



Cabinet

Monday 27 July 2026 at 10.00 am

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

Please note this will be held as a physical meeting which all Cabinet 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:

Lead Member Councillors:

Portfolio

M Butt (Chair)	Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Grahl	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources
Amadi	Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture & Cost-of-Living Support
Dixon	Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health
Johnson	Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters
Kelcher	Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning
Knight	Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport & Public Realm
Rubin	Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Employment & Climate Action

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

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

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	

2	Declarations of Interest	

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

3	Minutes of the Previous Meeting	1 - 14

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 22 June 2026 as a correct record.

4	Matters Arising (if any)	

To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

5	Petitions (if any)	

To receive and consider any petitions for which notice has been provided under Standing Order 66.

Members are asked to note that there are currently no petition(s) due to be presented at the meeting.

6	Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)	

To consider any reports referred to Cabinet by either the Community & Wellbeing or Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees.

Finance & Resources reports

7	Financial Outturn Report 2025-26	15 - 48

This report presents the 2025/26 financial outturn for the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the capital programme.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Gwen Grahl)

Contact Officer: Ravinder Jassar, Deputy
Director Corporate and Financial Planning
Tel: 0208 937 1487
ravinder.jassar@brent.gov.uk

8 Quarter 1 Financial Forecast 2026-27

49 - 102

This report sets out the financial forecast for the General Fund revenue budget, the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme, as at Quarter 1 2026/27.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Deputy Leader and Cabinet
Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor
Gwen Grahl)

Contact Officer: Ravinder Jassar, Deputy
Director Corporate and Financial Planning
Tel: 0208 937 1487
ravinder.jassar@brent.gov.uk

9 Medium Term Financial Outlook

103 - 144

This report sets out the overall financial position facing the Council and highlights the significant risks, issues and uncertainties with regards to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It also sets out the proposed budget setting strategy for 2027/28.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Deputy Leader and Cabinet
Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor
Gwen Grahl)

Contact Officer: Ravinder Jassar, Deputy
Director Corporate and Financial Planning
Tel: 0208 937 1487
ravinder.jassar@brent.gov.uk

Neighbourhood & Regeneration reports

10 Bridge Park Complex Regeneration Proposals

145 - 172

This report provides an update on the wider regeneration proposals for the Bridge Park Complex and Unisys site, including the development of a new leisure centre as part of the council-led elements of the scheme.

Ward Affected:
Stonebridge

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for
Regeneration & Planning (Councillor Matt
Kelcher)

Contact Officer: Neil Martin, Head of Capital
Delivery
Tel: 020 8937 4203
neil.martin@brent.gov.uk

This report presents the Council's sixth Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), which is prepared in line with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (amended 2019).

Ward Affected:

All, excluding parts of Alperton, Harlesden and Kensal Green, Stonebridge and Tokyngton where Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation is the Local Planning Authority.

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning (Councillor Matt Kelcher)

Contact Officer: Jonathan Kay, Head of Regeneration, Communities and Regeneration
Tel: 020 8937 2348

jonathan.kay@brent.gov.uk

12 West London Waste Plan Regulation 19 Consultation

229 - 250

This report provides an update on development of the new West London Waste Plan, which will form part of the Local Development Plan and be used for determining planning applications for waste development within Brent and across West London.

The draft Plan has been prepared jointly with the London Boroughs of Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond Upon Thames and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) and includes amendments that have been made in response to comments received through the previous ('Regulation 18') consultation. The Plan must be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination by 31 December 2026 before its formal adoption (subject to successful examination) by each of the planning authorities. The report therefore presents the draft plan and policies on which approval is being sought to undertake public consultation ('Regulation 19') for an eight-week period, commencing in August 2026 prior to a final version being presented to Full Council in November 2026 for approval, subject to the conclusion of the Regulation 19 consultation, in advance of its submission to the Secretary of State for examination.

Members are asked to note that, due to their size, the main appendices to this report have been published as a supplementary pack to this agenda.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport & Public Realm (Councillor Promise Knight)

Contact Officer: Hilary Seaton, Principal

Planning Policy Officer
020 8937 1427
hilary.seaton@brent.gov.uk

13 Authority to Undertake a Trial of a Cross-Pavement Charging Solution for Electric Vehicles on the Public Highway 251 - 264

Cross-pavement charging solutions (XPS) present an opportunity for residents without access to off-street parking to charge an electric vehicle (EV) on-street using their domestic electricity supply with this report setting out details of a proposed limited trial of XPS in Brent which, if successful, could be rolled-out to other parts of the borough.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport & Public Realm (Councillor Promise Knight)

Contact Officer: Annekatrin Dennemann, Principal Transport Planner, Spatial Planning
020 8937 3553
Annekatrin.Dennemann@brent.gov.uk

Resident and Housing Services reports

14 Housing Damp and Mould Policy 265 - 300

This report seeks approval to Brent's new Housing Damp and Mould Policy.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters (Councillor Robert Johnson)

Contact Officer: Spencer Randolph, Director Housing Services
020 8937 2546
Spencer.randolph@brent.gov.uk

Service Reform & Strategy reports

15 Corporate Performance Q4 2025/26 Performance Summary 301 - 316

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an end of year summary of Brent Council's performance for 2025/26. Throughout 2025/26, Cabinet has received detailed quarterly performance reports, highlighting the latest performance position, key drivers and actions being taken where required. This report represents the final update for the year 2025/26, providing a broad end-of-year assessment across each Borough Plan priority. This summary focuses on overall progress across 2025/26, key achievements, common themes and areas requiring continued focus.

Ward Affected:

Lead Member: Deputy Leader and Cabinet

All Wards

Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Gwen Grahl)

Contact Officer: Grace Hall, Change and Improvement Programme Lead

Tel: 020 8937 1471

grace.hall@brent.gov.uk

16 S75 Shared Funding Agreement between West and North London Integrated Care Board and Brent Council primarily related to the Better Care Fund 311 - 362

This report seeks authority to enter a partnership arrangement, under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006, in respect of the delivery of the approved Better Care Fund Plan with West and North London Integrated Commissioning Board (W&NL ICB) for 2026/27 and summarises the reasons for entering into a new Section 75 Agreement for the delivery of the Better Care Fund Plan for 2026/27.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Councillor Muhammed Butt)

Contact Officer: Eleanor Maxwell, Senior Programme Officer – BCF Lead
020 8937 2195

Eleanor.Maxwell@brent.gov.uk

Children, Young People & Community Development reports

17 West London Fostering Recruitment and Retention Programme 363 - 376

This report seeks approval for the Council to enter into a new, updated Collaboration Agreement in respect of the West London Regional Fostering Recruitment Hub along with Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster Councils.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Employment & Climate Action (Councillor Jake Rubin)

Contact Officer: Kelli Eboji, Head of Looked After Children and Permanency
020 8937 4444

Email: kelli.eboji@brent.gov.uk

18 Exclusion of Press and Public

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

19 Any other urgent business

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

Date of the next meeting: Monday 7 September 2026



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 CABINET

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 22 June 2026 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor Grahl (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Amadi, Dixon, Johnson, Kelcher, Knight and Rubin

Also present: Councillors Maurice and HB Patel (for item 5) and Councillor Georgiou (for item 8)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Thomas Cattermole (Corporate Director Resident and Housing Services) with Kirsteen Roe (Director of Resident Services) attending as his representative.

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council and Chair) opened the meeting by taking the opportunity to congratulate all members present on their re-election and to welcome the newly appointed members of Cabinet.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made during the meeting.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 7 April 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

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

None identified.

5. **Petitions (if any)**

5.1 Installation of MUGA in Preston Park

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) welcomed Angela Barrett (as lead petitioner) to the meeting, who he advised was attending to present a petition regarding the location of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in Preston Park.

In thanking the Leader of the Council for the opportunity to present the petition, Angela Barrett began by explaining its purpose in calling on the Council to reconsider the current location for the proposed installation of a MUGA on the tennis courts to an alternate site within the small meadow land area of Preston Park. Following its submission and subsequent engagement with officers and local

ward councillors regarding their concerns, the petitioners had welcomed the engagement with the Parks Service in considering available options relating to the site of the MUGA. The previous and current local ward councillors were also thanked for their support and engagement, with it hoped the concerns raised and alternative proposals identified could lead to development of a more appropriate scheme.

In outlining the initial concerns of the petitioners, Angela Barrett advised that whilst supportive of the provision of better facilities for young people in the Park they had been concerned about identification of the original tennis court site for the MUGA given its close proximity to a number of adjacent residential properties and associated risk of ongoing noise and nuisance from a use, which would be different in nature to tennis. Further adding to these concerns was the secluded location of the site, which it was felt had the potential to attract Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) leading to issues around safety and inclusion, particularly for girls and younger users. Angela Barrett advised these concerns had also been supported by the Brent Parks Forum and Preston Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) in relation to the current proposed location of the MUGA.

Given the concerns raised, local residents in support of the petition had therefore worked with the Parks Team and local ward councillors to identify a new site which was felt to be more suitable for the MUGA in an area adjacent to the existing children's playground in the centre of the park, which it was felt would create a more unified and safe family activity hub. The site identified had been within the existing meadow land area, which unfortunately had not managed to become fully established and was consequently viewed to be of low ecological value. Residents and officers had also recognised the potential for a rain garden and pollinator planting to be incorporated into the design without significant extra cost, which it was pointed out would help to manage drainage whilst also improving the biodiversity and appearance of the space and which could be used as an additional community asset for residents. In considering the design options for the MUGA, the petitioners were also keen for Cabinet to consider a more flexible, grass-based alternative to a traditional tarmac type MUGA, such as a mini-grass football pitch or natural adventure playground, referencing research that showed traditional MUGAs excluded girls, with over 90% of users being male.

Whilst recognising the associated cost and resource implications, Angela Barrett advised that the petitioners felt the proposals they had put forward regarding siting and design would lead to a better space and facility that more people could support and utilise and which would avoid future problems in relation to noise and potential ASB. The opportunity was also taken to highlight the positive and constructive engagement of residents in the process, with South Kenton & Preston Park Residents Association, the Brent Parks Forum and the Preston Ward SNT all supportive of the approach in seeking to find an alternative location for the MUGA that was felt to be safe, well-integrated and worked for the community.

The opportunity was also taken to highlight lessons learnt from the engagement process, with Angela Barrett referring to a supporting background paper that had been circulated to all members of Cabinet regarding improvements it was felt could be made to the community engagement process involving future Parks projects.

In concluding presentation of the petition, Angela Barrett felt that the scheme was now in a more positive position, moving away from a site that was not considered suitable by a number of local residents and other stakeholders to an alternative which it was felt would provide better access and it was hoped Cabinet would support, recognising the work and engagement undertaken to produce a thoughtful design that would deliver enhancements to the park and benefit everyone.

Having thanked Angela Barrett for presenting the petition the Leader then invited Soulla Kwong to speak, who he advised had requested to address the meeting on behalf of the Friends of Preston Park (FOPP) to outline their support for the MUGA proposal based on the current site identified utilising the existing tennis courts.

In opening her comments, Soulla Kwong began by advising of the background to formation of the Friends of Preston Park as a community group of local residents and volunteers seeking to maintain, protect and care for Preston Park and its environment. This work had involved engagement with pupils across local schools regarding the measures they felt could be taken in support of maintaining the park whilst also providing the type of facilities that would encourage greater use and best serve their needs. Cabinet was advised that it had been the feedback provided from this process which had led to development of the initial proposals for the MUGA alongside the provision of wider facilities such picnic and chess tables, table tennis and more trees.

Details were then provided on the way in which these proposals had been shared with local residents. This had included meetings held in Preston Park with Brent's Parks Team, which local ward councillors, residents, and local schools had also been invited to attend. This had led to the formation of a Committee to support fundraising efforts and development of the plans, which Cabinet was advised had also been successful in attracting Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding. Development of the proposals had also been supported by a petition in 2024 seeking support for the original site identified, based on what were regarded to be the largely disused nature of the tennis courts and their main use for football by adults. The site was therefore felt to be an ideal location for the MUGA, given the existing surface, which it was also pointed out would support the installation of a low-level noise surface to avoid disturbance to adjacent properties at lower cost. Confirmation was also provided that the original proposal had not involved the installation of flood lights with a closing time of 9pm in summer alongside the provision of trees and a high net to prevent further noise transmission. It was pointed out, this proposal had been further supported by a subsequent petition in May 2026 which, taken together with the original petition, had attracted over 800 signatories.

