly accepted the Government’s excuses while presiding over neglected streets, crumbling pavements, and services stretched to breaking point. Local people pay some of the highest Council Tax in London but see little in return - roads full of potholes, littered streets, unreliable waste services and a backlog of repairs to Council homes.

Brent Liberal Democrats have long campaigned for investment in the essentials: clean and safe neighbourhoods, well-maintained roads and pavements and public services that work. Yet Labour at both national and local level have failed to deliver the stability and competence.

This Council notes that:

- Despite a year of promises from the new Labour Government, Councils have still not received the multi-year funding settlements needed to plan ahead and invest efficiently.
- Brent’s own budget forecasts show continuing shortfalls in funding for street maintenance, waste and recycling, local infrastructure, and adult social care.
- The Labour Council’s record of financial management has been characterised by short-term fixes, rising debt levels, and an over-reliance on developer income, none of which provide sustainable solutions.
- Residents repeatedly raise concerns about potholes, broken pavements, overflowing bins and poorly maintained estates, everyday issues that the Council consistently fails to prioritise.

- The Labour Administration's focus on photo opportunities has too often come at the expense of basic services that matter most to residents.


As a result, this Council believes:

- The Government's failure to deliver long-term, predictable funding for local authorities show their election promises to "rebuild Britain" and "empower local communities" have not been delivered.
- Brent Labour has failed to use its voice or influence to fight for our borough, choosing instead to remain silent while residents and front-line services suffer.
- Councils must be given multi-year settlements, fair funding formulas and greater flexibility to raise and manage revenue locally.
- Cleaning up our streets, fixing our roads, and investing in neighbourhood infrastructure are not optional extras. They are the basic responsibilities of any competent local authority.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (1) To highlight that the Labour Government and Labour-run Brent Council have failed to secure and plan for long-term financial stability in Brent.
- (2) Urge the Government to introduce three-year funding settlements for Councils by 2026 and to provide additional ring-fenced investment for highways, pavements, and public-realm maintenance.
- (3) Support the commitment (as made by Brent Liberal Democrat Group) to campaign for a cleaner, safer, better maintained borough, with proper investment in local infrastructure, transparent budgeting and accountability for how every pound is spent.

Councillor Paul Lorber
Sudbury Ward

	<p align="center">Council 10 November 2025</p>
	<p align="center">Report from the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Community Development</p>
	<p align="center">Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools (Councillor Gwen Grahl)</p>
<p>Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28</p>	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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: Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-28
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Palvinder Kudhail, Director, Early Help and Social Care Palvinder.kudhail@brent.gov.uk Serita Kwofie, Head of Early Help 020 8937 1747 Email: serita.kwofie@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report provides a brief overview of the purpose and rationale for creating the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-28. It additionally describes how youth justice provision in Brent contributes to strategic and Borough Plan priorities, and outlines the partnership aims and commitments that will shape the Brent Youth Justice Service (YJS) partnership in the next three years.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Council is asked to approve (following its consideration and referral by Cabinet on 13 October 2025) formal sign off and adoption of the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-28 as detailed within Appendix A of the report.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to the Borough Plan and Strategic Priorities

- 3.1.1 This report presents the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 and celebrates the commitment and achievements of our Youth Justice Service (YJS) and the wider partnership to support children and young people who are risk of or have entered the youth justice system. This is the first three-year version of the Brent Youth Justice Plan. As such it provides a more comprehensive approach to planning and delivering services than was possible in the annual versions that shaped the provision of youth justice services in Brent during the last 20 years.
- 3.1.2 Performance remains strong overall, particularly in respect of the reduction in young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time. These numbers have been falling for more than a decade, at a national and local level. The number of First Time Entrants (FTE) has now plateaued and most recently totalled 70 in the period April 2024 to March 2025. This is comparable to both our statistical family and the London rate of FTEs.
- 3.1.3 It is equally pleasing that the number of children sentenced to custody in 2024/25 was significantly less than the London and statistical family average. This is due to the strong focus on prevention and engagement with children and young people so that their views are heard and interventions are personalised to their needs and environment. Work on reducing the disproportionate number of young people in the criminal justice system from Black backgrounds continues with rigour and pace.
- 3.1.4 In thanking all staff working for our Youth Justice Service for their hard work, diligence and innovation supporting young people, in what continues to be a challenging economic landscape the Plan was also informed by feedback from young people through surveys and individual engagement, with the following highlighted as specific areas:
- 94% (64) believe their case manager understands what has happened in their life.
 - 96% (65) said they had their court order explained to them by the YJS officer.
 - 97% (66) were offered an opportunity to engage in positive activities whilst in contact with the YJS.
 - 100% felt listened to by their case manager.
 - 99% (67) felt satisfied with the work that the case manager had completed with them.
 - When asked what has worked well or made the biggest difference, one respondent stated: 'I am not the person I was 2 years ago and that is a good thing.'
 - 100% said that their case manager has encouraged them to think about their future.
 - 99% (67) said that the case manager contacted them on the date and time expected for their session each week.
- 3.1.5 The Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028 is closely aligned to three priorities within the Borough Plan 2023-27 as well as the strategies outlined below:

Thriving Communities

Brent Youth Justice Service (YJS) is working closely with community partners to make Brent safer. This includes delivering Your Life You Choose sessions, and other preventative workshops in schools in partnership with the Targeted Prevention Hub (Early Help), Willesden Magistrates Court, the Police, and the local voluntary sector. Unlocking Your Potential groupwork sessions led by YYS introduce young people to inspirational members from local and wider London communities. YYS also supports young people to access positive recreational activities at Family Wellbeing Centres.

The Best Start in Life

Young people within the Brent youth justice system are seen and heard. A trauma informed approach to supporting children is embedded within YYS. Supported by a YYS Participation Officer, children and young people communicate with members of the YYS Management Board via a range of multi-media platforms including podcasts and short films. Joint work undertaken with the Brent Community Safety Team includes exploring options for broadening Brent's mentoring offer to young people affected by gangs and other forms of criminal exploitation, and the ongoing provision of early intervention preventative support to children and young people who receive the police issued Triage Out of Court Disposal.

Healthier Brent

Young people known to criminal justice services often have poor access to mental health provision. An NHS funded Youth Liaison and Diversion Officer, based within the YYS offers mental health screening to children who attend police custody. A co-located CAMHS Mental Health Practitioner offers a range of support and refers those with more complex needs for specialist CAMHS support.

Brent Youth Strategy

The Youth Justice Plan 2025-28 is aligned to the Brent Youth Strategy 2025-28 which includes youth participation, contextual safeguarding risk management, and the provision of educational support to children not in employment, education, and training.

The Brent Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024 – 2028

Brent YYS is committed to tackling inequalities which includes the added strand of work which focuses on disproportionality. The service's work is closely aligned to the Brent Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024/28.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 The YYS is a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency service that works with children and young people aged 10-17 years and their families. Brent YYS provides

support in relation to out-of-court disposals, court work, bail and remands, the assessment of children and young people who offend, the provision of court reports, the planning and delivery of community interventions, and custody and resettlement. The YJS sits within the Children, Young People and Community Development directorate and is managed by the Head of Early Help.

- 3.2.2 Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide the Youth Justice Board (YJB), with a previously annual, but now three-year Youth Justice Plan that sets out how youth justice services are funded, operate, and function. They provide an opportunity to review performance and developments and plan for the next three years. This allows services to be able to respond to any changes that have taken place prior, including new legislation, demographic changes, delivery of key performance indicators (KPIs) and developments in service delivery.
- 3.2.3 Updated guidance to youth justice services, first published in March 2023 and revised in March 2024, introduced the requirement that plans must be signed off by Full Council in accordance with Regulation 4 of the 'Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000'.
- 3.2.4 Content in the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 is presented in line with Youth Justice Board guidance. This information is analysed by the YJB to ensure compliance with statutory and financial requirements. Youth Justice Plans also serve to identify good practice capable of being replicated regionally and nationally.
- 3.2.5 The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 contains statistical information about children in Brent, with a specific focus on those children within, or at risk of entering, the youth justice system. Brent is committed to the priorities outlined in the YJB Strategic Plan 2024-27, Thematic and Area Based Inspection recommendations, and local practice approaches. In keeping with this, the following are the principal aims and commitments that will shape the Brent YJS partnership over the next three years:
- Embed the new Targeted Prevention Hub (TPH) within Brent.
 - Develop ever closer links with the voluntary and community sector – to include the ongoing identification of partners to join the TPH.
 - Implement and manage new substance misuse arrangements within Brent.
 - Embed new Appropriate Adult arrangements within Brent.
 - Increase access to victim support.
 - Work with partners to develop pathways and create access for Speech and Language Therapy.
 - Refresh, implement, and monitor the Brent YJS Disproportionality Action Plan to tackle the over representation of children from Black Heritage Groups in the Brent Youth Justice System.
 - Support the delivery of the Brent Youth Strategy.
 - Collaborate with children's social care services to reduce the risks of criminalisation of children in care and care leavers.

- Continue to promote evidence-based 'Child First' approaches as the best means to reducing victims, promoting public protection, keeping communities safe and supporting children towards positive outcomes.
- Support the MPS Children's Strategy recommendations to help keep children in London safe, build their trust and bring to justice those who abuse and exploit them.
- Continue to build a YJS partnership culture that encourages diversity in its workforce, promotes anti-racist practice in its thinking and inclusivity, is supportive, encourages personal responsibility and is outcomes focused.
- Continue work within the YJS Management Board, the wider partnership, and YJS staff to prepare for the current round of HMIP Inspection, through a focused programme of case file audits, thematic practice development sessions and individual supervision.
- Broaden access to mentoring with clear referral pathways.
- Develop a plan to expand the remit of the service to care leavers involved in the criminal justice system

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 was approved by the Brent Youth Justice Service Management Board on 24 July 2025.
- 4.2 The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 was presented to the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 17 September 2025.
- 4.3 The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 was sent to the Youth Justice Board
- 4.4 The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 will be presented to The Safer Brent Partnership Board – for information.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The commitments and activities of the Youth Justice Plan are funded from the Partnership Budget that includes cash and in-kind contributions from a number of partners including the Police and the Health Service. The total partnership budget is expected to be £1.7m including £579k grant from the Youth Justice Board.
- 5.2 The Council's financial contribution in 2025/26 has been reduced by £105K to £735k to meet savings targets. The savings have been delivered through the deletion of two vacant posts.
- 5.3 It is expected that the aims and commitments of the Partnership during the next three years included in paragraph 3.7 will be delivered within existing resources. Any potential impact on service capacity as a result of the savings described in paragraph 5.2 and reduction in grant funding or in-kind contributions, will need to be absorbed within the Partnership.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced a requirement that all local authorities must establish a Youth Offending Team (YOT) comprising members from the police, social services, probation, health and education. Most local authorities, including Brent, have renamed YOT provision as Youth Justice Services.
- 6.2 The Act also created the Youth Justice Board to oversee and monitor youth justice services in England and Wales. One of the YJB's key functions is to provide local authorities with funding to enable YOTs to deliver statutory services.
- 6.3 Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on local authorities to submit an annual youth justice plan.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 The proposed Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028 supports Brent Council's commitment to equality equity, diversity, and inclusion. It is also in compliant with the statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. Brent YJS considers all individuals when conducting their day-to-day work. This includes YJS Management Board oversight of YJS work to reduce the overrepresentation of children from Black Heritage groups in the youth justice system, child-centred operational policies, and a commitment to trauma informed work practices.
- 7.2 Brent YJS seeks to reduce health inequalities through the provision of good assessment and intervention planning for all children who enter the local youth justice system. This includes referral to substance misuse services, CAMHS, and CNWL mental health screening.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 details efforts to encourage young people within the youth justice system to share their views and opinions on issues of most relevance to them.
- 8.2 Youth participation and co-production is an evolving initiative within the Youth Justice Service. This work is aligned to the Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021-2030, which aims to equip children and young people with the skills and opportunities needed to take action to protect the environment and tackle climate change.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 9.1 No additional considerations to note.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025/28 will be shared with all services and organisations represented on the Youth Justice Service Management Board.

Report sign off:

Nigel Chapman

Corporate Director of Children, Young People and
Community Development

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Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

1.0 Introduction

The Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028 (YJP) is a statutory requirement under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 relating to the provision of youth justice services. Brent's new 3-year plan reviews progress made over the last 12 months and outlines our priorities and plans for the next three-years. Our planning is realistic, achievable and inspires confidence that we are well placed to build upon the gains made over the last ten-years. These include falling numbers of first-time entrants, a declining custodial population, and reductions to our reoffending rates. Our YJP also sets out how the Brent Youth Justice Service (YJS) operates, how it is funded, and provides details of our governance arrangements.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- i. That the Brent YJS Management Board supports, enables, and monitors delivery of the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028.
- ii. Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028 progress is reviewed and recorded annually and shared with the Youth Justice Board, Brent YJS Management Board and other governing authorities as directed on or before 30 June annually.
- iii. Youth Justice Partner organisations support the Brent Youth Justice Service to achieve the aims outlined in the Plan.

3.0 Vision and Strategy

View from the Chair of the Brent YJS Management Board: *'Our continuous drive to be the best we can be'.*

We hope you will enjoy reading our review of the last year and our plans for the next 3 years. The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028 outlines our work addressing the individual and often complex needs of children and young people who have entered, or are at risk of entering, the local youth justice system. In 2024, this totalled 201 children (0.6%) of the Brent 10-17 population who received 289 youth justice disposals:

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

Table 1. No. of children supported by Brent YJS by disposal in 2024

Type of disposals	No. of Children
Court Sentence	98
Out Of Court Disposals	59
Turnaround Programme	38
Remand / Bail support programme	6
Total	201

We are proud of our achievements which include the integration of child first principles into our daily work, the progress we have made to reduce reoffending and first-time entrants into the youth justice system, and our continued commitment to addressing the overrepresentation of children from Black heritage groups supported by Brent YJS.

On a Departmental level it has been both a very busy and extremely productive year. In April 2024, Brent Council's Early Help and Social Care Directorate embarked on a new redesign programme to better support more holistic, joined up working and ensure we have a modern, fit for purpose service model, in line with the Government's Families First reform programme. Throughout the process, we engaged with staff across Early Help and Social Care to get a strong understanding of their experience within the existing operating model, and the key issues that they wanted to be addressed in the new model. Following these sessions, a proposed Target Operating Model was approved by OCSLT and was taken forward for formal consultation with staff in January 2025.

Thanks to the considerable help and support we received from staff across CYP we have developed a new model which brings together non-statutory Family Support Workers with Children's Social Workers in seven teams, each aligned to a Family Wellbeing Centre. Over time, Family Support Workers will receive training to begin to complete Child and Family Assessments under the guidance and supervision of a Social Worker. These teams will oversee all Family Support and Child in Need work. New Child Protection Teams will also be established, made up of Social Workers who will oversee caseloads of Child Protection, Section 47, Interim Care Order, Supervision Orders and Care Proceedings cases.

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

Brent YJS and the Community Safety Team have long worked closely to identify and support services that combat antisocial behaviour, serious youth violence, knife crime, and county lines. Existing close collaborations were strengthened further when the service was repositioned in April 2025 within the widened Children, Young People and Community Development Department (CYPCD). Both services are committed to jointly promoting engagement with local communities and victims on the development of local youth justice services.

The development of our new Targeted Prevention Hub (TPH) is of particular relevance to Brent YJS. Located within the Brent Youth and Youth Justice Service and managed by the Youth and Youth Justice Manager (reporting to the Head of Service Early Help), the TPH will bring together existing adolescent-focused resources across Early Help and Social Care to support children and young people across all areas of the child's journey, starting at the point of referral. The TPH also includes the development of a Family Group Conference Service. The TPH is due to be launched in stages from June 2025.

The child-centred workplace culture that is so evident in Brent YJS will be incorporated into TPH through modelling the revised ways of working: *This is Brent CYP - This is How We Grow*. This ensures that all service development conforms to our common values of Contribution to Society, Integrity, Creativity and Achievement. It also encourages all staff to remain Curious, Courageous and Kind in all aspects of our work, including anti-racist practice. Our quality assurance tools continue to evolve and now include a reflective supervision template and enhanced requirements for robust management oversight.

In terms of our workforce development, it is important we recruit the right staff who will go the extra mile to safeguard children and work co-productively with them to improve outcomes. We provide a supportive, compassionate, and positive work environment that nurtures talent, values all contributions equally and strives for excellence where everyone is accountable for the delivery of their work. This is key to collaborating with the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to deliver the three strategic objectives outlined in the Youth Justice Board Strategy 2024-2027:

1. Supporting the improvement of youth justice services in local communities.
2. Focusing on addressing persistent racial disparities across the youth justice system.
3. Influencing the development of policy and practice to advance the adoption of Child First principles throughout the youth justice system.

Brent's operational responsibilities have remained broadly similar in their focus since they were introduced by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This required each local authority in England and Wales to deliver youth justice

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

services in line with a statutory framework outlining youth justice responsibilities in relation to out of court disposals, court work, bail and remand, the assessment of children and young people who offend, the provision of court reports, the delivery of community interventions, and custody and resettlement.

Our approach to delivering youth justice services shares much in common with the Child-First ambitions announced by the Youth Justice Board in 2021 and re-emphasised in their Strategy Plan for 2024-2027. These are to deliver positive outcomes for children by reducing offending and creating safer communities. We see children as children first, treat them fairly and help them to build on their strengths so they can make a constructive contribution to society as responsible citizens. It is also a method that provides Brent YJS with the necessary means to achieve its principal statutory aims:

- Reducing the likelihood of children offending or re-offending
- Protecting children and young people
- Protecting the public
- Ensuring that sentences are served.

During 2024/25, we performed strongly across several key areas:

Re-offending

Re-offending rates are prone to fluctuation and tracked over a period of 18 months. The low rates of reoffending that Brent has experienced in recent years is likely to have been influenced by the considerable programme of preventative work undertaken at this time. This included the COVID-19 Pathfinder for Overrepresented Children, the MOPAC Funded Disproportionality Project, and the Your Choice cognitive behavioural therapy programme. The establishment of TPH provides renewed confidence that our reoffending rates will maintain their downwards trajectory.

Custody & Remands

Our custodial population is at a historical low. This has been influenced by our work to tackle disproportionality in the youth justice system, the implementation of the Constructive Resettlement approach, effective interventions, and multi-agency oversight including At Risk of Custody meetings.

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

First Time Entrants

The number of children entering the Youth Justice System has also been falling for more than a decade. To a real extent this has reflected the effective planning, and decision making, and wide-ranging interventions offered by the YJS Out of Court Disposal team.

Out Of Court Disposals

Our procedures and processes highlight the voice of the victim, and promote our restorative justice offer. Work undertaken in partnership with the Police and the YJS Out of Court Disposal team is truly collaborative and focused on achieving fair and good outcomes for all children and young people. In 2024 we introduced the YJB Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool to make our assessments even more child-first and to ensure interventions are needs led. The number of police referrals to the Out of Court Disposal Team is predicted to increase significantly during the life of this plan due to the strategic commitment to child-first policing made by the Metropolitan Police in April 2025.

Disproportionality

Our Disproportionality Action Plan is refreshed annually and is reflected throughout the work of the YJS. It is regularly monitored by the YJS Management Board and contains wide-ranging actions across the partnership. In 2024 we conducted an analysis of our Police diversionary interventions which showed that whilst children from Black Heritage Groups in Brent have access to OOCs, they remain under-represented when compared to children from White Heritage groups. Furthermore, children from Black Heritage groups are more likely to receive 1st tier outcomes and thus more likely to be when compared to children from White Heritage Groups. We will build upon this throughout 2025-2028 by seeking to understand whether disproportionate access to OOCs the result of child-first policing or the product of children from Black Heritage groups being subjected to disproportionately high Police attention.

Violence and Gangs

We are committed to safeguarding young people affected by gangs and violence by understanding their challenges through a trauma informed lens and responding to neurodiverse needs. Serious Youth Violence has declined year on year since 2016/17 (66 SYV offences in the year 2016/17 to 37 in 2024/25, which is 44% decrease) - although within this cohort there has been an increase in the proportion of both robbery offences and knife crime for this cohort. For this reason, safety mapping is undertaken with all children supported by the YJS to better understand the harm they are exposed to in the community and where necessary plan how they can work safely with the YJS.

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

Courts

We receive a considerable amount of positive feedback from our Magistrates at Willesden Youth Court about the quality of our court reports and our knowledge of the children who appear before the Youth Bench. Our approach to sharing court facilities with Barnet and Harrow is collaborative and ensures all children are given the best possible opportunity to receive a fair outcome regardless of where they live. We are fortunate that our judiciary supports our continual strive for improvements in many ways which has included the adoption of trauma informed court reports and bail letters.

Participation

The voices of children and their families are heard and used to develop and shape service provision. YJS workers interact with our children and young people with increasing creativity. This has included YJS children sharing short films made by Brent children with the YJS Management Board, working in partnership with the Raheem Sterling Foundation, and sharing youth insights on crime and disorder with the Police during Community Safety Team Roundtable discussions, and conducting annual surveys with Brent children and their parents and carers.

Partnership and joint working

The growing proportion of high-risk children and young people on our caseloads has resulted in a growing reliance on good partnership work and close collaborations with wider Council services. We continue to extend our partnership with the local voluntary sector to provide access to existing and newly emerging preventative support. The new TPH will further strengthen our joint working.

Restorative Justice

Our determination to support victims through direct and indirect mediation is underpinned by our Restorative Justice Policy. It is particularly pleasing that our YJS Restorative Justice Workers convened our first face to face Restorative Justice Conference in 2024. It is hoped that new arrangements introduced by the Police will significantly increase our ability to directly encourage victims to engage in restorative justice.

The YJS Management Board will focus on the following in 2025/26:

Council Services

Children's Social Care

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

Safeguarding children and young people from serious youth violence and risk outside the home is central to our work. Brent YJS will continue to jointly take forward our plans to reduce the criminalisation of children in care in collaboration with our Looked After Children, Leaving Care, Family Support and Child Protection and Court Teams.

Ongoing work undertaken with our early help and social care teams to keep children safe, such as peer mapping and supporting children at court, will be enhanced by the establishment of the Brent Contextual Safeguarding and Violence Reduction Strategic Group (CSVRSRG). Introduced in May 2025, the purpose of CSVRSRG is to understand the profile of our most vulnerable and at-risk residents, oversee themes and trends and develop interventions to make individuals and Brent residents safer. The CSVRSRG supports the Safer Brent Partnership to achieve the priorities of the Safer Brent Strategy to tackle violent crime, challenge domestic abuse and sexual abuse and prevent violence against women and girls, focus on incidents impacting our community, and protect the most vulnerable.

Community Safety Team

Brent YJS and the Community Safety Team have long worked closely to identify and support services that combat antisocial behaviour, serious youth violence, knife crime, and county lines. Existing close collaborations were strengthened further when the service was repositioned in April 2025 within the widened Children, Young People and Community Development Department (CYP CD).

Both services are committed to jointly promoting engagement with local communities and victims on the development of local youth justice services. This includes working together to include mentoring provision for YJS children as part of 2026-2029 commissioning arrangements and delivering one of the priorities in the Overarching Safer Brent Action Plan 2024-2026: facilitating *Roundtable* conversations between children known to the Police and key stakeholders.

