



General Purposes Committee

Monday 27 July 2026 at 11.15 am or on the rising of Cabinet, whichever is the later
Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

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

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

Membership:

Members

Councillors:

M Butt (Chair)
Grahl (Vice-Chair)
Clinton
Georgiou
Johnson
Kansagra
Knight
Perrin

Substitute Members

Councillors:

Amadi, Dixon, Kelcher and Rubin

Councillors:

Mishra and A Patel

Councillors:

Lorber and Unger

Councillors:

Ahmadi Moghaddam and Mitchell

For further information contact: Rebecca Reid, Governance Officer
Tel: 020 8937 2469, Email: rebecca.reid@brent.gov.uk

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Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:

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

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

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

***Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

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

****Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

(a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:

- To which you are appointed by the council;
- which exercises functions of a public nature;
- which is directed is to charitable purposes;
- whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party of 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 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 22 June 2026 as a correct record.	1 - 6
5 Matters arising (if any) To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.	
6 Recruitment and Retention Payments for Adult Social Care Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and Visual Impairment Rehabilitation Officers Report This report seeks approval to continue with the recruitment and retention payments for social workers, occupational therapists and visual impairment rehabilitation officers in Adult Social Care (ASC), to improve the recruitment and retention of permanent staff, following on from approval of the previous payments in November 2023.	7 - 16
7 Recruitment and Retention Payments for Early Help and Social Care staff and Occupational Therapists Report This report seeks approval to continue with the recruitment and retention payments for social workers in Children's Early Help and Social Care roles to improve the recruitment and retention of permanent staff,	17 - 24

following the previous agreement in May 2023. It also proposes to include occupational therapists in the list of posts that will be eligible for payment in order to ensure that parity and fairness across the social care workforce is maintained.

8 Extension of Fixed-Term Director of Resident Services Appointment and Interim Director of Public Health Arrangement Report 25 - 28

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the General Purposes Committee to extend the fixed-term appointment of the Director of Resident Services and current interim appointment to the post of Director of Public Health and Leisure.

9 Appointments to Sub-Committees 29 - 30

To consider and confirm the changes in membership appointments notified in respect of Sub Committees appointed by the General Purposes Sub Committee.

10 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.

11 Exclusion of Press and Public

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



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

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



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 22 June 2026 at
11:15 am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor Grahl (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Georgiou, Johnson, Kansagra, Knight Perrin and Unger

1. **Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Clinton with Councillor Unger attending as substitute.

2. **Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interests made during the meeting.

3. **Deputations (if any)**

There were no deputations received.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 30 March 2026 be approved as a correct record.

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

There were no matters arising.

6. **Contractual Change to Probationary Periods**

Councillor Grahl (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) supported by Pat Chen (Senior HR Business Partner) introduced a report seeking approval to make a contractual change as of 1 July 2026 (as a result of the Employment Rights Act 2025) to the Council's probation period for new starters from 6 months to 4 months and reduce the probation extension period from 13 weeks to 4 weeks.

In presenting the report, it was highlighted that the Employment Rights Act 2025 had introduced significant improvements to workers' rights, including the extension of statutory sick pay to all employees, and the strengthening of protections against unfair dismissal for all workers. In light of these changes, members were advised that this report correspondingly acted to reduce the probationary period from 6 months to 4 months, in order to ensure that decisions regarding suitability for confirmed

employment were made in a timely manner. It was further noted that the revised policy set out updated assessment periods and placed a greater emphasis on providing support to staff who were new to the Council. Confirmation was also provided that the trade unions had been consulted (7 May 2026) on the changes and were in agreement with the policy and procedures and the required contractual change.

Having thanked Councillor Grahl (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) and Pat Chen (Senior HR Business Partner) for introducing the report, the Chair then moved on to invite questions and comments from the Committee, with the following comments highlighted:

- As an initial query, members sought details on how many employees would be affected by the proposed changes in comparison to the previous policy. In response, Krupa Peshavaria (HR Business Partner) noted that, from 1 July 2026, the changes were expected to affect approximately 70 new starters.
- Supplementary questions were raised regarding the number of unfair dismissal complaints previously received compared to the amount of unfair dismissal claims anticipated as a result of the proposed changes. Further questions were also raised in relation to the financial risk associated with the proposals, particularly with regard to the potential unfair dismissal claims. In response, Pat Chen (Senior HR Business Partner) advised that the Council had not historically experienced a high volume of unfair dismissal claims as the length of probation periods had previously been longer and had been managed effectively. It was explained that the rationale for the change reflected recent changes to employment legislation, under which the qualifying period required to bring an unfair dismissal claim had been reduced from 2 years to 6 months. Members were further advised that the volume of unfair dismissal claims were not anticipated to rise significantly; however, it was noted that the revised threshold increased both the financial and reputational risks for the Council, as employees were now able to bring claims at an earlier stage.
- Clarification was sought by members as to whether the implementation of the proposed changes would be applied universally or whether certain categories of employees would be exempt. In response, Pat Chen (Senior HR Business Partner) confirmed that the changes would apply solely to new employees joining from outside the organisation with effect from 1 July 2026, with the exception of specific groups, such as social workers, who were subject to a defined probationary period through the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE). It was confirmed that the changes would not apply to internal transfers within the Council.