Since the initial proposals had been identified, the Friend of Preston Park had become aware of concerns being raised by some residents living adjacent to the proposed site relating to noise nuisance and ASB affecting their properties, which had spread some fear and doubt in the neighbourhood and led to the petition which had been presented at the meeting seeking to use the meadow land in the Park as an alternative location for the MUGA. Having considered the alternative proposal, Soulla Kwong advised that the Friends of Preston Park remained opposed to the loss of green space within Preston Park highlighting the small nature of its footprint and their aim to preserve the green space available within the wildflower meadow

and community gardens as a space supporting biodiversity and valued by park users and local residents alike.

In highlighting the damage being created more widely to the environment, Soulla Kwong also felt it important to remind members that the site originally proposed had been based on a disused tennis court area which had fallen in disrepair and was already attracting alternative use. The opportunity was also taken to outline the wide engagement undertaken by Friends of Preston Park on the proposals, including local shop owners, schools and residents who had all been supportive of the initial proposal to locate the MUGA on the misused and underutilised tennis courts. In summing up, she hoped Cabinet would therefore support the Friends of Preston Park in seeking to preserve green space within the park and help sustain the environment for future generations recognising the need to enhance natural sustainability in the area.

In thanking both speakers for their presentations, the Leader then invited Councillor Promise Knight (as Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport and Public Realm) to respond to the points raised.

Having thanked Angela Barrett and Soulla Kwong, along with their supporters, for attending Cabinet to ensure the views of local residents were represented Councillor Knight felt it important to start by recognising the concerns raised regarding the proposed conversion of the tennis courts in Preston Park to a MUGA. She advised that the scheme had originally emerged through the NCIL process, recognising the keen support expressed by local school children and residents for the scheme with the intention to enhance the facilities available in the park for young people.

In addressing the speakers, an assurance was provided that the concerns raised regarding noise levels and the enjoyment of homes and gardens by those residents whose homes backed onto the initial proposed site had, however, also been recognised. Since the petition had been submitted, this had resulted in further discussions being undertaken with residents, officers, ward councillors and Friends of Preston Park to better understand the concerns raised. In considering the feedback from all parties, Councillor Knight confirmed that the Parks Service would therefore continue to review all options outlined to assess what would be possible moving forward. It was hoped this would provide residents with the necessary assurance that the Council was continuing to listen to all affected parties with all residents thanked for the time taken to engage constructively in the ongoing discussion.

As a final contribution and in summing up, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) confirmed that the Council remained committed to working with residents in order to achieve a positive outcome for the local community and to continuing the positive engagement with residents in an effort to find a way forward.

6. Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)

There were no items referred from either the Community Wellbeing or Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees.

7. Appointment of Cabinet Sub-Committees

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to confirm the appointment of the following as a Cabinet Sub Committee for the 2026-27 Municipal Year:

Barham Park Trust Cabinet Sub Committee

Members:

Councillor M.Butt (Chair)
Councillor Grahl (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Johnson
Councillor Kelcher
Councillor Knight

Substitute Members: Councillors Amadi, Dixon & Rubin

8. Brent Housing Compact

Prior to considering the report, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) welcomed Heather Thomas (Chief Executive, Sapphire Independent Housing – as an online participant) and Councillor Georgiou (as Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group) to the meeting who he advised had both requested to speak on the Brent Housing Compact.

Speaking first, Heather Thomas thanked the Leader for providing the opportunity to outline her support for Brent's Housing Compact as one of the Registered Housing Providers (RPs) who had been engaged in its development. Highlighting the importance of the Compact in providing a clear partnership framework between the Council and Registered Providers and support for the five core themes around which it had been developed, the collaborative approach towards its design was welcomed as a means of highlighting the commitment to continue working together to deliver the best outcomes for tenants across the borough.

Having thanked Heather Thomas for her contribution, the Leader then invited Councillor Georgiou to address Cabinet who, whilst welcoming the intention behind development of the Compact, advised he was also keen to ensure this was used as a means of encouraging stronger partnership working between the Council, Registered Providers and Housing Associations. In seeking the necessary assurances relating to implementation and operation of the Compact, Councillor Georgiou highlighted a number of issues on which he felt further clarification was required. These included:

- The difference it was expected the Compact would make for residents given its status as a voluntary partnership and lack of legally enforceable statutory obligations that could be imposed on RPs and Housing Associations.
- The level of accountability in terms of being able to monitor and manage performance issues with RPs and Housing Associations.
- The level and extent of meaningful engagement with residents in development of the Compact and also in terms of its shaping its ongoing development.

- The lack of what was felt to be clear measurable outcomes and targets against which delivery of the Compact could be assessed and monitored.

As a result of the issues raised, Councillor Georgiou was keen to ensure that as the Compact developed the Council sought to utilise the experience from a wider range of stakeholders including councillors, resident and tenant groups and community representatives in seeking to reflect lived experience enabling the Compact to succeed and provide a meaningful vehicle for change backed by clear accountability, transparency, resident involvement and measurable outcomes.

Having also thanked Councillor Georgiou for the representations made and advising that the issues on which further clarification had been sought would be addressed following the meeting, the Leader then invited Councillor Johnson (Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters) to introduce the report from the Corporate Director Resident and Housing Services providing an update on the development of the Brent Housing Compact as a new partnership framework between the Council and Registered Providers (RPs).

In presenting the report, Councillor Johnson highlighted housing as one of the biggest ongoing issues facing the borough. Whilst acknowledging that much of Brent's social housing was owned and managed by Registered Providers it was pointed out that residents often failed to distinguish between the Council and these providers when issues arose meaning that many would approach their local councillors in seeking a resolution and ensuring that the responsible organisations were able to work together to address the issues raised.

Recognising the level of casework generated as a result, and the level of frustration often experienced in seeking to address issues with repairs, anti-social behaviour and the condition of properties when the outcome being sought involved other organisations often operating under different systems and standards, members were advised that the Compact had therefore been designed to bring the council and housing providers together around a shared set of commitments covering housing quality and safety, affordable housing, homelessness prevention, neighbourhood management and resident engagement. Outlining the approach taken towards design of the Compact, Councillor Johnson was also keen to highlight the collaborative nature of its development, which had involved residents and housing providers being able to actively shape the process, providing a much clearer picture of where it was felt things were working well as well as areas for improvement.

In highlighting the significant challenges involved in addressing the housing crisis, the opportunity represented through development of the Compact to bring partners together, raise standards and improve the experience of residents was therefore welcomed as a means of ensuring the necessary responsibility and ownership was taken in seeking to address issues on behalf of residents which members, in concluding, were advised reflected the spirit behind the Compact and its ongoing development.

In commending development of the Compact as an important initiative to improve standards, accountability, and collaboration across social housing providers in Brent, Cabinet took the opportunity to thank all those involved in its development recognising the efforts made to collaboratively engage with residents and housing

providers. Highlighting the significant level of casework generated in relation to Housing Associations and challenges often experienced in being able to hold them to account, it was felt the more collaborative approach developed under the Compact would prove more effective in driving improvement and encouraging greater partnership working and development of shared performance frameworks. The engagement and participation with a range of housing associations and Registered Providers (which it was noted covered approx. 80% of social housing stock across the borough) was therefore welcomed along with the efforts to secure further signatories and increase engagement and participation from the larger housing associations.

Members were also keen to highlight the practical benefits of the Compact in terms of encouraging and delivering more standardised expectations and responses from providers, which it was felt would also provide a constructive step towards improving service quality for residents whilst also addressing concerns regarding accountability and seeking to improve standards.

In closing, Councillor Johnson thanked Cabinet for their support and took the opportunity to advise members of a number of additional Registered Providers who had agreed, in principle, to participate in the Compact including Notting Hill Genesis and ongoing engagement with Hyde Housing Association. Whilst acknowledging the limited enforceable powers directly available to the Council to hold Registered Providers to account (with those organisations accountable to the Social Housing Ombudsman) it was felt that the emphasis on partnership working and collaboration rather than enforcement within the Compact ultimately represented a more effective means of achieving the positive outcomes being sought for residents

In welcoming the collaborative approach towards development of the Compact as a new partnership framework designed to improve accountability, strengthen cooperation, enhance repair and safety standards, support homelessness prevention, and ensure that tenants and residents were provided with a stronger voice in raising concerns Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the progress to date in developing the Brent Housing Compact.
- (2) To note that the next phase will include:
 - Engagement with internal teams to confirm and align commitments.
 - Establishment of an RP Working Group.
 - Development of the governance model, including the proposed Housing Compact Board
- (3) To endorse the Draft Housing Compact (as set out in Appendix 1 of the report).

9. **Authority to Tender for the Appointment of a Social Investment Backed Design & Delivery Partner to support the sourcing of suitable Providers for Housing Related Support Services**

Councillor Johnson (Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Residents & Housing Services seeking approval to procure and appoint a design and delivery partner to work with the Council on the design, development and delivery of an outcomes based Housing Related Support Service through a Social Outcomes contract with payments linked to the achievement of agreed outcomes.

In presenting the report, Councillor Johnson began by advising members of the vital role Housing Related Support services played in supporting vulnerable residents to maintain their independence and sustain their tenancies including those experiencing homelessness, residents with mental health support needs, young people at risk, women fleeing domestic abuse, ex-offenders and others facing complex circumstances.

Highlighting a correction to section 6.1 in the report with reference to the Procurement Regulations 2004 being amended to 2024, members were reminded that for many residents the support provided for those residents most in need through the services available would often be the difference between them maintaining stability and reaching crisis point with the benefits of an early intervention approach in relation to homelessness prevention and in keeping people housed, independent and connected to support services outlined as key in the delivery of better outcomes for residents and in reducing pressure on already stretched public services. As a result, members were advised that the proposal presented for approval would involve the development of an outcomes-based approach to commissioning key services with a stronger focus on output alongside value for money and long-term sustainability whilst also enabling the council to work with specialist partners to design the most effective model before any commitment was made to future delivery arrangements.

In considering the report, members expressed support for the approach outlined highlighting the importance in maintaining a focus on prevention, early intervention independence and housing stability in an effort to reduce long term demand on services and improve outcomes for residents. As a result, Cabinet therefore **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the procurement of a design and delivery partner to co-design an outcomes-based Housing Related Support service, in accordance with the approach set out in the report.
- (2) To approve officers evaluating the tenders referred to in (1) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria.
- (3) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Resident and Housing Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters to award the contract to the design and delivery partner for a term of 4 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years to co-design the service model with the Council and procure suitable delivery partners to deliver outcomes-based Housing Related Support service through a Social Outcomes Contract.

10. Capital Investment in Leisure Centres

Councillor Dixon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Public Health) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Service Reform and Strategy seeking approval for a package of investment and associated financial measures relating to Vale Farm Sports Centre and Willesden Sports Centre as well as approval for discretionary National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) relief in relation to Vale Farm Sports Centre and Moberly Sports Centre.

In presenting the report, Councillor Dixon began by outlining the significant package of investment proposed within the report for two of what were felt to be Brent's most important leisure facilities. Highlighting the increasingly important role of public leisure provision in tackling health inequalities often linked to income, deprivation, ability, age and access, members were advised that the transition to an active well-being model (which the proposed package of investment had been designed to support) had been designed to recognise that leisure facilities should not only be regarded as places to participate but also as part of the local infrastructure for prevention, inclusion, and healthy communities. In total, the package of measures represented almost £4.25 million worth of investment in leisure provision serving the borough's residents, including nearly £3.25 million being invested directly by the Council, which was felt to provide a clear demonstration of the commitment to maintaining and improving the facilities valued and relied on by local residents.

In terms of the specific investment proposals, members were advised these had been focussed on the modernisation of facilities aimed at improving the experience for users and helping to ensure that more residents could benefit from all the borough's leisure centres had to offer whilst also supporting the commitment towards the delivery of active wellbeing.

Commenting on the report, members were keen to highlight their support for the proposed investment in Brent's leisure facilities recognising that it represented not only an investment in physical assets but also one focused around residents health, wellbeing and quality of life. In acknowledging the benefits it was felt improved leisure provision would contribute towards a healthier borough, members also acknowledged the associated impact this would have on reducing pressure on public services and delivery of wider social benefits for local communities.