Improving Educational Outcomes

YJS will continue to increase participation for those young people out of school. We have increased educational staffing resources to 2.0 FTE Prospects Careers Advisors, and this is complemented by one PLIAS Resettlement Worker who offers community-based support, advice and guidance to young people with criminal convictions. This combined with close oversight from the YJS NEET Working Group provides the tools and resources needed to reduce the number of children known to YJS who are not in employment, education or training (NEET). YJS will continue to deliver preventative workshops to mainstream and alternative schools. This will include working in partnership with our newly formed TPH to deliver the Your Life You Choose programme. This is a multi-agency presentation day which seeks to deter school students from crime, raise awareness of the consequences of their choices and empower them to make better decisions and keep themselves safe.

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

Victims

We continue to work collaboratively with colleagues in our Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services to reduce the unnecessary criminalisation of children living in supported accommodation by raising awareness about alternatives to reporting low level crime. This includes referral to our restorative justice offer which is open to all victims of crime and includes both direct and indirect mediation. Brent YJS has built upon plans to extend its reparations offer and now undertakes reparative work at Family Wellbeing Centres and the church-based Dementia Café. Our children and young people also exhibited significant painting and decorating flair as part of new reparations programme which has revamped the SEND area at Stonebridge Primary School. Victim's work is predicted to expand significantly following the recent decision from the Metropolitan Police to allow YJS' to have greater direct access to victims.

Public Health

We continue to work closely with Public Health. Work undertaken last year paved the way for the creation of newly revamped substance misuse provision pathways. Introduced in April this year, all children who receive Police Out of Court Disposals can access support from VIA, a voluntary sector provider that specialises in substance misuse provision for children and young people in Brent. To promote ever closer working between Brent YJS and VIA, the two organisations held a service wide meeting in May this year, that enabled practitioners to identify service improvements and new ways of working - which include a commitment to offer groupwork. This work dovetails with TPH plans to extend access to Public Health initiatives that support the physical and emotional health of children, especially those who are missing or excluded from school, or misusing drugs and alcohol.

Partnership Services

Courts

We will improve the court experience and outcomes for children through ever closer working with Court Services partners. Issues of disproportionality affecting children from Black heritage Groups will continue to be tackled. More widely we will build upon our work to enable all children to better understand what will happen at court and facilitate their active participation in ensuring they are involved and listened to during court proceedings.

Probation

The partnership between Brent YJS and the Brent Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) is strong. For many years this has enabled Brent YJS to benefit from the provision of effective staffing resources and operational processes that ensure our children transition seamlessly from the youth justice system into adult services.

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

Voluntary Sector

The continued sharing of community wide knowledge is vital to achieving good outcomes for children. This includes information shared by the Young Brent Foundation at Management Board meetings relating to contextual safeguarding, deprivation and the quality and sufficiency of safe spaces and activities for children and young people.

Brent YJS will continue to access to the broad range of youth provision offered by the Violence Reduction Unit funded *I Am Brent* consortium.

Improved Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Brent YJS Mental Health Practitioner seconded from the CAMHS Enhanced Treatment Team will continue to provide onward referral, advice and support for all children likely to require Tier 3 specialised CAMHS interventions. YJS Case Managers holding cases where children are suspected to possess less acute mental health needs can access general advice and guidance about emotional wellbeing and other community support from the Brent Centre for Young People and TPH.

Police

We will assist the Police to ensure the safety of children and better protect the public. This will include the ongoing delivery of Police led Victim Awareness and Crime Prevention group work sessions, Police One to One sessions with children and young people supported by YJS, and the joint sharing of risk and safety information between YJS and the Police. YJS will continue to support the Police to implement the child-centred ambitions contained within the new MPS Children Strategy, by identifying new opportunities to listen to and respond to the voices of children. Supporting the Community Safety Team to facilitate Roundtable events between YJS children and the Police.

National Strategy and Emerging Good Practice: the YJB and HMIP

Overall, the plans and priorities of Brent YJS will continue to be guided by good practice outlined in the *YJB Youth Justice Strategy for delivering positive outcomes for children by reducing offending and creating safer communities* (2024–2027), and recommendations made in recent HMIP thematic and area-based inspections. These include: *The experiences of Black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system* (October 2021), the *Joint thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention* (November 2023), the *HMIP Annual Report 2023: inspection of youth justice services* (Sept 24). *Standards for children in the justice system: 2023 to 2024 audit* (Feb 25), *Multi-agency responses to serious youth violence: working together to support and protect children* (Nov 24), and *Children and families' experiences of multi-agency support when impacted by serious youth violence* (Nov 24).

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As in previous years we will continue to learn from case audits, Serious Case Reviews, Key Performance Information data, through engagement with children, young people, and their families, and through case presentations at Board meetings. Furthermore, our commitment to improving outcomes for children in the Brent youth justice system will continue to shape our resourcing and focus. We believe that despite the passage of time the comments made by HMIP in our 2020 inspection report still apply: ‘...overall, Board members know how their service contributes to the work of the YJS and can judge if their service’s contribution is effective’. This 3-year Plan provides the Brent Youth justice partnership with the clarity needed to work together to achieve good outcomes for children, it also provides a very clear framework to provide strategic oversight, guidance and the support needed to improve the lives of children and young people who enter the criminal justice system.

Palvinder Kudhail

Director Early Help and Social Care

Children, Young People and Community Development (CYPCD)

4.0 Local Context: Brent Children and Young People

4.1 Children and Young People Profile (2024)

- 339,818 people live in Brent. It is the 5th largest Borough in London¹
- Brent is one of the most diverse local authority areas in the country with 65% of the total population consisting of people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic heritage groups².
- Brent’s child population aged 0-17 years (based on Census 2021) is 73,056 with 33,359 aged 10-17 years.
- Brent’s child population (0-17) represents 22% of the total Brent population.
- Brent’s population aged 10-17 represents 10% of the total Brent population.
- Brent’s child population (0-17) represents 4% of the 0-17 London population.
- Brent’s population aged 10-17 represents 4% of the 10-17 London population.

¹ ONS 2021 Census

² GLA Population Projections 2022, published 2016.

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4.2 GLA Population Projection for 2021:

Table 2. Brent Projected Population by age.

	Projected Population 2021	
	Brent	London
Aged 0-19	81,300	2,085,300
Aged 10-19	41,500	1,024,800
All Ages	339,818	8,799,800

4.3 Looked After Children in Brent

In January 2025, there were 289 Looked After Children (LAC) – eleven fewer than in January 2024 (300). Brent has a smaller LAC cohort than its statistical neighbours and less than the national average. In January 2025, Brent had a rate of 39.0 LAC per 10,000 children under 18-years.

4.4 The LAC / YJS Cohort

Within an overall YJS open caseload of 112 children and young people in April 2025 there were 17 LAC young people supervised by the YJS - compared to 10 LAC in May 2024 – the increase is the result of eight children being remanded in custody for two serious offences. Looked after Children are one of the most vulnerable groups in Brent with many children experiencing high levels of harm and exploitation. Analysis of this cohort shows:

- 94% were male.
- 76% were aged 16 or 17 years.
- 41% were of Black African or Black Caribbean Heritage (60% in May 2024).
- 59% had committed a violent offence (70% in May 2024, 83% in June 2023, 72% in February 2022 and 37% in February 2021).
- 12% had committed a drugs offence (30% in May 2024, 17% in June 2023, 39% in February 2022 and 23% in February 2021).
- 26% had committed a robbery offence (10% in May 2024, 33% in June 2023, 39% in February 2022 and 9% in February 2021).

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4.5 Substance Misuse

National substance misuse treatment data shows that young people often enter specialist substance misuse services with a range of problems or vulnerabilities related to (or in addition to) their substance use. These include:

- using multiple substances
- having a mental health treatment need
- being a looked after child
- not being in education, employment or training (NEET)
- self-harming behaviour
- sexual exploitation
- offending
- domestic abuse

Analysis of 201 children and young people supported by Brent YJS between January and December 2024 found that:

- 174 children were male, 26 children were female.
- 84 children were from a Black Heritage Group, 48 were of 'Other' Heritage, 26 were from a White Heritage Group, 26 were of Mixed Heritage, 15 were from an Asian Heritage group and the heritage of 2 was Unknown
- Cannabis was the predominant substance - used or possessed by 52 (26%) children and young people supported by Brent YJS.
- 52 (25.8%) of those children had committed a drugs offence with 51 (98%) of the offence type being possession.
- 24 of the 46 children referred to the YJS due to cannabis crime were referred for substance misuse treatment. This is consistent with the national picture where cannabis is the most common substance used by children referred for treatment (52%).
- 67% had mental health concerns.
- 7% had a special educational need.
- 1% were recorded as having difficulty with speech and language.
- 16% had been or currently were in LA care
- 26% were previously or currently subject to a CIN.
- 8% were previously or currently subject to CP.

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4.6 All children and young people: April 2025 open caseload

A snapshot of the active caseload taken in April 2025. showed there were 112 open cases. Analysis of the caseload showed that:

- Sixty percent were aged 16 or 17 years compared to 67% in May 2024, 64% in June 2023, 64% in February 2022 and 57% in February 2021.
- Eighty-eight percent were male compared to 89% in May 2024, 87% in June 2023, 78% in February 2022 and 86% in February 2021.
- Thirty-eight percent of children and young people were from a Black Caribbean or other Black Heritage Group compared to 54% in May 2024, 46% in June 2023, 48% in February 2022 and 46% in February 2021.
- Twenty-three percent, inclusive of caretaking cases, were LAC.
- Twenty-three percent were NEET (in academic years 12 and 13 and including children and young people residing out of Brent) compared to 23% in May 2024, 29% in June 2023, 39% in February 22 and 24% in February 2021.
- Seven percent of the caseload (8) had an EHCP or Statement of SEN compared to 11% in May 2024, 6% in June 2023, 5% in February 2022 and 12% in February 2021. SEND / Additional Learning Needs is one the ten newly introduced KPI's monitored by the YJB.

The wards containing the highest proportion of children in the April 2025 cohort were Alperton, Mapesbury, Stonebridge and Harlesden. Children and young people residing in these wards represent over 28% of all open cases. A significant proportion (almost a quarter) reside outside of Brent.

4.7 Brent YJS 2024 case level data:

Table 3: Brent YJS Case Level Data 2024

Brent YJS 2023/24 Case-level data (Offences and Offending Populations)			
Offences	Disposals	Offending population by ethnicity	Offending population by gender

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Total Offences	No. of Pre -court disposals	No. of First -tier disposals	No. of Community disposals	No. of Custody disposals	Total Disposals	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Chinese or Other	Unknown	Female	Male	Unknown	
210	22	73	18	2	116	12 (12.5%)	13 (13.5%)	3 (3.2%)	41 (42.7%)	26 (27.1%)	1 (1.0%)	6 (6.25%)	90 (93.75%)	0 (0.0%)	96

4.8 Reducing caseloads and increasing complexity

The significant reduction in caseloads in recent years reflects changes to national sentencing policy which is largely now focussed on more serious offences and children who are most at risk to others. This has led to smaller, more complex cohorts of children who often present with multiple vulnerabilities and are at high risk of harm to themselves and others. In recent years, the proportion of young people assessed as posing a high or very high risk has increased - especially amongst 16 to 18-year-olds. Inspection data taken from the *HMIP Annual Report March 2022*, showed that 'nearly 80 per cent of children sentenced to a court order were assessed as presenting some form of concern to others, and 30 per cent were considered to present a high or very high risk of harm'.

In Brent, the most prolific types of youth crime are offences of violence against the person, drug possession and supply, robbery, and motoring offences. Serious youth violence (often with links to gangs, drugs and county lines) is a persistent problem - along with knife crime - and has increased the amount of statutory provision children and young people receive.

5.0 Child First

5.1 Brent YJS delivers services to children and young people in accordance with *Child First principles*

Brent recognises that being Child First requires services to prioritise the best interests of children and recognise their needs, capacities, rights, and potential. For this reason, Brent supported Crest Advisory, an independent crime and justice consultancy, as part of ongoing research, commissioned by the YJB to understand the implementation of Child First in

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the youth justice system. This involved a series of staff interviews, and an in-person workshop that offered practitioners the opportunity to help shape the support that youth justice services receive from the YJB to operationalise Child First effectively. Key themes included, perceptions and practical applications of Child First, collaboration across youth justice services and partner organisations, and the YJB's role in driving the implementation of Child First.

The importance of really understanding our children and young people has become a key theme for Brent. All work is child focused and recognises structural barriers to full participation. This is reflected in the CYP training offer which includes anti-racist, and cultural competency training. Furthermore, YJS practice development sessions are delivered regularly and frequently make use of YJB effective practice resources to enhance the skill with which practitioners consider the importance of structural inequalities, racial discrimination, and the impact of trauma. YJS assessments are commenced after a young person, and their parent / carer's self-assessments have been completed.

Recognising neurodivergent characteristics is a fundamental part of being Child First because the way people think, move, act, see, hear, and process information varies from person to person which means some people do things differently from others. The term 'neurodiversity' covers many different conditions including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum condition (ASC) also known as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), dyspraxia, dyslexia, and developmental language disorder (DLD). Historically conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD and ASCs were viewed as separate disorders or conditions. More recent research has shown these should not be considered as binary diagnoses, in that you either 'have it or do not', but more like continuous traits such as height or blood pressure where everyone lies somewhere along a continuum. The impact of having one or more condition for the individual can vary substantially however:

- About one in six people are thought to be neurodivergent
- One in four in the unemployed population are thought to be neurodivergent
- At least one in three people moving through the justice system are thought to be neurodivergent - many will not have been diagnosed whilst at school.

By taking an inclusive approach to service delivery and design, Brent YJS is able to engage more children and young people in an accessible manner. Creating a formulation for each child means the YJS has moved away from labels, to being more child-centred and towards inclusive and not exclusive approaches. Brent YJS promotes a child's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society. Brent's continued focus on trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in its work with children and young people assists practitioners to identify those at higher risk of

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harm. Specific work can then be identified where the young person has complex issues, is 'stuck' or where there is high anxiety within the professional network. Joint 'signs of safety' group supervision with social work colleagues helps YJS workers to understand concerns and the importance of the joint planning process.

Brent YJS recognises the importance of Speech & Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) in our work with children. SLCN is described as difficulty understanding or using language. It is a type of neurodiversity, which can only be diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist. SLCN can also be deemed to be a hidden disability. The Brent Youth Justice Board, led by our NHS and Inclusion Service representatives, is currently redoubling efforts to establish referral pathways that will enable Brent children and young people known to YJS to access Speech and Language Therapy.

5.2 Encouraging children's active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion

The Brent CYPD Participation strategy describes how young people and children have meaningful and inclusive involvement throughout the decision-making process for services that impact them. It provides a structured approach to creating an environment that enables children, young people, and their families to have active involvement which influences decision making, policy and service development. Overall, participation offers numerous benefits for young people, giving them a voice and platform to be actively heard, fostering personal growth promoting social connections and enabling them to have a meaningful impact on their own lives and the wider community.

Adopting this approach has strengthened YJS's ability to form meaningful and creative collaborations. Children supported by the YJS Participation Officer have developed short films about their aspirations, challenges and experiences as victims and perpetrators of crime. Closer links with the Raheem Sterling Foundation are being formed and this has led to a group of five children, who supported a knife amnesty, discussing their hopes and aspirations with Raheem Sterling for over an hour. 'Roundtable' discussions with the Police and young people commenced in 2024. These afford children from the YJS the opportunity to share their views on crime and exploitation with the Police and senior decision makers.

During 2024/25 YJS children from Black Heritage groups identified the need for music and creative activities to form a greater part of the YJS offer. As a result of this, children from YJS have been supported to access an extensive range of music, sport and creative activities at Family Well-being Centres. All programmes have been designed to respond more specifically to children's needs and provide an open space for self-awareness. This work will be extended over the next

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three-years in line with the priorities contained in Brent's recently launched Youth Strategy 2025-2028 which are: Being Heard and Taking Part, Reaching Goals and Enjoying Yourself, Feeling Good and Staying Safe.

5.3 Promoting a childhood removed from the justice system through prevention, diversion, and minimal intervention

Possession of cannabis represents approximately 70% of all First Time Entrants to the youth justice system. Since August 2021, Brent children and young people arrested for the possession of cannabis have received Community Resolutions. These are non-criminal disposals that function as an alternative to entering the youth justice System. Despite the voluntary nature of Community Resolutions, children who receive them are offered a level of support that is commensurate to other OOCs. This includes assessment, and co-produced intervention and safety plans. Interventions offered to children include referrals to substance misuse counselling, Police led crime awareness sessions, and mental health screening and referral.

The work of the Brent Out of Court Disposal Joint Decision-Making Panel includes healthy debate on mitigating factors for children who have offended. The Panel adopts a child-first approach to identifying and balancing the personalised needs of the child against the wishes of the victim. Relevant professionals such as CAMHS workers, Social Workers, Substance Misuse Workers, Inclusion Service Officers, and Mentors are invited to Panel meetings to enable a holistic understanding of a child's background, neurodivergent characteristics, trauma concerns, learning needs or mental health issues. This enables the Panel to make child focused decisions that prevent children from being unnecessarily criminalised when they break the law. Children on an OOC who experience difficulties in school or have issues with their school place are referred to the Inclusion Service so their family can receive advice and specialist support. This includes managed moves, being home educated, and obtaining school places.

6.0 Voice of the Child

6.1 Brent YJS listens to children and young people

Brent listens closely to the voice of the child. It is heard through a range of activities that are designed and implemented by young people. This has enabled Brent YJS to move beyond hearing their views to ensuring young people are part of decision making, planning and implementation. We have journeyed with them to the implementation of a range youth led projects. These have been more creative and interactive approaches, supported by the YJS Participation Officer, such

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as podcasts and short films - including a short film about online exploitation that was shared with the Contextual Safeguarding Strategic Group.

Brent YJS commitment to co-production and youth participation was afforded a strategic advantage in April 2022, when the YJS Management Board approved a proposal to form the Youth and Youth Justice Service by bringing together the YJS and the Council's responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the Brent Youth Strategy. Approval was also given by the Board for Early Help to develop a small team to establish youth led activities at Family Wellbeing Centres. This has enabled YJS to promote service user access to a much wider range of youth participation opportunities than was previously possible. It has also created close alignment to a range of universal provision that had previously been difficult for many children from the YJS to access.

6.2 Over the course of the HMIP Inspection of youth justice services 2022/24, 423 text surveys were sent to children, parents and carers. HMIP received 152 complete responses and 52 partial responses (204 in total). Key findings included:

- Ninety-six per cent of children, parents and carers felt the aims of the YJS were communicated effectively to them: 'Help and guide', 'keep me/my child out of trouble', 'avoid further offending', 'to make better choices'.
- Ninety-eight per cent believed that their case managers had the right skills to help them: 'You get warm vibes with them – you feel that you can talk to them'. 'I feel confident with my worker, and I trust them'. 'It's taken some time to build the trust because it is something I struggle with. They got round it by being genuine, and being with them a long time now has helped me to really get to know them'.
- Ninety per cent felt that their YJS had supported them and helped them to get access to the services that would support them and help them to stay out of trouble: 'They pay for me to go to a music studio and use it for free. The people that work there have also helped me to learn how to produce music and beats.'
- Ninety-nine per cent of children felt that the places where YJS practitioners saw them were safe and accessible.
'They ask where you feel safe when you first meet them. I didn't feel safe where my school was and my YJS worker helped to get me into a new school placement.'

6.3 Brent Young People and Parent and Carer Surveys – 2024

During 2024 an extensive survey took place with YJS young people and their parents and carers. This involved 68 young people. Participants were given multiple choice questions, afforded the opportunity to provide explanatory information, and asked to rate responses on a scale to 10 - higher is better.

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Of the 68 young people, 38 (56%) were subject to a referral order and 8 (12%) were subject to a Youth Rehabilitation Order. There were 2 (3%) subject to a Detention and Training Order.

There were a wide range of responses to the question 'What led you to offend? This included frustration, anger, fear, stupidity, being bullied, not thinking, decision making both positive and negative, homelessness and money and a sense of justice. A few children maintained their innocence.

Other findings include:

- 94% (64) believe the case manager understands what has happened in their life.
- 96% (65) described their strengths as a person as sporting, nice person, resilient, good at DIY, sociable, fighting and music.
- 39% (22) fully understood their sentencing experience in court (10 rating - highest) and another 56% (32) gave ratings at 5 or above. 3 (5%) gave a rating of 1 (lowest).
- 96% (65) said they had their court order explained to them by the YJS officer.
- The overall court experience was viewed in varied ways by young people. This ranged from 'stressed, nervous, scared, trials are not fair', to 'it was ok, alright, calm, very good' and 'it was ok, but the fine was inconvenient'.
- 73% (19) said the YJS officer explained what the court order meant (42 young people skipped this question).
- 100% of young people said their case manager had completed work with them prior to an initial referral order panel. This included a learning questionnaire, YP assessment, mood questionnaire, screening tools, parent assessments, career choices, negative peers, and learning styles assessment.
- 97% (66) were offered an opportunity to engage in positive activities whilst in contact with the YJS.
- 100% felt listened to by their case manager.
- 99% (67) felt satisfied with the work that the case manager had completed with them.
- Key areas of work completed within the plan as indicated by the young people were peer pressure (54%), substance misuse (59%), victim awareness (63%), ETE (46%), work on my offence (62%), my identity (46%), reparation (41%), work on my safety (41%), restorative justice (21%), family support (28%) ETE work with Prospects (22%), stop and search (knowing your rights) (24%), weapons awareness (40%) and ETE work with PLIAS (16%).
- 94% (64) said that the case manager had given them feedback about their progress.
- When asked what has worked well or made the biggest difference on your order, responses included 'Obtaining a passport, kept me busy, knowing right and wrong, understand things more, anything can be a weapon,

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appointments give me a routine, cast off some friends, how to think and behave, good substance misuse sessions, helped my self-esteem and mental health, engaging with ETE, advice to keep me out of trouble, I like talking to you, session on decision making, having help from different people, substance misuse and mental health assessment'. One respondent stated: 'I am not the person I was 2 years ago and that is a good thing.'

- 100% said that their case manager has encouraged them to think about their future plans.
- 99% (67) said that the case manager contacted them on the date and time expected for their session each week.
- 69% (47) said that their case manager had visited them at home.
- 78% (53) of them had said that the case manager had supported them to keep them safe. This was due to 'safety mapping, advice to not go into certain areas, not going missing and telling staff where I am, advising me to talk to my Mum about the threats and better friends.'
- 34% (23) have been a victim.
- 81% (55) had been stopped and searched.
- 61% (41) felt well supported by their case manager (a 10 rating) and a further 26% (18) rated this support as 8 rating or 9.
- Participants expanded on how support' could be improved with a range of responses including: 'less (face to face) appointments and more appointments over the phone, sometimes when I am talking she does not take it all in and could listen some more, continuous support, not being so reluctant to give second chances, getting to know my case manager better, not making me do victim awareness or reparation, to be more understanding of why I did what I did, moving quicker on stuff that needs to get done.'
- 78% (53) felt that the YJS helped them to stop re-offending
- When asked what the biggest barriers to moving forwards in their lives were, participants replied: 'the neighbourhood, wrong friends, my ADHD, I don't want to answer this, some people in Southend can be a negative influence, mistakes in life, criminal record, need a job or training opportunity, to think about what I'm doing before I do it, Social Care do not listen and are too much in my business, being in custody and then needing to make up for lost time, stopping smoking cannabis, working, alcohol and my anxiety with people, nothing, being disciplined, being tagged, and living in Wembley'.
- When asked how the YJS could improve its service to young people, participants replied: 'have people work with us that have gone through the same experiences with committing a crime, don't assume people are in gangs or talk about safety issues when it's not the case, less appointments, no panels, book me a music studio session every Saturday, more videos and presentations with the interventions, more activities and practical work, not coming to court as it makes me feel like a bad person, having a jobs board for local opportunities - the SPEAR program does this but most of the opportunities are not in my area, doing what you say you will do quicker, Nah I

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don't think so, continue supporting them, more free activities like free gym memberships, have more Panels like Roundtable for young people to have good discussions about different things that affect them, not have so many appointments, more straight to the point, by providing constructive use of time such as studio time, or sports activities.'