Having thanked all those involved for their contributions to the discussion and consideration of the item, it was **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the contractual change required to the probation period for all new starters as of 1 July 2026 from 6 months to 4 months.
- (2) To approve the contractual change for reducing the probation extension period from up to 13 weeks to up to 4 weeks.

7. Update on Amendments to Terms and Conditions

Councillor Grahl (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) supported by Pat Chen (Senior HR Business Partner) introduced a report updating the Committee on the implementation of changes to terms and conditions and presenting the handbook that had been developed which detailed terms and conditions and formed the collective agreement with the trade unions.

In presenting the report, members were reminded that in October 2025, the General Purposes Committee had been asked to approve proposed changes to terms and conditions and to start consultation with staff and trade unions on the changes, which followed a review of pay and allowances to update the respective policies and address a number of inconsistencies in the way they were being applied, leading to disparity in payments to different groups of staff. Members were informed that consultation had taken place with staff and trade unions during November and December 2025 with the changes agreed as a result (outlined within section 3.2 of the report) having been implemented between January and April 2026. It was noted that the changes aimed to reduce financial commitments and introduce greater governance and oversight in relation to payments. Members were advised that the revised approach provided a more consistent, fair and transparent framework for all staff with the updated handbook having also been developed to provide an overview of the main terms and conditions developed and provide the basis of the collective agreement reached with the trade unions.

Having thanked Councillor Grahl (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) and Pat Chen (Senior HR Business Partner) for introducing the report, the Chair then moved on to invite questions and comments from the Committee, with the following comments noted:

- As an initial query, members were keen to seek details on whether the proposed changes would result in any savings or additional expenditure. In response, Pat Chen (Senior HR Business Partner) advised that the changes were expected to generate savings overall. It was explained that the introduction of standardised payments had reduced the risk of overpayments. Members were further advised that the move away from previous GLPC based arrangements, towards the application of plain time rates, together with improved governance of standby payments, had contributed to reducing overall costs.
- As a further issue highlighted, members enquired about whether trade unions had been consulted on the proposed changes, to which Pat Chen (Senior HR Business Partner) confirmed that a local agreement had been formed with the trade unions who were in agreement with the proposed changes.

Having thanked all those involved for their contributions to the discussion and consideration of the item, it was **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the updates provided within the report and endorse the Terms & Condition Handbook, as detailed within Appendix 1 of the report.

- (2) To note the outline of future work being undertaken in relation to additional payments for certain categories of staff and the payment of expenses.

8. **Review of Representation of Political Groups and Appointments**

James Kinsella (Governance & Scrutiny Manager) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources detailing the outcome of a review on the representation of political groups on those Sub Committees appointed by the General Purposes Committee.

Members were advised this followed the review undertaken at the Annual Council meeting on 20 May 2026 relating to the representation of political groups on the Council's main committees. It was noted that the purpose of the review was to ensure that the allocation of seats reflected the current political balance of the Council following the local borough elections in May 2026. The Committee noted that the General Purposes Committee had 3 Sub Committees; namely, the Senior Staff Appointments Sub Committee, the Staff Appeals Sub Committee, and the Pension Fund Sub Committee, to which the political balance requirements applied. Attention was then drawn to section 3.2 of the committee report, which detailed the basis upon which the political balance requirements had been applied for the purpose of the review, including the allocation of seats between political groups. Members heard that, in accordance with the principles set out in the report, the final seat out of the 7 available for allocation on the Pension Fund Sub Committee fell to be determined between the Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrats Group. It was confirmed that, following consultation with the relevant Group Leaders, it had been agreed, subject to the approval of the General Purposes Committee, that this seat would be allocated to the Conservative Group.

The Committee was therefore asked to approve the outcome of the review as set out in the report and to approve the appointments to the Sub Committees, as nominated by each political group, which were subsequently detailed under item 9 on the agenda.

As a result, it was **RESOLVED** on the basis of the current membership of the Council:

- (1) To agree the size of each sub-committee to be appointed by the Committee.
- (2) To agree the allocation of seats to political groups on each of the sub committees in accordance with political balance rules, as detailed in section 3 of the report; and
- (3) To appoint Chairs and Vice Chairs, members and substitutes to each Sub-committee (to be confirmed under Item 9 of the agenda) giving effect to the wishes of the political group(s) allocated the seats.