Recognising the investment as key in delivering the Council's long-term vision and commitment to improving opportunities for physical activity across the borough as well as support of community assets and extending access to affordable leisure opportunities, members thanked all those involved for their efforts in the development and design of the proposals. The opportunity was also taken to highlight not only the investment in Willesden and Vale Farm Sports Centre's but also wider leisure estate, with members noting the high quality of facilities available across Brent and also welcoming the way in which they would support broader commitments, including the provision of free swimming opportunities for children and young people recognising the positive impact such schemes had on community health and participation in sport. Support was also expressed for the pace at which the improvements were planned to be delivered and for their alignment with a number of other key Council priorities, including not only tackling health inequalities but also improving children's health and wellbeing, the promotion of active lifestyles and active travel, increasing accessibility to leisure opportunities for older people and children including those excluded from more expensive private leisure facilities.

Reflecting on the use and value placed on Brent's leisure centres by local communities, members also noted that the existing leisure contract was due to expire in 2031, which it was felt would also provide a further opportunity to consider the model of provision moving forward including potential to bring assets back in-house. In further support of the proposed investment, members were also keen to recognise how the proposals were felt to demonstrate the practical benefits of the prudent financial management approach adopted by the previous Administration as a means of enabling the Council to invest in services valued by residents in a way that would support continued participation in exercise, sport, and community activities and directly contribute to improved life outcomes. Members also noted the development of forthcoming proposals relating to other leisure facilities, including Bridge Park, with the shared aim of ensuring that all Brent residents continued to be able to access affordable, high-quality leisure provision.

In commending the positive impact of the proposed investment in terms of not only the leisure facilities outlined but also wider health and wellbeing of local residents, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve capital investment of £2m for a programme of major repairs and renewals at Vale Farm Sports Centre, to address priority asset condition, compliance and operational resilience requirements over the period to 2031.
- (2) To approve capital investment of £850,246 for contract-linked capital enhancements at Vale Farm Sports Centre to modernise and expand the main gym, women's only gym, studios and wider customer offer.
- (3) To approve a Council contribution of up to £393,752 towards the gym reconfiguration and fitness enhancement scheme at Willesden Sports Centre.
- (4) To approve the proposed variation to the Willesden Sports Centre PFI contractual arrangements required to implement the gym reconfiguration and fitness enhancement scheme and to regularise related existing contractual, financial and commercial matters under the PFI agreement, including matters relating to benchmarking, profit share, indexation, lifecycle and payment arrangements, and to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Service Reform and Strategy, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources, to finalise and enter into the necessary legal, financial and commercial documentation.
- (5) To approve the award of 20% discretionary NNDR relief in relation to Vale Farm Sports Centre and Moberly Sports Centre, in accordance with the Council's eligibility criteria for NNDR discretionary relief for charities and non-profit making organisations, and subject to the financial and legal considerations set out in the report.

11. **Approval to Participate in a Joint Procurement Exercise for the provision of Advocacy Services**

Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Service Reform and Strategy seeking approval for Brent to undertake a joint procurement with Harrow for the provision of statutory advocacy services including Care Act Advocacy,

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA) and the Relevant Person's Paid Representative (RPPR) support.

In presenting the report, Councillor Muhammed Butt began by highlighting the importance of advocacy services in support of some of the most vulnerable residents accessing care and ensuring they had the necessary advice and guidance as part of that process, recognising the importance in ensuring those residents (often with the most complex needs) were able to understand what was happening and that their wishes, feelings and rights were properly represented as part of decisions being made about their care and support.

In terms of development of the approach outlined, members were advised this would involve Brent working jointly with Harrow Council to commission the required services (which it was confirmed were statutory in nature) not only enabling the provision of a strengthened offer but more effective engagement with the market to deliver better value for money while also maintaining clear accountability for Brent residents and Brent acting as the lead authority for the procurement process. As part of the design of the proposals, assurance was also provided that both Brent and Harrow would retain their own decision-making responsibilities and enter into their own contracts.

In terms of the financial considerations, members were advised that Brent's contract value had been estimated at £267,000 per year, funded from existing resources, with a proposed contract term of three years and the option to extend for a further two. The approach was also felt to reflect the commitments made to residents in relation to delivery of more community-led care, prevention, dignity in later life, and building a more efficient and modern approach towards service delivery, recognising that adult social care was not only about the services commissioned but also about how people were treated, listened to and supported in order to be able to make informed choices about their own lives.

In support of the approach outlined and recognising the way in which it was felt the proposals would help reduce the risk of unmet need, support better physical and mental wellbeing as well as contribute to the wider ambition for a healthier Brent, where people were supported to live independently, safely and with dignity, Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the Council's participation in a joint (collaborative) procurement exercise with the London Borough of Harrow ("Harrow Council") for the commissioning of statutory advocacy services, namely: Care Act Advocacy, Mental Health Act Advocacy (IMHA), Independent Mental Capacity Act Advocacy (IMCA) and Relevant Person's Paid Representative (RPPR).
- (2) To approve the Council acting as the lead authority for the purposes of the tendering of the Advocacy Services, including responsibility for conducting the procurement process on behalf of both authorities.
- (3) To approve the proposed joint commissioning arrangements and confirms that the procurement will be undertaken on the basis of the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.3.1 of the report and in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and applicable procurement legislation.

- (4) To approve the Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy, in consultation with the Corporate Director Finance and Resources and the Director of Law:
- agreeing and entering into the necessary inter-authority or collaboration arrangements with Harrow Council to give effect to the Council's role as lead authority; and
 - being authorised to take all necessary steps to progress and complete the procurement exercise.
- (5) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care to approve the award of the resulting contract following the completion of the procurement process.

12. Proposal to expand Phoenix Arch Special School onto the Strathcona Site

As the final agenda item, Councillor Rubin (Cabinet Member Children's Services, Employment and Climate Action) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development providing a summary of the informal consultation undertaken between March and April 2026 on a proposal to expand Phoenix Arch Special School by 50 places using the Strathcona site (Strathcona Road, Wembley) in response to increasing demand for special school places across the borough with approval being sought (taking into consideration the responses to the informal consultation) to move to a formal consultation on the expansion proposal.

In presenting the report, Councillor Rubin began by advising members how the proposal to move to the next stage of consultation on the expansion of Phoenix Arch Special School onto the Strathcona site reflected part of a wider commitment to ensuring that every child in Brent could access the education and support they needed to thrive as well as addressing the increasing level of demand for SEND provision. In Brent, this included more than 4,300 children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans, with a growing number requiring specialist provision and the proposal before Cabinet therefore designed to create an additional 50 specialist places for children with SEND.

As part of a wider context Councillor Rubin, in recognising the need for reform of the SEND system, welcomed the new direction being set nationally by the Government under their SEND reform programme which had been designed to reflect the need for both greater inclusion in mainstream schools and increased specialist provision for children with the highest levels of need. In terms of the proposal outlined, members were advised that the proposed expansion of Phoenix Arch School had been developed to reflect the same approach in helping to build local capacity enabling children to access the right support, in the right setting, at the right time and ensuring better support for those children with the highest levels of need, including access to more specialist and tailored teaching, therapeutic support and learning environments designed around their needs.

In addition, members were advised that the approach had also been designed to reduce the need for children within Brent to have to travel outside of the borough to access suitable placements. Highlighting the benefits of this approach, it was pointed out that the expansion of local provision would not only enable children to remain connected to their communities while reducing the burden on their families but would also help reduce the reliance on costly out-of-borough and independent placements, given the increasing pressure on both the High Needs Block and school transport budgets, ensuring that every child had the opportunity to succeed and get the best possible start in life.

In welcoming and commending the approach outlined, Cabinet (in considering the report) supported the proposed use of the Strathcona Site for the purpose outlined in terms of the delivery of high quality SEND provision recognising the level of demand across the borough and reputation of Phoenix Arch Specialist School as a provider. Whilst recognising the challenges in terms of addressing the increasing level of demand for SEND provision, members commended the proactive and innovative work of all involved in ongoing delivery of the SEND capital investment programme across the borough in seeking to meet that demand, along with the strengthening of support and inclusion across mainstream provision and difference being made to families as a result. Reflecting on the positive outcome from the informal consultation process members were also keen to highlight the level of engagement with the local community and support expressed for Phoenix Arch as the specialist provider reflecting the outcomes being delivered by the school.

Having considered the outcome of the informal consultation process and reaffirmed the commitment to ensuring that every child in the borough was equipped with the support needed to thrive, Cabinet therefore **RESOLVED** to approve a period of formal consultation, through publication of a statutory notice, on the proposal to expand Phoenix Arch primary school by 50 pupils through use of the Strathcona site.

13. Exclusion of Press and Public

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

14. Any other urgent business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 10.53 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair

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	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources
	Lead Member - Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Gwen Grahl)
Financial Outturn 2025-26	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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)	Rav Jassar, Deputy Director, Corporate and Financial Planning Tel: 020 8937 1487 Ravinder.Jassar@brent.gov.uk Amanda Healy, Deputy Director, Investment and Infrastructure 020 8937 5912 Amanda.Healy@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the 2025/26 financial outturn for the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the capital programme.
- 1.2 The General Fund recorded an overspend of £18.3m, representing an adverse movement of £5.8m compared with the Quarter 3 forecast reported to Cabinet in January 2026. This overspend has been funded from reserves earmarked to manage in-year pressures. The Dedicated Schools Grant overspent by £6.6m, which is £1.8m higher than the Quarter 3 forecast. The Housing Revenue Account reported a breakeven position. The capital

programme delivered expenditure of £215.4m, equivalent to 65% of the revised budget. The 2025/26 revenue budget also incorporated £20.4m of savings agreed by Full Council in February 2025.

- 1.3 The tables below summarise the outturn position for the General Fund, Dedicated Schools Grant and Housing Revenue Account.

Table 1: 2025/26 Overall Outturn

Service Area	Revised Budget	Actual Transactions	Over/(Under) Spend	Q3 Forecast
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Service Reform and Strategy	183.4	191.7	8.3	8.1
Children, Young People and Community Development	97.1	97.5	0.4	2.1
Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	31.8	30.1	(1.7)	(2.0)
Finance and Resources	33.7	33.3	(0.4)	(0.2)
Residents and Housing Services	32.8	44.5	11.7	4.5
Subtotal Service Area Budgets	378.8	397.1	18.3	12.5
Capital Financing	38.9	38.9	0.0	0.0
Central Budgets	18.6	2.4	(16.2)	(12.5)
Central Funding	(436.3)	(438.4)	(2.1)	0.0
Subtotal Central Items	(378.8)	(397.1)	(18.3)	(12.5)
DSG Funded Activity	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
General Fund Outturn	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total (GF, HRA)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

*DSG and HRA budgets have been presented as net figures in the table above. Gross income and expenditure budgets for the DSG and HRA are shown below.

Table 2: 2025/26 Outturn for the Dedicated Schools Grant

DSG gross income and expenditure	Budget £m	Overspend / (Underspend) £m	Q3 Forecast £m
Income	(250.6)	0.0	0.0
Expenditure	250.6	6.6	4.8
Total	0.0	6.6	4.8

Table 3: 2025/26 Outturn for the Housing Revenue Account

HRA gross income and expenditure	Budget £m	Overspend/ (Underspend) £m	Q3 Forecast £m
Income	(69.9)	(3.4)	(3.6)
Expenditure	69.9	3.3	5.9
Surplus/Deficit (Transfer to/from HRA reserve)	0.0	(0.1)	0.0

Table 4: 2025/26 Capital Outturn

Capital Board	Revised Budget	Outturn	Variance		
	£m	£m	(Underspend)/ Overspend	(Slippage)/ Brought Forward	Variance Total
			£m	£m	£m
Corporate Landlord	13.4	11.8	(0.1)	(1.5)	(1.6)
Housing GF	73.9	50.1	(17.2)	(6.6)	(23.8)
Housing HRA	27.6	18.3	(0.9)	(8.4)	(9.3)
Invest for Brent (I4B)	41.9	0.0	0.0	(41.9)	(41.9)
Public Realm	34.9	22.9	0.3	(12.3)	(12.0)
Regeneration	84.2	73.5	0.1	(10.9)	(10.8)
Children & Young People	25.5	20.5	0.2	(5.2)	(5.0)
South Kilburn	26.9	12.3	0.8	(15.5)	(14.6)
St. Raphael's	0.4	0.4	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)
Total	328.9	209.8	(16.8)	(102.3)	(119.1)

- 1.4 Overall, the General Fund overspend reflects continued and significant pressures in social care and homelessness services. Although the 2025/26 budget included growth to address rising demand and market driven cost

increases, activity levels and complexity exceeded expectations, resulting in overspends in these demand led areas.

