



Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 19 November 2025 at 6.00 pm

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

Please note that this will be held as an in person physical meeting which all Committee members will be required to attend in person.

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

Membership:

Members

Councillors:

Ketan Sheth (Chair)

Afzal (Vice-Chair)

Aden

Chohan

Collymore

Clinton

Ethapemi

Mahmood

Smith

Mistry

Vacancy

Substitute Members

Councillors:

Moghaddam, S Butt, Conneely, Dixon, Kennelly, Long,
Mitchell, Molloy and Shah

Councillors:

Kansagra and Maurice

Councillors:

Lorber and Matin

Co-opted Members

Alloysius Frederick, Roman Catholic Diocese Schools

The Venerable Catherine Pickford, Archdeacon of Northolt/Willesden Area, Church of England Faith Schools

Sayed Jaffar Milani, Muslim Faith Schools

Rachelle Goldberg, Jewish Faith Schools

Vacancy X2, Parent Governor Co-optee

Observers

Brent Youth Parliament, Observer

Jenny Cooper, NEU and Special School observer

John Roche, NEU and Secondary School Observer

For further information contact: Hannah O'Brien, Senior Governance Officer
hannah.o'brien@brent.gov.uk

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

Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest** in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also significant enough to affect your judgement of a public interest and either it affects a financial position or relates to a regulatory matter then after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

***Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences** - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

****Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

- (a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:
 - To which you are appointed by the council;
 - which exercises functions of a public nature;
 - which is directed is to charitable purposes;
 - whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party or trade union).
 - (b) The interests of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;
- or

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

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

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Item	Page
1 Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members	
2 Declarations of interests	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, the nature and existence of any relevant disclosable pecuniary or personal interests in the items on this agenda and to specify the item(s) to which they relate.	
3 Deputations (if any)	
To hear any deputations received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 67.	
4 Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 14
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record.	
5 Matters arising (if any)	
6 Medical Day Care Transfer to Ealing Hospital and Update on Sickie Cell Care	15 - 20
Following the update on Sickie Cell Care provided by London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) to the Committee in September 2025, a briefing note has been provided which details further updates to Sickie Cell Care in North West London and the associated transfer of the Medical Day Care Centre at Central Middlesex Hospital to Ealing Hospital.	
7 Response to the Housing Regulator's Findings and Brent Graded at C3	21 - 30
To update the Committee on the progress made so far as a consequence of the self-referral made in April 2025 to the Regulator of Social Housing and Brent Council's grading of C3.	
8 Update from the Housing Improvement Board	31 - 54

To receive an update from the Independent Chair of the Housing Improvement Board on the work of the Board.

9 Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025-26 55 - 64

The report updates Members on the Committee's Work Programme for 2025-26.

10 Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Recommendations Tracker 65 - 94

The report provides the recommendations trackers for 2024-25 and 2025-26.

11 Any other urgent business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Deputy Director – Democratic and Corporate Governance or their representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 60.

Date of the next meeting: Monday 19 January 2026



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

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MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Wednesday 17 September 2025 at 6.00 pm
Held as a hybrid meeting in the Conference Hall – Brent Civic Centre

PRESENT: Councillor Ketan Sheth (Chair), and Councillors Aden, Clinton, Mahmood and Mistry, and co-opted member Ms Rachelle Goldberg

In attendance: Councillor Mili Patel, Councillor Neil Neva

1. Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

- Councillor Afzal
- Councillor Ethapemi
- Councillor Rajan-Seelan
- Councillor Tazi Smith
- Archdeacon Catherine Pickford
- Mr Alloysius Frederick
- Councillor Gwen Grahl

2. Declarations of interests

Personal interests were declared as follows:

- Councillor Ketan Sheth – Lead Governor of Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust and governor at a number of educational settings.

3. Deputations (if any)

There were no deputations received.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising (if any)

There were no matters arising.

6. Order of Business

The Chair advised that he had agreed to take two urgent items regarding Sickie Cell care in NWL and the Urgent Care Centre at Central Middlesex Hospital from Pippa Nightingale (CEO of London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust). As such, he advised that he would take item 11 – Any Other Urgent Business – first.

7. Any other urgent business

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Chair agreed to take two urgent items regarding Sickle Cell care and the Urgent Care Centre at Central Middlesex Hospital and welcomed Pippa Nightingale to provide those updates.

Sickle Cell Care

Pippa Nightingale began by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to attend the meeting to keep members informed of the rapid changes happening within the NHS and within NWL.

In providing an update on Sickle Cell care, Pippa Nightingale advised that one of the largest Sickle Cell populations in NWL was in Brent, so it was important to get their healthcare needs right, which she felt the NHS had not always done in the past. She emphasised the need for the NHS to hold itself to account on that and recognise that it had not designed services that met the needs of the Sickle Cell population. As such, a large piece of work had been undertaken over the last year between LNWT and Imperial College London, who provided the majority of healthcare for Sickle Cell patients in London, to re-design the pathway in partnership with patients and service users. She highlighted that there was a very active Sickle Cell community in NWL who were very open to telling the NHS their health needs, and so the new pathway had been co-designed with that community. The changes included a new Sickle Cell Acute Hub, located at Hammersmith Hospital, which allowed patients direct access to a Haematology Sickle Cell Specialist instead of needing to go through an A&E department. NHSE funding had been received to set up a 24/7 triage service for that hub and the patient could be seen straight away, which was what Sickle Cell patients had been asking for over the years.

The second part of the workstream on improving the Sickle Cell care pathway was to expand the outpatient service at Central Middlesex Hospital. Patients had been clearly expressing the want for that service to be expanded to be open 7 days a week for longer hours, so the hours of that service had been extended and the NHS was now looking to expand the service to be open 7 days a week. In concluding the update, she thanked clinicians across LNWT and Imperial College London for coming together to make the changes happen.

The Chair thanked Pippa Nightingale for the information and asked how the changes would be communicated to patients and service users. Pippa Nightingale advised that there was a very active Sickle Cell Patient Engagement Group who had co-designed the pathway and helped communicate the changes. They had also attended two very large Sickle Cell engagement events at Hammersmith Hospital to communicate the changes which had been well attended. The changes had been communicated through the Haematologist Specialist Teams who had close access to patients and all Sickle Cell patients had been written to about the changes.

The Committee asked whether there was capacity to manage all patients at the same time at the new hub if they were to become ill at the same time. They heard that the majority of Sickle Cell patients should not need crisis care, and it was only those who were very unwell who would go to the acute hub where they might need intensive care or high pain relief. The hub provided complex care, and the majority of Sickle Cell patients managed their health well in partnership with their providers and could be managed in an outpatient setting. There was capacity at the hub for all Sickle Cell patients, and there were still inpatient beds at Northwick Park Hospital which would be maintained as there may be patients admitted for other reasons who also had Sickle Cell.

Urgent Care Centre at Central Middlesex Hospital

Pippa Nightingale then provided an update on changes to the Urgent Care Centre at Central Middlesex Hospital. She reminded members that LNWT ran three Urgent Care Centres, of which Central Middlesex Hospital was one, which performed well with good feedback and saw approx. 130-140 patients per day. The site was not supported by an A&E onsite and was an urgent GP and nurse-led service. Currently, the Urgent Care Centre opened between 8am – 11pm, but saw the majority of patients between 8am – 3pm. LNWT wanted to align the opening times with radiology services, available until 8pm, as the majority of patients attending the Urgent Care Centre at Central Middlesex needed an x-ray and this would stop patients needing to return the following day for an x-ray if they were attending past 8pm. LNWT proposed to bring the closing time forward to 9pm to align that with radiology and put resources in at peak times. There had been work done with the local population and two further online engagement events would take place soon to discuss how to disseminate communications regarding the change.

In considering the update, the Committee asked when the changes would take place. Pippa Nightingale advised that LNWT had two more engagement sessions to hold over the next two weeks before the changes were made, and it was envisioned that the new opening hours would be put in place at the end of October.

The Committee asked whether there would be an increase in staff due to the reduced opening hours. Pippa Nightingale confirmed that staff resource and clinician time would be reinvested on the busiest parts of the pathway to be used across all sites. Northwick Park Hospital had a much bigger Urgent Care Centre and LNWT wanted to be able to improve performance on that site as well.

The Committee asked whether there would be changes to any other Urgent Care Centres, and heard that other Urgent Care Centres would remain the same. Pippa Nightingale added that Northwick Park Hospital was the biggest site seeing approximately 500-600 patients per day just through the Urgent Care Centre, and patients typically attended Urgent Care Centres where there was an A&E on site, meaning sicker patients were seen through those other urgent pathways. The majority of cases at Central Middlesex Urgent Care Centre were minor injuries.

As no further issues were raised, the Chair thanked Pippa Nightingale for attending the meeting to provide an update to the Committee and closed the item.

Retirement of Director

The Committee heard that this would be Dr Melanie Smith's final meeting, who would be retiring from her role as the Director of Public Health, Parks and Leisure. The paid tribute and thanked her for all the work she had done for Brent residents.

8. Children's Oral Health

Councillor Neil Nerva (as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure) introduced the report, which provided an overview of children's oral health in Brent, including both national and local contexts and available data. The report considered what the local authority and local NHS could do in partnership to improve oral health in Brent, and he thanked the Committee for prioritising this area.

Somebi Anwunah (Principal Public Health Strategist, Brent Council) provided additional information on the report, which he advised covered data, trends and levels of dental decay in the borough as well as the interventions Brent Public Health had put in place which included; an oral health needs assessment; the oral health bus, which had been running since 2021 and had completed over 3,000 dental assessments for children in primary

schools; the supervised toothbrushing programme which had been running in Brent since 2017; and the Big Brent Brushathon which was an oral health promotion programme run annually for the past two years. The report also covered the negative factors perpetuating poor oral health outcomes in Brent, such as gaps in knowledge regarding toothbrushing techniques, inadequate access to fluoridisation and poor behaviours around diet. Finally, the report detailed future planning, including a consultation on the programmes currently being delivered and the national expansion of the supervised toothbrushing programme for which Brent had received funding for. Brent Council was also looking at surveying schools to further understand children's health and oral health needs.

The Chair thanked presenters for their introduction and invited comments and questions from those present, with the following issues raised:

The Committee recognised the importance of oral health for children, and highlighted concerns in the figures showing that 43% of children in Brent had experienced some form of dental decay by the age of 5. They noted that Brent had the highest number of people suffering from dental decay compared to other boroughs and asked why there had been no earlier interventions. Somebi Anwunah responded that, whilst the level of dental decay in Brent was high, it was trending downwards. Up until 2022, dental decay levels had been trending upwards, where the figure showed 46% of children in Brent had experienced dental decay by the age of 5, compared to 43% now. This was in comparison to the London trend, where dental decay levels appeared to be currently trending upwards. As such, whilst Brent had historically high levels of dental decay, he felt that the trend over the last two years showed it was going in the right direction, particularly compared to the rest of London. Dr Melanie Smith (Director of Public Health and Leisure, Brent Council) added that there were deep-seated, entrenched beliefs amongst Brent's communities in relation to oral health, and Public Health found that parents who had experienced poor oral health in their own childhoods had negative attitudes towards oral health and accessing dentists as they associated it with pain and discomfort. Public Health was proactively addressing this and trying to change that mindset so that parents saw dentistry as a positive experience where they could take their children when their teeth were fine. Challenging that mindset was difficult, but she highlighted that this had been a priority area of work that Public Health had been addressing for ten years and not something only being addressed now. One of the challenges Public Health faced was intervening early enough so parents were comfortable taking their children to dentists as soon as their milk teeth appeared. She acknowledged that oral health was not where Public Health would want it to be, but confirmed it was moving in the right direction, which she felt was a direct result of the intervention programmes that had been put in place.

Considering that the trend of high dental decay levels started in 2015 and there had only been a 3% decrease since then, the Committee asked how effective the interventions had been. Dr Melanie Smith replied that, whilst the figures were not where Public Health would like them to be, they were showing a difference in Brent compared to the rest of London, which had been acknowledged by OHID and the GLA. She explained that it would likely take a generation to get to where Public Health would want to be on oral health, which was to have the same levels of oral health outcomes as the least deprived areas in the country.

The Committee asked how Public Health was reaching children to disseminate messaging and provide interventions. Dr Melanie Smith explained that the oral health bus programme undertook specifically targeted work, recognising the strong correlation between dental decay and levels of deprivation, therefore had been attending primary schools, nurseries and early years settings in those areas. The data was showing that those targeted interventions had been successful. She felt that the new supervised toothbrushing programme also represented a step change, as that offer would be universal. There would be a need to do

outreach for particularly difficult partners to engage such as smaller nurseries and childminders.

Noting the comments regarding encouraging parents to get their children's teeth checked as soon as their milk teeth appeared, the Committee asked what strategies were in place to set that good example from early years. Dr Melanie Smith advised that supervised toothbrushing started in nurseries until reception with the aim to establish very sound oral health practices early on. Most headteachers were well aware of the problems surrounding oral health as it impacted school attendance, with the most common reason for a child to have an unplanned admission to hospital being to have their teeth taken out. It was found that there was misinformation regarding oral health, for example, it was not widely known that professionals advised people not to use mouthwash after brushing as this washed the fluoride away, so there was also an emphasis on oral health education. This was done on the oral health bus, which also targeted health promotion at older children and their parents. Nigel Chapman (Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development, Brent Council) added that there was a close relationship between schools and Public Health on this issue and headteachers would speak to parents on an individual basis where a need was identified, in addition to the learning from the bus going into schools regularly. Schools also had a focus around healthy eating, ensuring there were very few sugary snack and drink options in schools, but it was highlighted that this could not be controlled in the home environment, so there was a need to support parents to do the right thing.

The Committee asked whether Brent was learning from other boroughs who were performing better on oral health. Somebi Anwunah confirmed that Brent participated in a community of practice in London around oral health. Many of the boroughs with poor oral health outcomes were from NWL, and there was a NWL Oral Health Network that Brent was part of to learn from there, and there was also learning from other parts of London with better outcomes to see what they were doing so that may be replicated in Brent.

The Committee felt that some of the issues that had been attributed to causing poor oral health in Brent, such as diet, systemic NHS issues and fluoridisation, were national issues, and therefore asked why it was worse in Brent. Dr Melanie Smith agreed that some of the issues were national, but there were some particularly acute issues in Brent needing to be addressed, including access to child-friendly dentistry and provision of preventative dentistry. The most significant intervention she felt would make a difference was addressing the intergenerational beliefs of communities and parents whose expectation was that their child would have poor oral health because they had it. To get the message across that poor oral health was preventable required sustained behaviour change and challenging those entrenched beliefs and behaviours, including around breastfeeding and weaning.

The Committee recognised that Brent had areas of high deprivation such as Harlesden and Stonebridge, which was being linked with poor oral health, but asked what could have been done more efficiently over the last 7 years to bring oral health performance in line with similar boroughs such as Lewisham, who had very similar demographics to Brent but better oral health performance. Dr Melanie Smith explained that, historically, dentistry, and specifically child-friendly dentistry, had not been easy to access within Brent. Public Health was working with the NHS to influence the provision of dentistry to improve access in Brent. She added that, whilst the rates of dental decay were high, they were reducing, and Brent Council had been taking action for a number of years around this. The targeted interventions had been impacted by the pandemic, as it was not possible to conduct supervised toothbrushing virtually, which she felt was why the figures had begun to improve over the last 3-4 years post-pandemic. Whilst the figures in Brent were high compared to other similarly deprived boroughs, she highlighted that the rest of London was trending upwards, so she would not be surprised if those other boroughs had higher levels at the next survey. There were also differences with dietary culture practices, parental experience and access to services that

needed to be factored in. Somebi Anwunah reassured members that Public Health's strategy had been to address oral health behaviours as early as possible, but, due to the combination of factors perpetuating poor oral health, this could not be solely addressed by the local authority and needed a multi-agency approach.

The Committee asked what was being done to fix the underlying issue in Brent specifically regarding access to child-friendly dentistry. Dr Melanie Smith explained that the national NHS dentistry contract actively disincentivised dentists from providing preventative dentistry. Whilst lobbying the NHS around the contract, Public Health had, with the help of other professional bodies, found dentists who were open to working in a different way and become child-friendly. Those dentists were often newly qualified dentists who Public Health then recommended to parents when the oral health bus identified dental decay, because officers knew they would have a positive experience with those dentists.

The Committee raised concerns that the education piece needed had not reached children and parents, and asked whether there was any focus from Brent Health Matters (BHM) to provide that education. Dr Melanie Smith welcomed a wider recognition on the importance of oral health and felt it was growing but there was further recognition needed, particularly in relation to decay and problems with milk teeth in the early years. As such, educating the whole community that dental decay was preventable if addressed early enough was needed, advising the community on the powerful impact of using fluoride on teeth to prevent dental problems which should be done by a dentist as soon as milk teeth appeared and every 6 months to 1 year after that.