Although findings were positive overall, there several areas where improvements need to be made. These include:

- Whilst YJS Case Managers invest a great deal of time explaining court proceedings, it is worrying that a large proportion did not fully understand their sentencing experience at court, and equally that some children were stressed, nervous and scared by their overall court experience. YJS will review current approaches to preparing children for court to identify the strengths and weaknesses of our current approach. Recognising the likely impact of known and undiagnosed speech and language difficulties and progressing our work with the NHS and Inclusion Service to unlock pathways to SALT provision will be central to improving our understanding.
- Similarly, YJS Case Managers routinely explain what a court order is, its requirements and the consequences of non-compliance. It is therefore concerning that 42 young people did not respond to this question. The YJS will assess the extent to which these messages are being delivered in a child friendly way that matches an individual's learning needs. Practice development sessions and individual support will be provided to officers where necessary. The extent to which speech and language difficulties may have contributed to the low response rate must also be considered as part of wider work to access SALT provision for children known to YJS.
- Thirty-one percent of children said they didn't receive a home visit. Work is needed to understand why. Whilst there are often safety reasons for not doing so, analysis of the ChildView database will be undertaken to understand why home visits were not undertaken in all instances. Team Managers will be expected to have close oversight of this area of practice, and where necessary provide rationale for not doing so in supervision.

6.4 YJS Parents and Carers Survey - 2024

Twenty-nine parents took part in the YJS Parents and Carers Survey 2024. Seventy-six percent of participants were female. Fifty-two percent of their children were sentenced at court and the remainder received an Out of Court Disposal (OCD) from the Police.

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Parents overwhelmingly felt emotional strain because of their child's involvement in the youth justice system. Participants referred to: 'sadness, upset, shame, tearful, feeling bad, and anxiety'.

Other findings include:

- 42% of parents found accompanying their child to court to be a difficult experience. Seventeen percent (5) said they had a good experience at court.
- 100% of parents attended and participated in their child's initial YJS meeting.
- 97% of parents felt listened to and included in the preparation of their child's Intervention Plan.
- 93% of parents were sent a copy of the plan of work to be undertaken.
- 51% of parents were invited to the child's quarterly review meeting.
- 97% felt they were able to speak to their child's case manager about any issues or concerns.
- 100% reported that they received up to date reports from the child's case manager about what is happening.
- Over 90% rated their experience as 8 and above when asked if their child was fully supported by the YJS.
- 93% were offered support, advice, and information about parenting.
- The support parents received was regarded positively: 'I could air my concerns, excellent advice and support, given a lot of tools to keep calm, supported and encouraged throughout, really helpful, I followed the advice and it worked'.
- 93% of parents and carers were satisfied with the service received from the YJS (43%) or very satisfied (50%).
- The top five issues of concerns identified by parents and carers were: substance misuse:19 parents (65%), child criminal exploitation:18 parents (63%), gangs: 20 parents (69%), social media: 14 parents (48%) and County lines: 12 parents (41%).

6.5 Although findings were positive overall, there several opportunities for improvements to be made. These include:

- It is unsurprising that so many parents and carers experienced emotional difficulties as a result of their child's involvement in the youth justice system. However, given that 100% had attended their child's initial YJS meeting, and so too that they were happy with the support provided by case managers, it is notable that so many found court to be a difficult experience. This may suggest that they require more emotional assistance than a Case Manager can be expected to give. Either way, YJS staff will work with parents to identify any additional needs that could be provided by the YJS and to refer them to local support including that offered at Family Wellbeing Centres.

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- Case Managers will invite all parents and carers to their child's quarterly review meeting. Team Managers will provide close oversight of this work and ensure the reasons for all instances of absence are recorded on ChildView.
- Parents and carers will be given access to structured workshops covering the issues they are most concerned about.

6.6 Raheem Sterling Foundation

In collaboration with Raheem Sterling Foundation and Word 4 Weapons, seven new Knife Amnesty bins were unveiled in Brent at an event held in May 2024, attended by five young people from Brent YJS, council and community workers. 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 away from knife crime and towards support with mentoring, education, and work opportunities. The bins align with the Raheem Sterling Foundation's Power of 7 objectives: social mobility, employment, education, community, creativity, leadership, and enterprise.

Commenting on the partnership, Raheem Sterling said, "I want this project to make a real difference to young people in Brent by guiding them to take positive actions and have better access to a powerful support network of opportunities. Growing up in Brent, I understand the challenges that young people experience every day, I truly hope our work enables change and I'm grateful to all our partners and the organisations supporting us to help improve the lives and increase opportunities for young people."

The YJS Participation Worker, together with YBF and the Raheem Sterling Foundation, organised for the five YJS young people who supported the event to travel to the Foundation's headquarters to discuss crime and community safety with the footballer Raheem Sterling. They spent a couple of hours being mentored, sharing their views on the challenges young people face, and hearing inspirational stories.

6.7 Brent Youth Parliament (BYP)

Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) represents over 77,000 children and young people living in the borough and encourages them to express their views and have a say on decisions that affect them. The parliament is open to young people aged between 10 and 19 (and up to twenty-five for young people with special education needs or disabilities) from a range of backgrounds, who represent schools, youth groups and different communities in Brent.

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Brent Youth Parliament run by an elected executive group of young people, which includes two members of the UK Youth Parliament who represent young people in Brent in national campaigns and decision-making. BYP meets at Brent Civic Centre once a month to discuss and campaign on issues that affect young people.

6.8 The Brent Youth Zone

This website promotes Brent Youth Parliament, the Fire Cadets and provides a platform for Brent young people to access universal information about employment, learning, support and advice and activities to get involved with. The Brent Youth Zone website is also used as an engagement tool for young people by providing online access to youth surveys to gather the voice and views of young people.

6.9 Junior Care in Action (Junior CIA), Care in Action (CIA) and Care Leavers in Action (CLIA)

The Children in Care Council for Brent Council works to make sure children and young people in care and care leavers have the chance to be involved in making decisions and in sharing views about the services and support received. These groups use flyers, newsletters and arrange meetings to share information and experiences.

6.10 Christmas Tree Appeal

In December 2023, Brent Early Help worked with the MET Police as part of their Xmas Tree appeal, reaching 3,000 young people in Brent CYP (including all YJS children) and across the borough in Family Wellbeing Centres. The aim of the work was to ensure that as many young people as possible received an age-appropriate book (for 0–12-year-olds) or a £10 online shop voucher for 13+ year olds, as well as toys, games and learning resources. This was a large undertaking involving logistics and planning and was a great success. Planning was expected to begin again in October 2024; however, the MET Police were unable to undertake the Christmas Tree appeal and distribute donations in the same as they were focussing on raising funds instead.

After exploring alternative avenues, Brent CYP received a delivery of £535 worth of £15 Amazon vouchers and £10-£20 Love2Shop vouchers donated by 'Wates Living Space'. These were distributed to young people across the Looked After and Leaving Care team, 0-25 Disabled Children and Young People's Service, Accelerated Support Team, Family Solutions, Youth Justice Service and Family Wellbeing Centres. The Church of Annunciation in Wembley kindly provided a large range of children's toys, clothes, games, books and craft items, which were given out over the two CYP conference days to Early Help staff for their Brent children and young people for Christmas. We also received two sacks of children's toys from the Ace Café in Stonebridge, which were given to the St. Raphael's and Three Trees Family Wellbeing Centres. Planning for Christmas 2025 will begin in October.

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7.0 Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

7.1 The Brent Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a multidisciplinary, multiagency service that works with children and young people aged 10-17 years and their families. Brent YJS provides support in relation to diversion, prevention, out of court disposals, court work, bail and remand, the assessment of children and young people who offend, the provision of court reports, the planning and delivery of community interventions, indirect and direct work with victims, and custody and resettlement.

The YJS sits within the CWYCD Department and is managed by the Head of Early Help. The Director of Early Help and Social Care chairs the YJS Management Board. The Board provides strategic direction and support for the YJS, ensuring that planning is undertaken to deliver effective youth justice services - which aim to reduce offending and safeguard children and young people. Secondly, the Board are informed by an understanding of the characteristics of the YJS cohort and the type and level of risk to children and young people and ensure proportionality in disposals for all children and young people in Brent.

7.2 The YJS Management Board has representation across the partnership at senior levels and has maintained a stable and engaged membership with awareness and knowledge of children in the youth justice system. Board members have developed an effective teamwork approach and contribute service area responses to Inspectorate recommendations, wider planning, and challenges. This consistent approach is embedded operationally reflecting the partnership's strategic focus on addressing disparity and disproportionality. All Board members have been encouraged to observe practice. A case study is presented by a member of the YJS at each Management Board meeting, promoting a wider understanding of interventions and their impact.

7.3 A review of the YJS Management Board's Terms of Reference, in adherence to YJB guidance, was approved in January 2025. The Board continues to monitor the original four KPIs reported to the YJB as well as overseeing the introduction and performance of ten new KPIs. The KPI on Management Board Attendance was met in full in 2023/24. The attendance at the Board remained good overall throughout 2024/25, however probation and educational representation dipped in the first half of the year due to new appointments.

Table 4: YJS Management Board Attendance 2024/25 by Quarter

Brent YJS Management Board Attendance 2024/25
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Senior Management Board Attendance	2024-25 Quarter 1 18/04/24	2024-25 Quarter 2 25/07/24	2024-25 Quarter 3 24/10/24	2024-25 Quarter 4 30/01/25
Health	0	1	2	2
LA Children's Social Care	0	2	1	2
LA Education	0	0	0	1
Police	2	2	2	1
Probation	0	0	1	1
Total	2	5	6	7

7.4 Families First reform programme

The Early Help and Social Care service commenced a redesign programme in April 2024, to make provision more seamless, holistic, and future fit. Involving staff at all levels and all stages has been a critical part of the programme's success. A series of workshops with Service Managers, Team Managers and practitioners across the service were conducted to gather a wide range of views and ideas. Other Local Authorities were also engaged, including those involved in the Government's Families First for Children Pathfinder, to understand best practice elsewhere. From this a set of key design principles underpinning the development of any model options were adopted:

- Ensure that Children and Young People are at the centre of everything we do.
- Reduction in silo-working between departments.
- Minimising and streamlining handover points between teams.
- Minimise assessments and duplication for children and families.
- Create greater opportunities for shared learning and experience building between teams
- Greater consistency for children and families.
- Increase practitioners' capacity to build strong relationships with children and families.
- Supporting the recruitment and retention of Key Workers and Social Workers.
- Improving the experience of Children and Families engaging with the Early Help and Social Care services.

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Using these guiding principles, three model options were developed, two of which were taken forward for extensive staff engagement in November and December 2024. Well over 200 staff participated in these sessions, providing extensive feedback on model options and guiding the choice of a preferred model. After careful consideration, OCSLT approved a proposed Target Operating Model for formal consultation with staff in January 2025. The model features a joining together of non-statutory Family Support Workers with Children's Social Workers in seven teams aligned to Family Wellbeing Centres. Each team is responsible for overseeing Family Support and Child in Need work. Additionally, Social Workers will be allocated to new Child Protection Teams and Court Teams to manage child protection and care proceedings cases. Care Planning Teams will remain the same, with the only change being that cases will only transfer to these teams once a Care Order is issued. Ultimately, it is hoped that this new model, with a stronger focus on preventative family support work, and closer working between qualified and alternatively qualified practitioners will reduce the number of handovers between different teams and ultimately improve outcomes for children and families.

7.5 Brent Youth Strategy 2025-2028

In March 2025 the refreshed Brent Youth Strategy 2025 – 2028 was approved by Cabinet after a period of consultation with partners and young people in Brent.

The refreshed youth strategy and action plan represent our promise and commitment to the young people of Brent, to deliver and achieve together. The Brent Youth Strategy document is made with and for the children and young people of Brent and outlines clearly how the Council and partners will work for them and support them towards a positive future. This will be monitored through the work of the Youth Strategy Delivery Group, that works collaboratively with multi-agency partners. Young people in Brent have been consulted throughout the process so that their voices and views on what is most important to them are heard and clearly reflected. The Brent Youth Strategy 2025 – 2028 is grounded in principles of equity, inclusion and innovation with a focus on ensuring that every young person, regardless of background, has the resources, confidence and opportunity to lead a healthy, fulfilling and purpose-driven life.

Through collaborative partnerships, the aim is to create a sustainable framework that nurtures the young people of Brent to be equipped to thrive.

Together with our partners, including the voluntary and community sector across Brent, we will continue building close and lasting relationships that will enable us to effectively succeed in the delivery of our strategy plan. We celebrate Brent for the diverse and vibrant borough that we are, and we are dedicated to ensuring the best possible

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

outcomes for our young people. This refreshed youth strategy and action plan represent our promise and commitment to young people to deliver and achieve together.

The Youth Strategy's Priorities, or main themes, as identified by young people, are:

- Being Heard and Taking Part (Engagement and Participation)
- Reaching Goals and Enjoying Yourself (Skills, Opportunities and Activities)
- Feeling Good (Health and Wellbeing)
- Staying Safe (Safety)

On 7 April 2025, young people gathered at St Raphael's Family Wellbeing Centre to celebrate the launch of the Brent Youth Strategy 2025 – 2028 with stalls promoting youth provision and support across Brent, free sporting, music and gaming activities, hot lunch and snacks provided and a sponsored raffle.

Members of Brent Youth Parliament, who played a key role in shaping the strategy, declared: "This is a strategy made for young people, by young people, with our fingerprints embedded firmly in it."

Brent Council is strongly committed to supporting the local youth sector with the principles in the Brent Youth Strategy. These include supporting a programme of refurbishment of existing voluntary sector youth facilities as well as converting spaces such as empty buildings or offices into modern accommodation that the voluntary sector could use for the benefit of young people across the borough. These developments - through the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) Youth Provision Project – will see up to £2.15 million spent on physical infrastructure to improve youth provision in growth areas. The youth voluntary sector will be able to apply for funding to improve or upscale their buildings to deliver social infrastructure and to improve the quality of life for children and young people in Brent in line with the Brent Borough Plan 2023-2027.

- 7.6** The YJB's revised Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) were introduced in England from April 2023 and approved by the YJS Management Board in January 2023. This stated that the existing four current KPIs: binary reoffending rate, frequency of reoffending, first time entrants and use of custody, will continue to be used in conjunction with ten new KPIs. These are accommodation, education, training and employment, SEND/additional learning needs, mental health and emotional wellbeing, substance misuse, out of court disposals, management board attendance, wider services, serious youth violence, and victims.

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7.7 Brent YJS is aligned to the Youth Justice Board oversight framework. This framework, informed by the YJB's vision (April 2023), monitors youth justice system performance, oversight, assurance, and compliance. It additionally highlights the YJB's two specific monitoring functions: operation of the youth justice system and the provision of youth justice services and the extent to which the system aims are being achieved and any such standards met. The framework has provided clarity on how the YJB's monitoring function is fulfilled, outlining how oversight of local youth justice services is undertaken and delivery across the wider system is understood. The framework – consolidated through the YJB Strategic Plan 2024-27 - is a new way of working for the YJB which involves challenge and support and helping systems and practices to be embedded. Our continued good relations with the YJB, who attend our Board meetings and regularly meet with the Youth and Youth Justice Manager, will continue to have far reaching benefits for our children, families, and wider communities.

7.8 The Brent Borough Plan 2023-2027, sets out what the council will focus on over the next four years. The Plan is called 'Moving Brent Forward Together' and it focuses on five priority areas:

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

By focussing on keeping young people safe, raising aspirations, empowering young people and encouraging them to be seen and heard, the work of Brent YJS is closely aligned to the Best Start in Life theme.

8.0 Workforce development

8.1 In line with the YJB Business Plan 2023/24, Brent YJS has a diverse workforce that reflects the communities it serves. Brent YJS shared its staffing profile by ethnicity with the Youth Justice Board in September 2024. This showed it is diverse and representative of children in the Brent Youth Justice System. Brent has a Disproportionality Action Plan which it regularly monitors - via the YJS management Board - and continues to ensure that everyone who works for the YJS has planned and recorded individual training and development.

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- 8.2** Brent YJS benefits from partner staffing contributions equivalent to 7.6 FTE within the YJS and senior members from partnership agencies at Board level. The YJS is compliant with the minimum staffing requirement set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – with multi agency staff from Education, Health, Probation, and the Police.
- 8.3** Brent Police continue to provide a continuous staffing contribution that exceeds the minimum statutory requirement of 1.0 FTE. There are 2.0 FTE Police Officers.
- 8.4** There are two mental health practitioners within the YJS, a seconded CAMHS practitioner and a NHSE funded Youth Justice and Liaison and Diversion Worker who undertakes mental health screening. Both offer children and young people 1:1 session, develop staff knowledge around emotional wellbeing, and support the wider professional network.
- 8.5** A 0.6 FTE National Probation Service officer is seconded to YJS. The officer holds a case load, advises YJS officers about transitions to the adult estate, and makes positive contributions to wider YJS work including team meeting attendance and providing duty cover.
- 8.6** Since the formation of YOTs in 2001, Education has fulfilled their statutory requirement to support YJS via annual Direct Schools Grant financial contributions.
- 8.7** Reporting to the Head of Service, Early Help, the Youth and Youth Justice Manager has overall management oversight of 21.5 FTE staff members.
- 8.8** Brent YJS has maintained a stable workforce of permanently employed staff. All staff have accessed training through the Brent Council CYP training programme and INSET training recommended by the Youth Justice Board. The team have received more specialist training this year such as, Restorative Justice Practice, Youth Justice Legal Training, Cultural Competency Training, anti-racist training, and neurodiversity. Regular monthly YJS monthly practice development sessions during 2024/25 have provided a wide and comprehensive focus upon case practice issues including restorative justice, understanding the new YJB KPIs, assessment and planning, Referral Order Panel best practice, reviews, management oversight, and reflective supervision.
- 8.9** The YJS will continue to develop its practice in line with the neurodiverse and personalised needs of children and young people during 2025/27. This will include building upon our understanding of disproportionality concerns, cultural competency and anti-racist training, especially around the journey of the child.

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8.10 YJS Case Managers have access to a range of one to one and group work interventions which cover a range of themes. These include offending behaviour, risk and safety interventions, victim awareness, decision and problem solving, anger and emotional management, and weapon and knives interventions.

9.0 Resourcing and Services

9.1 The YJS benefits from well-established partnerships with agencies within the voluntary sector including:

9.2 VIA

Since 2017, VIA, a voluntary sector provider that specialises in substance misuse provision have been supporting YJS children and young people:

- Who have admitted to, or been found guilty of, the commissioning of drug offences by a court of law.
- Or have been assessed as having substance misuse needs as part of the YJS duty to supervise court ordered sentences. This crucial support has been made possible due to Brent Public Health commissioning arrangements.

Following a remapping of substance misuse pathways exercise led by Public Health, VIA have increased their support in April 2025 to all children in the Brent youth justice system. This has been achieved by extending the referral pathway to include children who have received a Police-issued OOC for drug related offences, or are assessed by the YJS to have, or be at risk of, substance misuse harm.

Substance Misuse is one the ten newly introduced KPI's monitored by the YJB.

9.3 I Am Brent

I Am Brent is a local consortium includes Step Up Hub (lead organisation), PLIAS, Sport at the Heart, Connect Stars, United Borders and Hilltop. These organisations work together to address the root causes and effects of violence affecting young people in the London Borough of Brent. Support includes pre-custodial release engagement, intensive trauma informed mentoring, one to one casework support, employability support, psychotherapy, and family support. Under YJS management, TPH will work with I Am Brent to maximise the effectiveness of referral routes across CYPCD and identify opportunities to work more collaboratively.

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9.4 Brent Centre for Young People (BCYP)

BCYP offers a range of psychotherapeutic mental health interventions, designed specifically for children and young people who offend and who often struggle to engage with mental health services.

9.5 St. Giles Trust

St. Giles offer gang affected mentoring for children and young people involved in or at risk of criminal exploitation. Provision is accessible via the Exploitation, Violence and Vulnerability Panel.

9.6 Young Brent Foundation (YBF)

YBF are an umbrella organisation for local voluntary organisations and community groups. They provide mentors from across member organisations to match young people with mentors best suited to support them. The work, support, and guidance they provide to YJS is informed and guided by their extensive community knowledge. YBF is the primary link between YJS and the local youth sector. Community information is routinely shared with YJS staff and at a strategic level through membership of the YJS Management Board.

9.7 Multi-agency Panels

Brent YJS leads or contributes to a wide range of multi-agency Panels with specific strategic and operational functions. These include:

Resettlement and Aftercare panel

This monthly panel discusses all children in custody and ensures the accommodation and wider needs of children and young people due to be released from custody are identified and planned for in a timely and transparent fashion in line with the YJB's principles around constructive resettlement. The Panel also provides senior oversight on bail and remand work. Regular panel members include Feltham YOI, the Police, Social Care, Early Help, the NHS, CAMHS, Restorative Justice Workers, and the CYP Placement Service.

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Strategy and Professionals meetings

These meetings are convened as and whenever necessary to share risk, court outcomes, and other information needed to keep children and young people in the criminal justice system safe. Members include YJS, Social Care, Police, Health, and Education.

Exploitation, Violence and Vulnerability Panel

This Panel co-ordinates the sharing of information between partners about children and young people at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation, trafficking and modern slavery, and missing children to ensure identified risks are appropriately managed.

YJS Risk, Safety and Wellbeing Multi-agency Management Risk Forum

This YJS led multiagency forum meets monthly. It provides senior management oversight of risk and safety and wellbeing for some of the most vulnerable children and young people in Brent. Attendance includes Social Care, Police, CAMHS, Probation, Inclusion Service and YJS staff.

Contextual Safeguarding and Violence Reduction Strategic Group

The purpose of the Brent Contextual Safeguarding and Violence Reduction Strategic Group (CSVRSG) is to understand the profile of our most vulnerable and at-risk residents, oversee themes and trends and develop interventions to make individuals and Brent residents safer. The CSVRSG – which has a core membership of numerous agencies and other agencies as required - supports the Safer Brent Partnership to achieve the priorities of the Safer Brent Strategy to:

- Tackle violent crime
- Challenge domestic abuse sexual abuse and preventing violence against women and girls
- Focus on incidents impacting our community
- Protecting the most vulnerable

The Brent CSVRSG is accountable to the Safer Brent Partnership and contributes to the Safeguarding Children Forum and Safeguarding Adult Board.

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YJS Risk, Safety and Wellbeing Multi-agency Management Risk Forum

This YJS led multiagency forum meets monthly. It provides senior management oversight of risk and safety and wellbeing for some of the most vulnerable children and young people in Brent. Attendance includes Social Care, Police, CAMHS, Probation, Inclusion Service and YJS staff.