- 1.5 Looking ahead to 2026/27, additional budget growth has been built into these services; however, material risks remain. Demand for services, cost inflation and increasing case complexity continue to place pressure on the Council's financial position. Managing these risks will be essential to achieving a balanced outturn for 2026/27. Further detail is provided in the Quarter 1 Financial Forecast and the Medium Term Financial Outlook, which accompany this report.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the financial outturn for 2025/26.

3.0 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1 This report sets out the Council's final financial position for 2025/26, covering the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the capital programme. It reflects another demanding year for local government, during which the Council was required to deliver £20.4 million of agreed savings while continuing to protect essential services and respond to rising demand. The General Fund recorded an £18.3 million overspend, which has been met from reserves set aside to manage in-year pressures. The Housing Revenue Account reached a break-even position, while the Dedicated Schools Grant recorded a £6.6 million deficit. These figures underline the importance of maintaining strong financial control, improving forecasting and ensuring that agreed savings and mitigations are delivered in full.
- 3.2 There are nevertheless important areas of progress. Historic debt fell by £23.7 million during the year, from £230.5 million to £206.8 million, representing the first overall reduction in five years. Council Tax collection improved to 91.6 per cent while Business Rates collection rose from 93.4 per cent to 94.1 per cent. These improvements reflect the work undertaken following the review of the Council Tax service, including additional capacity, more timely recovery action, better use of data and more targeted engagement with residents. This has been accompanied by support for those facing genuine hardship, with the Council awarding the full £1.5 million Hardship Fund to more than 13,000 households. Further improvement is required, but the direction of travel is positive and demonstrates that strengthened systems are beginning to produce results.
- 3.3 The Council also delivered £215.4 million of capital investment during 2025/26. This included investment in regeneration, roads, parks, public buildings, housing and additional places for children with special educational needs and disabilities. A particular achievement was the completion of 543 new council homes, including homes at Fulton Road, Watling Gardens and Grand Union Phase 2.

- 3.4 The overall position, however, remains concerning. Once again, the largest overspends are concentrated in our statutory services, particularly homelessness and adult social care, alongside continuing pressure within the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. Brent has an ageing population, with more residents requiring increasingly complex and costly packages of care. At the same time, private rents and temporary accommodation costs continue to rise in a city where housing remains unaffordable for far too many people. The Council will continue to invest in preventative services and the supply of affordable housing, but it cannot by itself reverse demographic change, reshape the national care market or correct the wider failure of London's housing market. The principal policy and funding levers in these areas remain with central government.
- 3.5 It is therefore welcome that the Government has committed to a different approach to local government finance, including greater certainty through multi-year settlements and a stronger recognition of need. That change of direction must now lead to a sustainable funding system for adult social care, homelessness and SEND, so that councils are not expected to meet national pressures from increasingly constrained local resources. Brent remains financially resilient and will continue to collect the income it is owed, challenge unnecessary expenditure and strengthen accountability across every service.

4.0 General Fund Revenue Outturn

Service Reform and Strategy

Table 5: 2025/26 Outturn for Service Reform and Strategy

Service Reform and Strategy	Budget £m	Overspend / (Underspend) £m	Q3 Forecast £m
Adult Social Care	125.7	7.0	8.7
Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building	16.1	2.9	(0.3)
Public Health	26.2	0.0	0.0
Leisure	1.8	0.3	0.3
Integrated Care Partnerships	0.2	(0.3)	0.0
Communications Insight and Innovation	12.8	(1.2)	(0.3)
Change Programme	0.7	(0.4)	(0.3)
Total	183.4	8.3	8.1

Summary

- 4.1 Service Reform & Strategy directorate has an overspend of £8.3m at the end of the year, an increase of £0.2m overall from the forecast position reported at Quarter 3.

Adult Social Care

- 4.2 Adult Social Care reported an overspend of £7.0m at year end. The Quarter 3 forecast had assumed an overspend of £8.7m based on the prevailing spend run rate. However, the final position improved by £1.7m following a detailed review of expenditure, which identified costs relating to the prior financial year. These costs were subsequently adjusted for centrally, resulting in a more accurate reflection of 2025/26 expenditure and reducing the reported overspend to £7.0m.
- 4.3 Adult Social Care expenditure in 2025/26 continues to be dominated by Physical Support services, reflecting the high volume of older adults and individuals with long-term physical conditions requiring care. Demand remains particularly strong for homecare, residential care and nursing support. This pattern of need has contributed to sustained increases in unit costs across the sector. Homecare hours have risen by 3.4% since 2024/25, while the complexity of need has driven significant uplifts in weekly placement costs, most notably for Residential Dementia placements (+40.1%) and Nursing Dementia placements (+10.9%).
- 4.4 These pressures have been compounded by wider cost drivers, including increases in National Insurance, the London Living Wage, and the rising cost of new placements. Collectively, these factors have intensified the financial strain on the Council's placement budgets.
- 4.5 Alongside Physical Support, Learning Disability Support represents the next largest area of expenditure. Costs in this area are driven by high-cost, long-term supported living arrangements and specialist care packages. During 2025/26, the number of Supported Living packages increased by 5.6%, with the average weekly cost rising by 9.5%. This reflects a growing cohort of individuals requiring 1:1 or 2:1 support, as well as increasingly complex behavioural and health needs.
- 4.6 The Council continues to spot purchase residential and nursing placements, supported by market intelligence from the North West London Dynamic Purchasing System to inform negotiation. While spot purchasing provides essential flexibility to meet increasingly complex assessed needs, it also exposes the Council to higher provider rates. As such, Brent, as with other Councils, has seen new placement average weekly costs increase significantly - for example residential care costs rising by over 26%. Average placements costs for new packages however remain within median level compared to North West London comparators. Feedback from providers indicates factors include responding to market inflation and compensating for low uplifts.
- 4.7 The scale of these cost increases, which exceed the growth assumptions built into the 2025/26 budget, has created significant challenges in delivering planned savings. Of the £4.8m savings required for the year, £1.3m remain unachieved. These include a review of housing related support contracts (£0.5m), implementation of Telecare Service Charging (£0.4m), increasing reablement services (£0.2m) and managing demand at the front door,

prevention and early intervention (£0.1m). These shortfalls reflect both the intensity of demand led pressures and the impact of market driven cost inflation.

- 4.8 The risks and issues experienced during 2025/26 have informed the development of strengthened approaches to tracking and forecasting spend and income for 2026/27. The directorate is implementing improved financial monitoring processes and targeted mitigation plans to support more accurate forecasting and ensure that the budget remains deliverable in the context of ongoing demand and market pressures.

Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building

- 4.9 The Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building service recorded an overspend of £2.9m in 2025/26. The majority of this pressure, £2.6m, arose within Commissioning and Contracts, with the largest contributing factor being higher than anticipated expenditure on Extra Care placements. Originally intended as a cost-effective alternative to residential care, complex extra care packages now frequently match or exceed traditional care home costs.
- 4.10 During Quarter 4, a detailed review of Purchase Orders was undertaken. This exercise identified expenditure that had not been captured in previous forecasts, resulting in a large adjustment to the year-end position. The findings highlighted weaknesses in the end-to-end Purchase Order process, particularly around reconciliation and the timely reflection of commitments within financial forecasts.
- 4.11 To mitigate the risk of recurrence in 2026/27, the directorate is implementing a more robust and systematic approach to Purchase Order management. This includes ensuring that all Purchase Orders are fully reconciled against the contracts register, strengthening the link between commissioning activity and financial reporting. Additional training will be provided to all budget holders to reinforce correct Purchase Order procedures and ensure appropriate use.
- 4.12 Further controls are being introduced for any expenditure falling outside approved contractual arrangements. Such spend will now require formal logging and explicit confirmation of agreement prior to commitment, providing an additional safeguard against unapproved or unplanned financial exposure.
- 4.13 To support stronger oversight, a Market Sustainability and Oversight Board has been established. This Board will provide enhanced scrutiny of commissioning activity, contractual compliance and market-related cost pressures. Its role is to ensure that only agreed and approved expenditure is incorporated into financial forecasts, thereby improving forecasting accuracy, strengthening financial assurance and supporting more effective budget management.

Public Health

- 4.14 The Public Health grant ended the year in a break even, unchanged from Quarter 3 forecast. Inflationary pressures in NHS-commissioned contracts were managed within the grant allocation and the closing balance on the ringfenced Public Health grant reserve is £10.4m.

Leisure

- 4.15 Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre officially closed on 31 July 2025, following an extended period of community consultation. As the budget was built based on an assumption of an earlier closure date, a £0.3m overspend has resulted from part-year running costs, unchanged from the Quarter 3 forecast.

Communications, Insight and Innovation

- 4.16 Communications, Insight and Innovation underspent by £1.2m, a £0.9m increase from the Quarter 3 forecast. The underspend is attributed to income overperformance (£0.5m), staffing underspends (£0.4) and proactive budget management. The Embrace Change Programme is also reporting an underspend of £0.4m, an increase of £0.1m since the forecast at Quarter 3, driven primarily by delayed recruitment.

Integrated Care Partnerships

- 4.17 Integrated Care Partnerships is also reporting an underspend of £0.3m, which was not forecast at Quarter 3, due to staffing contributions from other funding streams that have reduced the overall staffing spend.

Children, Young People and Community Development (CYPCD)

Table 6: 2025/26 Outturn for Children, Young People and Community Development

CYPCD - General Fund	Budget	Overspend / (Underspend)	Q3 Forecast
	£m	£m	£m
Central Management	2.8	(2.0)	(2.0)
Community Safety and Prevent	1.8	0.1	0.1
Communities and Partnerships	0.2	0.0	0.1
Employment Skills and Enterprise	(0.4)	0.0	0.3
Early Help	4.9	(0.4)	0.0

Looked After Children (LAC) and Permanency	6.8	0.1	0.1
Children With Disabilities	14.8	(0.2)	(0.2)
Safeguarding & Quality Assurance	2.3	(0.2)	(0.1)
Family Support & Child Protection	9.7	0.1	0.4
Forward Planning Performance and Partnerships	50.1	2.4	2.3
Inclusion	3.4	0.4	0.8
Setting and School Effectiveness	0.2	0.2	0.3
Virtual School	0.5	(0.1)	0.0
TOTAL	97.1	0.4	2.1

- 4.18 The CYPD directorate has closed the financial year with a General Fund budget overspend of £0.4m, which is £1.7m lower than the £2.1m forecast at Quarter 3. This improved position primarily reflects lower than anticipated cost pressures across the directorate, particularly within centrally held budgets and Early Help services, which are largely supported by external grant funding.
- 4.19 The improved outturn is mainly attributable to the strategic use of grant funding to offset expenditure, alongside the use of reserves and the management of staffing vacancies where feasible.
- 4.20 The overall budget pressure continues to be driven primarily by overspends within Looked After Children placement budgets, with the most significant cost escalation occurring in residential placements. Residential care remains the highest-cost provision, and increasing complexity of need, limited market capacity and rising provider fees have collectively contributed to the sustained financial pressure in this area.
- 4.21 Pressures against the placement budgets led to an overspend in the Forward Planning Performance and Partnerships (FPPP) department of £2.4m due to an increase in the number of children placed in residential care homes; with a significant increase seen in the second half of the financial year, as well as placements in secure accommodation.