Noting that the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee had previously reviewed oral health before Covid-19 and made a number of recommendations, the Committee asked how those recommendations had been progressed and asked for a sense of the journey Public Health had been on from then until now. Somebi Anwunah felt that the journey could be described through better collaboration, which he felt had been the highlight of how Brent had got to where it was now. The oral health bus had grown its number of assessments year on year with organisations such as Whittington Health Trust, Library Teams, Early Years and NHSE part of these events, allowing more collaboration, including with schools. Public Health had gone from having a mobile assessment unit travelling to different areas to delivering events inside schools and libraries where information around oral health, diet and nutrition could be provided. Public Health recognised that poor oral health outcomes were multi-factorial, so was trying to address as many of those factors as possible per event and were trying to collaborate with as many parts of the system as possible to improve those outcomes.

The Committee asked how Public Health was engaging other partners to help, such as Brent Health Matters, Libraries and Family Wellbeing Centres (FWCs). They were advised that the oral health bus involved libraries staff, who were trained to make interventions themselves, and oral health education sessions were held within libraries. Dr Melanie Smith assured the Committee that Public Health was using all possible means to get messages out, but asked for suggestions from members if they had ideas.

Recognising that Public Health were trying to address the underlying beliefs surrounding oral health in the community, the Committee asked officers whether they felt they had done enough to change that underlying tone. Somebi Anwunah responded that there was still more to be done, but the Council was eager to do as much as possible. Public Health had done a lot of work with the oral health needs assessment to understand why Brent was in this position relative to other local authorities, and was looking at doing a wider health and wellbeing survey with schools to understand need, and focus promotion on nutrition for oral health and other aspects not necessarily related to dental hygiene. Dr Melanie Smith assured

the Committee that Public Health would continue to prioritise oral health and would want it to be a priority for everyone.

Noting that the gap between Brent and the national picture would not change in the near future, the Committee asked whether there was a timescale in mind to reach closer to other boroughs. Dr Melanie Smith advised that she envisioned the figures being closer to the London average in 5-10 years, but nationally it would not be possible due to the issue of fluoridisation in London.

The Committee highlighted that the NHS had recently undertaken a consultation on the NHS Dentistry Contract and asked whether Brent had input into that. Dr Melanie Smith confirmed that the level at which the contract was administered locally was through NWL Integrated Care System, so Brent had worked as a collective with NWL to respond to the consultation.

The Chair then invited representatives from Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) to ask the final question in relation to this item. BYP asked what the Council was doing to support young people in Brent to become dentists locally, and, furthermore, child-friendly dentists. Dr Melanie Smith replied that Public Health had introduced young dentists in schools and community settings to make dentistry appear more accessible, and whilst the primary aim of that was not to encourage people to become dentists, she considered that when young people saw other people their age as dentists they might consider that as a career. Nigel Chapman added that dentistry was a highly skilled role with strict requirements, and was confident with the A-level performance in Brent, which was higher than the national average, that many children leaving Brent schools were well-equipped to access a dentistry place. He was less clear on the funding for dentistry places nationally, how many vacancies there were and whether there were sufficient training places available. He encouraged the Council and partners to ensure community dentistry was seen as a job of choice for young people.

As no further issues were raised the Chair thanked officers for their time and responses and invited members to make recommendations, with the following RESOLVED:

- i) To get a strong message out to Brent parents, carers and communities via tools such as the Brent Magazine, Brent Health Matters, Libraries, Hubs, Family Wellbeing Centres and schools, focusing on areas with poorer oral health outcomes, about the use of fluoride on teeth.

An information request was also made during the discussion, recorded as follows:

- i) For the Committee to be provided with the response made to the NHS Dentistry Contract consultation, and any follow-up responses made as a result of the findings of the consultation.

9. Period Dignity in Brent

The Chair began by thanking Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) for putting this item forward on the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and shining a spotlight on the issue, before asking Councillor Mili Patel (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) to introduce the item.

In introducing the report, which provided an overview of the Council's action to tackle period poverty through the Period Dignity Brent Project, Councillor Mili Patel reminded members that the work around access to menstrual products had begun in 2020, following the work of the Poverty Commission which had emphasised the barriers that women and girls in particular faced regarding inequalities. The Commission had recognised that period poverty and lack of access to essential products was a barrier for people who menstruate to be able to continue in education and employment. She highlighted that, following that

work, the Council had relooked at period poverty as a policy, and rebranded the language from 'poverty' to 'dignity'. The policy and project aimed to provide education and awareness of period dignity to break down barriers whilst remaining sensitive to the demographics and cultures in Brent. Through a collaboration with 'Hey Girls', free period products were now being provided in Council-owned buildings such as the Family Wellbeing Centres, Hubs, Libraries, New Horizons, Sufra and Brent Food Banks. She added that the report detailed the success of the project and identified the learning made, with the aim to continue to evolve the work.

In continuing the introduction, Tom Pickup (Policy and Performance Manager, Brent Council) highlighted that, whilst the Committee had asked to understand the scale of the issue within Brent, with the information available it was not easy to measure in local areas. The report instead tried to capture the scale of poverty in Brent and supplement that with the level of uptake of the Period Dignity Project. The updated offer aimed to ensure the project provided free period products across Brent sites, tackled stigma and provided education around period dignity and trained staff on the frontline distributing period products so that they understood the issues around period dignity. The new offer had been live since November 2024, and, based on the level of uptake there was a clear need. The next steps would be to continue running the project and embed it as business as usual across the services and sites that were distributing the products.

Nigel Chapman (Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Community Development, Brent Council) concluded the introduction by reiterating thanks to BYP for focusing attention on this topic. He added that the Council had surveyed secondary schools on whether they provided free period products and all of the schools who had responded, which was the majority of Brent secondary schools, had confirmed they were taking part in the programme.

The Chair thanked the presenters for their introductions and invited the Committee to ask questions of the officers, with the following points raised:

The Chair invited BYP to begin the questioning, who asked what was being done in this area for young people who were not in education, including in relation to the awareness raising and educational aspect of the project. Tom Pickup explained that the project was focused on education across all Brent sites, so when someone attended a site where products were available, there were educational materials available to make clear why the products were there and other information that helped to tackle stigma. There was currently nothing targeted specifically at those groups because it was a general universal offer. Any young people accessing those sites, such as Family Wellbeing Centres, would be exposed to the products and materials in those settings. Serita Kwofie (Head of Early Help, Brent Council) added that data showing the number of requests for restocks in the Family Wellbeing Centres demonstrated a clear need for the offer, and there was good take-up of the various products available due to the strong foot-flow of young people attending Family Wellbeing Centres. Nigel Chapman thanked BYP for the challenge in relation to children not in education, as there were a number of school-aged children who were electively home educated. He agreed to take an action to ensure the School Attendance Service followed this up with parents to see if they were aware of the offer when doing their annual checks.

BYP also asked whether free products were provided to young people in care and care leavers. Nigel Chapman advised that there was an expectation that foster carers and semi-independent providers used the allowance they were provided to purchase products the young person would need, and Looked After Child Reviews and Social Worker Visits ensured checks were made into whether the young person was getting what they required.

From a cultural perspective, the Committee highlighted that stigma around periods could play a part in period dignity, and asked how the project addressed that, including with emerging communities and from a language point of view. Tom Pickup explained that there had been broad communications around the offer across various Brent channels to increase the outreach of what was available. When people attended locations where products were available, there were educational flyers available for anyone to take, and practitioners working on those sites may identify a need and provide education more discreetly.

The Committee asked how they could be assured that the offer was being monitored in a meaningful way to ensure there were no gaps in the offer. Tom Pickup advised that the monitoring was done at a high-level, based on uptake rather than at a granular level, because to get that more detailed information there would be a need to ask what could be considered a personal question.

In relation to transitional phases in terms of age, the Committee asked if there were any gaps in the offer. Rachel Crossley (Corporate Director Service Reform and Strategy, Brent Council) highlighted that there were no barriers because the awareness raising and access was universal and not targeted at particular people, age groups or protected groups.

The Committee commended the project and the work happening in Council venues and schools, but wanted to see the work go further. They highlighted that there were communities with young adults who may not be at school, who may be from overseas, or who may be going into low paid jobs, and asked whether the project brought awareness of the offer to those communities. Tom Pickup responded that the report reflected the first stage of the refreshed approach and affirmed that the aim was to expand the offer, including the awareness and educational element, working with other partners such as Brent Health Matters and the voluntary sector to share the offer.

The Committee asked whether these products and materials were distributed in gyms. Rachel Crossley advised that a lot of the gyms in Brent were private sector organisations and the Council would encourage them to do similar programmes themselves and have a social responsibility around that rather than fund them. This could be encouraged during procurement and commissioning stages. She would look into whether the offer was being extended to Brent-owned Leisure Centres, and asked members and BYP to let officers know of any venues that might be missing the products.

Noting paragraph 3.2.7 of the report, which stated that only 50% of the possible organisations had been engaged, the Committee asked whether that figure included primary schools. Officers confirmed that primary schools were included in that figure because people could start menstruating at primary school age. The Committee also queried how much engagement the project had with faith schools. Councillor Mili Patel advised that the pilot was conducted in Council-buildings only, but schools had their own project providing free products. Schools had been surveyed so if there were any faith schools on that list that information could be provided.

In relation to paragraph 3.2.12, which stated that it was difficult to understand the levels of uptake due to issues with data collection, the Committee asked how officers planned to resolve that so that the offer could be monitored and delivered correctly. Officers explained that the initial pilot had ceased collecting data during the trial, so there had been an improvement since then now that uptake of products was measured. The level of uptake of the services distributing the products was now being used to understand the scale of need.

BYP emphasised that period dignity was a major area of concern for Brent Youth Parliament, who's current national campaign was on period dignity and means testing. Noting paragraph 3.2.24, which stated that there was uncertainty from staff about whether

these products were being accessed exclusively by people in need, BYP raised concerns about the comment which they felt reinforced period stigma by questioning who was using the products when they should be universally available. Tom Pickup explained that, in this particular instance, there was a library where staff felt unsure whether the people they saw taking the products were in need. Irrespective of that, he acknowledged that it was a subjective judgement and the offer was universal, allowing anyone to take the products. In response to why that comment had been included in a public report, it was explained that this spoke to the education piece that was needed for staff around perpetuating stigma.

The Chair drew the item to a close and invited members to make recommendations with the following RESOLVED:

- i) To develop a plan to incentivise private sector organisations to offer similar products and information.
- ii) In developing projects and policies, to ask young people for their opinion, not just through BYP but other youth groups in the area.
- iii) For any future report on pilots, to ensure a more structured way of evaluating the pilot, what the learning was, and what would be done for the future.

During the course of the discussion an information request was made, recorded as follows:

- i) To provide the list of schools that had confirmed they were providing free period products.

10. **The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent**

Nigel Chapman (Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Community Development, Brent Council) introduced the report, which provided an overview of the impact of Youth Justice Service (YJS) delivery and its partners in 2024-25. In outlining the report, he highlighted that it felt like a successful story in the challenging environment in Brent. He reminded the Committee that the report did not just cover local authority work, but the local area partnership as a whole, because youth justice, under legislation, was delivered by partners with a multi-agency partnership approach to youth justice in Brent. He introduced Tony Bellis, Superintendent for Safer Neighbourhoods in the North West Borough Command Unit (NW BCU), Met Police, who had attended online as one of the partner agencies supporting youth justice in Brent. Tony Bellis agreed that the report showed a success story, and he was proud of the work of his teams in the Youth Justice Service and the relationship officers had with the local authority and stakeholders.

Nigel Chapman informed the Committee that there was a new His Majesties Inspectorate of Probation Inspection cycle and Brent was expecting an inspection under this new framework imminently. There had only been 6 published inspections under the new framework, two of which were in London. Brent's previous inspection had been in 2019 when youth justice had been judged as 'good', and the Youth Justice Service was currently assessing itself as providing at least a 'good' service through quality assurance work.

Serita Kwofie (Head of Early Help, Brent Council) provided further information about the self-assessment judgement of 'good', which she explained came from evidence of strengths. The YJS had seen a reduction in reoffending custody rates and first-time entry rates, which were lower than the London average and statistical neighbours. She was proud of Brent's out of court disposal processes, and Brent had achieved 100% in its decision-making which was strong and in line with guidance. There were some areas to focus on improving, including reducing disproportionality and increasing the voice of victims in youth justice work, which the new inspection framework would review. She felt that the YJS was well placed to achieve that considering what was already offered through the

Restorative Justice Programme, and the focus on strengthening that to hear the voice of victims.

The Chair thanked officers for the introduction and invited comments and questions from those present, with the following points raised:

The Committee were of the view that the narrative of the report did not match the figures being presented. Members highlighted that the report stated that custody rates had been falling for the last 10 years, but table 4 in paragraph 6.4 showed that across the last few years the figures had fluctuated and been inconsistent. Similarly, table 3 at paragraph 6.2 showed an upward trend for reoffending since 2022, despite the narrative of the report stating that reoffending had been on a downward trend for a 10-year period. Nigel Chapman advised that the covid period did distort the figures in terms of first-time entrants and reoffending rates as there was less crime during that period, meaning there was a dip in rates generally which had been factored in. He highlighted that the long-term trend still showed a gradual reduction in offending rates, and that fluctuated because the cohort size was very small so any changes would be significant in the figures. Officers explained that table 3 provided data up to March 2023, whereas the report focused on 2024-25 activity which might be why there were anomalies, but the Committee was assured that there was data on the ground, obtained through audits, showing that offending rates were declining. Serita Kwofie added that, whilst there were fluctuations, the YJS continued to address that through measures to support low reoffending rates, particularly through working with MOPAC funded programmes and organisations such as My Endz 2.0. in relation to first time entrants, there was fluctuation which the YJS was addressing, as detailed in the report, particularly around disproportionality as it was found that a disproportionate number of Black African Caribbean males were represented in the figures. The Council worked closely with the police around first-time entrants who ultimately made the decision whether to arrest or charge a young person, and there was close working to divert young people from being charged with an offense.

The Committee was pleased that the long-term trend was a downward trend in youth offending figures, but noted the demographic information of those known to the YJS and raised concerns that when those narratives occurred so early in a person's life it hindered their progression into adulthood. Nigel Chapman agreed that any young person who was arrested, charged and convicted of an offense was one too many, but there was also an element around public confidence in the justice system, where some offenses were so serious that there was no alternative but to charge and convict.

Noting the figures around disproportionality, particularly for males of Black Caribbean heritage, the Committee linked that to disproportionality in educational attainment for boys of Black Caribbean heritage, and sought assurance that there was preventative work taking place before an offense was made. Serita Kwofie informed members of the development of the Targeted Prevention Hub as part of the Families First Partnership Programme that had been launched by the Department for Education (DfE). That Hub was a way to bring together services focusing on contextual safeguarding, so that where there was a risk to a young person, such as repeatedly going missing or indicators that the young person was at risk of coming to police attention, services got to them early. Tony Bellis added that the Met Police had recently rolled out adultification and disproportionality training for all frontline officers and there was more awareness of safeguarding approaches to children and young people now. He felt that the early use of strategy discussions and professional meetings had made a big difference, not only for victims of crime but also perpetrators, and missing persons. He highlighted that previously the Met would not have held strategy discussions with partners around young people involved in crime, but now this formed part of the Met's investigative strategy. The Met had also recently implemented its Child First Strategy, a holistic approach to children and young people. For example, previously, officers might have worked in silos, but there was now a holistic approach around a young person,

recognising that while they could be a perpetrator of a crime, they could also be a victim in their own right. Since the implementation of these new strategies, the Met had seen a significant decline in the use of tactics such as more thorough intimate part searches on young people, and the outcome rate of stop and searches resulting in arrest or community resolution had increased to 1/3 of people stop and searched. He highlighted that the figures did not always tell the full story, so whilst there were fluctuations, the outcomes could be different, for example a young person may not be being charged but offered a community resolution instead, with the focus now on not criminalising children and working with partners. It was added that half of the 200 young people supported by the YJS over the course of the year had been supported outside of the formal Criminal Justice System, showing that 50% of YJS work was preventative.

The Committee asked whether there were common trends that the YJS were observing in terms of who was offending. Nigel Chapman advised that the report listed a small number of young people in care, some of whom may be in care as a result of their offending if they had been remanded into custody, and there was a link between deprivation and youth offending. Additionally, young people who came to the attention of the service often had a challenged education history or may be attending a pupil referral unit.

The Committee asked how the YJS supported young people from a mental health perspective. Serita Kwofie advised that the YJS was fortunate to have a close partnership with CAMHS as part of the team, providing early access to mental health support for young people, particularly where they may have an undiagnosed need. It was found that, often, young people who came to the attention of YJS had gone through education with an undiagnosed need and may have missed education for a number of factors. There were other services available to support young people coming to the attention of the service, including substance misuse colleagues, and the YJS worked to provide tangible support, including education and employment opportunities as a tangible diversionary outcome.

Noting the levels of staffing reported in paragraph 1.5 of the report, the Committee asked if that was sufficient for the need being dealt with in the YJS. Serita Kwofie advised that the service could always benefit from more staff which provided greater capacity to deliver the service, but felt the team did a good job with the resources available, working in partnership with other organisations and programmes to support the offer.