YJS Transitions Panel

Chaired by YJS with attendance from Probation, Police (IOM) and Leaving Care colleagues, the Panel discusses young people transitioning from the YJS to Probation in accordance with the new local YJS and Probation Protocol – which is informed by the Joint National Protocol for transitions in England (June 2021). The purpose of the Panel is to support the planned and safe movement of young people from the youth justice service to the probation service when they turn 18.

Restorative Justice (RJ) Improvement Group

This is a group comprised of Referral Panel members, YJS, Police and the Courts. Members consider meaningful reparation opportunities within the community that are beneficial for both the community and young people. It is also a forum for discussion and reflection about RJ good practice. The Panel enables children and young people to consider different ways of repairing the harm caused by their offending, acquire the opportunity to reflect on their offence(s), and see the wider consequences of their offending for themselves and others.

NEET Working Group

The NEET Working Group consists of the YJS, the Virtual School, Prospects and PLIAS (mentoring). It provides a child-focused consideration of NEET young people on a case-by-case basis, inclusive of planning work and educational initiatives to help young people engage in education and training.

Out of Court Disposals (O OCD) Decision Making Panel

This weekly Panel is chaired by YJS and attended by Police, Health, YJS, Social Care, Early Help staff and Restorative Justice workers to jointly consider and determine O OCD decisions guided by the ACPO Police child matrix. It additionally identifies young people who are eligible to attend the Turnaround project.

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9.8 The Safer Brent Partnership (SBP)

Community Safety Partnerships are multi-agency, strategic groups that oversee the approach to reducing crime and antisocial behaviour in a particular area. SBP is made up of representatives from many agencies, including the London Borough of Brent, Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade, National Probation Service, Voluntary Services and Victim Support. SBP aims to build an involved community, with less fear of crime and greater confidence in services, which takes responsibility for its own actions. It also pledges to bring to justice those who cause the most harm to our community, using restorative approaches and out-of-court disposals where appropriate. Its work is intelligence-led and evidence-based, identifying real issues and taking a problem-solving approach to reducing them. The YJS Management Board is linked to SBP via its Chair who is also a member of SBP.

10.0 Progress on priorities in previous plan – new developments - and related performance against KPIs

10.1 Nationally: Youth Justice Board Strategic Plan 2024-27

Encouraging progress has been made over the last twelve years across the national youth justice system:

- The number of proven offences committed by children has fallen by approximately 65%. From 98,937 in 2012/13 to around 34,300 in 2022/23.
- There have been substantial falls in the number of children entering the justice system. This amounts to a reduction of around 77% between the years ending March 2012 and March 2023.
- There were approximately 11,900 occasions where children were sentenced at court in the year ending March 2023. This is 73% lower than in the year ending March 2012.
- The number of children being sentenced to custody has also shrunk. In the year ending March 2023, the average monthly population of the youth secure estate was the lowest it has ever been at around 440 children.

10.2 Brent

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In 2024/25, Brent YJS performed well in relation to reducing youth re-offending, the number of first-time entrants to the justice system and the use of youth custody. The statistical evidence is encouraging and set out in sections 10.3 to 10.5.

10.3 Reducing Reoffending

The binary rate of reoffending is the official measure of reoffending and the proportion of 'reoffenders' who make up the total cohort. Brent's overall trend appears to be that of a significantly fluctuating and decreasing reoffending rate. This is largely due to the small size of the cohort creating an effect of instability. Relatively small increases or decreases to the number of reoffenders, or the number of reoffences committed, can produce significant changes each quarter. For instance, in a quarter during which most reoffenders committed no or few offences, the rate of reoffending will increase considerably if one child is criminally prolific. This explains the large variations Brent has experienced during the last six years. In this time the binary reoffending rate was 50% in January to March 2017, 62.2% in January to March 2018, 32.6% in January to March 2019, 39.6% in January to March 2020, 14.9% in January to March 2021, and 13.9% in January to March 2022 and 26.1% in January to March 2023.

YJS has also created the YJS Transitions Panel to manage various transitions (often a vulnerable time for children and young people), listened to the voice of the child, responded to substance misuse and disproportionality issues, and conducted regular monthly quality assurance activity.

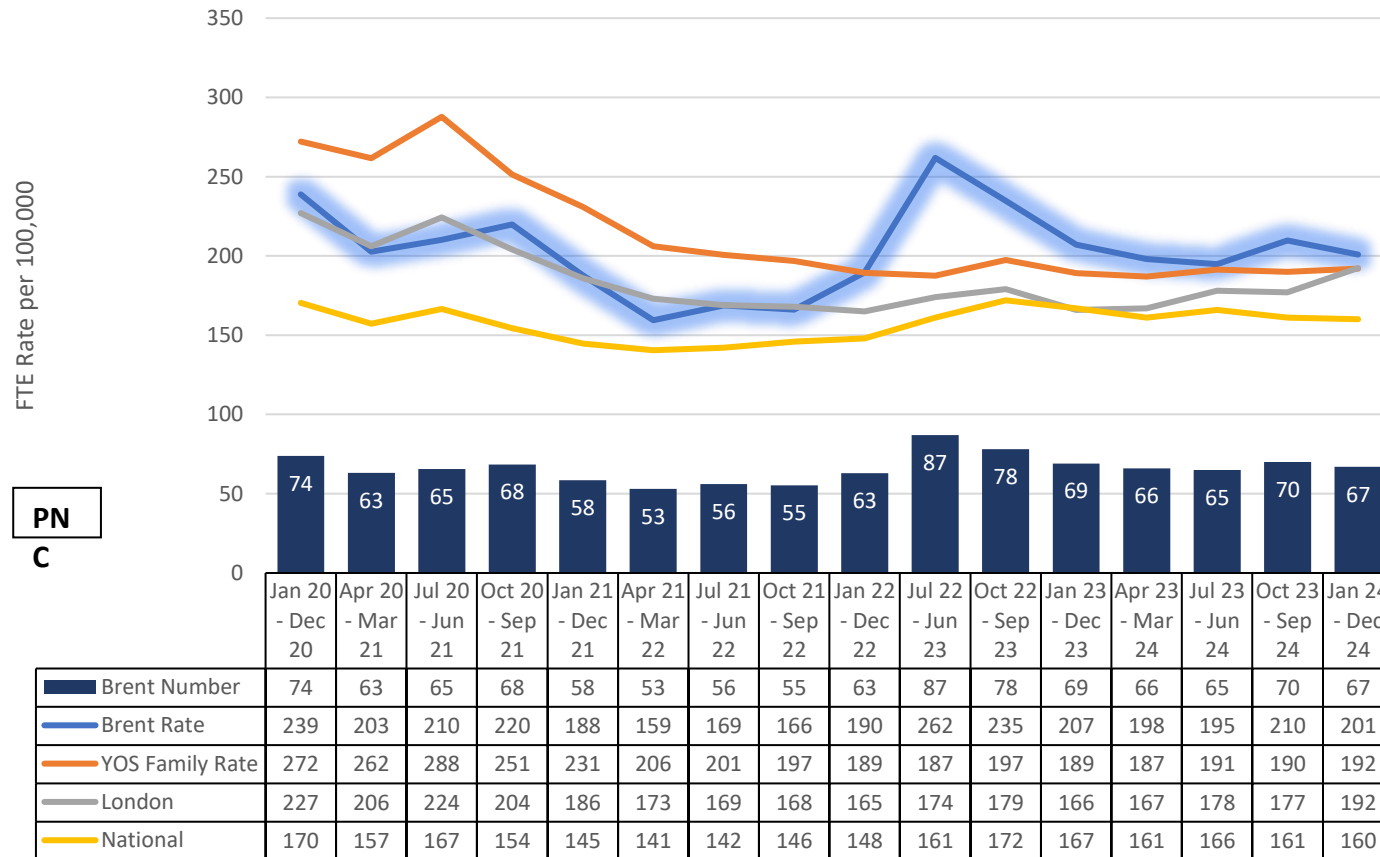
10.4 Reducing First Time Entrants (FTEs)

Although Brent recorded a small increase in the number of FTEs in 2024, the long-term trend is that of a significant fall. Brent's FTE rate per 100,000 children was 201 for the twelve-month period January 2024 to December 2024, compared to 207 per 100,000 children in the period January 2023 to December 2023. The data for this KPI comes from the Police National Computer and is shown in rolling full years.

The latest data published by the Ministry of Justice shows there were 67 new entrants to the youth justice system between January 2024 and December 2024. This is an annual decrease of 2 children when compared to the period between January 2023 and December 2023— 69 FTEs were recorded during this time.

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Table 5. No. of Brent Children Entering the Youth Justice System: January 2020 to December 2024.



10.5 Reducing Custody

Despite continued serious youth violence, criminal exploitation and gang affectedness, the number of Brent young people sentenced to custody has reduced from a high of 54 in 2013/14, to four in the twelve-month

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period ending January 2022 to December 2022. It decreased to three in the latest period (January 2024 to December 2024).

The number of remands in January 2024 to December 2024 (8 children) increased by three when compared to January 2022 to December 2022 (5 children). This increase is attributed to two serious incidents involving eight children. Children from BAME Heritage Groups continue to be overrepresented in the YJS remand cohort. The YJS has referred this to our children safeguarding partnership for a review given the themes that have emerged.

Table 6. Number of Children Remanded 2020 to 2024 by Heritage Group.

	Jan – Dec 2020 Remands	Jan – Dec 2021 Remands	Jan – Dec 2022 Remands	Jan – Dec 2023 Remands	Jan – Dec 2024 Remands
Black Heritage	8 (57%)	4 (50%)	1 (25%)	3 (60%)	6 (75%)
Other BAME	2 (14.5%)	3 (37.5%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)
Mixed BAME	2 (14.5%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	1 (20%)	1 (12.5%)
Asian BAME	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total BAME	13 (93%)	7 (87.5%)	3 (75%)	4 (80%)	8 (100%)
White Heritage	1 (7%)	1 (12.5%)	1 (25%)	1 (20%)	0 (0%)
Total	14	8	4	5	8

Brent YJS prepares written bail packages and bail letters whenever children are at risk of remand. Other proactive measures include management oversight and quality assurance of all bail applications, including a narrative of the child's history and lived experience in bail letters, and having a default approach that 'children will be given bail' in most instances. At Risk of Custody meetings are held regularly to help avoid the unnecessary use of custody.

10.6 Embedding Resettlement Practice

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The 2021 *HMIP Annual Inspection report of youth justice services*, highlighted resettlement as an area across YOTs that needed improvement. This was reinforced by the YJB in its 2023/24 Business Plan, later in February 2023 by the Minister for Prisons and Probation who directed 'YOTs to work 'with the Youth Custody Service to ensure every child has a clear plan ahead of their release and can access the right education, healthcare and accommodation support' and was highlighted in resettlement criteria for the HMIP Inspection regime. The Youth justice inspection Resettlement Case assessment guidance (CAG) v 1.3 June 2024 stated that 'planning for accommodation was to start at the point the child enters custody. This is a key aspect of resettlement work; other services cannot be organised until the child has an address to be released to'.

Brent continues to actively participate in the London Resettlement Partnership. Support is shaped by the five characteristics that have been identified as key to effective practice: Constructive, Co-created, Customised, Consistent and Co-ordinated. Support is shaped by the five characteristics that have been identified as key to effective practice: Constructive, Co-created, Customised, Consistent and Co-ordinated.

The Brent Resettlement and Aftercare Panel is an effective and well-structured forum for coordinating and reviewing resettlement planning with representation from key partners with an appropriate level of seniority. This is vital when considering that the YJB in its Strategic Plan 2024-27, described the patterns of violence, self-harm and trauma that is seen in custodial settings as 'unacceptable.' The Resettlement and Aftercare Panel will continue to review any safeguarding issues for children within the secure estate and ensure matters are escalated within the system. Systems are in place and adhered to in accordance with the Brent Probation and YJS joint protocol - under which all children are eligible for transition, and planning is initiated early.

10.7 Accommodation

Safe, suitable, and sustainable accommodation forms the foundations for delivering effective support to children and young people. In the period January to December 2024, 79 children and young people (76 in 2023) were supported by Brent YJS in suitable accommodation. Accommodation can however be deemed unsuitable for a range of reasons including proximity to contextual safeguarding risks, familial safeguarding risks, being placed in custody, or poor living circumstances such as overcrowding. In the same period, a further three children who resided in unsuitable accommodation were remanded into custody.

Brent YJS is working closely with Social Care to overcome barriers to unsuitable accommodation which include encouraging placement providers to accommodate children with challenging behaviour, and the practical difficulties associated with placing children in accommodation on weekends. Furthermore, Early Help offer a wide range of support

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that helps families address their housing and cost of living issues. Accommodation is one of the ten newly introduced KPI's monitored by the YJB.

Table 7. Suitability of accommodation 2024

KPI 1	Suitable accommodation	Unsuitable accommodation	% Suitable accommodation	% Unsuitable accommodation
Jan - Mar 2024	19	2	90%	10%
April - June 2024	24	1	96%	4%
July - Sep 2024	18	0	100%	0%
Oct - Dec 2024	21	0	100%	0%

10.8 Reducing disproportionality in custodial outcomes including remands and sentencing

Our work to reduce disproportionality follows the various stages within the criminal justice process and is particularly significant within the secure estate and the sentencing of young people. In 2023, a workshop with defence lawyers, CPS, and the court representatives on anti-racist legal representation (Just for Kids Law) provided important messaging regarding the role of defence lawyers to advocate for children and addressing the trust deficit within Black Heritage groups towards lawyers and Court Services.

During 2025-2028 there will continue to be a determined partnership response to some of the key recommendations in the *HMIP thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention (November 2023)*, which found that at any given time, there are around 200 to 250 children remanded in youth detention. Further findings included:

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- a quarter of the children were released on bail before being sentenced, and inspectors judged that more of them could have been safely managed in the community.
- nearly half of the children in the cases reviewed had no previous convictions and some of the remands were long, lasting more than a year.
- in many cases children made no comment at the Police interview but this was not always to the child's benefit as admitting the offence at that stage might have made bail more likely.
- In just under three-quarters of cases the Youth Justice Service did not offer a bail programme at the child's first remand hearing.

Our responses will again be outlined in both the Youth Justice Improvement Plan 2025/26, and the Brent Disproportionality Action Plan to ensure there is a specific focus on a wide range of actions that address the needs of all children and young people. This will include actions addressing drug and alcohol support, monitoring release arrangements from the start of the sentence / remand, greater consultation on bail conditions, mandatory online training for Police officers around child trafficking, bail and remand training across CYP, early identification of accommodation options at the first court appearance, briefings to defence solicitors about the impact of 'no comment' interviews and offering voluntary support to those acquitted.

10.9 Reducing serious youth violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding

Serious Youth Violence (SYV) is defined as any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity score of five or more. The Youth Justice Board SYV toolkit shows that serious youth violence in Brent decreased in the year ending December 2024 compared with the previous year. The tool also indicated that robbery offences have increased significantly in the year ending December 2024 compared to the previous year. An over representation of children from Black Heritage groups involvement in SYV persists. 41% of children and young people who committed SYV offences in Brent were from other heritage groups in 2024. This is an increase of 29% when compared to 2023 (12%), 2022 (0%) and 2021 (23%). Males make up the biggest proportion of children and young people committing SYV offences. In the year ending December 2024, 95% of the cohort were male compared to 100% in 2023, 96% in 2022 and 82% in 2021. During the first 3 quarters of the 24/25 period there were 2 drug related offences: 16 robbery offences and 4 offences of violence against the person.

Working in partnership is key to reducing SYV in Brent. Along with Social Care colleagues and youth justice workers from Barnet and Harrow, Brent YJS attends daily SYV Police briefings from the North-West London Borough Command Unit. Daily briefings function as an intelligence sharing forum and allow partners to coordinate the management of violence and tensions within Brent. Other strands to the concerted and joined up effort across the

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partnership to reduce SYV include supporting events such as Carnival, the deployment of various outreach activities in response to local needs, utilising peer mapping, summer programmes and communicating with neighbouring boroughs and courts. The YJS also employs safety mapping to identify risks and keep children safe.

Our work in this area will be guided by the recent HMIP report: *Multi-agency responses to serious youth violence: working together to support and protect children (Nov 24)*.

Key Points from Executive Summary

- The extent and impact of serious youth violence are more far-reaching than many adults realise
- A failure to consistently identify serious youth violence as a safeguarding issue is leaving too many children at serious risk of harm.
- The government and local agencies must prioritise the needs of children who are disproportionately at risk of harm from serious youth violence
- Multi-agency work was most effective when serious youth violence was a strategic priority
- In some areas, partners worked together well to meet the wider needs of children affected by serious youth violence.
- Local partnerships need to do more to evaluate approaches to addressing serious youth violence, to use available research about what works and to share learning across areas to drive improvement in practice.
- Children's access to support to address serious youth violence varies too much between local areas.
- Projects aimed at preventing serious youth violence often receive short-term funding.
- Engagement with the community, children and parents is essential

10.10 Reducing Knife Crime

Knife crime remains a persistent problem in Brent. A total of 39 knife offences were committed by young people in 2024, compared to 30 in 2023, 46 in 2022, 52 in 2021 and 44 in 2020.

Brent YJS has worked hard to reduce knife crime. Among other things, YJS staff accompany children to the monthly 'No Knives Better Lives' knife crime intervention at the Central Criminal Court ('Old Bailey'), all young people arrested for knife-related offences are required to attend a mandatory groupwork session led by professionals and members of the public who provide differing perspectives on knife crime – presenters have included a trauma surgeon, an ex-gang member, and the parent of a teenage victim of knife crime. Children who have committed knife offences are

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also referred to the Brent YJS Weapons Awareness Programme. This is an eight-week programme delivered by YJS Case Managers about the dangers of knife crime and offers participants strategies for preventing or resolving conflict without violence. The Raheem Sterling Foundation knife bin amnesty, saw a total of 118 weapons, including 9 zombie knives collected in September 2025. The March 2025 collection saw a total of 196 weapons, including 13 zombie knives and 4 other dangerous articles surrendered.

10.11 Unlocking Your Potential

Unlocking Your Potential seeks to inspire young people with entrepreneurial skills to achieve their ambitions. During the session with George the Poet George explained to the young people the key ingredient for success is self-belief, he said “you must choose the right friends and friends that are loyal to you”, He spoke about the importance of overcoming peer pressure and gang involvement. We discussed some of the current tensions within Brent and how he overcame this when he was young. George explained his resilience allowed him to pursue his education and achieve at Cambridge University.

people are authors of their own story, and they must take ownership rather than allowing other people to write their stories.

Feedback from participants has included:

“I think the programme is good because it gives you different perspectives on someone who has committed a crime(s) and is still able to achieve in society and make something of themselves. I learnt a lot about myself and my potential’.

‘it’s motivating seeing someone do well’

In order to develop and sustain capacity, YJS have continued a similar programme through the Roundtable Project which is now led by Community Safety and the YJS. Guest speakers from the community are invited to speak at this session similar to the format of Unlocking Your Potential

10.12 Radicalisation or extremist activity

The Youth Justice Board issued practice advice in April 2023 to support youth justice services to identify and manage children at risk of, or involved in, terrorist-related activity. This included dealing with children posing a terrorist risk and those arrested and convicted under the Terrorism Act 2000. The YJS has adopted this guidance and is also a

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member of the Prevent Operational Group. This allows youth justice perspectives to influence the shape of local anti-extremism provision and training. No Brent YJS children were referred to Channel in 2024/25.

10.13 Out of Court Disposals (OOCd)

Out of Court Disposal provision is tightly monitored in Brent. In each of the last five-years the YJS Management Board has received a report examining practice, procedures, and performance. Such high-level curiosity and interest reflect Brent's understanding of the clear links between intervening early and good outcomes. For instance, the Youth Engagement Fund toolkit shows that pre-court diversion nationally leads to greater reductions in reoffending (by 13%) than sentencing young people through Court Services. Furthermore, when children who have attended diversionary schemes do commit another offence, their offending is likely to be less serious.

The Brent YJS Out of Court Disposal Service offers effective assessment and early interventions to children and young people and their families. Its effectiveness is monitored by a Metropolitan Police led Multi-Agency Scrutiny Panel, comprised of senior representatives from the Police, CPS, Court Services, Judiciary, MOPAC and the YJB. The Scrutiny Panel audited six OOCd cases in January 2025. Decision making was agreed as correct and consistent with policy and guidance for all six cases.

The Child Gravity Matrix (CGM) is the tool Police use to determine the most appropriate outcome or disposal for children and young people who offend. The Matrix outlines the options available to the decision makers for both statutory (caution, conditional cautions, or prosecution) and non-statutory outcomes which in Brent include Community Resolutions and Triage. In November 2023, the Matrix was updated and now allows greater emphasis to be placed on mitigating factors which include vulnerabilities such as undiagnosed and diagnosed neurodiversity needs.

Keys changes include:

- Traffic Offences: the CGM now makes it clear that informal OOCds can be considered as an alternative to penalty/points charge where appropriate.
- The CGM introduces the Child Information Form (CIF) which replaces the First Time Entrant Check list and a 10-point checklist for Looked After- Children to accompany cases being sent to CPS for a decision. The CIF is designed to collate and streamline the information provided by Police and other relevant agencies involved in the child's life, requiring both the investigator and prosecutor to consider the specific circumstances of a child.
- Clarifies that joint decision making should take place between the YJS and Police but that where there is a disagreement the final decision rests with the Police.

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- There have been various technical changes to the offences table, including remorse and regret being removed from aggravating and mitigating factors.

Brent YJS has adopted the YJB Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool for Out of Court disposals. It enables greater analysis of how a child's behaviour can be the result of their life circumstances and helps identify their strengths. Furthermore, it provides a structured framework for assessment, interventions, planning, and the identification of risk factors.

All referrals for an Out of Court Disposal are discussed at the Out of Court Disposal Joint Decision-Making panels which are tightly organised and held weekly. Panel members include the NHS, Police, YJS, Social Care, Inclusion Service, Family Solutions and Family Support Workers. All professionals are involved in the discussion to determine any underlying issues and needs for each young person. Discussions take place around a child's life circumstances and impact that may contributed to their behaviour. The O OCD panel always aims to mitigate and lower the disposal where possible. If available victims' views are considered. YJS Police officers aim to get in contact with the victim prior to the panel and explain the diversion process.

Interventions for children who receive O O C D s , reflect their specific needs. Mental health screening is offered to all young people through referral to the NHS Youth Justice Liaison and Diversion practitioner. For those referred for drug related offences or where assessment has identified substance misuse, one-to-one sessions are offered by the Evel8 substance misuse team. Sessions include the law and drugs, county lines drug dealing, gang culture, criminal exploitation, abstinence, and harm minimisation. Other sessions delivered in 2024/25 included decision making, peer pressure, making better choices, online safety, sexually harmful behaviour, knife crime, weapon awareness, victim awareness, Police one to one sessions, crime presentations, Police led one to one sessions, and safety mapping. Case managers seek to include children in intervention planning wherever possible.

There were 76 referrals to the O C C D Team in 2024/25:

Community Resolutions: 23

Triage: 22

Youth Caution: 9 (100% successfully completed)

Youth Conditional Cautions: 14 (100% successfully completed)

Total: 67

Assessment and interventions are offered to all children and are mandatory for those who receive a Youth Conditional Caution. 67 young people undertook Safety Mapping – a contextual safeguarding tool that enables

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young people to identify non-familial risks in the community. 31 young people who were referred by the Police for drug related offences or where assessments identified substance misuse were offered one to one substance misuse counselling and groupwork sessions. Out of Court Disposals are one of the ten newly introduced KPI's monitored by the YJB – no. of young people successfully completing OOCs.