9. **Appointments to the General Purposes Sub-Committees**

Following on from Item 8 above, Councillor Muhammed Butt introduced an item setting out the proposed appointments to the General Purposes Sub-committees for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

As a result, it **RESOLVED** to agree the following appointments to the General Purposes Sub-Committees for the 2026 - 2027 Municipal Year:

SENIOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

M BUTT (C)	LABOUR
GRAHL	LABOUR
KANSAGRA	CONSERVATIVE
GEORGIOU	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
MITCHELL	GREEN

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

LABOUR: DIXON, KNIGHT,
CONSERVATIVE: MISHRA & MISTRY
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS: LORBER & UNGER
GREEN: AMADHI MOGHADDAM & RYAN

SENIOR STAFF APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE

M BUTT (C)	LABOUR
GRAHL	LABOUR
KANSAGRA	CONSERVATIVE
LORBER	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
MITCHELL	GREEN

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

LABOUR: DIXON, KNIGHT,
CONSERVATIVE: MISHRA & MISTRY
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS: GEORGIOU & UNGER
GREEN: RYAN & WARSAME

BRENT PENSION FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

BURN (C)	LABOUR
ANDERSON	LABOUR
I.AHMED	LABOUR
KANSAGRA	CONSERVATIVE
H.PATEL	CONSERVATIVE
BROWN	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
RYAN	GREEN

CO-OPTED NON-VOTING:

ELIZABETH BANKOLE (UNISON)

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

LABOUR: AGHA, BAJWA, CHOUDRY, THOAMS
CONSERVATIVE: CHOWDHURY & DO ROSARIO
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS: LORBER & UNGER
GREEN: GALLAGHER & PERRIN

BRENT PENSION BOARD

FULL MEMBERS:

DAVID EWART (C)
S.BUTT
DAR

INDEPENDENT CHAIR (31.12.2026)

LABOUR

LABOUR

CHRIS BALA
BOLA GEORGE
ROBERT WHEELER
VACANCY
COUNCIL)

PENSION SCHEME MEMBER
TRADE UNION (UNISON) MEMBER
TRADE UNION (GMB) MEMBER
EMPLOYER MEMBER (NON-BRENT

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

No provision is included within the Boards Terms of Reference for substitute members.

10. Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public.

11. Any other urgent business

No items of urgent business were raised at the meeting.

The meeting closed at 11:30 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair

	General Purposes Committee 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director, Service Reform & Strategy
	Lead Member – Leader of Council & Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Councillor Muhammed Butt)
Recruitment and Retention Payments for Adult Social Care Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and Visual Impairment Rehabilitation Officers	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
List of Appendices:	One Appendix 1: Eligible posts for recruitment and retention payments
Background Papers:	None.
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Claudia Brown, Director Adult Social Services 020 8937 2322 claudia.brown@brent.gov.uk Yvonne Olasunkanmi, Service Manager/Principal Occupational Therapist 020 8937 4402 yvonne.olasunkanmi@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The local authority has a legal duty to assess residents' care and support needs and the local and national picture indicates there is high demand and strong competition for qualified, regulated staff to discharge this statutory responsibility. This has resulted in recruitment and retention challenges and a reliance on agency staff. A lack of permanent qualified staff in these posts risks poorer quality services and poses a risk to financial stability due to the escalating costs associated with agency staff.
- 1.2 The General Purposes Committee previously approved the payment of recruitment and retention payments in November 2023. This report seeks approval to continue with the recruitment and retention payments for social workers, occupational therapists and visual impairment rehabilitation officers in

Adult Social Care (ASC), to improve the recruitment and retention of permanent staff. This approach complements a suite of strategies being employed and is forming the building blocks of an overarching workforce strategy within the refreshed ASC transformation programme. The proposals are closely aligned to the Children's social care approach to ensure that parity and fairness across the social care workforce is maintained.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Committee agree to the continuation of the use of recruitment and retention initiatives, as follows:
- 2.2 To make a one-off payment of £5,000 to newly recruited permanent qualified social workers, occupational therapists and visual impairment rehabilitation officers on grades PO2 – PO7, on satisfactory completion of their probationary period and repayable where an employee leaves the council within 12 months of receiving the payment.
- 2.3 To make annual retention payments of £3,000 to all qualified social workers, occupational therapists and visual impairment rehabilitation officers on grades PO2 to PO7 to be paid annually after completion of a full year's service.
- 2.4 To make retention payments for Best Interest Assessors of £2,000 a year for being on the rota to carry out statutory duties commensurate with the role.
- 2.5 To make retention payments of £1,000 a year for qualified Practice Educators to take two students a year.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities and Strategic Context

- 3.1.1 Implementation of these activities will enable the service to contribute to the borough's priorities 'Thriving Communities-Every opportunity to succeed' and *'Local people in the borough to gain jobs via our apprenticeship'*.
- 3.1.2 We have a diverse workforce; however 21.7% are currently agency workers. The proposal in this paper aims to retain good performing agency workers which include staff who live within Brent and recruit a permanent workforce that is representative of the borough at all levels.
- 3.1.3 We are currently hosting 4 local apprentices and the aim is to retain them or convert them to ASYE once the registration is completed.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 The Adult Social Care workforce is of central importance in delivering an excellent service to adults requiring care and support and the Director of Adult Social Care is held accountable for professional leadership including internal and external workforce planning. This proposal relates to those who are direct employees of Brent Council as opposed to a commissioned or provider service.