Highlighting the work of Brent Health Matters (BHM) who were doing good work in Park Royal Commercial Hub finding opportunities such as apprenticeships, the Committee asked how the YJS joined that work up, using other partners to ensure there were various avenues to give young people the best possible preventative offer. Nigel Chapman advised that the education offer within the YJS was from the voluntary sector organisation Shaw Trust, who had good knowledge of the opportunities available for young people and delivered a good performance. He felt that the Council's employment and skills offer as a whole, and its approach to joint working with private and public sector businesses, could be better co-ordinated. He now had employment and skills within his remit and had recently undertaken a review of that, so would be taking the recommendations of that forward to improve the offer. Within the YJS specifically, there was a very targeted support offer as it was a very small cohort of young people who each had an individual advisor to help them find opportunities. The YJS also worked closely with Young Brent Foundation who developed opportunities for young people, including apprenticeships, and that organisation sat on the Youth Justice Board providing that joined up partnership working. They were also heavily involved in the action plan underpinning the Youth Strategy.

The Committee asked how youth justice work was being aligned with other Council strategies such as the Youth Strategy and Black Community Action Plan (BCAP). Serita Kwofie advised that the work aligned well with the Youth Strategy, which had looked at where young people had said they did not feel safe, where they needed more access to

youth services, education, employment and training opportunities and how the Council provided diversionary activities for young people who came to the attention of youth justice. Young people involved in the YJS were also helping to develop the action plan sitting under the Youth Strategy so the Council was hearing those voices and bringing them into strategies. Nigel Chapman added that the next version of the SEND Inclusion Strategy was in development, which would include strategies for young people with additional needs who were involved in the YJS, and its Early Years Strategy, ensuring that children were on the right path at an early stage because it was known that if children were behind by the age of 5 their indicators for life were poorer, including the potential risk of offending. As such, long term outcomes needed to be met through intervention in the first 5 years of life.

The Committee advised officers of several initiatives set up as diversionary outcomes in other areas, such as in Manchester where an ex-offender had set up a boxing programme for young people in South London which had good success. They suggested the Council could do similar projects, building on the experience of other local authorities.

The Chair drew the item to a close and invited members to make recommendations with the following RESOLVED:

- i) For the service to strengthen and expand partnerships with boxing clubs, music groups, and similar community-based initiatives that promote rehabilitation, foster pro-social identity, reduce the risk of reoffending, and help individuals remain engaged and focused on their future.
- ii) For the Youth Justice Service to consider engaging with Wembley Stadium to explore potential employment pathways in the security and hospitality sectors, aimed at supporting young people transitioning out of the service and reintegrating into the community.
- iii) For the Youth Justice Service to strengthen collaboration with Brent's partners and community and voluntary sector.
- iv) As the current report did not focus on this area in detail, the Committee requested a future update outlining any progress made in developing these partnerships.

During the course of the discussion an information request was made, recorded as follows:

- i) As agreed by the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Community Development, the Committee requested an explanatory note detailing the methodology used to produce the 2024-25 data presented in the report.

11. Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025-26

The Committee noted the Work Programme.

12. Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Recommendations Tracker

The Committee noted the recommendations tracker.

The meeting closed at 8:15pm

COUNCILLOR KETAN SHETH
Chair

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Proposal to transfer the Medical Day Care Unit from Central Middlesex Hospital to Ealing Hospital and expand sickle cell services

6 November 2025

Introduction and summary

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) currently operates a Medical Day Care Unit at Central Middlesex Hospital. A Medical Day Care Unit provides a range of nurse-led day treatments and procedures for patients under a medical consultant. Intravenous drips, infusions and injections are typical procedures delivered at a Medical Day Care Unit. These are mostly delivered as planned appointments. It is open during normal working hours (9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday), and is closed at bank holidays and weekends. We are not proposing any changes to the opening hours arrangements.

Currently, the Central Middlesex Hospital Medical Day Care Unit is provided in the same space as the sickle cell day care service. This service provides blood transfusions and pain relief for our sickle cell patients.

LNWH is committed to delivering high quality, holistic sickle cell care at Central Middlesex Hospital. The Trust has successfully secured additional funding from NHS England to expand the day care facility to better meet the needs of the local population. This includes the provisions of annual checks, regular and preventative red cell exchange and apheresis (for pain relief) when required.

LNWH has assessed options for expanding the sickle service at Central Middlesex Hospital. Concurrently, it acknowledges the significant benefits in aligning the Medical Day Care Unit to the emergency pathway. Therefore, the Trust proposes moving the Medical Day Care Unit from Central Middlesex Hospital (where there is no emergency department) to Ealing Hospital (where there is an emergency department) from the 1 February 2026. This would include transferring all staff and patients.

LNWH is planning two public involvement events to talk to local people about these proposed changes. These are planned for Monday 15 December, with the first event from 12pm – 1pm, and the second from 6.30pm – 7.30pm.

Current medical day care unit provision

The Medical Day Care Unit sees on average 250 people per month (based on activity data April 2025 – September 2025). Of these 83 are haematology patients who would continue to be seen at Central Middlesex Hospital. The remaining 171 patients would be transferred to Ealing Hospital.

Summary of service provision & average monthly volumes	Medical Day Care Unit Total	254
	Haematology	83
	Endocrinology	31
	Rheumatology	55
	Gastroenterology	47
	Other	38

Around 25% of the appointments are repeat procedures.

Why is change being proposed?

The drivers for this change are:

- **To enable expansion of Sickle Cell services at Central Middlesex Hospital.** Transferring the Medical Day Care Unit from Central Middlesex Hospital to Ealing Hospital will create space to enable sickle cell expansion. This is in line with the Trust's objectives and to meet the needs of the local sickle cell population.
- **To support the urgent care pathway at Ealing Hospital.** Currently, around five of the patients seen each day by the Same Day Emergency Care service at Ealing Hospital, undergo Medical Day Care Unit procedures and not Same Day Emergency Care. Transferring this activity to the Medical Day Care Unit (as same day appointments) would better enable the Trust to meet urgent care needs.
- **To support the discharge pathway at Ealing Hospital.** Patients requiring an infusion prior to discharge could be moved to the Medical Day Care Unit, freeing up an acute bed and improving emergency flow.

Impact on the staffing model of proposed changes

This is a nurse-led service overseen by a consultant. The team comprises of three nurses and a senior house officer. The staff changes resulting from this proposal would be:

- Three nurses currently working at Central Middlesex Hospital to transfer to Ealing Hospital.
- The senior house officer to be retained at Central Middlesex Hospital, working exclusively for the haematology service.
- Consultant oversight to be provided for the Medical Day Unit by a consultant at Ealing Hospital
- An additional four nurses to be recruited to operate the sickle cell day service at Central Middlesex Hospital (what is currently a team of three, will become a team of seven nurses).

Impact on patients

It is proposed that patients who currently receive care at the Medical Day Care Unit at Central Middlesex Hospital will be required to attend Ealing Hospital for their appointments. We would write to all patients to explain these changes.

Taking a snapshot of the patients who have attended in the last year, the breakdown of patients' registered GPs is as follows:

	Brent	Ealing	Harrow	Other	Total
Percentage	42.18%	20.70%	19.04%	18.08%	100%

Quality and equality impact assessment

LNWH has completed and approved a quality and equality impact assessment for these proposed changes. This has also been shared with the North West London ICB. Key finding from the assessment were:

- A positive impact for clinical effectiveness and staff experience.
- A negative impact for patient experience and specifically for groups with disabilities. This will be mitigated by communication and engagement, provision of transport for eligible patients (in line with NHS guidance on patient transport: [Transport and travel](#)) and the potential to explore options with community providers for alternative local care provision subject to feedback from Patient Advice and Liaison Service issues and complaints raised.
- Neutral impact in all other areas.

Financial implications

The proposal is largely financially neutral. There will be an overall increase in spend of £18,000 in 2025/26 due to the equipment purchasing that is needed to support the expanded teams. From 2026/27 the Trust would save £21,000 per annum through a reduction in the use of bank staff.


Duty to involve

We recognise the importance of meaningful and inclusive public involvement in this process, supported by appropriate articulation of the rationale and full transparency regarding the proposals.

We therefore propose:

- Formal discussion with the Brent Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Two workshops onsite at Central Middlesex Hospital for local residents to discuss the proposals with our operational team and provide views and feedback. One workshop will be held in the daytime and one in the evening, in order to allow for as many participants to attend as possible.
- The option for local residents who have not been able to attend a meeting to submit feedback online
- Communications both onsite and online via website and social media channels to highlight the proposals and signpost residents to workshops and feedback mechanisms.

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	Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 19 November 2025
	Report from the Corporate Director of Resident and Housing Services
	Lead Cabinet Member for Housing - Councillor Donnelly-Jackson
Response to Housing regulator findings and Brent graded at C3	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-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:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Spencer Randolph Director of Housing Service Spencer.randolph@brent.gov.uk Gary Mitchell Head of Housing Management Gary.Mitchell@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to update the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the progress made so far as a consequence of the self-referral in April to the Regulator of Social Housing.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee note the progress being made by Housing Management to recover its position with regards to the compliance of its Housing stock and the positive engagement with the Regulator for Social Housing.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 **Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context** - The work detailed in this report and that of the housing management service more generally supports the Council's wider borough plan to Move Brent Forward

Together. In particular, the work presented with this report supports the borough plan priority to provide prosperity and stability in Brent through helping to deliver the desired outcome for safe, secure and decent housing across the borough.

- 3.2 **Background** - In April 2025 it was identified within the Housing Service that True Compliance, which is the compliance software utilised by the council, had been updated incorrectly.
- 3.3 Further investigations established that up to 12,500 fire actions had been wrongly updated to indicate that works had been completed but were missing the required supporting evidence. In addition, the council was unable to reconcile performance data on asbestos management, water safety and detectors for smoke and carbon monoxide.
- 3.4 Upon realising the potential seriousness of the situation, advice was taken on appropriate corrective steps, from a building safety specialist that deals with the management and recovery of regulatory breaches.
- 3.5 In line with the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023 around transparency, the advice was to self-refer to the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 3.6 Contact was made with the regulator, which subsequently led to a request for further performance information on building safety and stock decency.
- 3.7 The council was unable to provide a comprehensive response, due to the low level of confidence in the performance data held within True Compliance.
- 3.8 As part of the response, the council was asked to provide information on its stock condition data.
- 3.9 The council reported that it had stock data on 95% of its homes, however it does not hold recorded survey information on over 50%.
- 3.10 As a result of the aforementioned issues, on the 28th May 2025 the Regulator of Social Housing [published its regulatory judgement](#), that being a grading of **C3**.
- 3.11 The Consumer Standards is the regulatory framework operated by the Regulator of Social Housing. Set out below is an explanation of the grading:

Grading	
C1	Fully compliant: landlords demonstrate good compliance and an appetite and ability to address failings effectively.
C2	Still compliant, but there may be some weaknesses or areas for improvement.
C3	Serious failings have been identified, and significant improvements are needed.
C4	Very serious failings, and fundamental changes are needed to address them

- 3.12 In response to the situation, the council appointed health and safety advisors that specialise in building safety and assisting landlords in meeting the requirements and outcomes set out in the Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023, in particular The Quality and Safety Standard.
- 3.13 The independent specialists began their work mid-May and have completed an initial assessment of the council's compliance arrangements against the 'Big 8' areas of compliance. These being:
1. Fire Safety
 2. Gas Safety
 3. Electrical Safety
 4. Water Safety
 5. Asbestos Management
 6. Mechanical and Engineering (Lifts)
 7. Damp and Mould
 8. Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors
- 3.14 The Health and Safety Specialist have been contracted to support ongoing improvement work, providing additional objective and independent oversight, as well building safety expertise.
- 3.15 Caldiston Ltd have carried out an independent forensic audit across all key compliance workstreams (including fire, gas, electrical, water, asbestos and decent homes requirements) which was completed in August 2025. The audit involved desktop reviews, staff interviews and validation of data from multiple systems in use by the service, including True Compliance, NEC, and LifeSpan.
- 3.16 The audit aligned with officers' concerns, validating the referral to the regulator confirming that there were significant systemic issues, particularly in data management, governance, and policy implementation. The overall outcome of the audit was that the housing management service has inadequate assurance in relation to managing building safety and compliance.
- 3.17 Key recommendations from the audit include developing a comprehensive compliance framework, resolving data integrity issues, closing overdue fire risk assessment actions, establishing central registers for smoke and CO detectors, and providing staff training on compliance processes. It is also recommended

to implement dashboards for real-time KPI monitoring and align the Strategic Risk Register with actual risks.

- 3.18 The findings from the audit have highlighted and clarified several areas that the service had already identified as needing focus as well as some additional key learning. These findings have fed into the development of a robust action plan for improvement. This action plan also includes root cause analysis (as recommended by The Regulator), to ensure permanent solutions are in place to prevent similar issues arising in the future and will form a key part of the agenda and monitoring for the relevant project board under the newly established Housing and Tenant Improvement Programme.

4.0 Ongoing improvement work

- 4.1 Whilst the reflective audit work is vital for lesson learning and effectively mapping robust and long-term improvements to our management of building safety, it has been important to us as a service to ensure we are driving forward rapid improvements on the ground to strengthen oversight quickly and provide re-assurance for our residents
- 4.2 The Compliance Team have been onboarding additional contractors to expedite the completion of works as a consequence of Fire Risk Assessments, and as of 1 September it confirmed that all outstanding high-risk fire actions in high-rise blocks had been satisfactorily addressed; either closed with evidence, completed and closed with evidence or work booked.
- 4.3 The rebuild of True Compliance and the NEC asset register is well underway and due to be complete by April 2026. Additional governance has also been implemented around the management of data, in particular restricting property creation access which provides a more controlled approach to new properties being added to the system and feeding into compliance workstreams accurately.
- 4.4 The compliance team has been progressing with recruitment. A Compliance and Contract Manager, a dedicated electrical manager, a Quality and Delivery Manager and an interim Contract Officer all started in September with two permanent Contract Officers starting in October, all with a focus on compliance and safety.
- 4.5 Furthermore, the Housing & Tenant Satisfaction Improvement Board met for its initial meeting in September and the Building Safety Compliance Project Board holds its first meeting on 12th November 25.
- 4.6 The Building Safety Compliance Project Board report up into the Housing & Tenant Satisfaction Improvement Board, which is chaired by the Chief Executive, will oversee and drive initiatives aimed at improving the quality of housing services and increasing tenant satisfaction.
- 4.7 The Board will provide governance and oversight by monitoring the progress of improvement initiatives and ensuring compliance with housing standards.

- 4.8 Significant progress has been made in addressing the data issues highlighted in the audit report. Our priority has been to validate the ownership and the council's compliance responsibilities of all properties on our Housing Database, NEC. This work is essential to build confidence in our data and provide a reliable foundation for reporting.
- 4.9 We are currently in the process of systematically reviewing each compliance stream, starting with Gas. This will confirm the properties that fall in or out of scope, and importantly, for what reason. Whilst the audit highlighted that confidence in the reporting number is low, we are using these figures as a baseline so that improvements can be clearly appreciated as our validation work progresses. This will result in the reported asset numbers changing as properties are validated and confirmed in work streams, and percentages fluctuating because of this.
- 4.10 This data correction work is not limited only to the properties we report on to the Regulator (i.e. council owned homes) but has been expanded to all residents in our properties e.g. leaseholders, i4B and FWH tenants etc. This ensures a consistent, council-wide approach that strengthens both safety and assurance moving forward.
- 4.11 We have accelerated the Stock Condition Survey program to 35% this financial year splitting the remaining surveys between the next 2 years with a goal to reach 100% March 2028.
- 4.12 Senior Housing Management managers meet monthly with the Regulator of Social Housing, and have developed a good working relationship with them with the Regulator being happy with the pace in which Housing Management are working to recover their position.

5.0 Engagement with residents and key stakeholders

- 5.1 Effective communication and engagement with residents and key stakeholders is central to the overall recovery plan. A multi-channel engagement strategy has been developed in partnership with the councils Communications Team which prioritises transparency, trust and keeping all key parties informed of progress and upcoming changes.
- 5.2 Engagement and communication activities scheduled for the coming month:
- Special print edition of The Noticeboard (council tenant and leaseholder newsletter), providing an update on building safety, re-iterating how to contact the service about building safety concerns and an overview of the new repairs contract set up.
 - E-newsletter version of The Noticeboard to include video message from Cllr Donnelly-Jackson outlining the Regulator judgement, what it means, what action has been taken so far and our commitment to rapid and lasting improvements. This newsletter reaches over 7000 tenants and leaseholders

- Update to the existing web page and FAQs.
- Members bulletin update and self-referral update report to PCG.

6.0 Financial Considerations

- 6.1 Like other local authorities, Brent is facing significant financial pressures and is continuously needing to look for efficiencies to address budget challenges. Some of the main challenges that could affect the long-term viability of the HRA Business Plan along with rent levels are major works and repairs.
- 6.2 As the Council adds more stock to its portfolio and complexities of new additional requirements to building standards are increasing, such as fire safety works and decarbonisation, the cost of major works are rising. At the moment, there is insufficient government subsidy available to address these changes. The Asset Management Strategy and investment plans must be approached cautiously and allow for flexibility to scale back on schemes where required. Careful budget monitoring and financial planning are crucial. With a current 5.75% loan rate for the HRA, £1m in borrowing costs the HRA circa £28k per annum in interest costs.
- 6.3 The specialists that have been appointed to assist with the recovery of the compliance breaches, are currently undertaking an initial assessment of the situation with the intention of developing a recovery programme.
- 6.4 Upon completion of the initial assessment, a paper will be presented setting out the anticipated costs and financial implications. For comparative purposes, a registered provider with 21,000 homes that were in a similar situation, spent £2.3m on their recovery programme.
- 6.5 It should be noted that whilst operating under a regulatory notice, access to grant funding for housing developments may be reduced or ceased, until the council can evidence a position of compliance.