- 4.22 The Inclusion service also faced budget pressures, resulting in an overspend of £0.4m. This was primarily driven by staffing cost pressures within the Educational Psychology and 0–25 SENAS teams, along with savings that were not achieved in relation to the planned reduction in contracts for targeted services.
- 4.23 The Setting and School Effectiveness service recorded an overspend of £0.2m. The main pressures arose within the music service, primarily due to lower than anticipated income from service level agreements and music provision to schools, as well as reduced funding from the ACE Music Education Grant and charitable donations.
- 4.24 The Family Support and Child Protection service reported an overspend of £0.1m, primarily driven by expenditure on client subsistence and recruitment and retention fees for social workers. Budgets for these costs are held centrally due to the variable and demand-led nature of this expenditure.
- 4.25 LAC and permanency is reporting an overspend of £0.1m, due to staff pressures in the Care Planning management team.
- 4.26 Budget pressures across the directorate were partially offset by underspends in several service areas. Early Help reported an underspend of £0.4m, primarily because the newly established Targeted Prevention Hub became operational only midway through the year. As a result, staffing expenditure was lower than anticipated during the initial implementation period. The Children with Disabilities service recorded a further underspend of £0.2m, largely driven by posts that remained vacant throughout the year. Recruitment challenges and the time required to fill specialist roles contributed to the reduced staffing spend. Similarly, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance reported an underspend of £0.2m, again attributable to vacancies held during the year. While these vacancies generated short-term financial benefits, they also highlight ongoing workforce pressures across the directorate. Collectively, these underspends helped to mitigate the overall financial pressure arising from significant overspends in placement budgets, particularly within Looked After Children services.

Savings

- 4.27 The directorate was required to delivery £4.6m of savings for 2025/26. Of these, £3.9m of the agreed savings were delivered, with the remainder planned to be delivered in 2026/27. In addition, the directorate identified and implemented further in-year savings measures, which are reflected in the reported outturn.

Residents and Housing Services

Table 7: 2025/26 Outturn for Residents and Housing Services

Residents and Housing Services	Budget £m	Overspend / (Underspend) £m	Q3 Forecast £m
Housing Needs and Support	14.0	11.7	4.5
Quality Assurance and Resident Experience Service	2.5	0.0	0.0
Private Housing Services	0.2	0.0	0.0
Residents Services	15.7	0.0	0.0
Housing and Resident Services Corporate Director	0.4	0.0	0.0
Total	32.8	11.7	4.5

Summary

- 4.28 The Resident and Housing Services is reporting a £11.7m net overspend for 2025/26. The overspend is fully attributable to the high level of pressures in the Housing Needs and Support service.

Housing Needs and Support

- 4.29 The Housing Needs and Support projected overspend has increased by £7.2m since Quarter 3. The 2025/26 budget uplift, alongside increased Homelessness Prevention Grant, was expected to cover prior-year pressures and new demand, however demand has risen significantly beyond expectations.
- 4.30 An initial £5m pressure was identified in Quarter 2, with limited movement at Quarter 3, followed by a sharper increase in demand and costs between November and March. This reflects continued growth in Stage 1 Temporary Accommodation demand, with no sustained stabilisation. The rise is partly linked to increased Section 21 evictions ahead of the Renters' Rights Act, with overall placement levels remaining materially above historic norms.
- 4.31 Housing Needs and Support continues to represent the most significant financial pressure within the department. By the end of 2025/26, Brent had received a total of 8,795 homelessness support applications, comprising 5,309 single individuals and 3,486 families. This equates to an average of approximately 169 new applications per week, highlighting the sustained and intense demand for housing services. This reflects a 40% increase compared with March 2025, when total applications stood at 6,281 (3,538 single individuals and 2,743 families). Demand for the service, and the associated cost pressures, therefore remains high.
- 4.32 In April 2026, there were 1,428 households in nightly paid accommodation, compared with 1,182 households in April 2025. This represents an overall increase of 9% since December 2025, when 1,312 households were in

accommodation, with approximately half of the annual increase occurring between Quarter 3 and Quarter 4.

- 4.33 Spending on homelessness prevention services has also increased as part of a focus on early intervention. While this results in higher short-term costs, the benefits of prevention are expected to reduce future demand for temporary accommodation and homelessness services over time, rather than delivering immediate savings.
- 4.34 Progress continues to be made in the key priority of decanting households living in the highest cost nightly paid Temporary Accommodation (TA) properties (B&B), into more affordable accommodation. The Council has also entered in a number of lease arrangements to achieve cost avoidance in comparison to more expensive B&B placements.

Quality Assurance and Resident Experience Service

- 4.35 The Quality Assurance and Resident Experience Service is projecting a break-even position, which is consistent with the Quarter 3 forecast.

Private Housing Services

- 4.36 Private Housing Services are projecting a break-even position, unchanged from the Quarter 3 forecast. Additional licensing income of £3m generated in-year was transferred to reserves in order to manage future years costs as licensing charges cover multiple years.

Resident Services

- 4.37 The Resident Services budget is projecting a break-even position, consistent with the Quarter 3 forecast. Higher than anticipated spend on the funeral service and printing costs were largely offset by additional income achieved by the Registration and Bereavement team as a result of a higher demand for services.

Housing and Resident Services Corporate Director

- 4.38 The Corporate Director budget is projecting to achieve a break-even position. This is consistent with the Quarter 3 forecast.

Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

Table 8: 2025/26 Outturn for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	Budget £m	Overspend / (Underspend) £m	Q3 Forecast £m

Public Realm	21.2	(2.0)	(1.8)
Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Action	2.3	(0.1)	0.0
Property & Assets	8.3	0.4	(0.2)
Total	31.8	(1.7)	(2.0)

- 4.39 Neighbourhoods & Regeneration are reporting an underspend of £1.7m for 2025/26. This is a change from the £2.0m underspend forecast at Quarter 3, with the largest movement coming from Property & Assets.

Public Realm

- 4.40 Public Realm are reporting an underspend of £2.0m for 25/26, compared to the underspend of £1.8m forecast at Quarter 3. This underspend position comes largely from the Healthy Streets & Parking Service, who overachieved on income, which enabled the containment of pressures elsewhere within the department.
- 4.41 The improved financial position from Healthy Streets & Parking came largely from operational improvements such as enhanced deployment planning, targeted enforcement activity, and increased late-night enforcement operations at identified hotspot locations. This resulted in higher levels of compliance activity and associated parking income through PCN issuance.
- 4.42 Regulatory Services were also able to overachieve on their projected income, which improved their forecast from Quarter 3. This was due to additional fee income generated from increased demand for licences and increase works performed by the pest control team.
- 4.43 Within Public Realm the waste service has experienced pressures due to a combination of high inflation on the contract price, property growth, ad hoc nighttime collection requirements, extra litter picking, and additional ground maintenance work performed. To enable management of these pressures, the service has continued the drive to improve the quality of recyclable material collected, which can be evidenced through less loads being rejected by the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) which dropped from 17.9% to 14.1%; or an additional 612 tonnes being recycled. The increase in recycling tonnage reflected a corresponding decrease in the residual waste stream tonnage.
- 4.44 The waste service continued its focus on increasing the diversion of food waste from the general waste stream; with the installation of 140 new food waste housing units and bins in housing estates. This led to 444 tonnes of food waste being collected. This year also saw the introduction of a trail for the collection of food waste from flats above shops (FLASH), which is a requirement of Simpler Recycling reforms. 63 units were installed on our high streets as part of the trial. Initial participation has been encouraging across the designated sites resulting in over 12 tonnes of food waste being collected. Once the trial has been concluded and the findings analysed, the FLASH collection service will be rolled out across the Borough.

- 4.45 Pressures which were experienced within both Highway Management and Parks, were able to be managed within the department. Highways had some pressure due additional pothole patching works required in year. And Parks costs increased towards the end of the year, as a result of a high volume of health and safety remedial tree works, emergency repair of water leaks, and additional spend on the repair of play equipment.

Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Action

- 4.46 Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Action are reporting an underspend of £0.1m which is a slight adjustment from the break-even position reported at Quarter 3.
- 4.47 The improved position is a result of additional savings offered by the Climate Action service due to a change in funding sources for their projects, with additional grant funding able to be utilised.
- 4.48 As has been previously reported Building Control's revenue generation has been impacted by a slowdown in major development appointments, largely driven by delays and cancellations linked to wider economic conditions. However, these pressures have been managed within the service in year. This is largely due to additional income from Planning fees, helped by the revised fee structure for 2025/26.

Property & Assets

- 4.49 Property & Assets are reporting a £0.4m overspend for 2025/26. This is in comparison to a £0.2m underspend which was forecast at Quarter 3.
- 4.50 The changed position from Quarter 3 largely comes from additional costs from within Facilities Management. The service were expecting pressures, as reported at Quarter 3, due to additional overtime costs in Cleaning and Security Services. However, additional revenue costs were identified in year in relation to repairs expenditure, which were required as part of the Facilities contract. This has led to the department reporting an overspend of £0.3m.
- 4.51 Commercial Property are reporting an overspend of £0.6m, this is largely as a result of vacant property and expired leases. Work ongoing to mitigate this through the active marketing of available properties, supported by collaboration with agents where necessary.
- 4.52 These overspends were offset within the department by an underspend on the Energy budget. Energy is purchased in advance through annual tranches; this enabled the department to take advantage in securing lower energy costs for the year.

Finance and Resources

Table 9: 2025/26 Outturn for Finance and Resources

Finance and Resources	Budget £m	Overspend / (Underspend) £m	Q3 Forecast £m
Finance Services	12.8	0.0	0.0
Organisational Assurance & Resilience	4.7	0.0	0.0
Shared Technology Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
Human Resources & Organisational Development	4.4	(0.2)	(0.1)
Legal Services	5.6	0.0	(0.1)
Democratic Services	6.3	(0.3)	0.0
Total	33.7	(0.4)	(0.2)

4.53 Finance & Resources are reporting an underspend of £0.4m for 2025/26. This is an improved position from the £0.2 underspend forecast at Q3.

4.54 The Human Resources & Organisational Development service is reporting an underspend of £0.1m, this is unchanged from the underspend forecast at Q3. This underspend is largely due to a review of the service structure, and the implementation of spending controls to scrutinise spend in the service. The introduction of the new Occupational Health contract also resulted in a cost reduction for the service in 25/26.

4.55 Legal Services are reporting a break-even position for 2025/26, which is a slight adjustment from the £0.1m underspend reported at Q3. This is due to a reduction in staff time spent on capital projects, resulting in additional staffing costs recorded as revenue spend.

4.56 Democratic Services are reporting an underspend of £0.3m, an improvement from the break-even position forecast at Q3. This underspend largely comes from a review of postage arrangements for the Council resulting in reduced costs. The outturn was also improved due to a reduction in the budget pressures forecast earlier in the year for the Complaints team.

4.57 The other services of Finance, Organisational Assurance & Resilience, and Shared Technology Service report a break-even position, which is unchanged from reporting at Q3.

5.0 Central Items

Central Budgets and Central Funding

5.1 Central Budgets contains the budgets for activities that are not attributable to specific service areas. This includes a central contingency held to manage in-year service pressures and provide flexibility for investment in Council priorities throughout the financial year.

- 5.2 Central Funding contains the budgets for the Council's core funding for the Council's services, consisting of Council Tax, Business Rates, Revenue Support Grant and specific central government grants, which includes part of the direct funding for Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care. In 2025/26, this did not include direct funding for Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation, which is included within Residents and Housing Services.
- 5.3 In 2025/26, Central Funding recorded a net underspend of £2.1m, as a result of an improved position on the Eight Authority Business Rates pool (which is not continuing into 2026/27 because of the Business Rates reset) and year-end adjustments on the Collection Fund. Central Budgets recorded a small underlying overspend of £0.5m due to one-off items, with the total net overspend for the Council at £16.7m.
- 5.4 To ensure that the Council met its statutory obligation to balance the General Fund revenue budget without adjusting the service area outturns, a drawdown of £16.7m from the Future Funding Risks reserve to Central Budgets was carried out. This generated a final net underspend of £16.2m on Central Budgets, which together with the £2.1m underspend on Central Funding offsets the £18.3m net service area overspend.

Council Tax

- 5.5 The net collectible amount for Council Tax for 2025/26 (after exemptions, discounts and Council Tax Support) as at 31 March 2026 was £238.7m.
- 5.6 The in-year target for 2025/26 was 92.5% collection of Council Tax, which is an increase of 1.3% on the 91.2% achieved in 2024/25. The actual in-year collection was 91.6% which is 0.4% higher than the amount achieved in 2024/25.
- 5.7 Following the identified need for significant improvement in Council Tax collection, an external review of the service was completed, highlighting key areas for operational and strategic enhancement. In response, the Council had implemented a structured Council Tax Improvement Plan for 2025/26, focusing on increasing in-year collection, strengthening recovery processes, and improving resident engagement.
- 5.8 During Q4, progress has included the introduction of additional capacity within the service, enabling a more proactive and timely approach to billing and recovery. This has supported the clearance of backlogs and improved processing times for current workloads. There has been an increase in the volume and timeliness of reminder notices and summons issued, supporting improved collection performance. Work has progressed on targeted interventions, improved use of data to prioritise cases, and enhanced support for residents through hardship and engagement initiatives, ensuring a balanced approach between maximising collection and supporting vulnerable households.