- 3.2.2 Recruitment challenges are not unique to Brent; the employment market for social workers, occupational therapists and visual impairment rehabilitation officers is extremely competitive both nationally and locally.
- 3.2.3 The continuation of the proposed scheme is set out in Appendix 1 and is reflective of the scheme applied in the Children's Young People & Community Development Directorate.
- 3.2.4 Adult Social Care continue to take a wide range of actions to address recruitment challenges focusing on:
- Workforce recruitment, retention, and stability
 - Workforce development
 - Leadership and management
 - Our work culture
- 3.2.5 The proposed continuation of recruitment and retention payments will support us to increase the number of permanent staff into adult social care, reducing reliance on agency staff and associated cost pressures.

3.3. Impact

- 3.3.1 There is a national issue in the adult social care workforce, with more staff irrespective of the employer looking to retire, change careers or move to agency work. Staff have left permanent posts with the Council to take up employment either as an agency worker or permanent roles with other London local authorities where there is a more competitive remuneration and reward structure. To attract talented, permanent workers, manageable caseloads and opportunities to develop are essential components of the employment offer. In the last two years we were able to convert 32 agency staff to permanent with the recruitment and retention payments providing an incentive to do so.

3.3.2 Salary Bench Marking

Social worker salaries and additional payments data provided by London Councils (as at April 2025) and gathered from recruitment websites is set out in the table below. The data is for neighbouring London Boroughs where this is available.

This data highlights that Brent pays significantly below some of our neighbouring Boroughs and demonstrates the need for additional payments to remain competitive in a very tight market.

Council	Maximum Salary	Additional payments
Social Worker		
Brent	46512	Golden Hello £5K; R&R £3K
Ealing	46512	
Hillingdon	46968	
Hounslow	49056	Market supplement - not defined
Hammersmith	49638	
Harrow	50691	Up to £6K
Camden	52329	£4K - £2K at end of Years 3 and 4
Kensington	53319	£2.5K - Child protection roles
Westminster	57495	£1K or £2K for project work
Senior Social Worker		
Brent	49551	Golden Hello £5K; R&R £3K
Ealing	49551	
Hillingdon	52194	
Harrow	54843	Up to £6K
Hammersmith	55710	£1500
Hillingdon	57402	
Camden	57583	£4K - £2K at end of Years 3 and 4
Kensington	60003	£2.5K - Child protection roles
Hounslow	61653	Market supplement - not defined
Westminster	76872	£1K or £2K for project work
Approved Mental Health Professional		
Ealing	46512	
Camden	52329	£4K - £2K at end of Years 3 and 4
Kensington	53319	
Brent	53607	Grade uplift applied
Harrow	54843	Up to £6K
Hammersmith	55710	£1500
Assistant Team Manager		
Brent	56646	Golden Hello £5K; R&R £3K
Hounslow	57402	Market supplement - not defined
Kensington	60003	
Team Manager		
Harrow	62349	Up to £6K
Hillingdon	62766	
Hammersmith	62922	£1500
Brent	63159	Golden Hello £5K; R&R £3K
Ealing	63159	
Camden	63438	£4K - £2K at end of Years 3 and 4
Hounslow	66378	Market supplement - not defined
Kensington	66693	
Westminster	76872	£1K or £2K for project work

4.0 Other Approaches to Recruitment and Retention

4.1 Other approaches to recruiting and retaining staff have included reviewing the benefits to working in Brent, ensuring that our offer is competitive and effectively marketed to encourage high quality practitioners to apply and stay in Brent. Over recent years, ASC leads have taken a wide range of actions to address these challenges. These actions have included:

- Offering the opportunity to rent key worker housing which has led to practitioners becoming permanent and remaining in their roles.
- Introducing internal apprenticeships for Occupational Therapists (Ots) and Social Workers (SWs) and launching Brent's first Community Social Work Apprenticeship Programme which offers local residents an opportunity to gain a degree whilst learning and earning a London Living Wage salary.
- Introduction of the Adult Social Care Training Academy ensuring all social care staff have access to training that will enhance their skills, knowledge, and confidence. Course completion of 77 attendees from July 2025 - March 2026. E-Learning attendance from July 2025 involving 55 attendees.
- Fast-tracking of active agency staff to convert to a permanent contract with 32 conversions.
- Rolling recruitment adverts and social media advertising.
- Regular supervision supported by a standardised documentation and a tracker.
- We have used creative strategies to advertise and recruit local people who want to work in their local community.
- Working with North West London Social Care Academy on ways to engage with different groups in our communities, including previously marginalised groups who may not have been in work as part of a pipeline into Social Care.
- Recruiting based on values and behaviours, like kindness, compassion and reliability, life experiences and a willingness to learn.
- Communicating clearly with applicants about progress on their application, to help build positive relationships and keep them onboard for the recruitment process. Share information and timeframes early on to ensure eager applicants can start as soon as possible.