Feedback on OOCs

“Grandmother provided positive feedback on YJS involvement. She was grateful for the support provided to Y and the disposal agreed. Grandma was also happy with the advice and information provided to her around education and YJS supporting with liaising with the Inclusion Team.”
(OOC Case Manager, March 2025)

“Thank you for your work with D. She has built up a good working relationship with you and though D would never say it, she has valued your intervention. It has been great working with you!” (Social Worker, February 2025)

“The decision-making session was helpful – you helped me understand what would benefit me in a situation and what would not and how I should or could approach difficult situations.”
(Young Person, March 2025)

10.14 YJS Triage Programme

Triage is an OOC that is offered to young people who would otherwise be likely to receive a criminal justice disposal. It is available to young people who admit guilt to low gravity offences. The most common offence committed by children who take part in the Triage programme is possession of cannabis. The service is currently funded by MOPAC and has been identified as the most significant cause of the steep decline in the number of young people from Brent entering the criminal justice system. Children who complete Triage receive the same level of multiagency risk management that young people within the youth justice system receive. Triage is a short-term intervention that should not last longer than three months.

10.15 Policing

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Two Police Officers are based within Brent YJS. They work closely with YJS staff to administer and deliver OOCDS, share intelligence, enforce non-compliance, and engage with children known to YJS - this includes the delivery of groupwork and individual sessions.

The MPS' Children's 5-year Strategy (Sept'24) aims to make a meaningful difference to how the Met Police safeguard children and is designed to rebuild trust, reduce crime and ensure high standards across the force. In developing the strategy, the Met Police considered the views of children across London. Its aim is to keep children in London safe, build their trust and bring to justice those who abuse and exploit them. It proposes a child first approach with strategic aims and actions around building relationships, tackling discrimination, further increasing the use of OOCDS, strengthening schools and education provision, delivering precise and fair stop and search, and promoting routes into policing careers and volunteering. The success of this strategy will be measured through increasing the percentage of children surveyed by MOPAC who have a good opinion of the Police, feel they can trust the Met and believe the Police treat everyone fairly.

10.16 YJS Referral Order Programme

Referral Orders are a community sentence that require a young person to agree a contract of rehabilitative and restorative elements during a Referral Order Panel meeting. The YJS trains and recruits a diverse cohort of Panel members who reflect the diversity of Brent.

There are currently nine active local community panel members from Black, White British, White European, and Asian Heritage groups. Panel members come from a wide range of backgrounds including family support, teaching, accounting, business and law.

Panels take place on a weekly basis and consist of the following:

- Initial panels (where the RO contract of interventions is agreed with the young person).
- Review Panels.
- Non-compliance Panels
- Compliance review Panels.
- Final Panels.

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A young person and their parent were recently asked if they would change anything about the Panel they attended:

Young Person: 'Not really, I felt everything went well. In my opinion there's nothing that needs to be improved. It was better than I thought it would be'.

Mum 'I thought they (panel members) were fair, and they were engaged. What I liked was that they came across as though they really care. They were not judgemental, and we didn't feel judged. They came across as extremely supportive'.

Table 8. Referral Order Outcomes April 2024/25

Outcome	Disposals	Percentage
Successfully Completed	47	90%
Completed Other	1	2%
In Custody	1	2%
Not Completed (Order Revoked and Resentenced to Community Penalty)	1	2%
Not Completed Breached Order Revoked and Resentenced to Community Penalty (Terminated)	2	4%
Transfer to other agency/home YOT	1	2%
Total	52	100%

10.17 Restorative Justice (RJ) and Victims

Through engagement with RJ, Brent YJS seeks to empower victims and reduce reoffending by developing empathy within our children and young people. The YJS Partnership has dedicated staff who are innovative and creative in encouraging wherever possible victim and perpetrator engagement in restorative justice approaches.

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YJS practitioners are not always able to obtain victims views. This information can provide a unique perspective on how to keep children and communities safe. The YJS needs to work closely with the Police to identify and remove barriers to the timely acquisition of victim information. There are Police resourcing, capacity and systems issues which can make contacting victims difficult. For instance, if victims' details are not gathered by the investigating officer, delays will occur to YJS Police Officers being able to contact victims - and in some instances contact will never be made. Positively, in April 2025, the Metropolitan Police agreed a new approach that improves victim access.

This has been achieved by removing the Police requirement to gain the victims explicit consent to be able to share victim data with YJS. Furthermore, the Police have removed the requirement to send out the agreed victim letter to the victim, if they are unable to get through to the victim.

The new process means that upon receiving a YOT referral seeking an OOC, once the YOT Police have verified and confirmed the referral is suitable, they will continue to attempt to contact the victim to seek their wishes to share their basic details with the YJS. If the victim does not want to share their details no further contact will be made and the relevant YJS will be informed so this can be recorded on ChildView. If the victim agrees, or the Police are unable to make contact, they can automatically share sufficient victim data for the YJS to contact victims directly.

This process also applies to those cases which bypass the YOT referral stage and are convicted at court after a charge and sentenced to a court order to work with the YJS. For this to happen the YJS must request victim details. The Police will then seek to contact the victim. If they are unsuccessful victim details will be shared with a YJS so that they can contact the victim directly.

The Brent YJS Restorative Justice Worker has a manageable workload. Victims work is intensive so this could conceivably change now that the systems issues delaying victim consent have been resolved.

Brent YJS reparation activities have now extended into face-to-face work at a dementia Café with elderly people, Stonebridge Primary School, and at foodbanks operating out of Family Well-being Centres. These foodbanks enable young people to give back to the community in a meaningful way in a safe environment.

Brent YJS Victim Awareness Groupwork occurs on a quarterly basis for a period of six weeks. Feedback has been positive with excellent completion rates. Topics covered include establishing boundaries, values, the young persons', and the victim's experience, repairing harm and giving back to the community.

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The following quotes are typical of many victims and children and young people who took part in restorative justice in 2024:

Victims

"I'm glad you called me as didn't know RJ existed".

"I don't know if me and the victim would have ever spoken again if it weren't for RJ".

"It's good to know that young people have RJ to explore ways to repair harm. I'm happy to engage in any RJ of the young person's choosing".

"It's good to know that the young person is reflecting on their behaviour with the YJS and wants to repair the harm he caused to me".

"I am happy that I went ahead with the RJ process, it brought me closure."

"Although I wanted to rebuild the friendship, I understand that this is not possible now, but I am pleased that I could tell my side of the story."

"I was really frustrated throughout the investigation as I didn't feel that I was listened to. I am pleased that you called, and I can say what I need."

"I needed help at the time the incident happened. I wanted to prevent further harm. I am not happy with what happened at the time, but I think everybody involved has grown and now I can move on thanks for your work."

"It is good that you called and asked my opinion. I am pleased that the YP's intervention will address my concerns."

Young People

"Writing the letter (of apology) was the right thing to do".

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"I feel better for writing a letter as that's what I would have wanted".

"RJ got me thinking about my mum and how I would have felt if someone did that (his offence) to her".

"I wanted to put things right and I think my letter did that".

"I'm glad I could write a letter as I am sorry for what I did".

"I completed the Victim Awareness Group, and I liked the people doing the group, they were nice. I also learned different ways victims are impacted."

"I liked engaging with the other participants of the Victim Awareness Group where I learnt that crime can affect a lot of people that you would not have thought of."

"I wanted to meet the victim as I wanted to apologise. This was a great closure for the whole incident."

"I was sorry and embarrassed, and I wanted to say sorry from the beginning. I wrote a letter of apology to a community member as the victim didn't want any communication. I would have met the victim if he wished for it. RJ helped me to think about the impact of my actions on others."

"It's good to know that RJ is available."

Brent YJS Restorative Justice workers delivered 'Lunch and Learn' sessions to the whole CYP department in 2024. Brent seeks to build a restorative community by embedding restorative practice within both strategic and operational planning and delivery. We have also supported our full time Restorative Justice Worker to achieve the Restorative Justice Council's *Certified Advanced Practitioner* status.

Plans for 2025/26 include promoting the RJ offer to care homes and foster carers and extending the RJ Offer - currently offered to all victims of crime - to carers and key workers as a non-criminal remedy:

"I have learnt a lot of things from these offences. I've learnt that I should go down the right path. I should walk the other way and ignore negative friends," 17-year-old male.

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“Since the offence I have not been in any trouble and do not intend on getting into any trouble. I have learnt not to fight as it can affect many people including the victim, offender, community, and it can impact my future,” 17-year-old male.

“RJ has helped me look at the offence and my behaviour so I can put it in the past and get on with my life,” 16-year-old female.

“The main outcome for me was how an offence like this can truly affect the community. It really gave me a completely new angle on how to look at the crime from the perspective of someone that is a stranger to me and looks at the situation upon face value,” 18-year-old male.

Victims are one the ten newly introduced KPI’s monitored by the YJB.

10.18 Education, Training and Employment

Nationally

Accessing good ETE provision, is crucial to the life chances of children under statutory supervision. It is consistently identified as one of the top three factors that need to be addressed by inspectors and the YJB. However, many children and young people have had negative educational experiences, and a proportion are entrenched in lifestyles that are not conducive to participation in ETE. This is often because of exploitation, gang affiliation and disrupted educational history. In June 2022, a *HM Inspectorate of Probation, Estyn, and Ofsted joint inspection of education, training, and employment services in youth offending teams*, involving 180 children from six local authorities, highlighted many of the strengths and challenges of ETE provision from a youth justice perspective. Brent children were not involved in the inspection.

Strengths

YOT boards consistently prioritised ETE work in the delivery of services, operational staff had enough time to deliver high quality work with children, staff had good access to training in recognising children’s ETE needs, and YOTs delivering good ETE work had well-developed partnership arrangements, including specialist assessment and interventions.

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Areas for improvement

The quality of ETE work was poorest for those children who most needed it, and this was particularly evident when a child had an EHCP.

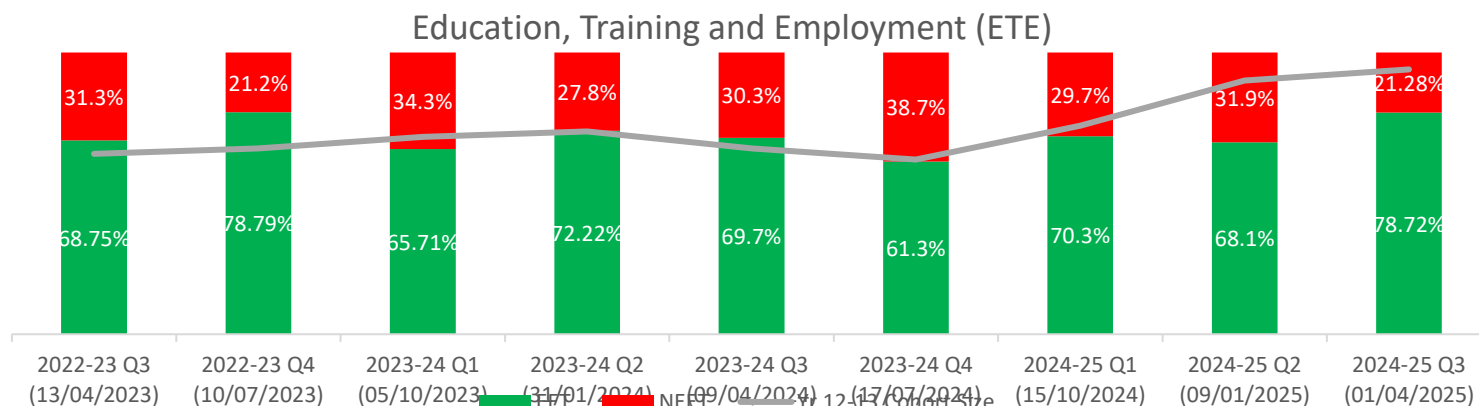
- There are too many cases where children were not making progress and whose vulnerability was increasing because of low levels of engagement in positive work.
- Boards were not monitoring key aspects of the children's engagement in ETE.
- There are significant barriers to participation.
- The quality of work was poorest for those children who most needed it.
- The support provided to the child to engage in ETE should be clear and reviewed regularly.

Employment – Training and Education (ETE) in Brent YJS

The characteristics of a strong YJS Partnership, as identified by HMIP and Ofsted, exist in Brent. The YJS Management Board scrutinizes the NEET cohort every quarter. This oversight has been extended to all children due to the national inclusion of education as a YJS Key Performance Indicator. The Board also ensures staffing levels are sufficient and there is access to a wide and varied training offer. Clear pathways between Brent YJS and mainstream and alternative education providers means that significant progress has been made towards making HMIP and Ofsted's recommended improvements. This includes increasing commitment to participation work in schools and a new quality assurance regime which ensures all assessment and case actions are undertaken within agreed timescales. Operational work is monitored by a supportive Board that maintains tight oversight of the relatively small but challenging number of NEET young people known to Brent YJS.

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Table 9. Brent NEET population 2022 to 2025: YJS children and young people



Operationally, ETE is shaped by intensive joint working between YJS, commissioned ETE provider Prospects, and the Virtual School for Looked After Children. Staffing capacity has increased and there is greater emphasis on access, monitoring and quality of provision. This includes:

- A NEET working group which meets monthly to monitor vulnerable young people not in education and ensure that plans are in place.
- The provision of employment and training data from the YJS to Prospects on a fortnightly basis so that interventions are put in place at the earliest opportunity and any children who have no recorded provision are identified.
- Working closely with custodial units to ensure children and young people have a transition destination at the point of resettlement.
- Ensuring that Prospects advisors are working closely with parents and YJS Case Managers, other professionals, and families.
- Deploying additional staffing when children and young people are already receiving support from a generic Prospects Advisor.
- The NEET group has extended its scope to include a PLIAS Employment Advisor who can provide specialist support to those seeking employment and the construction CSCS card.
- EHCP work is now more comprehensively reflected in Asset Plus and PSRs.

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- Close working with the Brent Inclusion Team. This includes the Inclusion Team Manager attending the Multi agency High-Risk Panel.
- The ASER programme offers a series of individually developed units preparing long-term YJS NEET young people for work or training.
- Brent Connexions delivered a re-engagement programme between February and April 2024. This included a series of employability groupwork job skills sessions for young people known to Brent YJS.
- Supporting children with undiagnosed learning needs is an ongoing challenge. Brent YJS works closely with the Brent Inclusion Service. Regular joint service area management meetings take place and can be used to identify training that can equip staff to better identify and refer children who are eligible for SEND and other Inclusion Service support.

Table 10. Brent YJS ETE Suitability April to December 2024

ETE suitability	
ETE Suitability	No. of Young People
Suitable	48
Unknown	0
Unsuitable	16
Total	64

Speech and Language

Brent YJS has identified significant deficiencies in access to provision relates to Speech and Language assessment and therapy. This is despite conservative estimates suggesting 40-60% of children in the youth justice system have an undiagnosed language disorder, *Winstanley, Webb & Conti-Ramsden (2021)*. Findings also suggest that Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) is the highest predictor of reoffending, and that children with DLD are 2.6 times more likely to reoffend. Furthermore, one year after committing an offence:

- 62% of people with DLD reoffended
- 25% of people without DLD reoffended.

Despite significant efforts to address this service gap in recent years, YJS still does not have access to the health resources needed to improve outcomes for children with undiagnosed speech and language needs. Work undertaken

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in the last year to resolve this shortcoming includes YJB facilitated meetings with the NHS, Head of Service discussions between Brent Early Help and the Brent Inclusion Service, and ongoing YJS Management Board oversight. In April 2025, the YJS Management Board representative from the NHS offered further support to the YJS aimed at accessing pathways to SALT assessment and support for Brent children in the youth justice system.

10.19 Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Local Strategy

The Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Local Transformation Plan 2024/25 has high ambitions for better mental health and wellbeing for every child and young person living in North-West London. These include developing inclusive, fair, and equitable services that are reasonably adjusted to support people with more complex needs, including those with learning disabilities and autism.

The North-West London Integrated Care Board (ICB) was formed in July 2022, to closely collaborate on several aspects of the Children and Young People mental health pathway. This includes implementing the National Thrive Framework which provides a set of principles for creating coherent and resource-efficient communities of mental health and wellbeing support for children, young people, and families. Thrive aims to talk about mental health and mental health support in a common language that everyone understands. This, and plans from the NW London CYP Mental Health Steering Group to embed the CYP Mental Health pathway within Family Wellbeing Centres will enable better access to mental health services for children supported by YJS.

Local delivery: CAMHS

A CAMHS Mental Health Practitioner (MHP) based within YJS supports young people who have severe or complex problems to access specialised CAMHS provision. The post was vacant between September 2024 and February 2025.

Table 11. CAMHS Mental Health Support April to September 2024: YJS young people have requested more data re table below)

Mental Health Support:	No. of Young People
Advice / Consultation	18
Referrals and Signposting to other services	7
Referral to FCAMHS / Ongoing liaison	5

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Referral to Tier 3 CAMHS	4
Total:	34

The positive outcomes achieved by the seconded CAMHS MHP include:

- Efficient information sharing, better care, and more effective multi-agency collaboration between YJS and CAMHS, as all young people who come under the CAMHS Effective Treatment Team are case managed by the MHP working across both teams. This allows the MHP to access specialist, multi-disciplinary advice from CAMHS which is shared with YJS Staff to facilitate cohesion and psychoeducation.
- Upskilling and psychoeducation provided to YJS case managers around mental health needs; including discussions alongside Social Care to promote a sense of stability and safety prior to intensive therapeutic interventions.
- CAMHS worker provided training for YJS (October '24) about mental health and neurodiversity in the context of offending behaviour. This will help better outcomes and more robust treatment plans.
- Dedicated liaison with FCAMHS to improve care and outcomes for young people; Including initial referrals, individual consultations with FCAMHS clinicians, dissemination of key information and advice, arranging and chairing network meetings, and navigating differences between services to allow collaboration around safety plans and risk mitigation. This helps alleviate workload from core network members, allowing for greater care provided to each specialism whilst also promoting cohesion and multi-agency collaboration.
- CAMHS and BCYP worker ran a four-week group for young people within the YJS exploring their emotional wellbeing in January 2025.
- Brent YJS will explore opportunities to expand referral pathways to mental health and other health provision through the establishment of TPH.
- CAMHS will provide mental health and neurodiversity training to Social Care, School and SENCOs during 2025 in the context of offending behaviour.

Mental Health Support (Help and Advice) is one the ten newly introduced KPI's monitored by the YJB.

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Local Delivery: Liaison and Diversion

The NHS England funded Youth Justice Liaison and Diversion scheme in Brent offers mental health screening to young people held in Police custody at Wembley Police Station, or those young people referred to YJS for an Out of Court or Turnaround disposal. The CNWL employed Youth Justice Liaison and Diversion (YJLD) Mental Health practitioner identifies any unmet mental health and neurodiversity needs a young person may have (ASD, ADHD, learning difficulties, or SALT) and refers on to appropriate health services. The service is monitored by the Brent ICS Lead, NHS and YJS.

Children are risk assessed and seen at a range of locations including the Brent Civic Centre, school, home, care homes, or community facility. Engagement takes place with parents, schools, Social Care, and other agencies where necessary - especially when there are unmet needs that require attention. The YJLD worker also attends CP, CIN conferences, professionals' meetings, and other meetings to help meet a young person's additional needs.

During the period April 2024 to March 2025, the YJLD worker engaged 148 young people. One hundred and twenty-nine of these were males (87.2%) and 19 were females (12.8%). Sixty-two (41.9%) assessments were completed. Over the period April 2023 to March 2024 the YJLD worker engaged 161 young people. Seventy-eight (49.8%) assessments were completed. During 2024 the YJLD worker engaged 160 young people. Ninety-one (57%) assessments were completed. The four key offences that children accessing YJLD were charged with were drug possession, violence against the person, robbery and possession of an offensive weapon. 16 and 17-year-olds form the highest age group.

10.20 Substance Misuse

Since becoming operational in 2000, more than 1,500 young people supported by the Brent Youth Justice Service have received community-based substance misuse support. After considerable planning in partnership with Public Health, approval was obtained in January 2025 from both the Brent Drug and Alcohol Board, and the Brent Youth Justice Management Board, to develop a single pathway from Brent YJS to substance misuse provision.

Under these arrangements, *Elev8*, a provider of community-based alcohol and drug detoxification services for residents in the London Borough of Brent, have been supporting all children known to the YJS who have come to the attention of YJS for committing drug or alcohol related offences or have subsequently been assessed as having substance misuse needs. These services have been accessible from VIA - the name of the substance misuse and other support services *Elev8* offer children.

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The two pathways by which children enter the youth justice system remain unaltered. The first of these are OOCs. These allow the Police to deal effectively and proportionately with low-level, often first-time offending without a prosecution at court. The other pathway by which a child will receive statutory support from a Youth Justice Service arises when a child appears before a court. If convicted, a youth court can give a range of criminal disposals including fines, Referral Orders, Youth Rehabilitation Orders, and custodial sentences. VIA have been supporting children who have become known to YJS through this route since 2017. They have maintained a co-located presence with YJS at the Brent Civic Centre throughout this time.

Table 12: Children receiving Court Orders or OOCs for drug offences 2017 to 2024: by number and percentage.

Year	Court Orders by no. of drug offences	Court Orders by percentage of drug offences	OOCs by no. of drug offences	OOCs by percentage of drug offences
2017	125	67.57%	60	32.43%
2018	138	70.77%	57	29.23%
2019	107	67.72%	51	32.28%
2020	57	52.78%	51	47.22%
2021	33	42.86%	44	57.14%
2022	28	45.90%	33	54.10%
2023	24	46.15%	28	53.85%
2024	26	50.98%	25	49.02%

Table 13: Drug offences by type, and substance misuse provider December 2023 to November 2024.

Drug offences: court convictions by drug type and percentage			Drug offences: Police issued OOCs by drug type and percentage		
Court Pathway			OOC Pathway		
Cannabis	Cocaine	Heroin	Cannabis	Cocaine	Other

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19	5	2	27	1	1
73%	19%	8%	93%	4%	3%

The development of the single pathways approach has been influenced by several factors.

- Fewer children supported by Brent YJS have accessed substance misuse provision in recent years. There is an opportunity to treat more children by refreshing referral pathways in a way that targets more children and young people supported by YJS.
- Introducing a less rigid system is now achievable and would allow substance misuse provision to be sequenced in line with the needs of the child, rather than the operational necessity to move a large volume of children into substance misuse support at the earliest opportunity.
- The majority of substance misuse delivery takes place at the Brent Civic Centre. Using a secure central office is ideal for coordinating back-to-back appointments. However, there are instances where accessing other sites would better serve the needs of children and families. It would also provide the added benefit of introducing children and their families to other provision offered at community centres
- There is real scope to put processes in place that ensure there is a consistent approach to making treatment services available to those hard to engage young people who fall through the cracks in existing pathways.
- The Metropolitan Police's *Children Strategy 2024* introduces a child first approach to policing in London. This means that the proportion of children supported by YJS's (approximately half of all Brent cases) is expected to increase significantly. Existing pathways need to be modernised to reflect this change as they were created when OOCs were a small proportion of YJS work.
- Remapping pathways enables Brent YJS and VIA to add greater value to each other's work. Partnership working between the two services is strong and benefits from good case management oversight and regular meetings. There are however many opportunities to strengthen this further through greater aligned working such as ensuring YJS staff accompany children to all first substance misuse appointments regardless of location, and where relevant to support and encourage children to access wider VIA provision including support groups and emotional wellbeing services.