- 5.9 There has been a marked improvement in in-year collection during 2025/26. Overall collection levels were higher than in 2024/25, despite the fact that net collectable income increased by £23.2m over the same period. This demonstrates that the service has not only kept pace with the increased tax base but has improved its effectiveness in securing payments.
- 5.10 In addition to stronger in-year performance, arrears recovery has also improved. Taken together, these trends indicate that the changes implemented following the recent Council Tax service review are beginning to have a positive impact. While progress remains gradual, the direction of travel is clearly positive, and early evidence suggests that the strengthened processes and recovery approaches are contributing to more robust and sustainable collection performance overall.
- 5.11 At the meeting of Full Council on 27 February 2025, alongside the budget for 2025/26, an amended Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme from 1 April 2025 was approved. This introduced a standard 35% minimum payment for working age households and applied a percentage reduction to each of the income bands.
- 5.12 The end of year collection rate for those on CTS of working age is 78%, with 69% having made a payment towards their 2025/26 council tax bill. Until December 2025 the numbers making payment increased month on month following the dispatch of soft reminders in May and 7,134 formal reminders sent out in June 2025. Following the issue of reminders, cases where no payment was received progressed to summons stage, resulting in the granting of liability orders at court. While this strengthens the Council's ability to recover outstanding debt, a proportion of cases have moved onto deductions from benefits. In these instances, repayment rates are typically low, meaning balances reduce slowly and there is an increased risk of arrears carrying forward into 2026/27.
- 5.13 To offset the impact of the changes on the recipients of CTS, a Hardship Fund was agreed as part of the 2025/26 budget, providing £1.5m of support, £0.4m of which was funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA). The fund is targeted at working age CTS recipients who have exhausted other financial support options. By October 2025, take up was lower than anticipated and a review of the approach used to assess applications was undertaken. Since that point, a focused administrative effort resulted in 13,154 awards totaling £1.5m by the end of March 2026, helping residents, many paying Council Tax for the first time, move towards sustainable payment. With funding confirmed for 2026/27, this support will continue.
- 5.14 During the 2025/26 financial year, the budget for 2026/27 was set. As part of this, the Council calculated the taxbase for 2026/27. This included keeping the assumption of 97% long term collection due to the ongoing challenges with collection. Collection continues beyond the end of the financial year, but a lower in-year collection target increases the pressure on the debt recovery team to collect more of that debt and achieve the 97% long-term collection rate. Evidence suggests that debt becomes much harder to collect after two

years have passed, so the continued low in-year collection of Council Tax is a key risk to the Council's financial resilience in the medium term.

Business Rates

- 5.15 The budgeted net collectable amount for Business Rates (NNDR) for 2025/26 was £149.8m (after exemptions, reliefs and discounts). This was based on the forecast used for the NNDR1 form in January 2025 and has increased by 6.9% from £140.1m in 2024/25. This increase is largely driven by the Government's decision to reduce Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief from 75% to 40% from 1 April 2025.
- 5.16 The actual net collectible amount for NNDR as at 31 March 2026 was £149.3m, a decrease of £0.5m from the reported in Quarter 3. This is driven by additional empty properties and reductions in the gross rates payable by businesses.
- 5.17 Any movement in the net collectible amount for NNDR does not directly affect the General Fund in the current financial year as the overall resources that the Council receives from the Business Rates retention system are determined in the Local Government Finance Settlement. However, where the actual income to the Collection Fund is different to the budgeted amount, Brent's share of the resulting surplus or deficit estimated in January is distributed to or from the General Fund in the following financial year.
- 5.18 The reduction in business rates income resulting from the additional empty property relief is an unfunded relief, meaning that this will result in a deficit that will affect the budget. However, the Council holds a Collection Fund reserve for the purpose of smoothing out any surpluses/deficits on the Collection Fund. It is expected that this deficit will be contained within the available reserve.
- 5.19 The in-year target for 2025/26 was 94.5% collection of Business Rates, which is an increase of 1.1% on the 93.4% achieved in 2024/25. The actual in-year collection was 94.1% which is 0.7% higher than the amount achieved in 2024/25.
- 5.20 Included within the outstanding debt for 2025/26 are a number of significant unpaid business rates liabilities where active recovery work is ongoing. This includes several cases involving suspected Business Rates avoidance arrangements, for which the Council is currently pursuing legal remedies. In some instances, ratepayers are pursuing changes in property use that may result in lower rateable values and have subsequently challenged their Business Rates liabilities through the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). The investigation and resolution of such cases, including Checks, Challenges and Appeals (CCAs), can be lengthy where current VOA timescales average 180 days to complete. Despite these challenges, the Council remains committed to maximising collection and will continue to pursue all outstanding liabilities, taking appropriate recovery and legal action where necessary to ensure that businesses pay the rates for which they are responsible.

- 5.21 Collection performance continues to be impacted by external factors, most notably business rates avoidance schemes and the 2026 NNDR revaluation. Collection performance has been adversely affected by increased numbers of Checks, Challenges and Appeals (CCAs) submitted to the VOA following NNDR revaluation increases. Higher liabilities have affected some ratepayers' ability and willingness to pay, leading to requests for recovery holds pending VOA decisions. These delays defer collection activity, particularly on high value accounts and have impacted in year collection and arrears collection performance.
- 5.22 Based on historical data, the long-term collection target for NNDR is 98%. Historically, collection of arrears becomes significantly more difficult with each year that passes after the debt has been raised. Therefore, to achieve the long-term collection target, a marked improvement in the Council's collection of arrears must be seen quickly to make up for the lower expectations for in-year collection. It is also important for the Council to continue to make improvements to in-year collection, as this remains the best way of achieving the long-term target.
- 5.23 Furthermore, there remain a number of factors present in the economy which could have a negative impact on the ability of businesses to pay their Business Rates, such as high interest rates, the increase to employer's national insurance contributions and the reduction in consumer spending power as a result of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.
- 5.24 One key area of potential concern is the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) industry, which was particularly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic relief was provided to RHL businesses at 75% of the liability. In 2025/26, this relief had been reduced to 40% of the liability, more than doubling the amount of business rates these businesses must pay. The government has introduced two new multipliers for RHL from 2026/27 (Standard RHL Multiplier at 43.0p – 5.0p below the Standard non-domestic rating multiplier & Small business RHL multiplier at 38.2p – 5.0p below the Small business non-domestic rating multiplier), these changes will formalise the lower collectable income. Due to these permanent changes along with the revaluations, this could cause some businesses classed as RHL to be adversely affected as liabilities could increase at higher levels. The impact of this change on the affected businesses is being monitored closely and further updates will be provided in future reports.
- 5.25 The government has also introduced a 15% discount on all pubs & live music venues, trying to protect these businesses from closures due to increasing operating costs. Some of the major costs being utilities; staffing and inflation. Although the government has recognised the support needed here; there has been no indication in terms of support for other sectors/ businesses that are also struggling from these financial pressures.

Debt Recovery

- 5.26 During 2025/26, the Council achieved significant progress in reducing historic debt through the Income and Debt Improvement Programme. The figures relate exclusively to debt balances brought forward from previous financial years and exclude debt raised during 2025/26. The exception is Adult Social Care and Sundry Debt, where the reported figures include debt raised during 2025/26. The movement in these balances provides a clear measure of recovery performance and the Council's progress in reducing outstanding arrears.
- 5.27 Historic debt across the five debt streams reduced from £230.5m as at 31 March 2025 to £206.8m as at 31 March 2026, representing a reduction of £23.7 million. This is the first overall reduction in historic debt balances in five years and demonstrates the positive impact of strengthened recovery performance, enhanced debt management controls, and the delivery of targeted debt recovery initiatives throughout 2025/26.
- 5.28 The table below summarises the movement in debt balances across key income streams:

Table 10: Movement in debt balances

Debt Line	31 March 2023	31 March 2024	31 March 2025	31 March 2026
Adult Social Care	£18.3m	£23.0m	£28.4m	£31.7m
Council Tax	£63.1m	£75.4m	£84.3m	£71.2m
Business Rates	£31.2m	£36.7m	£41.0m	£32.4m
Sundry Debt	£19.6m	£23.4m	£24.5m	£23.5m
Housing Benefit	£53.0m	£58.4m	£52.3m	£48.0m
Total	£185.2m	£216.9m 	£230.5m 	£206.8m 

Aged Debt Write Offs

- 5.29 The Council remains committed to exhausting all reasonable recovery options before recommending any debt for write-off. In line with the Debt Recovery Policy, this includes issuing dunning notices, telephone and email engagement, senior management discussions, and, where appropriate, escalation to legal action, court proceedings and enforcement agents.
- 5.30 As part of routine financial management, outstanding debts are regularly reviewed to determine whether they remain recoverable. The write off of uncollectable debt is a standard accounting practice that ensures the Council's financial records reflect realistic expectations of income recovery.

- 5.31 Historically, the Council did not routinely write off bad debts annually. The increase in the value of debt written off in 2025/26 reflects investment in additional resources, enabling more thorough reviews and ensuring that genuinely irrecoverable or statute-barred debts are appropriately identified.
- 5.32 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, any single debt write off exceeding £20,000 must be reported to Cabinet. In addition, all write offs irrespective of value are reported to the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources to ensure full financial oversight, transparency, and audit compliance. For the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, the total value of debts exceeding £20,000 that have been recommended for write-off across all income streams amounts to £1,070,221.15, as summarised in the table below:

Table 11: Summary of write offs

Debt Type	Write Off Amount
Housing Benefit Overpayments	£987,257.67(24 Accounts)
Adult Social Care - Residential Care Charge	£82,963.48 (1 Account)
Total	£1,070,221.15

- 5.33 Housing Benefit Overpayment and Adult Social Care debt can accumulate to significant balances due to the nature of the client groups involved, who are often on low incomes, in receipt of benefits, vulnerable, or have limited capacity to repay outstanding liabilities. Recovery can be further constrained by changes in personal circumstances, including ill health, financial hardship, vulnerability, death, or disengagement from services, which can make collection activity both difficult and prolonged.
- 5.34 Unlike Council Tax debt, these debt types cannot generally be referred to enforcement agents under the Taking Control of Goods framework, limiting the range of enforcement options available to the Council. Furthermore, in many cases debtors do not own property or other significant assets against which the Council could seek to secure the debt through legal action, such as charging orders. This significantly reduces the prospects of recovery and restricts the Council's ability to pursue more robust enforcement measures. As a result, some debts may become uneconomical to pursue, have limited recovery prospects, or become legally irrecoverable. The Council is therefore required to periodically review and write off such balances in accordance with its debt management and accounting policies, ensuring that outstanding debt levels reported in the accounts present a realistic and prudent assessment of recoverable income.
- 5.35 All debts proposed for write-off have been pursued in line with the Council's Debt Recovery Policy. This ensures that all reasonable recovery options have been fully explored and exhausted prior to any recommendation for write-off. Any subsequent write-off is then processed in accordance with the Council's write-off procedure.

- 5.36 Despite best efforts, a small proportion of debt will inevitably remain uncollectable. Writing off such debt is recognised as good financial management and ensures that the Council's accounts remain accurate. The impairment for doubtful debt is reviewed annually to ensure it reflects the level of debt considered irrecoverable.
- 5.37 If debts that are no longer recoverable are not written off, they would continue to appear as outstanding, overstating the accounts receivable balance and misrepresenting the impairment required. Once a debt is deemed irrecoverable, it must be formally written off and the impairment adjusted accordingly to maintain accurate financial reporting and compliance with accounting standards.

Virements

- 5.38 Table 12 shows the virements which have been entered to adjust the budgets at Corporate Directorate level from November 2025 to the end of 2025/26. Cabinet are recommended to approve these virements.