7.0 Legal Considerations

- 7.1 This report ensures compliance with the regulatory standards for housing, in particular ensuring we comply with the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023 (the “Act”).
- 7.2 The Act received royal assent on 20 July 2023. It makes provision for the regulation of social housing landlords, particularly with regard to issues such as safety, transparency, standards and conduct of staff and tenant engagement. The Act also strengthens the powers of the Housing Ombudsman and enables requirements to be set for social landlords to address hazards such as damp and mould within a fixed time period.
- 7.3 As a result of the amendments made by this Act, safety and transparency will become explicit parts of the objectives of the Regulator of Social Housing (“the

Regulator”) and the Regulator will have greater powers in relation to the competency and conduct of staff and the provision of information. The Regulator will also be given strengthened economic powers to ensure they can effectively intervene when required to enable them to assess landlords failing to meet standards more routinely and proactively, as well as taking action in a wider range of circumstances. Changes are also made to the economic regulatory regime to ensure that providers of social housing are well governed and financially viable.

- The Act has three core objectives as follows:
- To facilitate a new, proactive consumer regulation regime
- To refine the existing economic regulatory regime
- To strengthen the Regulator’s powers to enforce the consumer and economic regimes.

7.4 On 29 February the Regulator set out the revised consumer standards that apply to all registered housing providers from 1 April 2024. The new standards are:

- The Safety and Quality Standard
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- The Tenancy Standard

7.5 The introduction of the revised consumer standards also included information on the Regulator’s Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) referred to above, that all social housing landlords must report on. The TSMs will help the Council to see how well it is doing in areas such as keeping properties in good repair, maintaining building safety, and effectively handling tenant complaints. The Regulator required all landlords who own more than 1,000 homes to submit their first TSM data return by 30th June 2024 to enable the Regulator to publish the first year of data by autumn 2024.

7.6 As a social landlord the council has a duty to provide a safe environment for those living in their homes. Failure to comply could result in negative outcomes ranging from customer dissatisfaction and criticism to a requirement to submit (to the Regulator) a Performance Improvement Plan, or to take particular remedial actions as set out in an enforcement notice. If necessary, the Regulator will be able to authorise an appropriate person to enter a social housing premises to take emergency remedial action, issue penalties such as unlimited fines, or require the provider of social housing to pay compensation. A provider of social housing will commit an offence if they obstruct access or work required to undertake remedial action. A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale.

7.7 As per the report the council completed a self-referral that focused on the Safety and Quality Standard. The regulator notes that: “This is the first time we have issued a consumer grade in relation to this landlord. LB Brent has engaged positively with us since making its self-referral and has plans in place to

understand the wider impact of its current position. Those actions include work to understand the root causes of the presenting issues, reviewing the completion of all closed fire safety remedial actions through a risk-based approach and working to develop a suitable action plan to resolve the issues. We will continue to engage with LB Brent as it seeks to address the issues that have led to this judgement. This includes evidencing that it is taking reasonable steps to mitigate risks to tenants as it creates and delivers its improvement plan. We are not proposing to use our enforcement powers at this stage but will keep this under review as LB Brent seeks to resolve these issues”.

8.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 8.1 The public sector equality duty set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 9.1 Housing is a key stakeholder in delivering the Councils Climate Action strategy. The actions Housing is responsible for are as follows:

- Retrofit work to three tower blocks;
- We will deliver further retrofitting projects via the Council’s Carbon offset fund;
- We will develop and implement employer requirements for energy efficiency standards within all new Council housing;
- We will explore and identify an opportunity for an exemplar net zero new build within the NCHP;
- We will review developments within our NCHP pipeline to ensure that all aspects of sustainability are holistically addressed, with a special focus on the proposed development plans for St Raphael’s Estate;

10.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 10.1 At this time it is anticipated that additional resource will be required in the short to medium term, to assist with the recovery programme.

11.0 Communication Considerations


- 11.1 In consultation with the regulator, we are adopting a proactive approach concerning our engagement with tenants, elected members, and the wider community.

Report sign off:

Thomas Cattermole

Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services

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	Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 19 November 2025
	Report from the Corporate Director of Resident and Housing Services Lead Cabinet Member for Housing – Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson
Update on the Housing Management Advisory Board From the Independent Chair of the Housing Management Advisory Board	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-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:	Appendix 1 - Housing Management Advisory Board Terms of Reference (TOR) Appendix 2 - Housing Management Service – Improvement Plan
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Spencer Randolph Director of Housing Spencer.randolph@brent.gov.uk Abiola Adegoke Head of Quality Assurance, Engagement & Insight (Acting) Abiola.Adegoke@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to update the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the work of the Housing Management Advisory Board.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee note the progress being made by Housing Management to embed and positively engage with the Housing Management Advisory Board (The Board).

3.0 Detail

Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context - The overview details the engagement of Housing Management Services with the Board and aligns with the Council's Borough Plan – Moving Brent Forward Together, particularly the priority to build thriving communities and enable residents to participate in Council decision-making.

This report also demonstrates how Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are being embedded to strengthen resident engagement and empowerment, enabling residents to effectively scrutinise service performance.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Housing Management Board was established to provide scrutiny and oversight of the council's housing management services, with a particular focus on implementing the Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy. It is involved in reviewing community engagement methods and ensuring the council is responsive to the needs of its tenants and leaseholders.
- 3.2 The Board acts as a critical friend to the service, ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework set out by the Regulator of Social Housing. It also serves as an integral governance mechanism in the development and review of service policies. A key focus of the Board's role is to hold the service accountable for ensuring effective and meaningful resident engagement throughout these processes.
- 3.3 The Board comprises an independent Chair, three independent members, three Council tenant members, two Councillor representatives (including the portfolio holder for Housing), and three staff representatives.
- 3.4 Staff representatives were appointed by mutual agreement between the Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services and the Director of Housing Services. The Council tenant and independent members were appointed following an open application and recruitment process to ensure transparency and fairness in selection.
- 3.5 The Terms of Reference for the Housing Management Advisory Board can be found in Appendix 1.

4.0 Board Activities

- 4.1 To date, four board meetings have been held, with the inaugural meeting taking place on 23 April 2025, during which the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct were reviewed and endorsed.
- 4.2 An overview of the Housing Management Service, including its structure, remit, key challenges, and recent achievements was provided. The Board was also

advised that the Council had self-referred to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) because of concerns about compliance-related remedial actions and agreed to prioritise resident engagement, compliance, repairs, voids and rent collection, complaints, and compensation.

- 4.3 The second meeting, held on 26 June 2025, commenced with an estate inspection that enabled Board members to assess conditions on-site, engage with residents, and discuss key operational and service delivery issues.
- 4.4 During the inspection a range of issues were observed, including fire safety, communal disrepair, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, and security. Members also raised questions regarding monitoring of caretaking and cleaning services, building safety, CCTV functionality, and the future use of the underground car park.
- 4.5 The visit provided valuable insight into estate management, strengthening Board Members' understanding of repairs, compliance, and resident engagement in practice.
- 4.6 The Board meeting on 28 August 2025 was used to focused on service improvement, resident communication, and responsiveness to maintenance and environmental issues, based on feedback from the estate inspection undertaken on 26 June. An update was provided on the compliance and building safety self-referral to the RSH, with progress reporting agreed as a standing agenda item for meetings going forward.
- 4.7 Members also requested for information on caretaker patch sizes, and details of how complaints guidance / reporting is being incorporated into resident communications and expressed an interest in scheduling future estate walkabouts.
- 4.8 Following review of the Housing Management Improvement Plan (attached), an update on the new internal governance structure, staffing levels and turnover was requested for the next meeting, and it was agreed that more detailed performance indicators should be presented going forward to enhance oversight and monitoring.
- 4.9 Agenda planning is undertaken collaboratively with the Chair of the Board. At the meeting on 22 October 2025, the Board received information on Housing Management Services' performance across key areas, including plans for improvement where standards had not been met. The agenda covered the following items:
 - **Self-referral update** - Key points included: monthly liaison with the Regulator, commissioning of Caldston Ltd for independent oversight and a forensic audit across all compliance workstreams, and the development of a detailed Improvement Action Plan with responsibilities, timelines, and priority ratings. Updates were provided on gas and fire risk assessment (FRA) programmes, water and asbestos assessments, and ongoing resident engagement. Recruitment to strengthen compliance

and safety teams was also highlighted, including new appointments in compliance, electrical management, and voids management.

- **Housing and Tenant Satisfaction Improvement Programme** - covering the new internal governance structure, HMAB's role in providing oversight and challenge, updated improvement plan progress, programme design principles, and objectives across workstreams and governance boards.
- **Performance data** - focusing on safety and quality, transparency and accountability, neighbourhood and community, tenancy, rent, and staff competency and conduct.
- **Overview of the Housing Contact Centre and Out of Hours Service** – including service structure, delivery, current performance, call volumes, challenges, contract management, and its contribution to Housing Management

The Housing Management Improvement Advisor attended the meeting as an observer and commended the agenda and discussions, noting they demonstrated transparency and a clear commitment to delivering positive outcomes – the type of evidence a Regulator would expect to see during inspection.

The Board meets bi-monthly in person at the Civic Centre, with the next meeting scheduled for 17 December 2025. Future meetings will include further scrutiny of key issues, such as the financial position.

To date, Board members have completed two training courses delivered by the Chartered Institute of Housing: “Effective Governance” and “Regulatory Standard Update”, enhancing their knowledge of best practice in governance and regulatory compliance, to assist in strengthening their ability to provide informed oversight and challenge.

5.0 Engagement with residents and key stakeholders

- 5.1 Work is also underway with the Board to develop a dedicated webpage, providing details of the Board's purpose, membership profiles, and information on how residents can engage directly with the Board. The webpage will also serve as a platform for sharing updates on service delivery and performance standards.

6.0 Financial Considerations

- 6.1 N/A - However, Council tenant and independent Board members are remunerated in line with the Housing Engagement Incentives and Rewards Policy. They are also able to claim reasonable expenses, which required them to attend at least 50% of the Board meetings over a six-month period.

7.0 Legal Considerations

7.1 N/A

8.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

8.1 The Board is required to operate in accordance with the Council's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) policy, ensuring broad and representative participation in its membership and decision-making processes.

9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

9.1 The Board are responsible for holding Housing Management Services to account for service delivery, including those which fall under the Council's Climate Action strategy.

10.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

10.1 N/A – although the Board are required to review its operation, membership, terms of reference and code of conduct on an annual basis

11.0 Communication Considerations

11.1 N/A

Report sign off:

Thomas Cattermole

Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services

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Housing Management Advisory Board

Terms of Reference

Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Housing Management Advisory Board (The Board) is to support, advise and provide challenge to the housing management service at Brent Council by:
- Acting as a critical friend to the housing management service regarding its compliance with the regulatory framework set out by the Regulator of Social Housing (The Regulator);
 - Monitoring the delivery and impact of the Housing Management Improvement Plan; and
 - Providing a key governance step in the development and review of service policies, with particular focus on holding the service accountable for effective resident engagement throughout this process where applicable.
- 1.2 The Board is not a decision-making body and is not involved in day-to-day operational matters of service delivery or individual case work for housing management or any other Council service.

Membership

- 2.1 Full quorum of membership to the board will include:
- 1 x independent chair
 - 3 x independent members
 - 3 x council tenant members
 - 2 x Councillors
 - 3 x staff representatives
- 2.2 Councillor representatives will include the Portfolio Holder responsible for the Housing Management service and a fellow Councillor to be agreed between the Portfolio Holder and the Director of Housing Services. Staff representatives will be agreed and appointed jointly by the Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services and the Director of Housing Services.
- 2.3 Council tenant and independent representatives will be appointed following an application and recruitment process.

Meetings

Frequency, location and length

- 3.1 The Board will meet on a bi-monthly basis, with meetings taking place in-person at the Brent Civic Centre, unless otherwise agreed in advance by The Board.
- 3.2 Meetings will be two hours in length, taking place between 6pm – 8pm, unless otherwise agreed in advance by The Board.
- 3.3 Extra-ordinary meetings may be called on occasion to provide additional time for specific discussions or in response to emerging priorities.

Agenda and documentation

- 3.4 An agenda will be set in agreement by the Chair and Director of Housing Services at least four weeks in advance of each meeting.
- 3.5 All documentation required for a meeting of The Board, including meeting agenda, will be circulated no later than three working days in advance of the meeting.

Support and Chairing responsibilities

- 3.6 Administrative support for The Board (i.e., arranging meetings, collating and circulating agendas and other documents as needed, minute taking during meetings etc.) will be provided by the Council.
- 3.7 Should the Chair be unavailable to lead the meeting, then an Independent or Tenant Board Member can volunteer to Vice Chair in their absence. Chair training will be provided to any Member who wishes to attend.

Quorum

- 3.8 In order for a meeting to go ahead, there must be no less than seven Board members in attendance, with at least one representative from each membership group (i.e. Councillor, tenant, staff, independent) present.

Conduct

- 3.9 All Board Members and guest attendees must adhere to the agreed Code of Conduct for the Housing Management Advisory Board.

Training and remuneration

- 4.1 Members of The Board will be assisted to access training to support their role as a Board Member. General training or expertise briefings can be provided to the wider Board where needed and as agreed by the Chair and Director of Housing Services.

- 4.2 Council tenant and independent representatives on The Board will be remunerated for their attendance at Board meetings in line with the Housing Engagement Incentives and Rewards Policy. Remuneration will be paid in two instalments during the year and will only be paid where the Board Member has attended at least 50% of meetings over the previous 6 months.
- 4.3 Council tenant and independent Board Members can claim reimbursement of reasonable expenses they incur through Board activity.

Links to Council governance structure

- 5.1 The activities of the Board will be included in an annual update to the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee re. Housing Services.

Review

- 6.1 The Board will review its operation, membership, terms of reference and code of conduct on an annual basis.

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Housing Management Service – Improvement Plan

HMAB Update Tracker

Year 1					
	Action	Objective	Status	Target date	Commentary update
Our people, culture and partnerships					
1.1	Finalise and embed the re-organisation of the housing management service	Why are we doing this? Following the regulatory changes as a result of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, it was acknowledged that team structures and ways of working could be made more effective in delivering against the new requirements What does good look like? Our teams are structured to deliver effective services and provide value for money for residents	Complete	Q3 2024-25	The re-organisation of the housing management service is complete following a consultation period with staff and subsequent recruitment drive.
1.2	Work with HR colleagues to develop and roll out a comprehensive recruitment campaign for the re-organisation	Why are we doing this? Historically, several crucial roles across the service have been difficult to recruit and retain What does good look like? The housing management service attracts and maintains a diverse and talented workforce	Complete	Q3 2024-25	All roles as part of the initial re-organisation have been advertised, interviewed for and recruited to. The service worked with an external consultant and internal HR teams to develop a recruitment campaign video and utilised extended recruitment timeframes for key roles e.g. Area Tenancy Managers. Extended recruitment timeframes are now a tool in use for harder to recruit to posts when they become vacant.
1.3	Handover the management of the estate caretaking team to the Public Realm Directorate and embed an effective Service Level Agreement (SLA)	Why are we doing this? Estate caretaking services and moving to the Public Realm Directorate following a corporate level re-organisation. We need to ensure they are delivering effective services for Council tenants and leaseholders. What does good look like? Estate caretaking services are delivered effectively, effective monitoring is in place,	In progress	Q4 2024-25	Estate caretaking teams have been handed over to the Public Realm Directorate. A proposal for a new SLA is in development which will include elements of resident engagement e.g. opportunities for residents to take an ‘inspector’ or ‘block champion’ role and review the cleanliness and maintenance of communal areas against the expected standards which can then be fed back to management and operational teams. It is expected that the new SLA will be up and running by end of calendar year 2025.