10.21 Appropriate Adult Service

Brent's Appropriate Adult service sat with Adult Social Care until 31 December 2024 when the responsibility was transferred to CYP. AA services are contracted to the Appropriate Adult Service Limited (TAS). In March 2025, OCSLT approved the continuation of this arrangement. Costs will be shared across CYP and day to day management of the contract will sit with Brent YJS.

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10.22 Wider Services

Two hundred and one children and young people received a court disposal, Out of Court Disposal, Triage disposal, a Community Resolution or Turnround in 2024. Of these, 8% were on a Child Protection Plan, 26% were Children in Need, and 16% were Looked after Children. These services are classified as 'wider services' by the YJB. More than half of all children supported by YJS (50%) accessed wider statutory provision. Wider Services are one of the YJB's ten new KPIs.

Table 14. YJS Alignment with Wider Services 2024

Wider Services 2024		
Wider Service	No. of children	%
Total no. of children receiving a court sentence, O OCD, Triage or Community and Turnaround	201	
Child Protection	16	8%
Child in need	52	26%
Looked after child	32	16%

10.23 Disproportionality in the Brent Youth Justice System

Reducing disproportionality in the youth justice system is a highly challenging priority across London. The failure to achieve equity of treatment for all children in the youth justice system can also be found in Brent when using the YJB Summary Ethnic Disparity Tool to analyse children aged 10 to 17 years. This is particularly evident amongst Black African and Caribbean children and young people who are significantly overrepresented in the youth justice system. Overall, Black Heritage group children represented 37% of the Brent YJS cohort in March 2025. This compares unfavourably to the 22% of all children and young people from these other heritage groups living in Brent according to the mid-year 2021 census. The table below shows the breakdown by ethnicity over the last 5 years.

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Table 15. No. of Brent Children in the Youth Justice System 2020 to 2025 by ethnicity

Ethnic group	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Percentage change year ending March 2020 to March 2025	Percentage change year ending March 2024 to March 2025	2021 midyear 10- 17 population by ethnic group
Asian	19	13	6	17	8	11	▼ -42%	▼ -58%	10,322
Black	92	70	46	60	60	56	▼ -39%	▼ -34%	7,982
Mixed	14	10	11	12	13	24	▲ +71%	▼ -7%	2,764
Other	17	9	16	14	27	33	▲ +94%	▲ +59%	4,287
Total BAME Heritage Groups	142	102	79	103	108	124	▼ -12%	▼ -24%	25,355
White	26	22	18	20	15	22	▼ -15%	▼ -42%	7,899
Unknown	0	2	3	1	0	4	N/A	N/A	-
All Heritage Groups	168	126	100	124	123	150	▼ -11%	▼ -27%	33,254

What Brent YJS is doing to tackle disproportionality

Improving practice

- Trauma informed practice has improved the ability of YJS practitioners to tell the story behind the crime within the pre-sentence reports and the wider assessment and planning process. This includes explaining the experiences of children who have been adversely impacted by gang exploitation or have suffered trauma.
- Practice Development Sessions. These are held regularly and includes themes including Social Graces, and cultural competency (delivered by Young Brent Foundation).
- Background information has been expanded to include any experiences of discrimination or trauma to the courts.
- YJS case studies are shared at YJS Board meetings where attention is given to exploring whether the diverse needs of children have been considered.
- The CYP and YJS Audit programme monitors the quality of provision children receive.
- Magistrates training.
- Child first approaches. Relationship building, coproduced intervention plans, listening to children, participation work and annual surveys:

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- Group supervision. Social Care and the Brent YJS work collaboratively whenever Looked After Children (LAC) enter, or are at risk of entering, the youth justice system. This was enhanced in January 2022 by the adoption of joint case supervision. These arrangements formalised existing good practice by regularising ongoing joint risk management and decision making. Practitioners from partner agencies including CAMHS and the PDU participate in group supervision whenever this is in the best interests of the child.
- Out of Court Disposal Decision Making Panel. This weekly Panel is chaired by Brent YJS and attended by Police, Health, YJS, Social Care, Early Help staff and Restorative Justice workers to jointly consider and determine Out of Court Disposal (OCD) decisions. Social Workers attend the Panel - or complete a Professionals Information Form - since November 2021. This has strengthened our ability to take mitigating factors into consideration and identify appropriate interventions and disposal conditions.
- *The Joint working protocol between Brent Youth Offending Team and The Probation Service (Brent Probation Delivery Unit PDU)*. Created in May 2022, this Protocol outlines the operational procedures and standards required when transferring supervision from the YJS to the Brent Probation Service.
- Since December 2021, LAC Social Workers have contributed to all transfer meetings between the YJS and PDU. This ensures that planning is as supportive as possible for LAC Young People moving from the youth justice system to the adult criminal justice system.
- Access to Family Support Workers has enabled the YJS to support the whole family, not just the young person.
- The early identification of neurodevelopmental disorders and help in education at an early stage could combat the entry of Black heritage group children into the criminal justice system.
- The collaborative culture in CYP means that Social Care and YJS work together every day in a range of ways including Strategy meetings, at risk of custody meetings, and preparing bail packages.
- Introduced in 2022/23, the annual Brent Youth Justice Service Disproportionality Action Plan (DAP) has been created to understand the extent to which youth justice disposals are disproportionately served, monitor the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken by YJS to support children from Black Heritage groups, and to consolidate actions youth justice partners are undertaking to tackle overrepresentation. The DAP is monitored by the Brent YJS Management Board biannually. In 2024/25 the DAP focussed on preventing Black Heritage group children entering the criminal justice system, preventing re-offending within the Black Heritage cohort, preventing school exclusions, improved ETE outcomes, improving access to early support for ASD or neuro disabilities to prevent entry and re-entry into the criminal justice system, reducing disproportionality in custodial outcomes, and listening to children's voices and understanding their experiences.

It is difficult to attribute the extent to which Brent YJS has contributed to a steady decline in the number of Brent children from Black Heritage groups in the local youth justice system: a 39% reduction between March 2020 (92) and March 2025

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(56). It is hoped however that the concerted partnership effort to reduce disproportionality is a key factor. Notwithstanding these gains, it must be noted that the overrepresentation of children from Black heritage groups remains and is significant.

10.24 Prevention work - Targeted Work and our Wider Reach

Targeted Prevention Hub (TPH)

The development of our new Targeted Prevention Hub (TPH) located within the Brent Youth and Youth Justice Service brings together existing adolescent-focussed resources across Early Help and Social Care to provide an expanded range of preventative support to children and young people in Brent. Due to be introduced in stages from June 2025, it will also introduce a new Family Group Conferencing Service.

TPH is a non-case holding service that is expected to achieve a wide range of benefits including:

- Providing more support to services tackling risk outside the home.
- Strengthening Brent's approach to prevention and early intervention.
- Expanding resources for children returning home from care and supporting reunification with families.
- Unifying and coordinating existing resources from across Early Help and Children's Social Care.
- Improving experiences for children, young people, and families – providing a single, dedicated referral pathway.

By creating a single pathway across Children's Social Care, TPH will fast-track access to a menu of services, including:

- Careers advice e.g. for children who are NEET.
- Sexual Health advice (NHS/VCS).
- Expert advice re child sexual exploitation.
- 1:1 support for children who are gang affected/affiliated.
- Out of hours detached youth work.
- Mentoring.
- Missing children support.
- CVS enrichment provision e.g. Young Brent Foundation.

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- Mental health support including CAMHS and WEST.
- Substance misuse support from VIA.
- Contextual safeguarding support e.g. peer mapping, safety mapping, complex strategy meetings, and intelligence sharing.
- Brent YJS Turnaround.
- Educational awareness sessions on crime and exploitation.
- Family group conferencing.
- Reunification of children returning from home from being looked after.
- Domestic abuse with Advance.

Turnaround Programme

Developed by the Ministry of Justice, Turnaround is based on similar principles to those underlying the Supporting Families programme, including the view that children on the cusp of offending often have complex needs that should be supported. It also recognises that supporting the needs of the whole family is an effective means of reducing the likelihood of children entering the youth justice system.

Brent Turnaround is a four-year programme which has been funded by the MoJ until April 2026 to:

- Work and offer additional support to young people who are on the edge of entering the criminal justice system.
- Support young people who come to Police attention.
- Prevent further offending.
- Help young people and their families where there are concerns around behaviour at school, in the community or at home.
- Achieve positive outcomes for young people.

Turnaround extends support offered through the OOC Team to young people aged 10 to 17 years who are:

- Subject to a No Further Action (NFA) decision.
- Subject to a Community Resolution.
- Receiving a first-time youth caution.
- Released under investigation (RUI) or those subject to pre-charge bail (PCB).
- Discharged by a court.

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- Acquitted at court.
- Fined by a court.

All the 70 Brent children who have accessed Turnaround in the three-year period up to March 2025 were either referred by the Police or Brent Early Help. Approximately 90% of referrals came via the Police. This is significant as prior to Turnaround these children would not have been given access to services. Staff work hard to encourage families to access Turnaround. As it is a voluntary intervention consent from a young person and their family is required.

Table 16. Turnaround Referrals April 2024 to March 2025

Outcome	No. of Young People
Refused intervention / Not started intervention / Not Completed intervention	3
Partially Completed	0
Successfully Completed or in still in active intervention	46
Total no. of young people	49

Turnaround staff meet with young people and their parents to ensure the whole family participates in a holistic assessment. This is to identify needs and identify any family issues or factors affecting a child or young person's behaviour. Young people who have received an Out of Court Disposal will also be assessed using the Brent YJS Diversion and Assessment template.

Turnaround participants are offered support including an NHS Mental Health screening assessment, substance misuse assessment and interventions, education training and employment advice, mentoring, and positive activities.

Turnaround outcomes include:

- Young people getting back into education or training.
- Increased self-esteem and confidence.

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- Young people identifying their goals and creating a plan for their future. Having something to aspire to gives them more purpose and motivation to change their behaviour and engage with services.
- Providing children and families with a safe space to express their thoughts and feelings, wishes and hopes. This is something they may not have been able to do before.
- Helping children to identify their trusted adults and support network.
- Understanding what makes healthy family relationships. This enables participants to assess their current relationships and identify those that may be exploitative and unhealthy.

Engage

Engage is a MOPAC Funded project that since September 2023 has provided a range of youth work support in Police custody suites across the NW Borough Command Unit. Barnet are the lead borough and have recruited youth workers who are based in the Wembley and Colindale custody suites. Youth workers meet young people in custody and offer a further two meetings post custody. During this time, they are given information, advice and signposted to Brent Early Help and Youth Justice Service interventions. Engage is open from 8am to 8pm weekdays with a reduced level of cover over weekends. Brent has an Engage SPOC working collaboratively with the Barnet Service Manager who reports progress to the YJS Management Board via the Brent Youth and Youth Justice Manager. Engage is funded until the end of 2025/26.

Your Choice

Your Choice provides training in CBT techniques to youth practitioners working with young people aged 11-17 years at elevated risk of harm. Comparing the outcomes of the treatment and control group measures the impact of Your Choice so long as the two groups are similar to each other. Teams of practitioners are randomly allocated to train and deliver Your Choice. Young people matched to trained practitioners received Your Choice. Young people matched to untrained practitioners are supported as per business as usual.

Since its introduction in Brent in 2023, 49 children and young people have been recruited to Your Choice from the YJS, Accelerated Support Team, and Children's Social Care. This is broadly similar to the 1,463 children who have received Your Choice across 31 London boroughs in the period 2021 to 2025 – an average of 47 per Local Authority. Many of the young people who engaged with the programme were at risk of contextual harm. Seventy percent of participants completed the 12-week programme.

Feedback from YJS Case Managers was very positive:

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"I have seen a noticeable difference in the behaviours and responses of the YP engaged with the YC Programme. Particularly, those children who are part of the treatment group have been afforded the opportunity to explore their thoughts and behaviours and the emotions attached. As a result, I have found the programme to be an effective method of engaging YP that are willing to explore these areas of their lives."

Your Choice funding was due to finish at the start of April but has been extended until June 2025. Brent has been invited to submit a bid to run a further 12-week programme. A proposal is being developed which if successful would be based within the YJS and made available to children involved in the youth justice system. A report focussed on the pan-London impact of Your Choice is due to be published by Youth Endowment Fund at the end of Oct 2025.

Provision of parent workshops

These workshops are popular with parents who appreciate meeting other parents in a blame free environment and learn about a variety of themes such as online grooming, county lines drug dealing, parenting styles and the negative impact of social media. These workshops have been a response to *the Children Commissioners report on Young Lives (April 2022)*, that found families often do not know where they can get help and then feel blamed when engaging in programmes. Brent YJS has an ongoing commitment to providing parent workshops as well as offering the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme which is focused specifically on parents who have concerns about youth violence.

All parents benefitted from the work that covered topics on exploitation and county lines. Feedback from parents includes:

"Learned and was shocked about the drug houses and the dirty conditions young people are made to stay in. Also, young people are staying with strangers who also might have risky behaviours."

"Surprised to learn about the way in which the gangs are so well organised. Helped me reflect on my son's behaviour and there were signs there that he could have been groomed and how the groomers behave to exploit young people."

"Didn't know that these gangs were so well organised. Learned to be more alert. Learned that it is adults who are in charge of grooming not just teenagers".

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“Learned that the numbers of young people being groomed is high and well organised”.

Parents all commented positively about their experiences attending substance misuse workshops for parents:

‘I learnt a lot more awareness and safety tips - I would like to continue with these meetings so I can get a more detailed understanding about our children today. Overall, the meeting was a blessing because I came out knowing more than I did going in’.

Trainers commented positively about the participants who attended substance misuse workshops for parents:

“Families felt supported and have appreciated the wraparound support and advice/advocacy that had been offered.”

“Grateful for the insight into their child(s) behaviours and the YJS.”

“Thankful for the awareness given to widen knowledge around how drugs affect their child and its impact.”

“Appreciative of having someone to listen to their concerns, as they felt heard”

“Grateful for the groups they had been referred to as it helped resolve some of their concerns and given them ample information, that in some cases they thought they wouldn’t need.”

10.25 Case Work Practice and Quality Assurance

The YJS audit framework has been shaped by revised case management guidance and HMIP lines of enquiry and is closely aligned to the Brent CYP Quality Assurance Framework 2023-2026. This sets out the quality assurance activities which help the Children and Young People Department fulfil its core values, to make the most positive impact and improve outcomes for Brent children and young people:

- Places children and young people and their families at the heart of service design and delivery.
- Adopts a child/family journey approach to service delivery.
- Holds the views of children and young people and their families as of paramount importance.

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- Ensures that staff can spend as much time as possible with children and young people and their families so that they can make a real difference to their lives.
- Enables children and young people and their families to only tell their story once and be able to rely on long-term relationships with CYP professionals.

The CYP Quality Assurance cycle supports Brent to be an outstanding learning organisation through understanding what is working well, what needs to change, identifying new ways to measure the impact of our work. It drives the gathering and analysis of information, the development of action plans for individual children, staff and services and a review of outcomes. Brent YJS contributes to the quality assurance outcomes achieved as part of the CYP Annual Audit Programme. This is an intensive programme of monthly auditing of CYP service areas which in May 2024 included the topic: *Quality of work with LAC and care leavers on remand or in prison*. The YJS Management Team sought to assess the effectiveness of this by undertaking a dip sample of 30 Social Care case files. As part of the analysis, the YJS Quality Assurance & Practice Development Manager concluded that the quality of work with LAC and Care Leavers in custody was good overall. Led by the YJS Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager, YJS Team Managers also undertook a peer audit of ten intervention plans. Applying HMIP inspection standards, eight out of ten intervention plans were assessed as Good” - the remaining two were both assessed as “requires Improvement” - one of these did not provide a rationale for its assessment of risk safety and wellbeing, and the other was not saved within ChildView. Team Managers supported their Case Managers to make the necessary improvements in both instances and good Intervention Planning has subsequently been afforded significant attention within Practice Development sessions. Other YJS audits have focussed on risk, safeguarding, education, mental health, trauma, cultural competency, and diversity. Audits undertaken during 2023/24 included a full case audit on management supervision and oversight, Pre-Sentence Reports, and Out of Court Disposals. Learning from case audits is a standing agenda item at YJS Team Meetings. Overall, audit results show an upward trajectory of good practice - especially around the quality of recorded outcomes. Areas requiring improvement identified as part of the auditing process are addressed by line managers and during monthly practice development sessions led by the Quality Assurance & Practice Development Manager. In collaboration with Barnet, a cross-borough peer audit of Brent and Barnet OOC cases is due to take place in June 2025. Auditing programmes due to commence in 2025/26 include peer audits of case files to assess recording practice, national standards adherence, and assessing the standard and use of desistance factors. YJS cases are also subject to ongoing audits and support undertaken by the YJS Quality Assurance & Practice Development Manager.

YJS has developed a bespoke and more child friendly intervention plan than the one available within the Child View Assessment framework. The intervention plan was created by an Intervention Planning Committee, led by the YJS Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager in consultation with Case Managers, Deputy Service

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Manager, Team Managers, the YJS Liaison and Diversion Officer and a young person receiving support from the YJS.

10.26 National Standards Audit and Subsequent Reviews

The Youth Justice Board required Brent YJS to assess how well they complied with 2019 National Standards. The review in Brent took place between November 2019 and March 2020, across five new Youth Justice National Standards themes. Members of the YJS Management Board led the review. They were supported by YJS Managers and operational staff to form one small working group for each standard. The review covered strategic and operational practice. All five National Standards: Out of court disposals, at Court, the Community, in Secure Settings, and Transitions, were rated good for both the strategic and operational self-assessments.

YJS Team managers have been trained to audit national standards and have undertaken subsequent reviews of their lead areas - led by the Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager. A review of the Court National Standard was completed in July 2023. Two improvements relating to the management oversight of court processes were identified and subsequently remedied. Overall, the audit showed good compliance with National Standards. It was submitted to the YJS for moderation – ratings remained unchanged.

11.0 Challenges, Risks and Issues

The cost-of-living crisis has provided significant challenges for children, young people, and their families. It has exacerbated tensions within the home, affected mental health and produced poor ETE outcomes. Although restrictions have long been lifted, the COVID-19 pandemic created long lasting challenges for many children. For example, some young people have been exposed to hardships that have affected their physical and mental health, experienced increased poverty and social deprivation, and experienced loneliness and a loss of support networks. For children from Black and Minority Ethnic communities, the impact of loss has been comparatively greater. To respond successfully to these challenges there may well be resource demands within the YJS in the years ahead. The effects of these socio-economic factors in Brent cannot be fully predicted but it is possible for example, that robbery, theft, and other forms of acquisitional crime such as shoplifting may increase.

Strong leadership, good governance, and a committed and determined workforce provide Brent with good reason to feel confident about achieving our ambitions for 2025-2028. We trust our stakeholders and partners to provide the

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support needed to ensure we respond effectively to the challenges that accompanied the introduction of ten new performance KPIs and our inspection preparation provides an additional layer of Quality Assurance Brent's commitment to ongoing youth justice improvement and innovation is nonetheless resource dependent. Brent has worked creatively and flexibly to protect and improve frontline service provision. However, the possibility of public sector funding reductions in the years to come, combined with cost pressures stemming from increasing local housing demands, pose a risk to the current concerted partnership effort to reduce serious youth violence, reoffending and compromise our dedicated commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people in the criminal justice system.

12.0 Service Improvement Plan and Looking Forward 2025-2028

12.1 Brent is committed to the priorities outlined in the YJB Strategic Plan 2024-27, Thematic and Area Based Inspection recommendations, and the *Brent ways of working, this is Brent, this is how we grow*. In keeping with this, the following are the principal aims and commitments that will shape the Brent YJS partnership in the next three years.

1. Embed the new Targeted Prevention Hub within Brent.
2. Develop ever closer links with the voluntary and community sector – to include the ongoing identification of partners to join the TPH.
3. Implement and manage new substance misuse arrangements within Brent.
4. Embed new Appropriate Adult arrangements within Brent.
5. Increase access to victim's support.
6. Work with partners to develop pathways and create access for Speech and Language Therapy.
7. Refresh, implement, and monitor the Brent YJS Disproportionality Action Plan to tackle the over representation of children from Black Heritage Groups in the Brent Youth Justice System.
8. Support the delivery of the Brent Youth Strategy.
9. Collaborate with Social Care to reduce the criminalisation of children in care and care leavers.
10. Continue to promote evidence-based Child First approaches as the best means to reducing victims, promoting public protection, keeping communities safe and supporting children towards positive outcomes.
11. Support MPS Children's Strategy recommendations to help keep children in London safe, build their trust and bring to justice those who abuse and exploit them.

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12. Continue to build a YJS partnership culture that encourages diversity in its workforce, promotes anti-racist practice in its thinking and inclusivity, is supportive, encourages personal responsibility and is outcomes focused.
13. Continue work within the YJS Management Board, the wider partnership, and YJS staff to prepare for the current round of HMIP Inspection, through a YJS focussed programme of case file audits, thematic Practice Development sessions and focused individual supervision.
14. Broaden access to mentoring with clear referral pathways.
15. Develop plan to expand the remit to care leavers who are involved in the criminal justice system

The above aims and actions will be included within the annual Brent Youth Justice Improvement Plan 2025/26. Activity will continue to focus upon our key themes to improve our performance, tackle serious youth violence, strengthen our partnership culture, improve our prevention offer, strengthen our staff and workforce, become more evidenced based and creative in our practice, and be inspection ready.

12.2 HMIP Inspection Standards Review

12.3 In March 2025, Brent YJS completed a 23-page self-evaluation: *Brent YJS: HMIP Inspection Standards self-assessment*. The report assessed Brent YJS readiness for inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) - the independent inspector of youth justice and probation services in England and Wales.

12.4 The report outlines the two types of inspections Brent may be subject to prior to assessing Brent YJS's strengths and areas for improvement against each of HMIP's inspection standards. Information used to evidence performance include audit findings, scrutiny panel findings, service user survey responses, parents and carer survey responses, magistrates feedback, feedback from other professionals, the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2024/25, quotes from children and young people, and lead area analysis from the YJS Management Team.

12.5 The work of Brent YJS was rated Good overall. There were also seventeen recommendations that will be incorporated into the Brent YJS Improvement Plan:

Domain One recommendations

1. The creation of a three-year Youth Justice Plan.
2. Increase youth participation at YJS Management Board Meetings.

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3. Identify priority policies and devote time to increasing staff awareness.
4. Introduce a staff survey cycle
5. Director's briefings and Serious Incident Notifications to be stored in one place
6. Identify training that can equip staff to better identify and refer children who are eligible for SEND and other Inclusion Service support.
7. Pre-supervision mini audits must be routinely completed.
8. Compliance actions must be followed up within 24 hours and Management Oversight must be evident.
9. Gain access to the resources needed to improve outcomes for children with undiagnosed speech and language needs.
10. Closer data sharing and alignment with the Brent Community Safety Team.