Table 12: Virements and adjustments in 2025/26 budget between 31.10.2025 and 31.03.2026

	2025/26 In-Year Budget at 01.11.2025	In-year growth	Transfer of functions between services	Technical Adjustments	2025/26 Closing Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Service Reform and Strategy	182.1	1.3	0.0	0.0	183.4
Children, Young People and Community Development	97.2	0.0	0.0	(0.1)	97.1
Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	31.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.8
Residents and Housing Services	32.9	0.1	0.0	(0.2)	32.8
Finance and Resources	32.7	1.0	0.0	(0.1)	33.7
Central Budgets	16.0	(2.4)	0.0	0.1	13.7
Capital Financing	38.6	0.0	0.0	0.3	38.9
Core Funding	(431.4)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(431.4)
Total Budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

- 5.39 In-year growth items are budget movements from the Central Items budget to Departmental budgets which were not actioned at the start of the financial year. The table above includes the following in-year growth items added between November 2025 and the end of 2025/26:

- Permanent funding for salaries in Finance and Resources (£0.1m)
- Temporary funding for one-off pressures in Adult Social Care in Service Reform and Strategy (£1.3m)
- Temporary funding for salaries in Residents and Housing Services (£0.1m)
- Temporary funding to Finance and Resources for debt recovery improvement project (£0.6m)
- Temporary funding for salaries in Finance and Resources (£0.3m) - Complaints service.

5.40 Transfers of functions between services are budget movements between Corporate Directorates, which occur when a department is moved from one service to the other. The virement ensures that the department and the related budget remain together. The table above does not include any transfer of functions between services items added between November 2025 and the end of 2025/26.

5.41 Technical adjustments are budget movements resulting from events which are provided for in the MTFs, but only confirmed during the year (e.g. pay award), budget movements resulting from changes to processes (e.g. centralisation of budgets) or other budget movements between directorates resulting from changes to the Council's structure. The table above includes the following technical adjustment items added between November 2025 and the end of 2025/26:

- Adjustments to service budgets in respect of financing of the Capital Programme, previously agreed at Full Council (£0.3m Capital Financing, -£0.2m Residents and Housing Services, -£0.1m Children, Young People and Community Development, -£0.03m Finance and Resources)
- Temporary transfer of £0.02m budget from Finance and Resources to Residents and Housing Services for Customer Services
- Reprofiled to 2026/27 of previous temporary funding to Service Reform and Strategy from Central Budgets (£0.1m) due to recruitment delays

6.0 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

Table 13: 2025/26 Outturn for Dedicated Schools Grant by block

Funding Blocks	Overall DSG Funding 2025/26	Overspend/ (Underspend)	Q3 Forecast
	£m	£m	£m
Schools Block	126.0	(0.4)	0.0
High Needs Block	82.8	8.2	4.8
Early Years Block	44.1	(1.0)	0.0
Central Block	2.4	(0.2)	0.0
Total DSG	255.3	6.6	4.8

- 6.1 The DSG outturn for 2025/26 reports an in-year deficit of £6.6m compared to £4.8m reported at Q3 against the total funding allocation of £255.3m. The adverse movement is largely attributable to continued pressures within the High Needs (HN) Block, although this has been partially mitigated by underspends across the remaining blocks, including £0.4m within the School Block, £1.0m within the Early Years (EY) Block and £0.2m within the Central Block.
- 6.2 At the end of 2024/25, the cumulative DSG deficit stood at £13.6m, reflecting the sustained increases in demand for High Needs provision and ongoing pressures on top-up funding. Following 2025/26 in year deficit of £6.6m, the overall cumulative DSG deficit has now increased to £20.2m.
- 6.3 The EY Block outturn reflects a £1.0m underspend. In recognition of the potential refund of the EY Block funding to the Department for Education (DfE), a provision has been included within the 2025/26 financial year accounts. This reflects the expected adjustment arising from the final EY funding allocations, which are based on actual take up of the free entitlements as determined by the January 2026 census. The DfE is expected to publish the final allocations in July 2026.
- 6.4 The HN Block reported an overspend of £8.2m compared to £4.8m reported in Quarter 3. The increase in overspend is primarily driven by increase in the top-up funding for children placed in special schools and academies due to an increase in pupil numbers. There was an increase in the number of children requiring Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) which was 4,306 as at March 2026 compared to 3,892 as at March 2025, an increase of 10.6%. This led to increases in the top-up funding for in borough mainstream academies, special schools, placements in independent day special schools, alternative education for children awaiting placements as well as the post-16 provision.
- 6.5 The Schools Block surplus of £0.4m arose from underspends related to unused budgets earmarked for in-year pupil growth as well as underspends against the contingency budget which was not fully utilised.

- 6.6 The £1.0m under-spend against the EY Block is mainly driven from the additional funding from the DfE to cover the increase in provision of free childcare for working parents from September 2025 to 30 hours. This allocation was provided based on an estimated take up of hours by working parents in Brent. However, take-up has been lower than predicted by the DfE, leading to underspends of £0.6m reported against the under 2- to 2-year-old and the 2-year-old working parent entitlements.
- 6.7 EY Block funding is calculated using different census points depending on the entitlement type. Funding for the universal entitlements for all 3- & 4-year-olds, the additional entitlements for eligible working parents of 3- & 4-year-olds, and entitlements for 2-year-olds receiving additional support is based on January 2025 and January 2026 census. In contrast, funding for the working parents' entitlements for 2-year-old and under 2 is derived from termly headcount data from summer and autumn 2025 terms, together with the January 2026 census. As the final allocations are based on actual take-up of entitlements, there is a risk that the DfE may clawback once final census and headcount data is confirmed. An allowance has been made for the potential clawback, with final EY allocations expected to be published in July 2026.
- 6.8 The budgets held for central service also saw an underspend of £0.2m due to vacancies held throughout year and a reduction in spend towards the training offer. This budget included a contingency of £0.1m which was not utilised and contributed to the underspend.
- 6.9 The DSG deficit will be disclosed as an earmarked unusable reserve in line with DfE regulations (the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2023). The regulations make clear the requirement for any DSG deficit balance to be held within the local authority's overall DSG and carried forward to be funded from future year's funding and/or recovery plans agreed with the DfE. This also means that authorities cannot fund a deficit from the General Fund without the secretary of state's approval. The recent outcome of the SEND Review confirmed this arrangement will be in place until the end of the 2027/28 financial year.
- 6.10 2025/26, maintained school balances increased by £1.6m (£1.0m decrease last year) from £11.9m to £13.6m. Despite the overall increase, the underlying position reflects financial pressure driven by reduced income linked to falling pupil numbers particularly within the Primary phase. Of the 54 maintained schools, 31 increased their balances and 23 decreased their balances. Also included in this total are 8 schools in deficit and at the end of 2025/26, 4 schools that were previously in deficit recovered their deficit; however, 4 new schools have closed with deficit balances. School budgets remain under significant strain from rising costs, alongside funding reductions in some case due to falling pupil numbers on roll.
- 6.11 Brent provides targeted financial oversight and recovery support to schools that fall into deficit. The core support includes Licensed deficit arrangements, where the Councils may allow a school to operate with a licensed deficit if it

has a robust, council approved plan to repay the deficit, usually within three years. Support is also provided with deficit recovery planning, where finance and education improvement teams work with headteachers and governors to create, monitor, and review a detailed recovery plan. The Council uses a risk-based framework to track progress and intervene when needed.

7.0 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Table 14: 2025/26 Outturn for Housing Revenue Account

HRA gross income and expenditure				
	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Budget	2025-26 Actual	2025-26 Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
HRA				
Income	(70.3)	(69.9)	(73.3)	(3.4)
Expenditure	68.2	69.9	73.3	3.4
Total	(2.1)	0.0	0.0	0.0

- 7.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) outturn for 2025/26 is a break-even position, with the general HRA balance maintained at £4.5m. As summarised in Table 14, gross income of £73.3m was £3.4m higher than the £69.9m budget, offset by an equal £3.3m increase in manageable expenditure, leaving a £0.1m transfer to the HRA reserve. This represents a significant improvement on the £2.3m deficit forecast at Quarter 3, which would have drawn down reserves, and reflects additional rental income together with a number of favourable movements offsetting the in-year cost pressures set out below.
- 7.2 Sustained inflationary pressures and elevated interest rates continued to affect both revenue and capital expenditure during the year. Higher material and labour costs increased repairs and maintenance spend, while higher borrowing costs raised the cost of financing the capital programme. The break-even outturn was achieved by offsetting these pressures – most notably on repairs and interest – against additional rental income and the favourable movements described below.
- 7.3 Demand for repairs and maintenance services remained significantly above budgeted levels. A high volume of complex repairs, an increase in damp and mould cases, and the transition to new service contracts placed sustained pressure on the budget, alongside the new statutory obligations introduced by Awaab's Law, which came into force for the social rented sector on 27 October 2025. Outturn expenditure of £25.9m was £8.5m above the £17.4m budget (2024/25: £21.4m). The scale of the variance also reflects that the budget was set below the prior-year outturn, understating the level of demand experienced.
- 7.4 Supervision and management costs closed at £16.4m, a £0.9m underspend against the £17.3m budget. This reflects the capitalisation of officer time

attributable to capital projects and in-year vacancies, partially offset by additional resourcing associated with new housing stock and backlog reduction.

- 7.5 Rents, rates, taxes and other charges closed at £7.0m, a £1.3m overspend against the £5.7m budget. This arose across a range of areas, including decants, council tax on void and temporary units, and insurance.
- 7.6 Interest payable and similar charges closed at £14.0m, £2.0m above the £12.0m budget (2024/25: £10.9m), reflecting the rising cost of financing the HRA's Capital Financing Requirement in a higher interest rate environment. This is consistent with the net interest charge to the HRA calculated in accordance with Government regulations.
- 7.7 Total income of £73.3m was £3.4m above budget. This was driven principally by dwelling rents of £62.8m, £3.7m above the £59.1m budget (2024/25: £58.6m), reflecting the expanded asset base from additional properties brought into the HRA and the in-year rent uplift. Modest shortfalls on certain service charge and other income lines partially offset this favourable position.
- 7.8 The movement on the allowance for bad or doubtful debts was a £2.6m credit, against a budgeted £1.4m charge – a £4.0m favourable variance. This arises from the release of a provision previously held against leaseholder service charge debt that is no longer required. Tenant rent arrears nonetheless remain a risk to be managed, with collection performance monitored against the 98% assumption adopted in the HRA 30-year Business Plan.
- 7.9 A number of further movements supported the break-even position. The planned revenue contribution to capital was not required to be made in-year; a £3.1m gain was realised on the disposal of HRA non-current assets; and net provision movements, including those relating to the self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing, were broadly favourable. A £0.4m surplus before reserve movements was transferred to earmarked reserves.
- 7.10 The statutory outturn also includes significant non-cash entries, principally impairments and revaluation losses of £87.1m, together with a corresponding downward revaluation adjustment. These reflect movements in the carrying value of HRA assets and are reversed out in full through the adjustments between the accounting and funding basis. They have no impact on the HRA balance, on rent levels, or on the resources available to the service.
- 7.11 The general HRA balance was increased by £0.1m to £4.6m, compared with the substantial drawdown anticipated at Quarter 3 – an improvement of £4.6m in the in-year position. The Major Repairs Reserve increased from £3.6m to £7.2m over the year, after a £14.8m depreciation transfer and £11.2m applied to the capital programme, providing capacity to support future capital investment.
- 7.12 Looking ahead, the ten-year rent settlement (CPI+1%, equating to 4.8% for 2026/27) and the introduction of Social Rent convergence from 2027/28

provide greater income certainty to support investment in the stock. Significant cost pressures remain, including the phased expansion of Awaab's Law to further hazard categories from October 2026, continued investment to meet the Decent Homes Standard and Warm Homes commitments, and delivery of the improvement plan associated with the Council's C3 consumer standards grading and self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing. These factors will continue to shape the HRA Business Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

8.0 Capital Programme

- 8.1 The Council's Capital Programme is an ambitious five-year investment plan containing a variety of projects that facilitate the Borough Plan, for example by investing in regeneration projects for prosperity in Brent; road, parks and pavement improvements for a cleaner borough and delivering additional SEND places to give residents the best start in life. A particular highlight of the 2025/26 programme was the delivery of 543 new council homes. The 2025/26 – 2029/30 Capital Programme budget is £824.5m, financed from a combination of capital receipts, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), grants, contributions, reserves and external borrowing.
- 8.2 In 2025/26, the Council delivered £209.7m capital expenditure against a revised capital budget of £328.9m. The variance consists of £16.8m net underspend and £102.3m slippage. These figures include the capital outturn for i4B Holdings Ltd where the planned £40m loan and equity facility was not drawn down and is expected to be drawn down in 2026/27.