		service provides value for money for residents			
1.4	Develop an induction programme for all new starters which includes vision, values and expectations from senior management	Why are we doing this? Lots of new starters in the service following the re-alignment, we want them to have a consistent introduction. What does good look like? Housing staff induction aligns well with the corporate induction expectations, training needs are incorporated and addressed	Complete	Q3 2024-25	A welcome pack has been developed for new starters which includes an induction process which mirrors that of the corporate induction expectations. This document also includes an introduction to the wider Housing Services Directorate and expectations that managers and new officers have discussions re. training needs and utilise the Housing Training Programme to address these.
1.5	Refresh the training staff programme to ensure it aligns with priorities, gaps in knowledge/skills and can respond to emerging training needs	Why are we doing this? It is expected that during 2025-26, the Regulator will publish a new Competence and Conduct Standard requiring effective management and monitoring of staff training, skills and knowledge. What does good look like? Staff can access training to address skills and knowledge gaps, key behaviours and cultures are re-iterated through mandatory courses	Complete	Q4 2024-25	The training programme has been reviewed, refreshed and approved by Housing Services senior management for year 2025-26. The training programme sets out mandatory and non-mandatory courses and includes core sessions like Building Safety Fundamentals, Customer Service, Stigma in Social Housing and Plain English Writing. The training programme is now also built to be responsive to additional training needs as they arise e.g. recent Housing Ombudsman recommendations have included Noise Nuisance training which is being commissioned.
1.6	Centralise all professional memberships held by the service (e.g. Housemark, CIH, HQN etc) and ensure membership benefits are being effectively utilised	Why are we doing this? Utilising our memberships to professional bodies supports continuing knowledge of best practice across the sector and encourages knowledge, skills development and networking What does good look like? Staff are aware of our professional memberships and how they can utilise them	Complete	Q4 2024-25	All professional memberships are now overseen by the Competence and Conduct Officer who is responsible for the training programme. Attendance is facilitated at all Housemark best practice 'clubs', CIH memberships have been agreed for Housing Management staff and HQN membership now also sits centrally.
Our relationship with tenants and leaseholders					
1.7	Finalise the Engagement Strategy and work with the Partnerships and Engagement Service to deliver an annual	Why are we doing this? Engagement is a core part of the Regulatory expectations for us as a social landlord and vital for ensuring we're continuously working to improve our services.	Complete		Engagement strategy is finalised and engagement plan agreed for 2024-25, going into 2025-26. The Partnerships and Engagement Team have moved back into the Housing Services directorate following a corporate re-

	programme of engagement activities	What does good look like? Rolling programme of engagement activity, including events, consultations and opportunities to challenge, hold us accountable and feed into decision making.			organisation and how meet regularly with housing management teams to plan and deliver engagement activities.
1.8	Review all housing management website pages, ensuring key information and policies are accessible	Why are we doing this? Feedback from our tenants tells us that we could do more to help them feel informed about the services we deliver What does good look like? Website pages are refreshed and accurately reflect our services, all core policies are available to read and are kept up to date	In progress	Q4 2024-25	A workshop with tenants and leaseholders has been held to get feedback on our housing management website pages, both across computer and mobile users. Feedback from this is being fed into a page-by-page review. Building Safety pages have been prioritised, with updated pages due to go live before the end of June 2025. Housing Complaints pages are currently being refreshed, with Damp and Mould and Anti-social Behaviour pages also in progress. This will be an ongoing process as we review page-by-page.
1.9	Develop a communication plan for the service which includes an approach to regularly sharing performance information (TSM results, complaints analysis etc.)	Why are we doing this? Feedback from our tenants tells us that we could do more to help them feel informed about the services we deliver. What does good look like? Regular communications going out to tenants re. service updates, reminders on how to best access services and keeping them up to date on our performance	In progress	Q4 2024-25	E-newsletter established which goes out 4 times a year. Borough-wide letters have been utilised this year to update on the re-organisation changes, introduction of the Area Tenancy Managers and one is also planned for the new repairs and maintenance contract. WhatsApp channels in place now for each Area Tenancy Manager (ATM) so they can communicate more directly with residents on their patch for quick, effective updates. These need to be officially launched and promoted by ATM's. 2023-24 TSM data shared on our website in an accessible format. A new Communications Account Manager has been assigned to Housing Services who is supporting on the ongoing communications plan moving forward.
1.9	Ensure tenants and leaseholders living in 'high-risk' blocks (7 storeys or more / over 18m high) have access to building safety	Why are we doing this? It is important that residents feel informed and able to ask questions about the safety of the block they live in. We are also required under the Building Safety Act 2022 to deliver	Complete	Q3 2024-25	The service has launched a programme of Building Safety Engagement Meetings and the first year of these was completed in 2024. These meetings include an update on Building Safety surveys and checks carried out in the individual block, an update on

	information unique to their block, have opportunities to provide challenge and know how to report issues	<p>effective engagement when it comes to matters around building safety.</p> <p>What does good look like? Rolling programme of building safety meetings taking place across high-risk blocks</p>			<p>Building Safety more generally with health and safety reminders and also an opportunity for residents to raise and issues or questions they have about the safety of the block they live in.</p> <p>The second year of Building Safety meetings is now underway.</p>
1.9	Establish a process for more detailed complaints analysis, incorporating tenant and leaseholder reviews of complaint responses and learning from Housing Ombudsman decisions and wider publications	<p>Why are we doing this? Complaints management is an area of low satisfaction for us as a service.</p> <p>What does good look like? Insightful analysis of our complaints that can be used to inform service improvement actions</p>	In progress		<p>2 x tenant-led complaints scrutiny workshops have taken place which included review of complaint responses for empathy, plain English etc. and feedback from these sessions has helped to inform the wider review of complaints management. More detailed tenant surveys have also taken place to identify resident 'pain points' in the complaints process.</p> <p>Analysis of complaints is currently high-level due to the level of detail and categorisation available in the IT system in use for complaints case management. Work is ongoing with our Digital Transformation team to make changes to the system which will allow for nuanced analysis for key themes and root causes.</p>
Delivering good landlord services					
1.10	Reprocure the repairs and maintenance contract, ensuring tenant and leaseholders have been involved in the process	<p>Why are we doing this? Our current repairs and maintenance contract is due to expire.</p> <p>What does good look like? Effective repairs and maintenance services have been procured which have been informed by resident feedback and input into decision making</p>	Complete	Q4 2024-25	<p>New repairs and maintenance contract has been procured using a new multi-contractor approach. The contract award was split into 4 lots, repairs and voids for East of the borough and repairs and voids for West of the borough. These contracts go live in 2025.</p> <p><u>Engagement carried out as part of the recruitment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online session open to all tenants and leaseholders as an overview of the procurement process and opportunity to ask questions - Targeted workshop with tenants and leaseholders focused on appointment management, communication and performance management for the new contract - Programme of summer 'roadshows' with the repairs and maintenance procurement as a core theme re.

					<p>information being shared and opportunity for people to give feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tenant and leaseholder involvement in scoring the bids provided by potential contractors
1.11	Fully embed True Compliance system, ensuring accurate, reliable and up to date data and reporting is available across all compliance streams	<p>Why are we doing this? It's important that the IT system we use for monitoring our compliance workstream e.g. fire safety, gas safety etc. is working effectively and providing accurate reporting.</p> <p>What does good look like? Reliable performance reports across all compliance workstreams.</p>	In progress	Q4 2024-25	<p>System is live and in use by teams.</p> <p>The recent self-referral to The Regulator, along with the investigations surrounding this, have identified issues with our data across several of our compliance workstreams.</p> <p>This is being worked on with external consultants with expertise in this area and improvements to the True Compliance system are also being discussed with True Compliance account managers. This will be an ongoing process.</p>
1.12	Develop and embed an emergency response process for the housing management service	<p>Why are we doing this? It is important that we, as an organisation, are able to respond quickly and effectively in an emergency situation.</p> <p>What does good look like? Staff feel confident and clear on what their role is in an emergency situation, contact details for our residents are up to date and accurate, staff have access to the tools they need to respond to an emergency.</p>	Complete	Q3 2024-25	<p>Rest Centre Officer training is included as mandatory for all Housing Management staff from 2025-26. Contact Centre have been reminded of the expectation for them to be checking and updating contact information for all council tenants and leaseholders who call in. Area Tenancy Managers are also carrying out tenancy audits where they confirm any support needs for household members in the event of a fire and work with them to create an emergency evacuation plan.</p> <p>The corporate emergency planning team have developed a council-wide action plan to address the requirements of the Grenfell Inquiry and expectations for Local Authorities and their landlord functions.</p> <p>This action on the improvement plan has been superseded by this council-wide action plan and the service is working with the emergency planning team to develop the tools and guidance needed moving forward, including running emergency centre scenario testing and developing phone tree access in the event of an emergency to call in housing-specific support.</p>
1.13	Develop a clear and robust approach to	<p>Why are we doing this? ASB management is an area of low satisfaction for our service and it is</p>	In progress	Q4 2024-25	<p>A review of current ASB management has taken place, which has included consultation with internal staff, tenants and</p>

	managing anti-social behaviour (ASB)	<p>important that we prioritise tenancy-sustainment and take quick action to address tenancy-related concerns</p> <p>What does good look like? New ASB policy and process guidance, clear and effective escalations and ways of working with corporate ASB team, tenants understand what is and isn't considered ASB and feel empowered to try and resolve low level neighbour disputes themselves</p>			<p>leaseholders and input from an external agency by way of an audit.</p> <p>A new anti-social behaviour and hate crime policy is in draft and process guidance is being developed with staff. We are also currently exploring options for alternative IT systems for ASB case management (NEC).</p> <p>New ASB policy will include a core focus on early intervention and prevention of low level ASB escalating via use of a Good Neighbour Policy to address neighbourhood disputes early-on, quicker and more efficient working with corporate ASB and noise nuisance teams via a review of the current SLA in place and managing new tenant expectations at sign up re. reasonable noise levels when living in flats with communal spaces etc.</p>
1.14	Carry out a detailed self-assessment against the consumer standards, identifying gaps and actions to address them	<p>Why are we doing this? Its important that we have a clear understanding of where our gaps are in relation to meeting the refreshed regulatory consumer standards</p> <p>What does good look like? We are able to provide assurance to The Regulator upon inspection that we either meet a regulatory requirement, or have a full understanding of where we are not meeting it and are taking action to address it</p>	Complete	Q3 2024-25	<p>External auditor carried out a spot check re. consumer standards and self-assessment sessions have also been held for each standard with the relevant housing managers.</p> <p>Gaps identified have been fed into this improvement plan, QA workstreams or are being addressed via more formal routes i.e. the ongoing self-referral.</p>
1.15	Build organisational awareness of social housing regulation and its implications for key stakeholders	<p>Why are we doing this? It's important that staff at all levels are aware of our regulatory requirements and their implications for service delivery</p> <p>What does good look like? Staff at all levels feel knowledgeable about the consumer standards and understand how their role contributes towards us being compliant with the regulations</p>	Complete	Q3 2024-25	<p>Service-wide briefing on Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the new Consumer Standards. This was also delivered for TMO's.</p> <p>TSM focus service-wide briefing also took place for 2023-24 TSM results and a more focused session also took place with key senior managers across the wider Council.</p> <p>Reports / briefings taken to Corporate Management Team (CMT) meetings and Policy Co-ordination Group (PCG).</p>

1.16	Develop an agreed approach and rolling programme for policy reviews moving forward	Why are we doing this? Its important that our policies accurately reflect what residents can expect from our service, they need to be up to date and accessible What does good look like? A suite of core policies available on our website	Complete	Q3 2024-25	Policy register now in place under QA team. Building Safety and Recharge Policies are complete and published. Updated ASB and Complaints policies currently in development. Domestic Abuse Policy, Rent Arrears Management Policy and Rent Setting Policy due next for refresh.
1.17	Develop an approach to case auditing across core housing management functions, identifying good and bad practice, training needs, process or system issues etc.	Why are we doing this? Reflecting on case work across the service is a useful way of gaining insight re. good and bad practice and informing service reviews, training needs etc. What does good look like? Case audit tools developed and in use	Complete	Q4 2024-25	Learning Review Case Audit template now developed and in use for Housing Ombudsman complaint cases. Operational case auditing takes place during 121's for Area Tenancy Managers. ISO based audit programme being developed for housing management (pilot testing for Private Housing Services throughout June/July/August).

Year 2					
	Action	Objective	Status	Target date	Commentary update
Our people, culture and partnerships					
2.1	Implement a 'grow your own' approach to tackle hard to recruit roles and support career development for existing staff	Why are we doing this? Some roles across the service are harder to recruit to and it would be beneficial to invest in upskilling existing staff in terms of future proofing the service. What does good look like? Opportunities for new starters and existing staff members to access training, qualifications and/or shadowing which would support them moving into technical, hard to recruit to roles.	In progress	Q3 2025-26	The housing service regularly appoints graduate positions as part of the corporate graduate scheme. A new trainee post has been introduced under Property Services but has not yet been recruited to.
2.2	Review all SLA's in place across the housing management service and embed a consistent approach to managing them	Why are we doing this? We have a number of service level agreements with other Council services, these are paid for out of the HRA and therefore need to ensure they are providing value for money. What does good look like? All SLA's are robust, well monitored and are providing value for money for the housing management service and its residents.	In progress	Q4 2025-26	Estate caretaking and ASB SLA's currently under review.
2.3	Introduce an additional team to Property Services who can deliver quick, responsive service against priority work e.g. damp and mould	Why are we doing this? Awaab's Law in being implemented from October 2025 and the service needs to be able to deliver against its requirements. What does good look like? Repairs relating to damp and mould are managed effectively, ensuring good communication with the tenant throughout.	In progress	Q3 2025-26	

2.4	Develop process guidance for core functions of the housing management service	Why are we doing this? Good process maps and guidance support consistency in service delivery, timeframes and communications no matter which staff member is managing a case What does good look like? Process maps and guidance notes available to staff and regular checks in place to ensure they are kept relevant and up to date	In progress	Q4 2025-26	Process maps for complaints and ASB case management in draft and being worked on with operational teams. S20 processes for leasehold team is also in draft.
Our relationship with tenants and leaseholders					
2.5	Use our TSM results to inform targeted improvements to housing management services and engage with tenants on how this can be best achieved	Why are we doing this? TSM surveys and the results are an opportunity to hear from our wider tenants about how they feel when it comes to the services we deliver. It's important we work with them to drive improvements from this. What does good look like? Areas of concern (e.g. where satisfaction has dropped) are focused on in partnership with engaged residents so targeted improvements can be driven based on the feedback.	In progress	Q3 2025-26	2024-25 TSM results presented and discussed at housing senior management meeting. To be externally published this summer with engagement on learning from TSM's to be incorporated into Roadshows.
Delivering good landlord services					
2.6	Ensure the service meets the new Decent Homes requirements once published by central government	Why are we doing this? The government has carried out a review of the Decent Homes requirements and we are waiting on an updated version to be published. What does good look like? Our properties meet the new Decent Homes standards when they are published and effective reporting on this is in place.	In progress	Q4 2025-26	
2.7	Embed a rolling programme of estate walkabouts so issues on estates can be picked up	Why are we doing this? Having an active presence on the estates we manage builds trust and provides an opportunity for Area Tenancy Managers to	Not started	Q4 2025-26	

	and tenants have an opportunity to engage with the service in their local area	<p>engage directly with residents from their patch.</p> <p>What does good look like? Residents have the opportunity to meet housing management staff in and around their local area to raise questions or concerns they have, identify repairs or other issues on their estates etc.</p>			
2.8	Embed a programme of tenancy audits across all patches	<p>Why are we doing this? Regular tenancy audits are an opportunity for Area Tenancy Managers to visit residents, identify any support needs, update contact information and report and property issues e.g. outstanding repairs.</p> <p>What does good look like? A rolling programme of audits is running with effective reporting in place on key outputs.</p>	In progress	Q3 2025-26	<p>Tenancy audits running across patches by the new Area Tenancy Managers. Process guidance for this to be developed and reporting to be developed by the resident data team.</p> <p>This will one of the first areas to receive an ISO internal audit once launched for housing management later this year.</p>
2.9	Work with tenants and leaseholders to review our digital offer when it comes to reporting repairs	<p>Why are we doing this? Ad-hoc feedback from tenants suggests our digital offer for accessing the housing service e.g. to report a repair is not fit for purpose.</p> <p>What does good look like? Formalised feedback gathered from residents as to their experience of our digital offer and use this to inform an improved way option.</p>	Complete	Q1 2025-26	<p>Workshops held with residents in partnership with Housemark as part of a wider review of the service's digital infrastructure.</p> <p>The resident feedback captured in these workshops has informed a phased move away from Dynamics as our case management system, over to NEC. This will start with repairs and maintenance functionality.</p>
2.10	Review and improve opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to communicate with and hear from the service re. ongoing cases	<p>Why are we doing this? Feedback from residents suggests that they sometimes find it difficult to get hold of the right team or don't always hear back from us when they contact via email.</p> <p>What does good look like? A more accessible and easily contactable housing management service with response time expectations being met and clearly</p>	Not started	Q3 2025-26	


		communicated to residents. Opportunities online, by phone and in person to speak directly to housing management staff.			
2.11	Develop a 'tone of voice' guidance document which provides advice on consistency in communication and language style expectations across all written interactions	<p>Why are we doing this? Average reading age in Brent is at the level of a 9 year old. It is important that our communications, at both a strategic and day-to-day level are clear, concise and easily understandable by all residents.</p> <p>What does good look like? A guidance document available to all staff that sets out expectations when it comes to language and communication style. Spot checks in place as part of audit programme.</p>	Not started	Q4 2025-26	Plain English Writing training is now mandatory for all housing management staff.
2.12	Develop a vulnerability / reasonable adjustment policy in line with Housing Ombudsman spotlight report recommendations	<p>Why are we doing this? The Housing Ombudsman recommend a vulnerability / reasonable adjustment policy is in place to ensure we, as a service, are equipped to tailor services to individual resident needs.</p> <p>What does good look like? We have a thorough understanding of the support needs of our residents, have clear pathways in place for them to update their circumstances and staff feel confident tailoring core processes to meet individual needs.</p>	In progress		Self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman spotlight report complete and submitted.
2.13	Review core IT system in place across the housing management service to ensure it is fit for purpose	<p>Why are we doing this? Current IT system in use for case management across the service is not fit for purpose in its current format.</p> <p>What does good look like? A robust plan in place for refreshing or replacing existing IT system with an improved alternative.</p>	Complete	Q2 2025-26	Housemark led a review of our IT system which included significant engagement with both residents and staff at all levels across housing management. Final report has been received and has now informed a phased move away from Dynamics as the core case management system over to NEC. This will start with repairs and maintenance areas.