Domain Two recommendations

11. YJS Team Managers to ensure that the full extent of the support and guidance provided to Case Managers is evidenced as management oversight on Child View.
12. Work closely with the Police to identify and remove barriers to the timely acquisition of victim information.
13. Team Managers to ensure that Case Managers routinely attach intervention plans to the Asset Plus assessment.
14. Team Managers to ensure that all Intervention Plans are SMART.

Victims

15. Brent YJS to raise issues that limit the ability of the Police to contact victims in a timely fashion with the YJB, and at pan London strategic forums.
16. A Brent YJS Victims working group should be formed to explore local barriers and identify recommendations for making improvements.
17. Centralise all victims and restorative justice practice within one overarching Victims Policy.

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13.0 Evidence-based Practice and Innovation

13.1 The *HMIP 2023 Annual Report: inspections of youth justice services* promote an evidence-based approach to youth justice policy and practice. The approach is broken down into a framework that will underpin Brent YJS effective practice development in 2025-2028:

- **Adversity** – Young people who come into conflict with the law have experienced adversity on an individual, family, and community basis, and those from ethnic minority backgrounds experience disproportionate contact with the justice system.
- **Adolescent development** - Offending behaviour by young people should be viewed as part of adolescent development and considered in the context of the young person's social and psychological environment.
- **Universal Services** - Providing access to universal services – especially those focused on education and health – can prevent young people coming into conflict with the law.
- **Individualisation** - An individualised, rights-based and child-centred approach is key to preventing young people from getting into further conflict with the law.
- **Diversion** - When seeking to divert young people who have come into conflict with the law, it is important to take care with how and when to intervene, always ensuring to support positive outcomes.
- **Positive Relationships** - The development of positive relationships between young people and adults can help to prevent offending/engaging in further offending.
- **Detention** - The use of detention must be avoided, and where used, it must be adapted to children's needs, with a focus on equipping children with the health, education and life skills that ensure their safe return to their communities.
- **Continuing Support** - Education and employment opportunities are vital to ensuring young people avoid further offending and attention needs to be paid to managing the end of any intervention, providing continuity in support to the greatest extent possible.
- **Involving YP** - Young people's lived experiences are invaluable for policymakers seeking to understand the nature of youth offending, and their views are indispensable for developing effective and child-centred responses to offending behaviour.
- **Developing the Evidence base** - There is a continued need for consistent data collection, increased funded research, and improved relationships between policymakers and the academic community to promote progressive approaches to youth justice.

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13.2 Brent has learnt much from evidence-based practice and will seek to adopt any new approach that has the potential to improve outcomes for Brent residents. This will include monitoring research commissioned by the Youth Engagement Fund via their research toolkit which provides access to many promising approaches to addressing offending behaviour and preventing serious youth violence. Work with community organisations to identify alternative forms of engagement with young people will also be explored. This will include coproduction and participation methods, such as the use of podcasts and multimedia, that enable young people to learn and express their views about offending and its impact upon their communities.

14.0 Evaluation

14.1 HMIP 2023 Annual Report: inspections of youth justice services

In January 2024, the YJB published its annual statistics, looking at data from April 2022 to March 2023. These showed a small increase in the number of children who were first-time entrants (one per cent compared with the previous year), the first increase seen in the last 10 years. There was also an increase in the number of stop and searches (13 percent compared with the previous year). (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.10)

Evidence gathered online found that several factors consistently emerge as central to improving the life chances and outcomes of children. These include the importance of establishing positive, secure, consistent and trusting relationships between practitioners and children, as well as working collaboratively with children to identify goals, find solutions and build on their strengths, while working to address their needs. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.10).

One of the most significant concerns HMIP identify in relation to youth justice during this period is the pressure on partnership resourcing and funding. The power of the partnership is critical for YJSs. HMIP assert that their very existence is predicated on partnership commitment and statutory responsibility. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.10-23).

HMIP found that boards were most effective when board members were active participants who understood the distinct and diverse needs of YJS-involved children, could direct resources to meet these needs, and were influential advocates for them. Fundamental to boards' effectiveness was their ability to listen to the experiences of children and their parents or carers, and then use this information, both strategically and operationally, to develop and improve services. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.19).

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Many YJSs have a stable workforce and have demonstrated that they are able to balance office and remote working, providing staff and children with flexibility in how services are delivered. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.21).

HMIP typically found strength in the strategic and operational analysis of children's needs. The strongest performing areas had embedded a child-first and trauma-informed approach across the partnership. Interventions were delivered to a consistently high standard, which demonstrated the quality of partnership working. Children were able to access a range of services and support, and specific pathways for targeted, specialist and timely provision. Many YJSs are increasingly prioritising timely and appropriate neurodevelopmental pathways and recognising the importance of making sure YJS children can access speech, language and communication provision. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.24).

Examples of effective transition arrangements with probation services and good links with courts and sentencers (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.25).

Interventions were often highlighted as a gap in provision for a variety of different reasons. Staff identified particular interventions that they lacked in their YJS, such as addiction support, restorative justice, domestic abuse, young fathers, speech and language therapy and prevention). Some said that the interventions they did have were old, out of date or did not meet current needs, and that there was a lack of innovation in what was available. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.25).

HMIP found that reparation was often under used, or there were limited options available for children. Services for victims were not being adequately prioritised, and vacancies or gaps in specialist roles had led to significant delays in children receiving the services they required. They also found that a lack of review, monitoring or quality assurance sometimes meant partners were not proactively evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the resource or service they were providing. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.25).

Some staff reported that they were unclear about what provision was available locally and that a mapping exercise was required, with clear pathways showing how to access those services. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.26).

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HMIP found that only nine of the 20 YJSs had a seconded Probation Officer in post. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.27).

HMIP expect timely and relevant information to be available and appropriate facilities to be in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children. These areas had detailed policies, procedures and guidance documents, where diversity was considered throughout, and which were evidenced-based and regularly reviewed and evaluated. HMIP found strong evidence that quality assurance drove performance and led to high-quality services. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.28).

Several staff mentioned the various issues around the geography of their area, saying that services available in one part of their area were not available in another, creating a postcode lottery for the children. (HMIP 2023 Annual Report, p.29).

Other notable findings included:

- The majority of children were aged 17 or older (40 per cent), followed by children aged 15 to 17 (34 per cent).
- The majority were male (91 per cent, an increase from 86 per cent the previous year).
- The majority were of white heritage (61 per cent), a decrease from last year (75 per cent); 36 per cent were of Black and minority ethnic heritage, an increase from last year (23 per cent). Two per cent were recorded as 'other groups' and two per cent were not clearly recorded.
- In 50 per cent of the cases HMIP inspected, the children had identified disabilities. Of those, the majority had learning difficulties (75 children), followed by a cognitive disability (39 children) and then mental illness (24 children).
- The majority of children subject to court orders had received referral orders (77 per cent), followed by youth rehabilitation orders (23 per cent).
- Violent offences accounted for 55 per cent of the cases inspected, followed by robbery (nine per cent) and drugs and motoring offences (five per cent). Sexual offences (contact and non-contact) accounted for five per cent and burglary for three per cent of the cases inspected.
- In 76 cases a knife was feature in the current/inspected offence. In 59 cases a knife had been a feature in previous offences.

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

- In 24 per cent of the inspected cases, children had been cared for by the local authority within the inspected period: 14 per cent of these children lived in the area covered by the YJS and 10 were living out of the YJS area.
- In 32 per cent of cases, the children did not have their religion recorded.

15.0 YJS Partnership Budget 2025/26

Brent uses Youth Justice Board funding exclusively for the delivery of a range and variety of youth justice provision, aligned to effective practice and the achievement of the youth justice core outcomes.

£105,347 reduction

Agency	Cash	In-Kind Contributions	Partnership Funding	Total
Brent Council	£621,258	-	-	£621,258
Police	-	£90,000	-	£90,000
National Probation	£5,000	£50,000	-	£55,000
Health Service	-	£120,000	-	£120,000
MOPAC	£45,000	-	-	£45,000
Youth Justice Board	£588,339	-	-	£588,339
Other Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	£114,000			£114,000
Other - Turnaround (MoJ)	£100,266			£100,266
Total	£1,473,863	£260,000	£0	£1,733,863

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

Sign off, submission and approval



Signed

Palvinder Kudhail

**Chair of the Brent Youth Justice Service Management
Board**

Date: 15/06/2025

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028

Appendix 1 YJS Management Board Membership

Name	Job Title	Sector / Partnership Area
Palvinder Kudhail	Director – Early Help and Social Care	CYP CD Brent Council
Serita Kwofie	Head of Service Early Help	CYP CD Brent Council
Simon Egbor	Head of Community Safety	Community Safety and Public Protection
Vivien Dean	Head Teacher of Brent River College	Education
Alexandra Johnson	Head of Probation Delivery Unit	Probation Service
Sarah Nyandoro	Head of Joint Commissioning Brent ICB	CCG – Health
Andy Brown	Head of Substance Misuse	Public Health
Roxanna Glennon	Head of Inclusion	CYP CD Brent Council
DI Tony Killeen	Detective Inspector Offender Management Northwest Borough Command Unit Metropolitan Police	Metropolitan Police
Sgt Karl Jameson:	YJS Supervisor – NW BCU	Metropolitan Police
Kelli Eboji	Head of Service Looked After Children and Permanency	CYP CD Brent Council
Stephen Gordon	Head of Service Localities	CYP CD Brent Council
Emmanouela Kladouchou	Psychology Lead & Enhanced Treatment Team Lead. Principal Clinical & Forensic Psychologist	Brent and Kensington and Chelsea CAMHS
Rachel Summerfield	Magistrate – Chair of the Youth Bench	Willesden Magistrates Court

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Anna Alexandrou	Early Help, Panel Officer (minutes)	CYPCD Brent Council
James Salter	Youth and Youth Justice Manager	CYPCD Brent Council
Catherine Williams-Baffoe	Deputy Youth Justice Manager	CYPCD Brent Council
Antoinette Morgan	Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager	CYPCD Brent Council
Maxine Willetts	Chief Executive Young Brent Foundation	Young Brent Foundation – Voluntary Sector
Sanjay Shah	Performance and Management Information Officer	CYPCD Brent Council
Jessica Manning / Bhavita Gohel	Oversight Manager	Youth Justice Board
Divine Bremathas	Programme Mental Health and Wellbeing Officer	Brent Integrated Care Partnership Brent Council

Dates of the YJS Management Board Meetings

Meetings 2025/26
10 April 2025
24 July 2025
23 October 2025
22 January 2026

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Appendix 2: Staff Structure

The Youth and Youth Justice Manager reports to the Head of Early Help

YJS Staffing Structure 2023 – 24		
Post	FTE	Funding Source
Youth & Youth Justice Manager	1	YJB/Brent Council
Deputy Youth Justice Manager	1	YJB/Brent Council
Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager	1	YJB/Brent Council
Team Managers	4	YJB/Brent Council
Restorative Justice Lead	1	YJB/Brent Council
Case Managers	10	YJB/Brent Council
Data Quality Officer	1	YJB/Brent Council
Youth Participation Worker	1	YJB/Brent Council
Early Intervention Officer – Triage	1	MOPAC
Reparations Worker	0.5	YJB/Brent Council
Total	21.5	

The service wide YJS staff group of 21.5 FTE is supplemented by the following 7.6 FTE secondments and co-location arrangements:

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Post	FTE
Police Officer	2.0
Seconded Probation Officer	0.6
Prospects Employment Advisor	2
CAMHS Practitioner	1
YJLD Liaison and Diversion (CNWL)	1
VIA Substance Misuse	1
7.6	

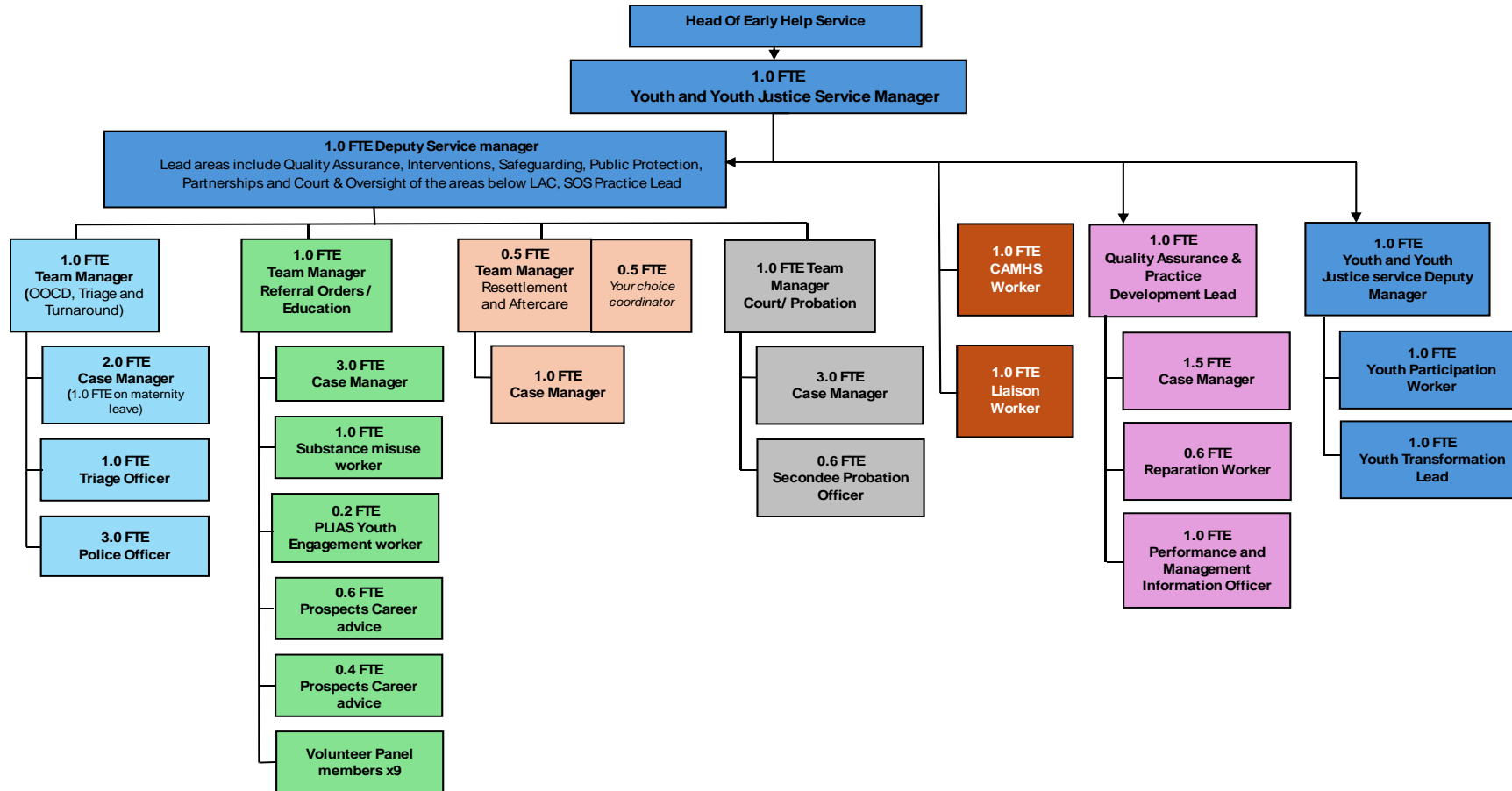
Staff by gender and ethnicity (There are no staff currently registered as disabled)

Gender	Total
Female	23
Male	7
Total	30

Ethnicity	Total
BAME	23
White	7
Prefer not to say	0
Total	30

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028


Brent Youth Justice Service Staff Structure 2025/26



Pre-Court	First Tier, Community and Custody Disposals					
First-time Entrants, Early Interventions, Pre-court Disposals, Data Quality, Turnaround, Engage	Referral Order Panels, Education, Employment and Training; Volunteer Panel members	Gangs, Your Choice, Contextual Safeguarding, No Knives Better Lives, Resettlement and Aftercare	Court, Custody, Bail, and Remand, Reoffending, Intensive Supervision & Surveillance, National Referral Mechanism, Probation, Transitions		Quality Assurance and Practice Development, Restorative Justice, Reparation, Group work & Interventions, Participation & YJS	Youth Strategy, Youth Engagement, FWC Interventions

Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028



	Full Council 10 November 2025
	Report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources
Representation of Political Groups on Committees	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Council
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	One Appendix 1: Political Balance Rules
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Amira Nassr, Deputy Director Democratic & Corporate Governance Tel: 0208 937 5436 amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk James Kinsella, Governance & Scrutiny Manager, Democratic Services Tel: 020 8937 2063 james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 As a result of a member having resigned from the Labour Group and joining the Conservative Group there is now a requirement for the Council to undertake a review of the representation of different political groups on certain committees.
- 1.2 The current membership of the Council consists of 57 councillors, which has been used as the basis for this review. Following the review, the Council will then have a duty to make appointments (where necessary) to those committees giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seats.

2.0 Recommendations

Full Council is asked:

- (1) To agree the size of each committee, which remains unchanged from the previous review undertaken at the Council meeting in July 2025.
- (2) To confirm (where the rules of political balance apply) the allocation of seats on committees to each of the Council's political groups as set out in the report.
- (3) To make appointments, where identified as required, to those committees giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seats; and
- (4) To note that the political balance on sub-committees will be reviewed at the first available meeting of the General Purposes Committee and the Licensing Committee.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1.1 The allocation of seats on each of the Council's committees to which the political balance rules apply supports delivery of the borough plan by enabling the Council's decision-making bodies to operate transparently and effectively whilst also supporting and promoting confidence in the good governance of the council.

3.2 Background

Representation of Political Groups

- 3.2.1 The Council is required to review and determine the representation of different political groups on certain committees as soon as possible following any change in Council membership and the balance of political groups.
- 3.2.2 As soon as practicable after the review, the Council then has a duty to determine the allocation to the different political groups of all seats on the relevant committees. The allocation is determined by applying the "political balance rules" prescribed by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and supplemented by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. These rules are set out in Appendix 1 to this report and are designed to ensure that the political composition of the Council's decision-making and deliberative committees, as far as possible, replicates the political composition of Full Council. Subsequently, the Council has a duty to make appointments to those committees giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seat(s).
- 3.2.3 The Committees that the political balance rules apply to have similar duties in relation to any sub-committees they may have.

3.2.4 Whilst the overall membership of the Council remains as 57 councillors, the composition of political groups as a percentage of overall membership following the recent resignation of the member from the Labour Group and that member having joined the Conservative Group is now as follows:

- 47 Labour Group councillors (reduced from 48) – representing 82.46% (reduced from 84.22%) of the total council membership.
- 6 Conservative Group councillors (increased from 5) – representing 10.53% (increased from 8.77%) of the total council membership.
- 3 Liberal Democrat councillors – representing 5.26% of the total council membership (no change)
- 1 independent councillor – representing 1.75% of total council membership (no change)

3.2.5 Table 1 below sets out the 5 ordinary committees of the Council to which the political balance rules apply; the size of each committee (excluding any non-voting co-opted committee members in accordance with the political balance rules); the total number of seats required to be allocated and the number of seats each political group is entitled to based on the number of group members.

3.2.6 There are a total of **38** ordinary committee seats to which the political balance requirements will formally apply. Based on the overall council membership, the breakdown regarding the proportion of seats each political group is entitled to on these committees, following this review, has been revised as follows:

- Labour Group – 32 (reduced from 33) seats.
- Conservative Group – 4 (increased from 3) seats.
- Liberal Democrat Group – 2 seats

3.2.7 According to the political balance rules, a political group for this purpose is a group of two or more members. In light of the rules relating to political balance it will not be possible to treat the single independent member as having formed a political group for the purposes of the review and, on this basis, they are not entitled to the allocation of any of the available seats.

3.2.8 Given the breakdown outlined in terms of the proportion of seats to be allocated between the eligible political groups, this has resulted in seats on each of the 5 ordinary committees to which the political balance rules apply, being agreed and allocated between the respective Groups (following this review) as follows.

Table 1

Ordinary Committees	Size	Labour Group 47 82.46%	Conservative Group 6 10.53%	Liberal Democrats Group 3 5.26%
General Purposes Committee	8	7	0	1

Planning Committee	8	7	1	0
Audit & Standards Committee	7	6	1	0
Corporate Parenting Committee	5	4	1	0
Licensing Committee	10	8 (reduced from 9)	1 (additional seat allocated)	1
Total seats	38	32	4	2
Entitlement (based on a proportion of total members)		32	4	2

- 3.2.9 There are other committees which the political balance rules apply to but only principles (a), (b) and (d) (see Appendix 1, paragraph 3). Namely, the existing Scrutiny Committees and the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee.
- 3.2.10 Table 2 below confirms the size and make-up of these Committees, with the Conservative and Liberal Democrats groups both entitled (given the size of each committee) to be allocated a seat on both Scrutiny Committees.

Other Committees	Size	Labour Group 47 82.46%	Conservative Group 6 10.53%	Liberal Democrats Group 3 5.26%
Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	11 (plus 4 voting co-opted members and 2 non-voting co-opted members)	9	1	1
Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee	11	9	1	1
Audit & Standards Advisory Committee	7 (plus up to 4 voting co-opted members)	6	1	0

3.2.11 Subsequent to allocating seats, the Council has a duty to make appointments to the specified committees giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seats.

3.2.12 The political balance rules do not apply to the Health and Wellbeing Board but it has been previously agreed that this Board comprise four Cabinet Members and one opposition Member and this will continue following this review, with the Conservative Group as the Principal Opposition Group allocated the available seat.

4. Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 The proposed allocation of seats between Committees has been subject to consultation with each political group.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 There are no financial considerations arising directly from this report.

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 These are addressed in the main body of the report.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (Act), the Council has a duty when exercising their functions to have 'due regard' to the need:

- a) To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity; and
- c) Foster good relations between those who share a “protected characteristic” and those who do not.

7.2 This is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The ‘protected characteristics’ are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

7.3 The purpose of the duty is to enquire into whether a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic. In other words, the indirect discriminatory effects of a proposed decision. Due regard is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances.

7.4 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report at this stage.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 None directly arising from this report.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 None directly arising from this report.

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 None directly arising from this report.

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel


Corporate Director Finance &
Resources

Appendix 1

The political balance rules prescribed by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ('the Act') and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 ('the 1990 Regulations')

1. The rules are that seats on relevant committees must be allocated to different political groups so far as reasonably practicable in accordance with the following four principles:
 - (a) that not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;
 - (b) that the majority of the seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the Council's membership;
 - (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that each political group is allocated the same proportion of the total seats across all the ordinary committees of the Council as the proportion of the members of the Council that belong to that group; and
 - (d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that each political group is allocated the same proportion of the seats on each relevant body as the proportion of the members of the Council that belong to that group.
2. Principle (c) refers to "ordinary committees" which under the Act means those appointed under section 102(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972, namely General Purposes Committee, Audit & Standards Committee, Corporate Parenting Committee, Planning Committee and Licensing Committee.
3. Principles (a), (b) and (d) apply to a "body" to which the Council makes appointments. The Act provides that the bodies to which this principle applies include ordinary committees (as defined above) and ordinary sub committees, advisory committees and sub-committees, and joint committees where at least 3 seats are filled by appointments made by the Council.
4. Principles (a), (b) and (d) therefore apply to the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee. Strictly speaking, according to principle (b), the Labour Group is entitled to a majority of the seats on the Committee. However, to maintain the current size of the Committee, Full Council can depart from the rules provided no member votes against the proposal.
5. By virtue of the Local Government Act 2000, principles (a), (b) and (d) also apply to the Scrutiny Committees.
6. According to principle (c) above, the General Purposes Committee, Audit & Standards Committee, Corporate Parenting Committee, Planning Committee and Licensing Committee first have to be taken together to determine the *number* of seats that should be allocated to each group. Then, in accordance with paragraph (d) above, the number of seats each political group is entitled to has to be allocated proportionately to individual committees so far as possible.
7. The political balance principles do not apply to the London Councils' Joint Committees or the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee because only one appointment on each Committee is made by the Council.