Other measures which have been developed include;

- The launch of a linked grade Job Description from PO2 – PO4, career progression framework, enabling staff to move through the promotion system for PO2 – PO7 grades. This will be supported by linked grade job descriptions to facilitate progression.
- Rotations for OTs across health and social care.
- For non-regulated staff the developing care workforce pathway will reflect the skills, behaviours and expertise needed to deliver excellent social care and set clear expectations about what high-quality care looks. In time, it will become a recognised benchmark for all non-regulated in adult social care roles.

4.2 Whilst these and other measures will continue to contribute to the recruitment and retention of permanent staff, the proposal for recruitment and retention

incentives as outlined in this report are required to maintain and boost the number of permanent staff in regulated roles across the department.

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 There are regular recruitment campaigns and these payments will be incorporated into the materials. Monthly progress meetings to consider the impact of these initiatives have been set up and the overall effectiveness of the proposed changes will be reviewed every two years.

6.0 Financial Considerations

- 6.1 The cost of recruitment and retention payments based on current staff numbers and expected new recruitment is c.£500,000 per annum, excluding employer costs and will be funded from within ASC budgets.

7.0 Legal Considerations

- 7.1 Where a supplement is paid on top of the evaluated grade of a post the potential for equal pay claims arises. The council will need to demonstrate that there is a genuine “material factor” which is neither directly nor indirectly discriminatory based on sex to avoid or defend such claims. The position of the employment market, which may lead an employer to increase the pay of a particular job to attract candidates, may constitute an objectively justified economic ground for a pay disparity. Where payments to an employee are on-going the payment must be kept under regular review to ensure that it only continues for as long as it is justified by material market factors.

8.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 8.1 The public sector equality duty, as 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, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have 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.
- 8.2 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- 8.3 This proposal seeks to continue recruitment and retention payments for all social workers, occupational therapist and visual impairment rehabilitation officers which ensures fairness across these roles. There are no obvious equality issues with this proposal. Additionally, it is considered that the market

evidence, establishing that there was a material factor (namely market conditions for recruitment to the affected posts) justifies any pay disparity.

- 8.4 The make-up of the Adult Social Care workforce (specifically the posts which are qualified social workers) overall is predominantly female and from a multi-ethnic background. The characteristics of ethnicity and gender are specified as these were the two most significant types affected by the proposed changes.
- 8.5 The current demographic of Brent's Adult Social Care workforce reflects the diversity of the borough and indicates equality and fairness, through the lens of diversity, in the current recruitment and retention approach. Additionally, the programme for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic managers demonstrates the focus on supporting the workforce's diverse talent.
- 8.6 There are no obvious, substantial equality implications within these proposals particularly as the approach seeks to ensure Brent continues to deliver a quality service to adults with care needs. However, for staff, it is important to ensure that recruitment and retention payments are awarded in a fair and equitable manner.

9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 9.1 N/A.

10.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 10.1 The Human Resources implications have been contained within the main body of the report.

1.0 Communication Considerations

- 11.1 The continued payment of Recruitment and Retention payments will be communicated across the Directorate through email distribution lists, newsletters, team meetings and staff quarterlies. Communication will be well constructed, and the design principles of the scheme will avoid equal pay claims by staff who are not included in this scheme such as non-regulated staff. Externally the payments will need to be highlighted in any recruitment campaigns and in job adverts.

Report sign off:

Rachel Crossley

Corporate Director, Service Reform & Strategy

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Appendix 1 – Eligible posts for recruitment and retention payments

Adult Social Care

Grades	Job Title	Golden Hello	Retention payment
PO2	Social Worker, Occupational Therapist, Visual Impairment Rehabilitation Officer, Advanced Mental Health Practitioner	£5,000	£3,000
PO3	SW/OT Advanced Practitioners and AMHPs, Senior ROVIs	£5,000	£3,000
PO4	SW/OT Deputy Team Manager and Safeguarding Adult Managers	£5,000	£3,000
PO5	Practice Development Lead	n/a	£3,000
PO7	Team Managers (SW & OT)	£5,000	£3,000
	Best Interest Assessors (BIA)		£2,000
	Practice Educators		£1,000

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	General Purposes Committee 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Community Development
	Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Employment & Climate Action (Councillor Jake Rubin)
Recruitment and Retention Payments for Early Help and Social Care staff and Occupational Therapists	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision: (only applicable for Cabinet, Cabinet Sub Committee and officer decisions)	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	One Appendix 1: Eligible posts for recruitment and retention payments
Background Papers:	None.
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Palvinder Kudhail, Director Early Help and Social Care Palvinder.kudhail@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Recruitment and retention of permanent staff to ‘hard to fill’ posts, including social workers and occupational therapists, is a corporate priority and included in the strategic risk register. A lack of permanent qualified staff in these posts risks poorer quality services and an overreliance on agency staff.
- 1.2 The General Purposes Committee most recently approved the payment of recruitment and retention payments in May 2023. This report seeks approval to continue with the recruitment and retention payments for social workers in Children’s Early Help and Social Care roles to improve the recruitment and retention of permanent staff. It also proposes to include occupational therapists in the list of posts that will be eligible for payment. The proposals are closely aligned to the Adult Social Care approach to ensure that parity and fairness across the social care workforce is maintained.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee agree to the continuation of the use of recruitment and retention initiatives as follows:
- 2.2 To make a one-off payment of £5,000 to newly recruited permanent qualified social work staff on grades PO1 – PO7 and to occupational therapists grades PO2 – PO5, on satisfactory completion of their probationary period and repayable where an employee leaves the council within 12 months of receiving the payment.
- 2.3 To make retention payments of either £2500 or £4,500 for qualified social work staff on grades PO1-PO7 as set out in the accompanying policy (Recruitment and Retention Payments Policy for Social Work Staff), to be paid annually after completion of a full year's service.
- 2.4 To make retention payments of £3,000 to occupational therapists grades PO2 – PO5 to be paid annually after completion of a full year's service.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities and Strategic Context