2.14	Develop an effective performance management framework across all core functions	Why are we doing this? Effective performance monitoring and management is key to delivering a good landlord service and providing opportunities for key stakeholders to hold us to account. What does good look like? A clear and robust suite of performance reports, monitored on a regular basis and made available for resident scrutiny.	In progress		Power BI dashboards in place across some core functions i.e. void management and complaints at a high level. Performance scorecards for monthly internal performance meetings being developed in line with regulatory requirements.
2.15	Embed structured and consistent approach to horizon scanning which includes keeping ahead of Housing Ombudsman publications and ensuring learning is being taken and improvements to services embedded where identified	Why are we doing this? Utilising learning from Housing Ombudsman publications is a useful way of ensuring continuous improvements to our services. What does good look like? The service is using publications to inform reflective discussions about how learning from these can inform improvements to our services.	In progress		The QA team take a lead on this and incorporate best practice research from horizon scanning into improvement projects. New publications from key sector organisations are flagged and shared with housing managers for reflective sessions.

Year 3					
	Action	Objective	Status	Target date	Commentary update
Our people, culture and partnerships					
3.1	Ensure all relevant directors, heads of service and managers have achieved (or are working towards) the qualifications like to be required under the new Competency and Conduct Standard	Why are we doing this? The Regulator is due to publish a new Competence and Conduct Standard which will require staff at a certain level to achieve specific housing related qualifications. What does good look like? All required management have achieved or are working towards the required qualifications.	In progress	Q4 2026-27	Qualification requirements were included in all updated JD's as part of the re-organisation. Several Service Managers and one Head of Service have either completed or are part-way through achieving the expected Chartered Institute of Housing Level 5 qualification. We are waiting on final publication of this standard to confirm wider requirements. We are expecting there to be a two year timeframe for qualifications to be achieved or enrolled on.

Our relationship with tenants and leaseholders					
3.2	Develop a clear and robust approach to tenancy sustainment across the service	Why are we doing this? Reducing evictions and supporting residents to effectively maintain their tenancies is an important landlord function. What does good look like? A robust and varied sustainment offer is in place where we can effectively identify residents who are struggling and put support in place as early as possible.	Not started	Q4 2026-27	
Delivering good landlord services					
3.3	Expand and embed the QA resource and remit across housing management	Why are we doing this? With increased regulatory scrutiny in place, effective resource to ensure the service is meeting all requirements is needed. What does good look like? A centralised team who can act as a critical friend and hold the service accountable to regulatory requirements, as well as support teams with reviewing and improving policies and processes.	Complete	Q1 2026-27	QA team now in place.
3.4	Achieve the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation	Why are we doing this? As a landlord, identifying, signposting and managing cases of domestic abuse effectively is crucial. What does good look like? A robust policy and process in place for managing domestic abuse cases and our approach meets the DAHA standards for accreditation.	Not started	Q2 2026-27	

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	Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 19 November 2025
	Report from the Deputy Director, Democratic and Corporate Governance
Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme 2025/26 Update	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Not Applicable
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 – Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025/26
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Chatan Popat Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Governance and Scrutiny chatan.popat@brent.gov.uk Amira Nassr Deputy Director, Democratic and Corporate Governance Amira.Nassr@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 To present the Committee's work programme for 2025/26.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 That the Committee's work programme (set out in Appendix A) be agreed.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1.1 Borough Plan 2023-2027 – all strategic priorities.

3.2 Background

3.2.1 The work programme outlines the items which the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee will consider during the municipal year.

3.2.2 The programme is in line with the remit of the Committee which is set out in the Council Constitution (under the Terms of Reference for scrutiny committees¹):

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

The Committee is also responsible for discharging the functions of the Council under Part 4 of the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 in respect of the review and scrutiny of relevant NHS bodies or relevant health service providers including:

- reviewing or scrutinising any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in the borough; and
- making reports or recommendations to the relevant NHS bodies or relevant health service providers or Full Council on any other matter reviewed or scrutinised; however
- in response to any consultation by the relevant NHS bodies or relevant health service providers in respect of any proposal for a substantial development of the health service in the borough or for a substantial variation in the provision of such service, to make recommendations to Full Council only.

3.2.3 Committee members prioritised items for inclusion in its work programme at its annual work planning meeting, ensuring items selected aligned with:

- The strategic priorities set out in the Borough Plan 2023-27
- Areas of local community concern
- Significant issues affecting a significant number of residents/wards
- Emerging policies, strategies, or key decisions where there is strong interest for scrutiny input.

Nonetheless, this method of prioritisation is in line with best practice².

3.2.4 The work programme of a scrutiny committee is intended to be a flexible, living document that can adapt and change according to the needs of a committee. The 2025/26 work programme will therefore be regularly reviewed throughout the municipal year by the Committee and updated accordingly where necessary. The following amendments set out in this report reflect this:

¹ Brent Council Constitution, Part 4.

<https://democracy.brent.gov.uk/documents/s142996/Part%204%20May%202024%20Terms%20of%20Reference%20.pdf>

² The Good Scrutiny Guide (Centre for Public Scrutiny).

<https://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CfPS-Good-Scrutiny-Guide-v4-WEB-SINGLE-PAGES.pdf>

- The agenda item titled Leisure and Physical Activity has been rescheduled from the meeting on 19 November 2025 to the later meeting on 09 April 2026.
- The two agenda items scheduled for 19 January 2026 titled Update on Poverty Commission Project and Brent's response to the Cost of Living Crisis and Tackling Child Poverty in Brent will now be presented to the Committee as one item titled Tackling Poverty in Brent: Update on Poverty Commission Project, Brent's response to the Cost of Living Crisis and Tackling Child Poverty in Brent.

All changes are highlighted in red in Appendix A.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 Non-executive members were involved in developing the work programme as part of their membership of the Committee.
- 4.2 In developing its work programme, the Committee held sessions with stakeholders such as cabinet members, corporate directors, and ward councillors to temperature check key priority areas, avoid work duplication, and most importantly confirm the work programme reflects matters of local community concern.

5.0 Financial Considerations

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

6.0 Legal Considerations

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

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 There are no EDI considerations for the purposes of this report. However, EDI implications are addressed in the 'EDI Considerations' section of any reports to the Committee, requested as part of its work programme.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 There are no climate change and environmental considerations for the purposes of this report. However, climate change and environmental implications are addressed in the 'Climate Change and Environmental Considerations' section of any reports to the Committee, requested as part of its work programme.

9.0 Communication Considerations

- 9.1 There are no communication considerations for the purposes of this report. However, communication implications are addressed in the 'Communication Considerations' section of any reports to the Committee, requested as part of its work programme.

Report sign off:

Amira Nassr

Deputy Director, Democratic and Corporate Governance

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 and Leisure	
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 2025/26	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>	
<p>Tackling Poverty in Brent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Poverty Commission Project • Brent's response to the Cost of Living Crisis • Tackling Child Poverty in Brent 	<p>Cllr Promise Knight Cabinet Member, Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture</p> <p>Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson Cabinet Member, Housing</p> <p>Councillor Gwen Grahl, Cabinet Member, Children, Young People & Schools</p>	<p>Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy</p> <p>Tom Cattermole, Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services</p> <p>Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development</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, Young People and Community Development 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, Young People and Community Development 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

 Brent	Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 19 November 2025
	Report from the Deputy Director, Democratic and Corporate Governance
Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	Two Appendix A – Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker 2024-25 Appendix B – Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker 2025-26
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Chatan Popat Strategy Lead - Scrutiny, Democratic and Corporate Governance chatan.popat@brent.gov.uk Amira Nassr Deputy Director, Democratic and Corporate Governance amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker to the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

2.0 Recommendation

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

3.0 Background

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1.1 Borough Plan 2023-2027 – all strategic priorities

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 The Recommendations Tracker tabled in Appendix A relates to the previous municipal year (2024/25) and Appendix B to the current year (2025/26). These responses will remain on the tracker for ongoing monitoring with some further updates expected in upcoming meetings throughout this municipal year and next.
- 3.2.2 In accordance with Part 4 of the Brent Council Constitution (Standing Orders of Committees), Brent Council scrutiny committees may make recommendations to the Full Council or the Cabinet with respect to any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive, or of any functions which are not the responsibility of the Executive, or on matters which affect the borough or its inhabitants.
- 3.2.3 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee may not make executive decisions. Scrutiny recommendations therefore require consideration and decision by the appropriate decision maker; the Cabinet or Full Council for policy and budgetary decisions.
- 3.2.4 The Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker provides a summary of any scrutiny recommendations made in order to track executive decisions and implementation progress. It also includes suggestions for improvement and information requests, as captured in the minutes of the committee meetings.
- 3.2.5 Recommendations are removed from the tracker when they have been rejected or when implemented successfully and the review date has passed. This is the same for suggestions of improvement and information requests.

4.0 Procedure for Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees

- 4.1 Where scrutiny committees make recommendations to the Cabinet, these will be referred to the Cabinet (and/or relevant cabinet member) requesting an Executive Response. If relevant, the item will be published on the Council's Forward Plan.
- 4.2 Regarding recommendations to Full Council (e.g. in the case of policy and budgetary decisions), the same process will be followed, where a report containing the scrutiny recommendations will then be forwarded to Full Council alongside the Cabinet's responses to those recommendations.

- 4.3 Where scrutiny committees have powers under their terms of reference to make reports or recommendations to external decision makers (e.g. NHS bodies), the relevant external decision maker shall be notified in writing, providing them with a copy of the respective Committee's report and recommendations, and requesting a response.

5.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

6.0 Financial Considerations

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

7.0 Legal Considerations

- 7.1 Section 9F, Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000, *Overview and scrutiny committees: functions*, requires that Executive arrangements by a local authority must ensure that its overview and scrutiny committees have the power to make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are or are not the responsibility of the executive, or on matters which affect the Authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.

- 7.2 Section 9FE, *Duty of authority or executive to respond to overview and scrutiny committee*, requires that the authority or executive;-

- (a) consider the report or recommendations,
- (b) respond to the overview and scrutiny committee indicating what (if any) action the authority, or the executive, proposes to take,
- (c) if the overview and scrutiny committee has published the report or recommendations, publish the response, within two months beginning with the date on which the authority or executive received the report or recommendations.

8.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

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

9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

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

10.0 Communication Considerations

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

Report sign off:

Amira Nassr

Deputy Director, Democratic and Corporate Governance

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Appendix A

Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee (CWBSC)
Scrutiny Recommendations and Information Request Tracker 2024-25

The Recommendations Tracker is a standing item on committee agendas, and documents the progress of scrutiny recommendations, suggestions for improvement, and information requests made by the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee at its public meetings and as part of task and finish group reviews. Scrutiny recommendations, suggestions for improvement, and information requests will not be removed from the tracker until full responses have been provided to the Committee by either the Cabinet, council departments, and/or external partners.

Recorded Recommendations to Cabinet from CWBSC

Meeting date and agenda item	Scrutiny Recommendation	Cabinet Member, Lead Officer, and Department	Executive Response	Implementation Status	Review date

Recorded Recommendations to external partners from CWBSC

Meeting date and agenda item	Scrutiny Recommendation	External partner	Response	Status
30 July 2024 - Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report (Oct 2022–Mar 2024).	To formally invite Keith Makin (Independent Chair and Scrutineer, Brent Safeguarding Children Forum) to accompany the Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to the next Brent Youth Parliament event.	Brent Safeguarding Children Forum	The Independent Chair has been liaising with the Brent Youth Parliament and will be attending their events as and when appropriate. The Chair of the CWBSC will also be joining him when required.	

Recorded suggestions for improvement from CWBSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Suggestions for improvement	Council Department/External Partner	Response	Status
30 July 2024 - Brent Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report (2023/24)	Recommend that an Internal Communications Strategy is drawn up for data sharing between partners.	Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services	This has been accepted by the Independent Chairs and the Brent Strategic Partnerships Team. All relevant stakeholders will work together to ensure a strategy and processes are developed to ensure data sharing is incorporated into the work of both partnerships and the Brent Strategic Partnerships Team. This will now become an on-going action throughout the year.	
30 July 2024 - Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report (Oct 22–Mar 24)	In relation to the commitment to develop data collection outlined in the report, to recommend that the next report details what the current system for data collection and analysis is and what the improvement over the period was.	Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services Independent Chair and Scrutineer, Brent Safeguarding Children Forum	This has been agreed and will be included in the next report that will come to the Committee in the 2025/26 municipal year.	
18 September 2024 – Overview of SEND Provision in Brent	To widen the understanding of SEND within the wider community outside of the school setting, particularly in organisations with a young people focus.	Children and Young People	Accepted by the department at the meeting. Updates are and will continue to be provided through various channels to all partners and relevant organisations to ensure residents and families are well informed of the SEND offer Brent has in place and work carried out in this area.	
18 September 2024 – Early Years Provision and progress towards meeting the expansion of childcare entitlements	Recommend that officers working on the Food Strategy looked to further utilise data from food banks to map where provision of breakfast and afterschool clubs is required.	Children and Young People	Accepted by the department. CYP and partners will utilise data captured by our current providers, food bank partners, the Public Health team and other data sources available to ensure they have accurate data that can be used to target the correct areas and to ensure informed decisions are being made.	

18 September 2024 – Early Years Provision and progress towards meeting the expansion of childcare entitlements	Recommend early years officers contact voluntary and community sector organisations who had data on children and families whose first language was not English so that information regarding provision could be disseminated to those families.	Children and Young People	Accepted by the department. The department does and will continue to work with Brent's communications team, translation service, voluntary sector and community partners, medical services and other partner agencies to ensure that all residents have access to the information they need in a clear and understandable manner, presented to them in several of Brent's most prominent languages to ensure the highest possible catchment.	
20 November 2024 – Brent i4B and FWH performance update	At a future meeting, to receive the voids action plan, including reassurance that properties were being looked after in a systematic way before the point they became void, with staff checking property conditions while tenants were in situ. The plan should incorporate value for money.	Neighbourhoods and Regeneration Chair of i4B and FWH Housing Companies	Accepted by the Chair of i4B and FWH. Future updates to the Committee will include detailed information on voids. This will include numbers by ward (where applicable), turnaround times, risks and a rectification action plan for long term major and minor voids. Information on planned inspections and maintenance will also be included.	
20 November 2024 – Brent i4B and FWH performance update	At a future meeting, to receive an engagement and communications plan that helps to improve the outcomes of future Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) surveys.	Neighbourhoods and Regeneration Chair of i4B and FWH Housing Companies	This has been agreed and will be included in future iterations of the i4B/FWH performance report presented to this Committee.	
20 November 2024 – Brent i4B and FWH performance update	For future reports, where it is noted that performance targets are not being met, it should be stated what would be done to mitigate that.	Neighbourhoods and Regeneration Chair of i4B and FWH Housing Companies	Accepted by the Chair of i4B and FWH. Future updates to the committee will include an exceptions report highlighting areas where performance is below target, relevant information on the impact of non-performance and subsequent mitigations.	
20 November 2024 – Brent Housing Management	To provide information on the impact of the housing management services reorganisation at a future Committee meeting.	Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services	Accepted by the department at the meeting. Updates will be provided to this Committee and others once the service reorganisation has been implemented.	

Performance Update				
20 November 2024 – Brent Housing Management Performance Update	To include health and safety considerations in future reports, particularly relating to cladding and fire safety, as well as climate change targets.	Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services	Accepted by the department. Future reports on BHM performance will include all relevant information on health and safety and climate change implications.	
05 February 2025 – CQC Adult Social Care Improvement Plan	For the committee to receive 6 monthly updates on the CQC ASC Improvement Plan.	Community Health and Wellbeing	Accepted by the department at the meeting. Progress updates will be provided to the Committee either through a meeting setting or as a separate briefing every 6 months.	
05 February 2025 – CQC Adult Social Care Improvement Plan & Adult Social Care Transformation Programme	<p>In future reports, for the department to increase the visibility of available data.</p> <p>To have more target setting and to further outline mitigating factors where targets are not met.</p> <p>When benchmarking with other boroughs, to compare with boroughs of similar demographics to Brent.</p>	Community Health and Wellbeing	<p>This has been agreed. Larger data sets will be included in future reports and progress updates to the Committee.</p> <p>The department do already benchmark against statistical and neighbouring boroughs that share similar pressures and demographic profiles to Brent and therefore will be also able to provide this type of analysis in future reports.</p>	
05 March 2025 – Nicotine Addiction and Vaping in Brent	To ensure parents are included in the approach to tackling vaping, smoking and non-smoking tobacco use.	Community Health and Wellbeing	The department agrees with this recommendation. We will work with Elev8, our Young People Drug and Alcohol Service, to ensure parents are actively engaged in prevention efforts.	
05 March 2025 – Nicotine	To share information and learning with other local authorities with similar issues, such as Leicester,	Community Health and Wellbeing	The department agrees and will seek to actively engage with local authorities facing similar challenges, to share best practice and learning around non-smoking tobacco use.	