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	Full Council 10 November 2025
	Report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources
Constitution Update – Function & Procedure Rules West London Economic Prosperity Board	
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 A: Amended Function & Procedure Rules – West London Economic Prosperity Board
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Amira Nassr, Deputy Director Democratic & Corporate Governance 020 8937 Amira.Nassr@brent.gov.uk James Kinsella, Governance & Scrutiny Manager 020 8937 2063 james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report details a change in membership on the West London Economic Prosperity Board (on which Brent participates as a member) along with associated changes to the Boards Function & Procedure Rules, as referred to within the Terms of Reference included within Part 4 of Brent's Constitution.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Full Council is asked to note the change in membership on the West London Economic Prosperity Board following the admittance of the London Borough of Hillingdon as a member and endorse the subsequent update and revision of

the Function & Procedure Rules, which govern operation of the Board, as detailed in Appendix A.

- 2.2 To note that, to the extent that the changes relate to executive functions of the Council, they have been approved by the Leader.

3 Detail

3.1 Contribution to the Borough Plan and Strategic Priorities

- 3.1.1 Ensuring the Constitution is kept up to date and supportive of good governance contributes to the delivery of all of the strategic priorities within the Borough Plan by supporting and enhancing the Council's activity.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 This report informs members of a change in membership on the West London Economic Prosperity Board, on which Brent serves as a participating member.
- 3.2.2 The West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB) is a formal Joint Committee of local authorities, established pursuant to powers under the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, and under the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 3.2.3 The WLEPB was first established in 2015, following discussions facilitated by the West London Alliance (WLA), to advance boroughs' aspirations for economic prosperity in West London. The Board operates under a set of Function & Procedure Rules with an outline Terms of Reference as a Joint Committee included within Part 4 of Brent's Constitution. The Terms of Reference include reference to the Function & Procedure Rules.
- 3.2.4 The Function and Procedure Rules for the WLEPB state that 'The purpose of the Joint Committee will be collaboration and mutual co-operation and the fact that some functions will be discharged jointly by way of the Joint Committee does not prohibit any of the Participating Boroughs from promoting economic wellbeing in their own areas independently from the Joint Committee.'
- 3.2.5 Five boroughs (made up of Brent, Barnet, Ealing, Harrow & Hounslow) initially formed the Joint Committee, with Hammersmith & Fulham then joining in 2016. Each borough is entitled to appoint one member to serve on WLEPB. As an Executive appointment in Brent, the Leader of the Council currently serves as Brent's nominated representative alongside the Leaders of the other constituent councils.
- 3.2.6 Following a request, the Board has now also approved a request for the London Borough of Hillingdon to now join the WLEPB as a Participating Borough, aligning the WLEPB membership with that of the West London Alliance as a whole (comprising Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow). This change in membership was approved by the Board and subsequently Hillingdon's Cabinet in September 2026.

3.2.7 This change in membership has required an update of the WLEPB Function and Procedure Rules by the West London Alliance, which were last reviewed in 2016. In updating the Rules, the opportunity has also been taken to make other minor revisions to ensure that they are up to date, with the changes detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

3.2.8 Whilst the change in membership on the WLEPB and associated changes to their Function & Procedure Rules will not require any formal change to the Terms of Reference as detailed within Brent's Constitution, it is felt (for transparency and from a governance perspective) that they should be presented to Council for reference purposes.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 The change in membership and subsequent revisions to the Boards Function & Procedure Rules have been subject to formal consideration and approval by the West London Economic Prosperity Board.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 None, specific to the changes outlined or Brent's membership of the West London Economic Prosperity Board.

6 Legal Considerations

6.1 The proposed changes to the Joint Committee Function & Procedure Rules are designed to ensure the change in membership on the West London Economic Prosperity Board are clearly reflected within their operating procedures and rules.

6.2 The change will not require any formal amendment to the Council's Constitution, with Brent having only chosen to discharge its executive (and none of its non-executive) functions), via the joint committee.

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 No equalities implications arise directly from this report.

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

10.1 None

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director, Finance & Resources

JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE BOROUGHES OF BARNET, BRENT, EALING, HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM, HARROW, HILLINGDON AND HOUNSLOW (KNOWN AS “WEST LONDON ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD”)

Functions and Procedure Rules

1. Purpose of the Joint Committee

- 1.1 The London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow (“the Participating Boroughs”) have established the Joint Committee pursuant to powers under the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, and under the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 The Joint Committee shall be known as ‘WEST LONDON ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD’ (EPB).
- 1.3 The Joint Committee’s role and purpose on behalf of the Participating Boroughs relates to ensuring appropriate, effective and formal governance is in place for the purposes of ~~the West London Vision for Growth~~ advancing Participating Boroughs’ aspirations for greater economic prosperity in West London, including promoting the ‘Economic Prosperity Agenda’, in partnership with employers, business and trade bodies, representatives from regional and central government, and education and skills providers and other partners.
- 1.4 The purpose of the Joint Committee will be collaboration and mutual co-operation and the fact that some functions will be discharged jointly by way of the Joint Committee does not prohibit any of the Participating Boroughs from promoting economic wellbeing in their own areas independently from the Joint Committee.
- 1.5 The Joint Committee is not a self-standing legal entity but is part of its constituent authorities. Any legal commitment entered into pursuant of a decision of the Joint Committee must be made by all of the Participating Boroughs.
- 1.6 These Procedure Rules govern the conduct of meetings of the Joint Committee.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Any reference to “Access to Information legislation” shall mean Part V and VA of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and, to the extent that they are applicable, to the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (as amended) and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 2.2 Any reference to “executive”, “executive arrangements”, “executive function” or “committee system” has the meaning given by Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000.

3. Functions

- 3.1 The Joint Committee will discharge on behalf of the Participating Boroughs the functions listed below related to promoting economic prosperity in West London:
 - 3.1.1 Making funding applications and/or bids to external bodies, in relation to economic prosperity for the benefit of the local government areas of the participating local authorities.
 - 3.1.2 Providing direction to a nominated lead borough on the allocation of any such funding awards to appropriate projects for the benefit of the local government areas of the participating local authorities, including, where applicable, approving jointly the approach to the procurement to be undertaken by the lead borough.
 - 3.1.3 Seeking to be the recipient of devolved powers and/or funding streams for the local government areas of the participating local authorities, which relate to the economic prosperity agenda.
 - 3.1.4 Exercising any such powers and allocating any such funding.
 - 3.1.5 Representing the participating local authorities in discussions and negotiations with regional bodies, national bodies and central government on matters relating to economic prosperity for the benefit of the local government areas of the participating authorities.

- 3.1.6 Representing the participating authorities in connection with the Greater London Authority, London Councils and ~~the London Enterprise Panel~~ **other relevant London forums and institutions**, for the benefit of the local government areas of the participating authorities, in matters relating to the economic prosperity agenda.
- 3.1.7 Representing the participating local authorities in discussions and negotiations in relation to pan-London matters relating to economic prosperity.
- 3.1.8 Seeking to influence and align ~~government~~ **public and private** investment in West London in order to boost economic growth within the local government areas of the participating authorities.
- 3.1.9 Agreeing and approving any additional governance structures as related to the Joint Committee, or any sub-committees formed by the Joint Committee.
- 3.1.10 Representing the participating local authorities in discussions and negotiations with **relevant secretaries of state, particularly** the Secretary of State for **Housing**, Communities and Local Government, to encourage legislative reform enabling **Economic Prosperity Boards, as defined by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 Act, to be established by groups of boroughs in London.** participation and representation of local authorities and sub-regional partnerships in the governance of London, including the administration of devolved powers and funding.
- 3.1.11 Inviting ~~special~~ representatives of stakeholders such as business associations, government agencies such as DWP or Jobcentre Plus, the further education sector, higher education sector, schools, voluntary sector, and health sector to ~~take an interest in, and/or seek to influence, the business of the committee including by attending meetings and commenting on proposals and documents~~ **engage with the Joint Committee and its members on issues affecting West London.**
- 3.2 In relation to the Participating Boroughs which operate executive arrangements, only executive functions of each borough may be exercised.

4. Membership and Quorum

- 4.1 The membership will comprise of 7 members, with each Participating Borough appointing one person to sit on the Joint Committee as a voting member.
- 4.2 Each Participating Borough will make a suitable appointment in accordance with its own constitutional requirements.
- 4.3 Where a Participating Borough operates executive arrangements, then the appointment of a voting member of the West London EPB will be by the leaders of the executive or by the executive. It is anticipated that, where practicable, the leader of each such executive will be appointed to the West London EPB.
- 4.4 Where a Participating Borough does not operate executive arrangements, the appointment of a voting member of the West London EPB will be in accordance with the Borough's own procedures. It is envisaged that this will usually be one of its senior councillors.
- 4.5 In all cases, the appointed person must be an elected member of the council of the appointing Participating Borough. Appointments will be made for a maximum period not extending beyond each member's remaining term of office as a councillor, and their membership of the Joint Committee will automatically cease if they cease to be an elected member of the appointing Participating Borough.
- 4.6 Members of the Joint Committee are governed by the provisions of their own Council's Codes and Protocols, including the Code of Conduct for Members and the rules on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
- 4.7 Each Participating Borough will utilise existing mechanisms for substitution as laid down in their own Standing Orders. Continuity of attendance is encouraged.
- 4.8 Where a Participating Borough wishes to withdraw from membership of the Joint Committee, this must be indicated in writing to each of the committee members. A six month notice period must be provided.

4.9 When a new borough wishes to become a Participating Borough, then this may be achieved if agreed by a unanimous vote of all the existing Participating Boroughs.

4.10 The quorum for the Joint Committee is ~~three~~ **four** members. If the Joint Committee is not quorate it cannot transact any business. If there is no quorum at the time the meeting is due to begin, the start of the meeting will be delayed until a quorum is achieved. If no quorum is achieved after 30 minutes has elapsed, the clerk will advise those present that no business can be transacted and the meeting will be cancelled.

5. Chair and Vice-Chair

5.1 The Chair of the Joint Committee will be appointed for 12 months, and will rotate amongst the Participating Boroughs.

5.2 Unless otherwise unanimously agreed by the Joint Committee, each Participating Borough's appointed person will serve as chair for 12 months at a time. Where the incumbent Chair ceases to be a member of the Joint Committee, the individual appointed by the relevant borough as a replacement will serve as Chair for the remainder of the 12 months ~~as chair~~ **term**.

5.3 The Joint Committee will also appoint a Vice-Chair from within its membership on an annual basis to preside in the absence of the Chairman. ~~This appointment will also rotate in a similar manner to the Chair.~~

5.4 ~~At its first meeting, the~~ The Committee will draw up the rotas for Chair ~~and Vice-Chair respectively.~~

5.5 Where neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair are in attendance, the Joint Committee will appoint a Chair to preside over the meeting.

5.6 In the event of any disagreement as the meaning or application of these Rules, the decision of the Chair shall be final.

6. Sub-Committees

- 6.1 The Joint Committee may establish sub-committees to undertake elements of its work if required.

7. Delegation to officers

- 7.1 The Joint Committee may delegate specific functions to officers of any of the Participating Boroughs.
- 7.2 Any such delegation may be subject to the requirement for the officer to consult with or obtain the prior agreement of an officer (or officers) of the other boroughs.
- 7.3 It may also be subject to the requirement for the officer with delegated authority to consult with the Chair of the Joint Committee and the Leaders of the one or more Participating Boroughs before exercising their delegated authority.

8. Administration

- 8.1 Organisational and clerking support for the Joint Committee, and accommodation for meetings, will be provided by the Participating Borough whose representative is Chair unless otherwise agreed by the Joint Committee. The costs of this will be reimbursed by contributions from the other Participating Boroughs as approved by the Joint Committee.

9. Financial matters

- 9.1 The Joint Committee will not have a pre-allocated budget.
- 9.2 When making a decision which has financial consequences, the Joint Committee will follow the relevant provisions of the Financial Procedure Rules of LB Ealing.

10. Agenda management

- 10.1 Subject to 10.2, all prospective items of business for the Joint Committee shall be agreed by a meeting of the Chief Executives of the Participating

Boroughs or their representatives.

- 10.2 It will be the responsibility of each report author to ensure that the impacts on all Participating Boroughs are fairly and accurately represented in the report. They may do this either by consulting with the monitoring officer and chief finance officer of each Participating Borough or by some other appropriate method.
- 10.3 In pursuance of their statutory duties, the monitoring officer and/or the chief financial officer of any of the Participating Boroughs may include an item for consideration on the agenda of a meeting of the Joint Committee, and may require that an extraordinary meeting be called to consider such items.
- 10.4 Each Participating Borough operating executive arrangements will be responsible for considering whether it is necessary [in order to comply with Access to Information legislation regarding the publication of agendas including Forward Plan requirements] to treat prospective decisions as 'key- decisions' and/or have them included in the Forward Plan. Each Participating Borough operating a committee system will apply its local non-statutory procedures.

11. Meetings

- 11.1 The Joint Committee will meet as required to fulfil its functions.
- 11.2 A programme of meetings at the start of each Municipal Year will be scheduled and included in the Calendar of Meetings for all Participating Boroughs.

~~The quorum for a meeting of the Joint Committee shall require at least 4 of the 5 appointed members (or their substitutes) to be present in order to transact the business as advertised on the agenda.~~

- 11.3 Access to meetings and papers of the Joint Committee by the Press and Public is subject to the Local Government Act 1972 and to the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. The Joint Committee will also have regard to the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to information) (England) Regulations 2012, notwithstanding the fact that its provisions do not strictly apply to the Joint

Committee for so long as the committee has any members who are not members of an executive of a Participating Borough.

12. Notice of meetings

- 12.1 On behalf of the Joint Committee, a clerk will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with the Access to Information requirements.
- 12.2 At least five clear working days in advance of a meeting a clerk to the Joint Committee will publish the agenda via the website of the clerk's authority and provide the documentation and website link to the Participating Boroughs to enable the information to be published on each Participating Borough's website. "Five clear days" does not include weekends or national holidays and excludes both the day of the meeting and the day on which the meeting is called.
- 12.3 The clerk to the Joint Committee will arrange for the copying and distribution of papers to all Members of the Committee.

13. Public participation

- 13.1 Unless considering information classified as 'exempt' or 'confidential' under Access to Information Legislation, all meetings of the Joint Committee shall be held in public.
- 13.2 Public representations and questions are permitted at meetings of the Joint Committee. Notification must be given in advance of the meeting indicating by 12 noon on the last working day before the meeting the matter to be raised and the agenda item to which it relates. Representatives will be provided with a maximum of 3 minutes to address the Joint Committee.
- 13.3 The maximum number of speakers allowed per agenda item is 6.
- 13.4 Where the number of public representations exceed the time / number allowed, a written response will be provided or the representation deferred to the next meeting of the Joint Committee if appropriate.

13.5 The Joint Committee may also invite ~~special~~ representatives of stakeholders such as business associations, government agencies such as DWP or Jobcentre Plus, the further education sector, voluntary sector, and health sector to take an interest in the business of the committee including by attending meetings and commenting on proposals and documents.

13.6 The Chair shall have discretion to regulate the behaviour of all individuals present at the meeting in the interests of the efficient conduct of the meeting.

14. Member participation

14.1 Any elected member of the council of any of the Participating Boroughs who is not a member of the Joint Committee may ask a question or address the Committee with the consent of the Chair.

15. Business to be transacted

15.1 Standing items for each meeting of the Joint Committee will include the following:

- Minutes of the last **previous** meeting
- Apologies for absence
- Declarations of interest
- Provision for public participation
- Substantive items for consideration

15.2 The Chair may vary the order of business and take urgent items as specified in the Access to Information Requirements at his / her discretion. The Chair should inform the Members of the Joint Committee prior to allowing the consideration of urgent items.

15.3 An item of business may not be considered at a meeting unless:

(i) A copy of the agenda including the item (or a copy of the item) is open to inspection by the public for at least five clear days before the meeting;
or

(ii) By reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the minutes the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be

considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

- 15.4 “Special Circumstances” justifying an item being considered as a matter of urgency will relate to both why the decision could not be made at a meeting allowing the proper time for inspection by the public as well as why the item or report could not have been available for inspection for five clear days before the meeting.

16. Extraordinary meetings

- 16.1 Arrangements may be made, following consultation with the Chair of the Joint Committee, to call an extraordinary meeting of the Joint Committee. The Chair should inform the appointed Members prior to taking a decision to convene an extraordinary meeting.
- 16.2 The business of an extraordinary meeting shall be only that specified on the agenda.

17. Cancellation of meetings

- 17.1 Meetings of the Joint Committee may, after consultation with the Chairman, be cancelled if there is insufficient business to transact or for some other appropriate reason warranting cancellation. The date of meetings may be varied after consultation with the Chairman and appointed members of the Joint Committee in the event that it is necessary for the efficient transaction of business.

18. Rules of debate

- 18.1 The rules of debate in operation in the Chair’s authority shall apply.

19. Request for determination of business

- 19.1 Any member of the Joint Committee may request at any time that:
- The Joint Committee move to vote upon the current item of consideration.
 - The item be deferred to the next meeting.
 - The item be referred back to a meeting of the Chief Executives of the Participating Boroughs for further consideration.
 - The meeting be adjourned.

19.2 The Joint Committee will then vote on the request.

20. Urgency procedure

20.1 Where the Chair (following consultation with the appointed Members of the Joint Committee) is of the view that an urgent decision is required in respect of any matter within the Joint Committee's functions and that decision would not reasonably require the calling of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Joint Committee to consider it and it cannot wait until the next Ordinary Meeting of the Joint Committee, then they may request in writing the Chief Executive of each Participating Borough (in line with pre-existing delegations in each Borough's Constitution) to take urgent action as is required within each of the constituent boroughs.

21. Voting

21.1 The Joint Committee's decision making will operate on the basis of mutual cooperation and consent and will take into account the views of the special representatives. It is expected that decisions will be taken on a consensual basis wherever reasonably possible.

21.2 Where a vote is required it will be on the basis of one vote per member and unless a recorded vote is requested, the Chair will take the vote by show of hands.

21.3 Any matter (save for a decision under Rule 4.7 above) shall be decided by a simple majority of those members voting and present. Where there is an equality of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second and casting vote.

21.4 Any two members can request that a recorded vote be taken, whereby, immediately after a vote is taken at a meeting, ~~if any Member so requests,~~ there shall be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting whether each member cast his / her vote for or against the matter or whether he/ she abstained from voting.

22. Minutes

22.1 At the next suitable meeting of the Joint Committee, the Chairman will move a motion that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a

correct record. The meeting may only consider the accuracy of the minutes and cannot change or vary decisions taken at a previous meeting as a matter arising out of the minutes.

22.2 Once agreed, the Chairman will sign them.

22.3 There will be no item for the approval of minutes of an ordinary Joint Committee meeting on the agenda of an extraordinary meeting.

23. Exclusion of Public and Press

23.1 Members of the public and press may only be excluded from a meeting of the Joint Committee either in accordance with the Access to Information requirements or in the event of disturbance.

23.2 A motion may be moved at any time for the exclusion of the public from the whole or any part of the proceedings. The motion shall specify by reference to Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the reason for the exclusion in relation to each item of business for which it is proposed that the public be excluded. The public must be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that confidential information would be disclosed.

23.3 If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks is necessary.

23.4 Background papers will be published as part of the Joint Committee agenda and be made available to the public via the website of each authority.

24. Overview and Scrutiny

24.1 Decisions of the Joint Committee which relate to the executive functions of a Participating Borough will be subject to scrutiny and 'call -in' arrangements (or such other arrangements equivalent to call-in that any Participating Borough operating a committee system may have) as would apply locally to a decision made by that Participating Borough acting

alone.

- 24.2 No decision should be implemented until such time as the call-in period has expired across all of the Participating Boroughs.
- 24.3 Where a decision is called in, arrangements will be made at the earliest opportunity within the Participating Borough where the Call-In had taken place for it to be heard.
- 24.4 Any decision called in for scrutiny before it has been implemented shall not be implemented until such time as the call-in procedures of the Participating Borough concerned have been concluded.

25. Access to minutes and papers after the meeting

- 25.1 On behalf of the Joint Committee, a clerk will make available copies of the following for six years after the meeting:

- (i) the minutes of the meeting and records of decisions taken, together with reasons, for all meetings of the Joint Committee, excluding any part of the minutes of proceedings when the meeting was not open to the public or which disclose exempt or confidential information.

- (ii) the agenda for the meeting; and

- (iii) reports relating to items when the meeting was open to the public.

26. Amendment of these Rules

- 26.1 These Rules shall be agreed by the Joint Committee ~~at its first meeting~~. Any amendments shall be made by the Joint Committee following consultation with the monitoring officers of the Participating Boroughs. Note that Rule 3 (Functions) may only be amended following a formal delegation from each of the Participating Boroughs.

27. Background Papers

- 27.1 Every report shall contain a list of those documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the opinion of the author:

- (i) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of it is based;
 - (ii) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report but do not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information and in respect of reports to the Joint Committee, the advice of a political assistant.
- 27.2 Where a copy of a report for a meeting is made available for inspection by the public, at the same time the clerk shall make available for inspection
 - (i) a copy of the list of background papers for the report;
 - (ii) at least one copy of each of the documents included in that list.
- 27.3 The Clerk will make available for public inspection for four years after the date of the meeting one copy of each of the documents on the list of background papers.

Special Representatives

The contract and procedure rules for the WLEPB set out that there will be a select number of 'Special Representatives' invited to attend meetings to 'influence' the work of the Board and the West London WLA Leaders, supported by the WLA Growth Directors Board, have has been leading the process to identify appropriate special representatives. Suggested Special Representatives are listed in the table below and a draft 'core narrative' to support engagement is attached as Appendix 2:

- Higher Education
 - Mark Gray, Pro Vice Chancellor and Director of Knowledge Transfer, Imperial College
 - Middlesex University
 - University of West London
 - Brunel University
- Further Education
 - West London College Chairs and Principals nominee
- Business
 - John Holland-Kaye, Chief Officer Executive of Heathrow & Heathrow Finance PLC
 - Chair of West London Business
 - Rahul Gokhale, Chair of Park Royal Business Group & Board Member of OPDG
- Voluntary & Community Sector
 - Andy Roper, Lead Officer for West London Network
- DWP/JCP
 - Jo Kerrison, District Manager West London JCP Job Centre Plus
- Health
 - Clare Parker, Accountable Officer for Central London, West London, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hounslow and Ealing (CWHHE)
 - Representatives from West London Clinical Commissioning Groups

- ~~Greater London Authority~~
 - ~~Sir Edward Lister — Deputy Mayor of London for Policy and Planning and Chief operating Officer~~
 - ~~Deputy Mayor for Planning~~
 - ~~Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development~~
 - ~~Deputy Mayor for Business~~
 - ~~Deputy Mayor for Transport~~