- 3.1.1 Implementation of these activities will enable the service to contribute to the borough's priorities 'Thriving Communities-Every opportunity to succeed' and *'Local people in the borough to gain jobs via our apprenticeship'*.
- 3.1.2 We currently have a diverse workforce; however we are reliant on locum workers to undertake regulated roles. The proposal in this paper aims to enable recruitment of good performing agency workers and external candidates which include staff who live within Brent and retain a permanent workforce that is representative of the borough at all levels.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 The issue of sufficiency of suitably qualified children's social work staff is recognised as a national issue that the DfE is seeking to address through new routes into social work and better development pathways for future managers. The profession is noted as an occupation that appears on the list of skills shortages to enable overseas recruitment to fill key vacancies.
- 3.2.2 This challenge is not unique to Brent; the employment market for social workers, a highly mobile workforce, is extremely competitive both nationally and locally. The last decade has continued to see more social workers deciding to work on an agency rather than permanent basis, resulting in higher costs and relative instability for local authorities. Whilst the introduction in 2024 of national rules to manage the children's agency workforce in recent years have redressed the balance somewhat, there is still more action required at a local authority level to recruit and retain high quality staff. Currently, agency workers make up 10.7% of our workforce.
- 3.2.3 The continuation of these payments, alongside other factors such as stable senior leadership, greater training and development opportunities and

manageable caseloads for staff has supported the permanent recruitment of qualified social work staff, increasingly at all levels across the workforce. However, challenges remain within the Family Support and Child Protection/Court and Children with Disabilities services in part due to the more challenging nature of the work, the opportunities of the agency market or for other factors such as pay and rewards.

3.2.4 The departmental workforce strategy is continually reviewed and includes a range of activities to address the ongoing recruitment and retention challenges. The key activities include the social work career progression framework that supports social workers with the intention of 'growing our own' staff such as student social workers, step-up to social work programme, ASYE and the international recruitment of qualified social workers.

3.2.5 Career progression panels are held every six months with a number of staff progressing into the senior social worker role. The progression framework continues to act as part of the retention strategy with some staff commenting that they had considered leaving Brent before it was put in place.

3.3 Impact

3.3.1 Whilst these and other measures will continue to contribute to the recruitment and retention of permanent staff, further measures are required to maintain and boost the number of permanent staff in social work roles across the department.

3.3.2 Previous transformation projects have focussed on optimising the Brent offer for social workers. This work included reviewing, benchmarking and evaluating incentive packages and other drivers at a pan-London level, as well as developing options to minimise any disparities and inconsistencies identified in current arrangements in Brent.

3.4 Salary Bench Marking

3.4.1 Social worker salaries and additional payments data provided by London Councils (as at April 2025) and gathered from recruitment websites is set out in the table below. The data is for neighbouring London boroughs where this is available.

3.4.2 This data highlights that, for some roles, Brent pays below neighbouring boroughs and demonstrates the need for additional payments to remain competitive in a very tight market.

Council	Maximum Salary	Additional payments
Social Worker		
Ealing	46512	
Hillingdon	46968	
Camden	47940	£4K - £2K at end of Years 3 and 4
Hounslow	49056	Market supplement - not defined
Brent	49551	Golden Hello £5K; R&R £2.5 or £4.5K
Hammersmith	49638	Market supplement £1500
Harrow	50691	Up to £6K
Kensington	53319	Market supplement £2500
Westminster	57495	£1K or £2K for project work
Senior Social Worker		
Brent	49551	Golden Hello £5K; R&R £2.5 or £4.5K
Hillingdon	52194	
Hillingdon	57402	Advanced practitioner rate
Hammersmith	55710	Market supplement £1500
Kensington	60003	Market supplement £2500
Deputy Team Manager		
Hammersmith	60795	Market supplement £1500
Ealing	55620	
Brent	63159	Golden Hello £5K; R&R £2.5 or £4.5K
Team Manager		
Harrow	62349	Up to £6K
Hillingdon	62766	
Hammersmith	62922	Market supplement £1500
Brent	63159	Golden Hello £5K; R&R £2.5 or £4.5K
Ealing	63159	
Hounslow	66378	Market supplement - not defined

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 There are regular recruitment campaigns, and these payments will be incorporated into the materials. Monthly progress meetings to consider the impact of these initiatives have been set and the overall effectiveness of the proposed changes will be reviewed every 2 years.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 Providing incentives to support the recruitment and retention to social work positions is an investment if permanent staff are recruited and retained in place of providing interim cover for agency staff.