Addiction and Vaping in Brent	in relation to non-smoking tobacco use.			
05 March 2025 – Nicotine Addiction and Vaping in Brent	To further engage those whose first language is not English and other communities who the Council and partners may not be reaching.	Community Health and Wellbeing	We are actively working with communities in Brent to further develop a targeted community offer. This will support more inclusive engagement, particularly with those whose first language is not English and other underserved groups.	
05 March 2025 – Nicotine Addiction and Vaping in Brent	To ensure targets are set to reduce vaping, smoking, and non-smoking tobacco use.	Community Health and Wellbeing	The department acknowledges the importance of measuring progress in this way. The department uses the nationally agreed measures around 4 week quits and supporting data system. This has the advantage of allowing benchmarking. Unfortunately, there is no routine measurement of vaping or non-smoking tobacco use so we are reliant on extrapolating from national one-off surveys. This means we are unable to set targets for vaping and non-smoking tobacco use.	
05 March 2025 – Nicotine Addiction and Vaping in Brent	To meet with young people regarding their experience and views towards vaping and smoking to further understand their lived experience and needs.	Community Health and Wellbeing	The department agrees with this recommendation. We will work with Elev8 to ensure young people's views and experiences directly inform the development of the service and future initiatives.	
05 March 2025 – Nicotine Addiction and Vaping in Brent	BYP Recommendation – to lobby for or undertake more research relating to young people vaping and smoking, and to incorporate that data into future reports.	Community Health and Wellbeing	The department acknowledges the value of further research in this area and is committed to supporting and utilising emerging evidence to inform our work. We will continue to work with partners who work directly with Children and Young People to incorporate relevant data into future reports and strategic planning.	
28 April 2025 - Annual School Standards and Achievement 2023-24	For the Council to develop a dashboard to be used to track school performance providing early warning indicators that a school's Ofsted rating might be at risk.	Children Young People and Community Development	The Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness guides the focus of the Local Authority's school improvement work with community schools. The Framework identifies sustaining high quality Ofsted judgements as a key priority. Under the Framework, schools are categorised as either 'good or better' or 'less than good' using both self-evaluation and the officers' assessment of the school improvement priorities of individual schools based on a	

			<p>range of data analysis. Where a school is categorised as 'less than good' a Rapid Improvement Group is established to monitor and challenge the school's leadership on the impact of the school's improvement plan.</p> <p>Brent's Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board, that comprises headteacher and governor representatives, Brent Schools Partnership, the North West London Teaching School Hub and senior officers, is responsible for monitoring the impact of the framework and both supporting and challenging its delivery.</p>	
28 April 2025 - Annual School Standards and Achievement 2023-24	For the Council to support after-school learning opportunities and develop a community group structure that allows learning and mentoring to continue outside the school environment.	Children Young People and Community Development	<p>Individual schools provide a range of after-school learning opportunities.</p> <p>Through the Holiday Activity and Food Programme and the offer at Family Wellbeing Centres, the Local Authority provides access to out-of-school learning opportunities for vulnerable children.</p> <p>The Council does not have resources to organise after-school learning on a borough-wide basis outside of current programmes.</p>	
28 April 2025 - Annual School Standards and Achievement 2023-24	For the Council to commit to a proactive approach in supporting schools to identify staff pressure points and utilise technological solutions to support staff, including reducing admin tasks.	Children Young People and Community Development	The DfE has provided guidance to schools on the use of AI. Officers will share information and guidance with schools as appropriate to support them in considering how the use of technology could support efficient ways of working, using any learning from the <i>Embrace Change</i> programme.	
28 April 2025 - Annual School Standards and Achievement 2023-24	For the Council to conduct further research on the reasons for the gap in attainment for Boys of Black African and Caribbean Heritage, considering barriers to learning and creating a CoP (community of practice) dedicated to improving the educational attainment, engagement, and well-being of	Children Young People and Community Development	<p>The Council is committed to addressing disproportionality in education outcomes. The Council will be undertaking analysis of disproportionality across the education sector in 2025/26 as part of its work with schools to understand barriers to learning.</p> <p>The Council is currently funding an anti-racist training programme for schools that includes the opportunity for schools to participate in the Leeds Beckett University Anti-Racist School Award. Around 50 schools are engaging with the programme, which is developing a community of practice both within individual schools and across</p>	

	these boys in primary and secondary education.		the borough. The programme is aimed at understanding barriers to learning for different cohorts of pupils and offers schools free access to a programme of central training, a resource library and access to knowledge exchange events. Through the programme, secondary schools have access to the FLAIR project that allows them to undertake data analysis, action planning and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion schemes of work for pupils in KS3-5.	
28 April 2025 - Meeting the Adults and Children's Social Care Workforce Challenges	For the Council to commit to a proactive approach in identifying staff pressure points and utilise technological solutions to support staff, including reducing admin tasks.	Children Young People and Community Development Service Reform and Strategy	<p>Additional support has been commissioned to make changes to our case recording system, Mosaic. This is an end-to-end review to streamline forms and processes. A number of changes have already been implemented. Staff are involved in the proposed changes and testing of the changes.</p> <p>Pilots for AI in some areas of the service have been agreed and licences obtained where it is safe to do so. If successful, this will reduce time for front line practitioners and managers to focus on delivery and direct work with children and families.</p> <p>A new single assessment, one plan and review framework is being developed to use in early help and social care to replace the current 2 assessments and plan formats. A draft version is ready for consultation with staff</p> <p>Adult social care has implemented Copilot for managers and Magic Notes for all frontline workers. This has proven to be really effective and timesaving for those workers.</p> <p>We have commissioned service support to work with us on developing forms that will streamline the process and remove all duplications. The aim is that this will be implemented in September.</p>	
28 April 2025 - Meeting the Adults and Children's Social Care Workforce Challenges	For a future paper to come to the Committee on this subject emphasising the co-ordination between adult's and children's social work and cross-working	Children Young People and Community Development Service Reform and Strategy	<p>A revised transition protocol is in place for children with disabilities to transition to adult services.</p> <p>There is a learning review on the programme for discussion at the transitional safeguarding forum.</p>	

	opportunities, including the recent joint work on transitional safeguarding.		<p>The transition pathway has been refreshed, and the transition customer booklets have been updated. We have developed a transition meeting with children's services and a transition dashboard to identify children requiring transition to ASC. Regular meetings are held to ensure the transition process starts early in a child's life.</p> <p>In adult social care, we are also developing a transition pathway and protocol to ensure consistency in how the transition happens.</p>	
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Information requests from CWBSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Information requests	Council Department/External Partner	Response
18 September 2024 – Overview of SEND Provision in Brent	For the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to receive a further breakdown of demand for EHCPs including ward breakdowns, age, gender and communities.	Children and Young People	Accepted by the department at the meeting. Future updates to the committee will include relevant data broken down into wards, age, gender and community groups wherever possible.
20 November 2024 – Brent Housing Management Performance Update	To provide the number of tenants the Council had diversity data on.	Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services	Accepted by the department at the meeting. The diversity data requested will be circulated to the Committee once it has been compiled for presentation.
20 November 2024 – Temporary Accommodation and Homeless Prevention Service	To provide the number of single homeless people aged 18-25 to Brent Youth Parliament.	Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services	Accepted by the department at the meeting. The single homeless people (aged 18-25) data requested will be circulated to both the Committee and Brent Youth Parliament once compiled.

05 February 2025 – Adult Social Care Transformation Programme	To provide further information and data on the number of people that are currently supported. The data should also include particular information about services users such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age• Ethnicity• Gender	Community Health and Wellbeing	Accepted by the department at the meeting. The data required by the Committee will be requested by the Strategy Lead to the department. Once compiled, the data will be circulated to the Committee.																						
05 March 2025 - Nicotine Addiction and Vaping in Brent	To provide the committee with data on smoking and vaping prevalence by age, with a focus on 8–18-year-olds.	Community Health and Wellbeing	The department acknowledges the importance of understanding the prevalence of these by age and will explore the availability and suitability of relevant data sources. There is very limited local data available which would inform us of the current situation in Brent. Meaningfully surveying children in an area such as this is quite difficult and is dependent on a number of factors outside of the control of the department.																						
28 April 2025 - Meeting the Adults and Children's Social Care Workforce Challenges	For the Committee to receive Brent specific reasons given by Social Care workers for leaving the organisation at their exit interviews.	Children Young People and Community Development Service Reform and Strategy	<p>From the 30 completed exit interviews for social care workers across CYP and ASC who left between 2022 – 2025, the top 2 reasons given for leaving the organisation were: better career prospects and looking for new/different types of work.</p> <table><tr><th>Reasons for leaving</th><th>No. of leavers</th></tr><tr><td>Career Prospects</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>New and Different type of work</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Did not wish to disclose</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Job security</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Lack of work life balance</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Management Style</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Maternity reasons</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Health reasons</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Relocation</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Grand total</td><td>30</td></tr></table> <p>The table below is a breakdown of how many social care workers left in the period 2022 to date.</p>	Reasons for leaving	No. of leavers	Career Prospects	12	New and Different type of work	8	Did not wish to disclose	3	Job security	2	Lack of work life balance	2	Management Style	2	Maternity reasons	1	Health reasons	1	Relocation	1	Grand total	30
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			<table><tr><th>Year</th><th>No. of Social Workers who have left over the years</th><th>Total No. of leavers across the whole council</th></tr><tr><td>2022</td><td>28</td><td>140</td></tr><tr><td>2023</td><td>16</td><td>102</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>24</td><td>118</td></tr><tr><td>2025 (up to May)</td><td>10</td><td>44</td></tr><tr><td>Grand total</td><td>78</td><td>404</td></tr></table>	Year	No. of Social Workers who have left over the years	Total No. of leavers across the whole council	2022	28	140	2023	16	102	2024	24	118	2025 (up to May)	10	44	Grand total	78	404
Year	No. of Social Workers who have left over the years	Total No. of leavers across the whole council																			
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2023	16	102																			
2024	24	118																			
2025 (up to May)	10	44																			
Grand total	78	404																			
			<p>Due to the limited number of exit interviews completed, the general leavers report for the same period indicated that for the 78 social care workers who left over these years, the most common reasons for given for leaving were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moving to a new job - 30• Career Break - 3• Majority of other records simply have voluntary resignation as the reason.																		

Appendix B

Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee (CWBS)

Scrutiny Recommendations and Information Request Tracker 2025-26

The Recommendations Tracker is a standing item on committee agendas, and documents the progress of scrutiny recommendations, suggestions for improvement, and information requests made by the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee at its public meetings and as part of task and finish group reviews. Scrutiny recommendations, suggestions for improvement, and information requests will not be removed from the tracker until full responses have been provided to the Committee by either the Cabinet, council departments, and/or external partners.

Recorded Recommendations to Cabinet from CWBS

Meeting date and agenda item	Scrutiny Recommendation	Cabinet Member, Lead Officer, and Department	Executive Response	Implementation Status	Review date

Recorded Recommendations to external partners from CWBS

Meeting date and agenda item	Scrutiny Recommendation	External partner	Response	Status

Recorded suggestions for improvement from CWBS to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Suggestions for improvement	Council Department/External Partner	Response	Status
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Adults Board	To co-produce a SAB priority with those with lived experience.	Children, Young People and Community Development	The Board is underway with a community engagement project that will conclude in November. Our new Strategic priorities are due to be drawn up in January 2026, so we should be able to draw on learning from the project when setting new priorities.	

(SAB) Annual Report (2024/25)		Brent Safeguarding Adults Board Independent Chair		
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report (2024/25)	To commission a multi-agency safeguarding awareness campaign	Children, Young People and Community Development Brent Safeguarding Adults Board Independent Chair	National Safeguarding Adult week occurs every year in November, where a lot of awareness and training is run and accessible to professionals supporting learning and awareness around keeping adults safe. Budget and resource constraints would not allow the Brent SAB to fund a stand-alone campaign.	
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report (2024/25)	To recommend future reports list learnings and how they had been addressed.	Children, Young People and Community Development Brent Safeguarding Adults Board Independent Chair	This will be considered within the format and structure of next year's report.	
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report (2024/25)	To recommend future reports reflect on national reviews and how they impact locally.	Children, Young People and Community Development Brent Safeguarding Adults Board Independent Chair	The Board does this informally via agenda items through the routine Board meetings that will touch on address national themes. We will work to indicate more explicitly in the narrative what these may be.	
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report (2024/25)	To recommend that the Committee have sight of the work being done around online safety.	Children, Young People and Community Development Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Independent Scrutineer	Work on the Online Safety Task and Finish Group commenced April 2025. It has representatives from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Borough of Brent: Adult Social Care • London Brough of Brent: Children Service • Secondary school education leader • Primary school education leader • Independent Scrutineer: BSCP • Young Person TBC 	

			<p>The work plan focuses on the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile phone usage in schools • Review of knowledge gaps for professionals • Neurodiversity pathways for exploring the online world • Knife crime awareness • Voice of the child and managing transitions <p>Findings and recommendations to be finalised December 2025 and a report shared with the Safeguarding Children Forum.</p>	
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report (2024/25)	To receive a future report looking at how services are supporting young people from a transitional safeguarding perspective who are vulnerable but don't meet ASC threshold.	<p>Children, Young People and Community Development</p> <p>Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Independent Scrutineer</p>	<p>The Safeguarding Children Partnership and The Safeguarding Adults Board established a Transitional Safeguarding Project in May 2025. This joint initiative will assess and strengthen safeguarding or young people aged 14-25. Three cohorts have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional needs • Care experienced • Exploitation <p>Two workshops to be held:</p> <p>1: What works well and what needs to be strengthened</p> <p>2: Live case audits.</p> <p>Project outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a final report for the Joint Safeguarding Partnerships Executive Group with recommendations on how to ensure that children and young people in the 3 cohorts, with care and support needs, are supported through their transition to adulthood. • Develop a delivery plan for 2026 across SAB/SCP subgroups and member agencies • Continued work with young adults to hear views on progress of changes 	

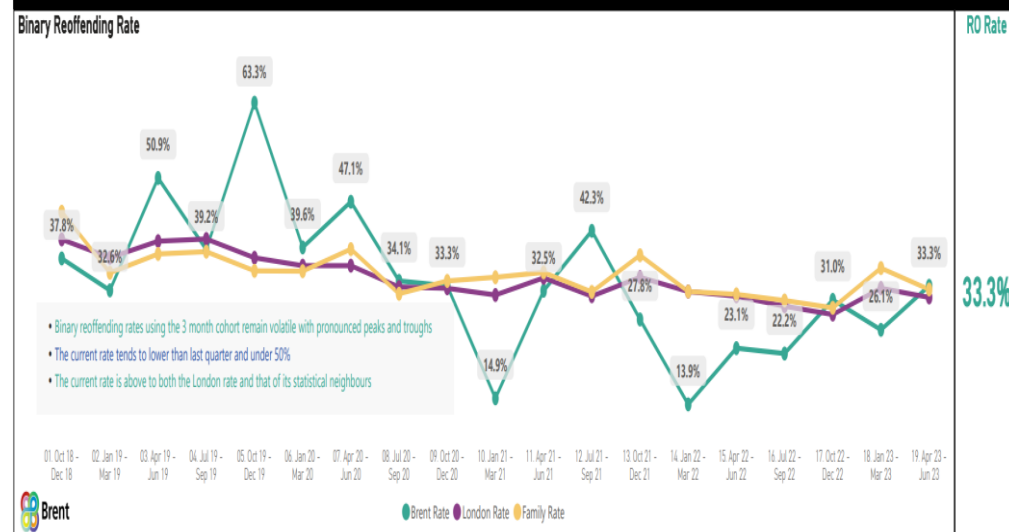
			The Safeguarding Children Partnership are also looking at new processes for Cases of Concern for those young people who do not make thresholds for review.	
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report (2024/25)	To recommend an improvement in safeguarding support for youth organisations.	Children, Young People and Community Development Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Independent Scrutineer	Support is currently and will continue to be offered through the partnerships multiagency training programme. The Independent Scrutineer to meet with Young Brent Foundation	
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report (2024/25)	For the Independent Scrutineer to contact Healthwatch to see how they can support the work of the partnership.	Children, Young People and Community Development Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Independent Scrutineer	Independent Scrutineer to set up a meeting with Healthwatch to discuss collaboration with the partnership.	
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report (2024/25)	Recommendation by Brent Youth Parliament – for the partnership to stretch out to different youth and community groups alongside schools.	Children, Young People and Community Development Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Independent Scrutineer	Independent Scrutineer to meet with BYP and explore appropriate youth organisations.	
02 July 2025 - Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Report (2024/25)	For future reports to include more data and KPIs.	Children, Young People and Community Development Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership Independent Scrutineer	New commissioned software via PHEW in place to support with this. Section 11 audit to be actioned.	

17 September 2025 – The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent	The service should strengthen and expand partnerships with boxing clubs, music groups, and similar community-based initiatives that promote rehabilitation, foster pro-social identity, reduce the risk of reoffending, and help individuals remain engaged and focused on their future.	Children, Young People and Community Development	<p>Brent YJS works with a range of community-based initiatives. These include St. Giles Trust mentoring, the <i>I Am Brent</i> consortium, Raheem Sterling Foundation, and the <i>Engage</i> Programme - youth work support in Police custody suites.</p> <p>A briefing paper outlining progress made to increase pathways to community based, voluntary sector and partner agency initiatives will be presented to CWBSC in March 2026.</p>	
17 September 2025 – The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent	For the Youth Justice Service to consider engaging with Wembley Stadium to explore potential employment pathways in the security and hospitality sectors, aimed at supporting young people transitioning out of the YJS and reintegrating into the community.	Children, Young People and Community Development	Brent YJS will explore the development of Wembley Stadium employment pathways with Community Development colleagues. This work will seek to complement existing Employment, Training and Education (ETE) support provided to YJS from the Shaw Trust, and from Plias Resettlement. Both Services are co-located within the YJS and provide ETE mentoring and counselling support to children involved in Brent Youth justice System.	
17 September 2025 – The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent	<p>The Youth Justice Service should strengthen collaboration with Brent's partners and the voluntary sector.</p> <p>As the current report did not focus on this area in detail, the Committee requests a future update outlining any progress made in developing these partnerships.</p>	Children, Young People and Community Development	<p>Brent YJS works closely with voluntary sector and youth justice partners. These include <i>Via</i> substance misuse support, the Young Brent Foundation, Probation Service, CAMHS, and the Police.</p> <p>A progress update on the entirety of this work will be included in the briefing paper presented to CWBSC in March 2026.</p>	
17 September 2025 – Children's Oral Health	To get a strong message out to Brent parents, carers and communities via tools such as the Brent Magazine, Brent Health Matters, Libraries, Hubs, Family	Service Reform and Strategy	76% of settings that we have approached are successfully delivering the Supervised Toothbrushing Programme. However, we have only been able to reach just under 50% of the 314 settings in the borough. Since October, we have contacted 15 settings from IMD 1 and 2 and seven have agreed to sign up.	

	Wellbeing Centres and schools, focusing on areas with poorer oral health outcomes, about the use of fluoride on teeth.		<p>Therefore, we will need to expand our reach and thus will appreciate the support and input from the council's corporate communications team in centring oral health for families.</p> <p>We will draft a paragraph for Brent magazine encouraging parents to ensure their children are brushing their teeth twice a day, specifically focusing the messaging on the role fluoride in toothpastes play in preventing decay. Also, encouraging visiting the dentist regularly who are able to provide high-strength fluoride varnish applications for children and greater risk of tooth decay.</p>	
17 September 2025 – Period Dignity	To develop a plan to incentivise private sector organisations to offer similar products and information	Service Reform and Strategy	We will seek to work with colleagues both within and outside of the council to establish a plan. An example of how this could be established is through current activity to update our approach to Social Value i.e. encouraging our contractors and providers to provide free products	
17 September 2025 – Period Dignity	In developing projects and policies, to ask young people for their opinion, not just through BYP but other youth groups in the area.	Service Reform and Strategy	During the development phase of future projects and policies related to Period Dignity we will engage with young people, beyond BYP.	
17 September 2025 – Period Dignity	For any future report on pilots, to ensure a more structured way of evaluating the pilot, what the learning was, and what would be done for the future.	Service Reform and Strategy	The report presented does this to an extent, but we will make this clearer and more robust in the future.	

Information requests from CWBSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Information requests	Council Department/External Partner	Response
17 September 2025 – The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent	As agreed by the Corporate Director, the Committee requests an explanatory note detailing the methodology used to produce the 2024/25 data presented in the report.	Children, Young People and Community Development	<p>The report: <i>The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent</i>, contains seven statistical tables. The accuracy of four of these tables was questioned during the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17 September 2025. Below are detailed responses to each of these questions:</p> <p>Data source and counting methodology Every quarter, all Youth Justice Services in England and Wales submit case level data to the Youth Justice Board (YJB). This information is uploaded from local authority youth justice case management systems. Information is collated by the YJB. This is done in adherence to YJB counting rules that are applied consistently to all Youth Justice Services to allow comparative analysis at a national, regional and local level. This data is then published by the YJB and includes rate of reoffending, rate and number of reoffending, number of children remanded into custody, and the number of children sentenced to custody.</p> <p>Re-offending The narrative and data provided in <i>The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent</i> follows: <i>"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."</i></p> <p>Table 3: Brent youth reoffending rates, October 2018 to June 2023</p>



Early Help response

A cohort of “repeat offenders” is identified every quarter, then tracked for a period of eighteen-months to determine the cohorts rate of reoffending. The results are published three-months later, meaning data relates to a period of analysis commencing 21-months earlier.

Table 3 shows that the Brent rate of reoffending decreased sharply in the period January to March 2021, increased sharply six-months later, fell sharply in the period January to March 2022, before increasing gradually in the five quarters that followed. There is however reason to be cautious about the accuracy of this data as it was counted during the height of the Pandemic. During this time crime statistics were affected by factors including restrictions on social movement, and the slow progression of cases through the judicial system which ultimately created a backlog of juvenile cases waiting to be administered.

It may never be understood whether Brent’s performance was exceptional during the time or a byproduct of COVID-19. This question was posed to the YJB throughout this time; the response was limited to the possibility that due to pandemic related

staffing issues affecting YJB data officers, Brent's data may not have been processed as thoroughly as usual.

The "low rate of offending Brent has experienced in recent years" is referenced to the most recent rate of reoffending (33.3%) being almost half of that recorded in the period October to December 2019 (63.3%), when Brent's rate of reoffending was significantly higher than the London and Family Group rates – it is currently marginally higher than both.

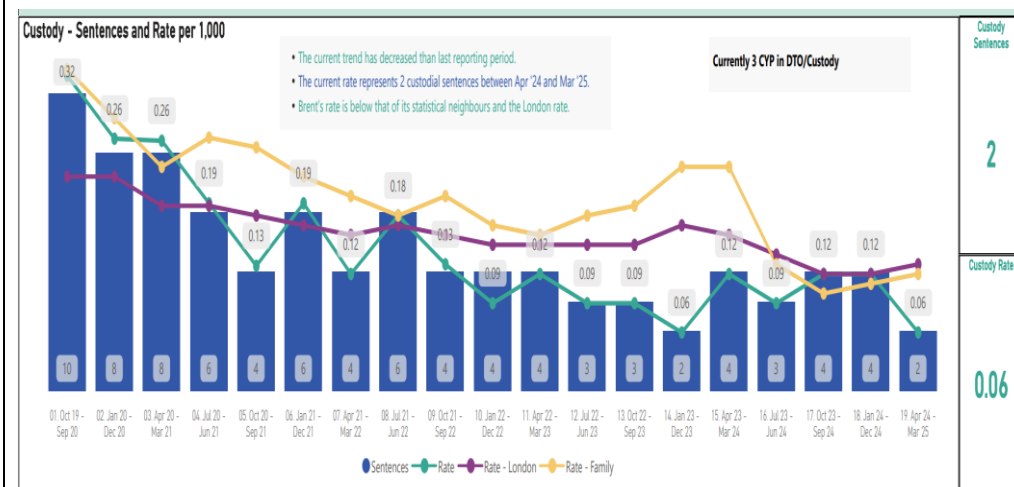
The complex nature of reoffending data warranted further explanation than that outlined in *The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery* report. Future reports will ensure this level of detail is provided.

Custody

The narrative and data provided in *The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent* included:

"Brent's custodial population is lower than both our statistical neighbours and the London average."

Table 4: Brent youth custody rate and numbers, October 2019 to March 2025



Early Help response

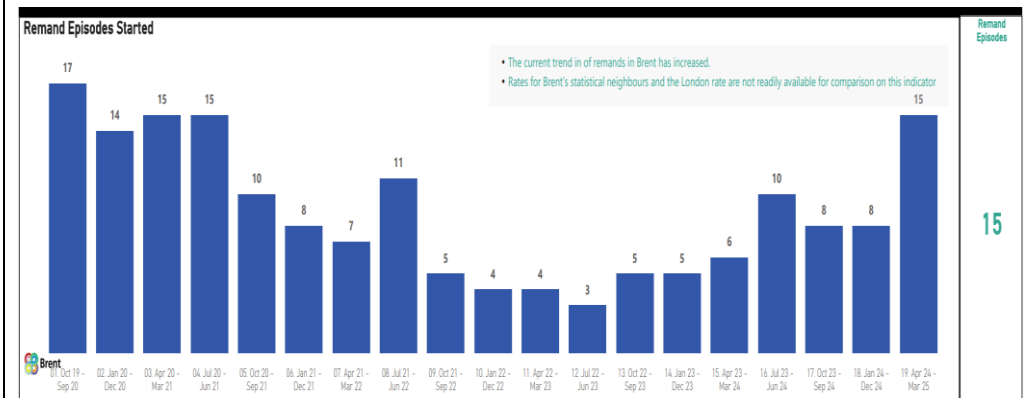
The rate and number of Brent children sentenced to custody has fallen significantly since analysis within Table 4 commenced in the 12-month period October 2019 to September 2020 (0.32 children per thousand – 10 children) and ended in the period April 2024 to March 2025 (0.06 children per thousand – 2 children. It is currently well below both the London and family rate.

Remands

The narrative and data provided in *The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent* included:

“...the number of remands has increased by three compared to the previous year (five) to total eight in 2024/25. This increase is attributed to two serious incidents involving eight children in 2024/25.”

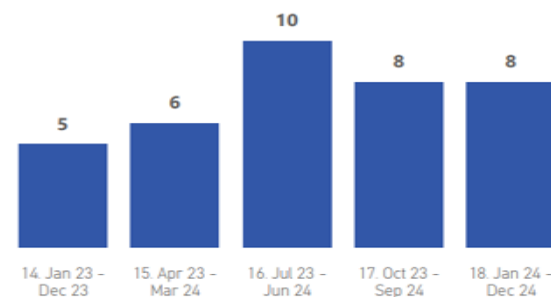
Table 5: Brent youth remand numbers, October 2019 to March 2025



Early Help response

“...the number of remands has increased by three compared to the previous year (five) to total eight in 2024/25. This increase is attributed to two serious incidents involving eight children in 2024/25.”

This statement mistakenly refers to the 2024/25 financial year. It is in fact a correct comparison of the calendar years 2024 and 2025:



A correct explanation of the reason why the number of children on remand increased significantly is provided. However, there is an absence of an explicit reference to the 15 children who were remanded into custody in the period April 2024 to March 2025.



A clearer narrative to provide context is as follows:

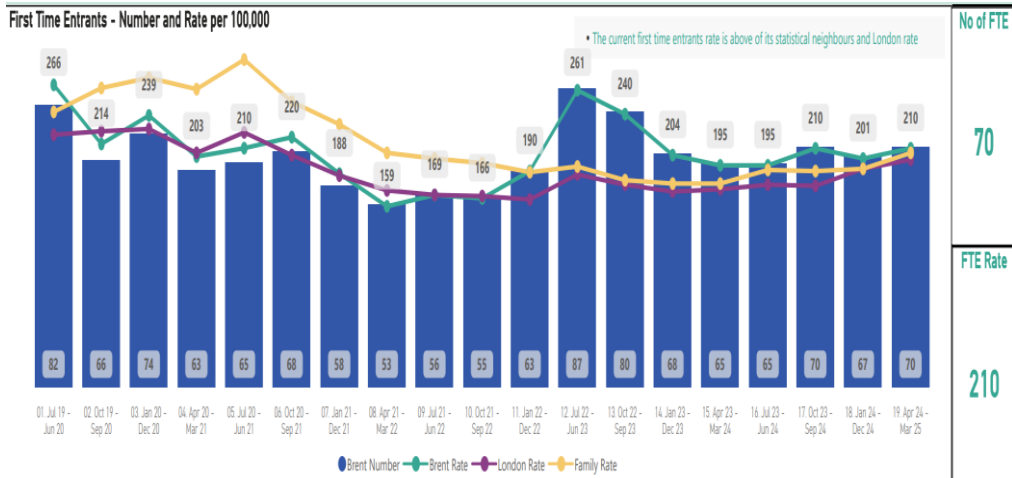
...the number of remands in the 2023 calendar year was five. This figure increased to eight in the 2024 calendar year. In the twelve-month period ending March 2025, 15 children received custodial remands. This increase is attributed to two serious incidents involving eight children.

First-time entrants to the Youth Justice System (FTEs)

The narrative and data provided in *The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent* included:

“The number of children entering the Youth Justice System has also been falling for more than a decade, at a national and local level.”

Table 6: Brent first-time entrants to the youth justice system, July 2019 to March 2025



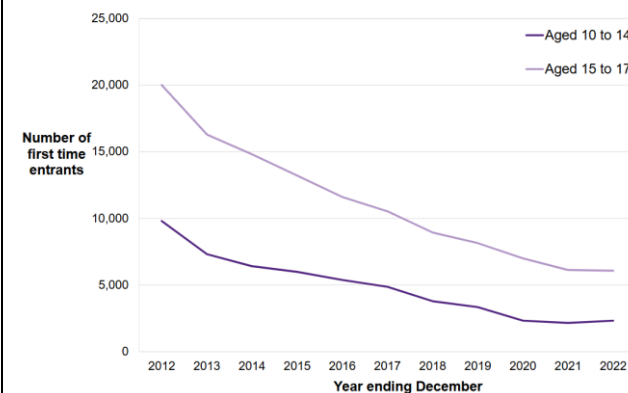
Early Help response

More context was needed to support this statement: YJB Accredited official statistics provided in

Youth Justice Statistics: 2022 to 2023, [Youth Justice Statistics: 2022 to 2023 \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK](#)

Published on 25 January 2024, show that the national number of FTEs has fallen sharply since 2012.

Figure 2.2: Number of child first time entrants by age group, England and Wales, year ending December 2012 to 2022



The number of FTEs in Brent in 2012 cannot be provided due to changes in case management systems that occurred at this time. It does however roughly correlate to the decline experienced nationally. A central government FTE target for Brent in the late noughties was approximately 400.

Although the dataset provided in Table 6 cannot be extended to include this period, more explanation is needed. Future narratives of first-time offending will afford equal attention to recent change. In this way, the narrative relating to the period contained in *The Impact of Youth Justice Service Delivery in Brent*, will include additional information as follows:

“The number of children entering the Youth Justice System has also been falling for more than a decade, at a national and local level.” In Brent, a historical low of 53 FTEs was recorded in the twelve-month period between April 2021 to March 2022. This increased to 87 in the period July 2022 to June 2023, before falling to 68 between January and December 2023. The number of FTEs plateaued at this time and most recently totalled 70 in the period April 2024 to March 2025. This is marginally higher, and comparable, than both our Family and the London rate of FTEs.

17 September 2025 – Children's Oral Health	For the Committee to be provided with the response made to the NHS Dentistry Contract consultation, and any follow-up responses made as a result of the findings of the consultation.	Service Reform and Strategy	<p>Brent Council worked in collaboration with NWL dental liaison group to respond to the survey questions that formed the NHS Dentistry Contract consultation, and we will request for a local summary of the responses to the questions.</p> <p>NHS Dentistry Contract consultation which closed in August 2025, and the findings are being considered. However, the DHSC expects that the proposals package may start to be implemented from April 2026. We will share any information from the implementation of the proposal with the committee when this happens.</p>
17 September 2025 – Period Dignity	To provide the list of schools that had confirmed they were providing free period products.	Service Reform and Strategy	<p>Between 2020-2024, the schools listed below have provided free products (this list does not necessarily mean the schools provided products every year). More comprehensive insights are available via the Department for Education: Period product scheme: management information - GOV.UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newman Catholic College • Skills Training UK • JFS • Capital City Academy • Ark Academy • Ashley College • E-ACT Crest Academy • Claremont High School • Kingsbury High School • Saint Claudine's Catholic School for Girls • Wembley High Technology College • Queens Park Community School • Alperton Community School • Sudbury Primary School • Preston Manor School • Salusbury Primary School • Woodfield School • Gladstone Park Primary School • Ark Elvin Academy

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Michaela Community School• St Andrew and St Francis CofE Primary School• St Gregory's Catholic Science College• Oakington Manor Primary School• Furness Primary School• Manor School• Braintcroft E-ACT Primary Academy• The Kilburn Park School Foundation• Chalkhill Primary School• Mitchell Brook Primary School• Newfield Primary School• The Stonebridge School• Preston Park Primary School• Northview Junior and Infant School• Lyon Park Primary School• Leopold Primary School• Uxendon Manor Primary School• Harlesden Primary School• Brentfield Primary School• Anson Primary School• St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School• Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School• St Joseph's Catholic Junior School• Fryent Primary School• Oliver Goldsmith Primary School• Wykeham Primary School• Barham Primary School• Kingsbury Green Primary School• Islamia Primary School• Sinai Jewish Primary School |
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Mary's CofE Primary School • Princess Frederica CofE Primary School • John Keble CofE Primary School • Christ Church CofE Primary School • Roe Green Junior School • Mount Stewart Junior School • Wembley Primary School • Phoenix Arch School • Byron Court Primary School • St Mary's RC Primary School • St Robert Southwell Catholic Primary School • The Village School • Our Lady of Grace Catholic Junior School • St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School
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