5.2 The cost of recruitment and retention payments based on current staff numbers and expected new recruitment is c.£456,000 per annum, excluding employer costs and will be funded from existing budgets.

5.3 It is anticipated that the revised incentives, will increase the number of permanent staff into the social care teams, reducing reliance on agency staff, which will also lead to a reduction in the cost pressure arising from the use of those agency staff.

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 Where a supplement is paid on top of the evaluated grade of a post the potential for equal pay claims arises. The council will need to demonstrate that there is a genuine “material factor” which is neither directly nor indirectly discriminatory based on sex to avoid or defend such claims. The position of the employment market, which may lead an employer to increase the pay of a particular job to attract candidates, may constitute an objectively justified economic ground for a pay disparity. Where payments to an employee are on-going the payment must be kept under regular review to ensure that it only continues for as long as it is justified by material market factors.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 The public sector equality duty, as 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, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have 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.

7.2 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

7.3 This proposal seeks to continue recruitment and retention payments for all eligible social workers which ensures fairness across these roles. There are no obvious equality issues with this proposal. Additionally, it is considered that the market evidence, establishing that there was a material factor (namely market conditions for recruitment to the affected posts) justifies any pay disparity.

7.4 The make-up of the Social Care workforce (specifically the posts which are qualified social workers) overall is predominantly female and from a multi-ethnic background. The characteristics of ethnicity and gender are specified as these were the two most significant types affected by the proposed changes.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 N/A.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

9.1 The Human Resources implications have been contained within the main body of the report.

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 The continued payment of Recruitment and Retention payments will be communicated across the Directorate through email distribution lists, newsletters, team meetings and staff quarterlies. Communication will be well constructed, and the design principles of the scheme will avoid equal pay claims by staff who are not included in this scheme such as non-regulated staff. Externally the payments will need to be highlighted in any recruitment campaigns and in job adverts.

Report sign off:

Nigel Chapman

Corporate Director Children, Young People &
Community Development

Appendix 1 – Eligible posts for recruitment and retention payments

Early Help and Social Care

Teams and posts eligible to receive £4,500 retention payment

LAC & Permanency: Care Planning Teams	Family Support and Child Protection/Court: Family Support Teams and Child Protection/Court Teams		
Grades	Job title	Golden Hello	Retention payment
PO1	Social Worker	£5,000	£4,500
PO2	Social Worker	£5,000	£4,500
PO3	Senior Social Worker	£5,000	£4,500
PO7	Team Manager	£5,000	£4,500

Teams and posts eligible to receive £2,500 retention payment

LAC & Permanency: Fostering, Kinship	Family Support and Child Protection/Court: MASH, Children with Disabilities		
Grades	Job title	Golden Hello	Retention payment
PO1	Social Worker	£5,000	£2,500
PO2	Social Worker	£5,000	£2,500
PO3	Senior Social Worker	£5,000	£2,500
PO5	Deputy Team Manager (MASH)	£5,000	£2,500
PO7	Team Manager	£5,000	£2,500

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	General Purposes Committee 27 July 2026
	Reports from the Corporate Director of Resident and Housing Services and Corporate Director Service Reform and Strategy
	Lead Members: Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture & Cost-of-Living Support (Councillor Tina Amadi) Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health (Councillor Liz Dixon)
Extension of Fixed-Term Director of Resident Services Appointment and Interim Director of Public Health and Leisure Arrangement	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
List of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Thomas Cattermole, Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services 020 8937 5446 Thomas.Cattermole@brent.gov.uk Rachel Crossley, Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy 020 8937 5012 Rachel.Crossley@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the General Purposes Committee to extend the fixed-term appointment of the Director of Resident Services until 31 March 2027. The proposed extension exceeds the period that may be authorised under the Chief Executive's delegated powers and therefore requires approval by the General Purposes Committee.
- 1.2 The report also seeks approval to extend the current interim appointment to the post of Director of Public Health and Leisure. The existing arrangement is due to end in September 2026. Whilst recruitment to the substantive post is underway, it is anticipated that any successful candidate may not be able to commence until December 2026 at the earliest and potentially later. An extension to the interim arrangement is therefore required to ensure continuity of statutory public health leadership and the discharge of the Council's public health duties pending a substantive appointment. As the proposed extension exceeds the period that may be authorised under delegated powers, approval is sought from the General Purposes Committee.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Members of the General Purposes Committee:

- 2.1 Approve the extension of the Director of Resident Services until 31 March 2027.
- 2.2 Authorise the Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services, in consultation with the Director of HR &OD, to complete all necessary contractual and employment arrangements associated with the extension.
- 2.3 Approve the extension of the interim Director of Public Health and Leisure until 31 January 2027 or until the substantive postholder takes up appointment, whichever is sooner.
- 2.4 Authorise the Corporate Director for Service Reform and Strategy, in consultation with the Director of HR &OD, to complete all necessary contractual and employment arrangements associated with the extension.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Director of Resident Services was appointed on a fixed-term basis in September 2025.
- 3.2 The fixed-term appointment was made to provide leadership capacity and continuity during a period of organisational transition and service delivery priorities.
- 3.3 The current fixed-term appointment is due to expire. However, the Council continues to require senior leadership capacity within Resident Services, and it is therefore proposed that the arrangement is extended until 31 March 2027.
- 3.4 Following consideration of the Council's leadership requirements and future organisational arrangements, it is proposed that the post be filled on a fixed-

term basis until 31 March 2027. The proposed extension will ensure continuity of leadership and service delivery whilst the substantive recruitment process is undertaken.

- 3.5 The proposed extension exceeds the period that may be authorised under the Chief Executive's delegated powers and therefore requires approval by the General Purposes Committee.
- 3.6 The Director of Public Health and Leisure is a statutory chief officer role with responsibility for the Council's public health functions and for providing independent professional advice on public health matters to the Council, elected members and partners.
- 3.7 The post is currently occupied on an interim basis under an arrangement which expires in September 2026.
- 3.8 Recruitment to the substantive position is underway. However, given the specialist nature of the role, the professional registration requirements applicable to Directors of Public Health and the likely notice periods of suitable candidates, it is anticipated that a substantive appointment may not commence until December 2026 at the earliest. There remains a possibility that a further recruitment exercise may be required should a suitable appointment not be secured.
- 3.9 In order to ensure continuity of statutory public health leadership, maintain the Council's capacity to discharge its public health functions and avoid any gap in the Council's statutory Director of Public Health arrangements, it is proposed that the interim appointment is extended until 31 January 2027 or until a substantive postholder takes up appointment, whichever is sooner.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

None associated with the content of this report.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The costs associated with the extension of the interim Director of Resident Services and the interim Director of Public Health and Leisure arrangement will be met from existing approved staffing budgets.
- 5.2 There are no additional financial implications arising directly from the recommendations contained in this report.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 The appointment of a Director is subject to the Council's Constitution and applicable employment legislation
- 6.2 Part 2, Standing Order (SO) 76 of Brent's Constitution sets out the requirements for the extension of interim and fixed term appointments for Directors. Pursuant

to SO 76(i) the Chief Executive may appoint interim and fixed term contracts for less than a year. In accordance with SO 76(ii) the General Purposes Committee shall be informed of any extension of an interim post beyond a year. The current interim Director posts falls within SO75 (b)(vi), and the requirements of SO 76(iv) in relation to the interim post of Director of Public Health and Leisure comply with the above.

- 6.3 Appropriate pre-employment checks will be completed prior to commencement of the appointment if not already undertaken.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 The recruitment and selection process has been undertaken in accordance with the Council's equity, diversity and inclusion commitments, relevant employment legislation and Equality Act.
- 7.2 There are no specific adverse equality implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

None associated with the content of this report.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations

- 9.1 The recommendations will ensure continued senior leadership capacity within Resident Services and Public Health and Leisure and support continuity of service delivery pending completion of substantive recruitment processes for both posts.
- 9.2 There are no additional staffing or accommodation implications arising from the recommendation.

10.0 Communication Considerations

None associated with the content of this report.

Report sign off:

Thomas Cattermole

Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services

Rachel Crossley

Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy



APPOINTMENTS TO SUB COMMITTEES & OUTSIDE BODIES

Change in appointments to the General Purposes Sub-Committees for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year

Members are asked to confirm the following change in appointments notified in respect of the Sub Committees appointed by General Purposes Committee.

BRENT PENSION FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

- (1) Councillors Kansagra and HB Patel to be replaced by Councillors A.Patel and Mishra as the Conservative Group nominations as full members on the Pension Fund Sub Committee
- (2) Councillors Chowdhury and Do Rosario to be replaced as the Conservative Group substitute members on the Pension Fund Sub Committee by Councillors Kansagra and HB Patel
- (3) Subject to no other nominations being received Councillor Mishra to be appointed as Vice Chair of the Pension Fund Sub Committee

On the basis of the above changes, the revised membership of the Pension Fund Sub Committee to be confirmed as follows

BURN (C)	LABOUR
ANDERSON	LABOUR
I.AHMED	LABOUR
A.PATEL	CONSERVATIVE
MISHRA	CONSERVATIVE
BROWN	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
RYAN	GREEN

CO-OPTED NON-VOTING:

ELIZABETH BANKOLE (UNISON)

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

LABOUR: AGHA, BAJWA, CHOUDRY, THOAMS
CONSERVATIVE: KANSAGRA & HB PATEL
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS: LORBER & UNGER
GREEN: GALLAGHER & PERRIN

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