Table 15: 2025/26 Capital Outturn

Capital Board	Revised Budget	Outturn	FY Variance		
	£m	£m	(Underspend)/ Overspend	(Slippage)/ Brought Forward	Variance Total
			£m	£m	£m
Corporate Landlord	13.4	11.8	(0.1)	(1.5)	(1.6)
Housing GF	73.9	50.1	(17.2)	(6.6)	(23.8)
Housing HRA	27.6	18.3	(0.9)	(8.4)	(9.3)
Invest for Brent (I4B)	41.9	0.0	0.0	(41.9)	(41.9)
Public Realm	34.9	22.9	0.3	(12.3)	(12.0)
Regeneration	84.2	73.5	0.1	(10.9)	(10.8)
South Kilburn	26.9	12.3	0.8	(15.5)	(14.6)
Children & Young People	25.5	20.5	0.2	(5.2)	(5.0)
St. Raphael's	0.4	0.4	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)
Total	328.9	209.8	(16.8)	(102.3)	(119.1)

- 8.3 The level of slippage across the 2025/26 Capital Programme reflects the inherent complexity of delivering a large investment programme in a challenging operating environment. Ambitious NCIL and SCIL schemes received Cabinet approval later in the financial year, compressing the time available for delivery. The Council also faced national pressures beyond its direct control such as a constrained contractor market, changes to procurement law and new Government grants announced late in the year. More specific project factors are covered in the Board level commentary below.
- 8.4 Officers reviewed the governance of the capital programme in 2025/26 with the objectives of strengthening risk management, reducing slippage and streamlining processes. For 2026/27, the capital outturn reporting will follow the revised capital board structure. Public Realm and Corporate Landlord have been merged to a new Corporate Assets Board, whilst the reporting of the housing capital programme will be split between Affordable Housing Supply and HRA & Housing Management.
- 8.5 Of the final capital outturn of £209.7m, £100.8m was funded by prudential borrowing. This has a direct impact on revenue budgets through interest costs and minimum revenue provision (a prudent charge to revenue for the repayment of borrowing).

Corporate Landlord

- 8.6 Corporate Landlord, which comprises Retained Estates, Digital Strategy, ICT and Libraries, has a final outturn for 2025/26 of £11.9m against a revised budget of £13.4m. The variance of £1.6m consists of £1.5m net slippage and a £0.1m underspend. The underspend is driven by the Grove Park Pavillion refurbishment project not going ahead as Cabinet approved the potential sale of the building instead.
- 8.7 The £1.5m net slippage is mainly due to delays in appointing a suitable contractor for the Roy Smith House refurbishment project (£0.8m) and Energy Efficiency projects on Council buildings (£0.4m) where grant and Carbon Offset funding was only confirmed later in the year. Accelerated spend was reported on Digital Strategy (£0.3m) as the team has started to mobilise the Digital Strategy Roadmap programmes to deliver the anticipated cross-cutting savings.

Housing General Fund

- 8.8 Housing GF has a final outturn 2025/26 spend of £50.1m against a budget of £73.9m. The £23.8m budget variance is split between £17.2m underspend and £6.4m slippage.
- 8.9 Underspend of £17.2m is primarily driven by the temporary accommodation acquisition projects as the budgets were calculated at the price caps and savings have been achieved compared to them. In addition, due to a shortage of available properties at suitable prices, the Council has bought fewer larger

properties than planned under the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) and only 7 of the target 15 properties under the Council Housing Acquisition Programme (CHAPs). The £6.2m slippage across both projects is primarily for the completion of 8 LAHF properties in conveyancing at 31 March (CHAPs requires exchange by year end) as well as refurbishments of properties purchased in 2025/26. 31 properties were purchased under these schemes in 2025/26 providing much-needed temporary accommodation.

- 8.10 There is accelerated spend of £2.1m on Church End as the project nears completion. This is offset by £1.7m slippage on Disabled Facilities Grant adaptations and £0.6m on Empty Property Grant. There is a full pipeline of works for both schemes, and the team is confident both schemes will use their budgets in full in 2026/27.
- 8.11 543 units out of the anticipated 820 New Council Homes for 2025/26 were completed and handed over in year. This includes the completion of Fulton Road, Watling Gardens, and the Grand Union Phase 2 developments. The remaining housing projects – Clock Cottage, Alperton Bus Garage, Church End and Pharamond – are now anticipated to complete in 2026/27.

Housing HRA

- 8.12 Housing HRA has a final outturn 2025/26 spend of £18.3m against a budget of £27.6m with £8.4m of the variance attributable to slippage. The single largest cause of the slippage is £4.0m on Alperton Bus Garage relating to spend that will be recognised when the housing is handed over to Brent. Project completion has been delayed to 2026/27 due to delays from the developer.
- 8.13 Following a £3.9m overspend on the major repairs programme in 2024/25, improved financial control and careful prioritisation decisions, there is no net overspend on the programme in 2025/26, alleviating pressure on HRA revenue budgets. The £2.2m slippage includes £2.5m funded by the major repairs reserve (offset by £0.3m accelerated spend on Granville Homes remediation) that will provide a much-needed additional budget in 2026/27. Overspends from prior commitments on the Kilburn Square refurbishment (£4.1m) and an accelerated programme of voids works (£0.9m) and condition surveys (£0.4m) were offset by reduced expenditure on the Windmill Court refurbishment (£4.4m) and External Fabric Works (£0.9m). Despite these positive steps, this area of the programme continues to face major challenges due to the age of Brent's housing stock and the need to invest to address the issues identified in the self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing.

PRS I4B and First Wave Housing

- 8.14 The budget was set on the basis that Brent would provide a £40m loan and equity facility to I4B Holdings Ltd to continue their acquisition programme to deliver homes in the private rented sector. The new facility is expected to be drawn down in 2026/27.

Public Realm

- 8.15 The revised Public Realm 2025/26 capital budget of £34.9m represented a significant increase on the £18.1m outturn in 2024/25. This created challenges for delivery capacity, especially as many schemes are dependent on delivery with strategic partners or only received funding in the latter part of the year. As a result, total spend of £22.9m represents 65% of the total 2025/26 budget with £12.3m of slippage offset by £0.3m of overspend.
- 8.16 £3.9m of the slippage is from Health Streets & Parking programmes, notably on Wembley High Road transformation (£1.3m) due to delays in obtaining TFL approvals and the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project (£1.2m) which is still at the procurement phase. The £3.2m slippage is from delays on SCIL and NCIL programmes, including across Highways Maintenance, Public Safety CCTV and the Church End & Roundwood Green Corridors scheme. Other slippage includes £2.5m on parks and pitch improvements, £0.8m on waste vehicles and £0.5m on unspent Pride in Place Impact Funding where project activities have commenced in 2026/27.
- 8.17 Despite the challenges in the Public Realm programme, the additional investment has delivered significant, noticeable improvements to the Borough including significant footways reconstruction, carriageways resurfacing, secure cycle parking and green corridors.

Regeneration

- 8.18 The final outturn against the 2025/26 Regeneration capital budget of £84.2m was £73.5m with the variance largely attributable to £10.9m slippage. £6.7m of this slippage relates to Wembley Housing Zones as the discovery of a water leak has now delayed the expected completion of the 281 homes (141 affordable) to November 2026 from September 2026. The medical centres projects have a total slippage of £1.7m as discussions with the NHS are ongoing. Slippage in relation to Bridge Park Regeneration is £0.7m as a community group has appealed the decision made by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) not to list the site and this is delaying demolition works. The GLA granted an extension of six months for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund completion to September 2026 and therefore slippage on these projects now totals £0.2m.

South Kilburn

- 8.19 The South Kilburn programme shows a high-budget variance of £14.6m against the revised 2025/26 budget of £26.9m with £15.5m slippage offset by £0.8m overspend.
- 8.20 The overspend is driven by a £1.0m overspend on the Neville, Winterleys, Carlton House and Carlton Hall (NWCC) project to deliver 95 affordable units. The overspend arose due to historic discrepancies, including the exclusion of key costs such as EA fees and SCIL payments, alongside inaccurate actuals in the South Kilburn dataset. The team has now identified and reconciled these

issues, and steps are being taken to ensure future forecasts and reported budgets robustly reflect all financial commitments. In addition, Officers are currently preparing a safeguarding grant bid to the GLA to mitigate the impact.

- 8.21 The largest item of slippage is £6.7m on the District Heating Network due to a delay in awarding the contract after the tenders came back higher than expected. The preferred contractor has now been appointed, and a revised £36m budget has been agreed by Cabinet. In addition, there is slippage of £1.9m on the Carlton and Granville Centre refurbishment due to disputes with the contractor that are now resolved and £3.1m across the single delivery partner sites due to the rescheduling of rehousing activities as the procurement progresses.

Schools and CYP

- 8.22 The Children & Young People capital programme had a successful 2025/26 despite £5.2m of slippage offset by £0.2m of overspend. A large number of projects completed in year including the provision of over 200 new SEND places at the new Wembley Manor SEND School and 3 Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) at St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary, Newman Catholic College and Preston Park Primary. Other project completions included Brent Children's Care Home and the replacement of Northview Primary School Nursery as part of the Council's duty to maintain its school buildings.
- 8.23 Slippage of £5.2m predominantly relates to £4.9m on the SEND expansion programme as St Gregory's ARP (£2.5m) is now part of the Department for Education School Rebuilding Programme, extending delivery timetables, and £2.5m on the Welsh Harp Post-16 Centre as construction is scheduled for January 2027.

Capital Financing

- 8.24 The final capital financing revenue outturn position was £38.9m against a revised £38.9m budget with nil variance. This reflects a reduction in outturn compared to 2024/25 due to the impact of one-off adjustments in 2024/25, as well as savings achieved from slippage in the capital programme and completed housing schemes appropriating to the HRA. In addition, the Council was able to secure relatively low borrowing rates from its "little and often" approach to borrowing small amounts regularly to take advantage of temporary reductions in interest rates and ensure we do not hold more cash than we need.

9.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 9.1 There are no stakeholder and ward member consultation arising from this report.

10.0 Financial Considerations

10.1 This report sets out the financial position for the General Fund revenue budget, the Housing Revenue Account and the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2025/26. There are no direct financial considerations in noting this report.

11.1 Legal Considerations

11.1 There are no legal considerations arising out of this report.

12.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

12.1 There are no EDI considerations arising out of this report.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

13.1 There are no climate change or environmental considerations arising out of this report.

14.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

14.1 There are no HR or property considerations arising out of this report.

15.0 Communication Considerations

15.1 There are no direct communication considerations arising out of this report.

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director, Finance and Resources

Legal considerations provided by:

Pameel Crowther Newman

Finance considerations provided by:

Rav Jassar

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 Brent	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources
	Lead Member - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Gwen Grahl)
Quarter 1 Financial Forecast 2026-27	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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 A: Prudential Indicators
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Rav Jassar, Deputy Director, Corporate and Financial Planning Tel: 020 8937 1487 Email: Ravinder.Jassar@brent.gov.uk Amanda Healy, Deputy Director, Investment and Infrastructure Tel: 020 8937 5912 Email: Amanda.Healy@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the financial forecast for the General Fund revenue budget, the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme, as at Quarter 1 2026/27.
- 1.2 The Council's revised General Fund revenue budget for 2026/27 is £501.8m. There is a forecast overspend of £9.5m against the revenue budget at Quarter 1. If sustained until the year end, this would require a transfer from unallocated reserves. Equally, any overspend not dealt with in 2026/27 could

potentially carry over into the following year, therefore increasing the requirement for further savings whilst at the same time depleting the Council's reserves. The Council is taking a number of mitigating actions, including continuing to implement spending controls. If the overspend increases, further in-year savings may be required in order to contain identified pressures as much as possible.

1.3 The current budget also reflects £10.4m of savings agreed by Full Council in February 2026. In contrast to previous years, a new collaborative approach has been developed to address the Council's medium term financial challenge and identify sustainable savings. This approach focuses on identifying high-impact opportunities, including cross-directorate working, improving productivity, better use of digital solutions, and increasing income generation. An update on the progress towards delivery of the savings, including timelines, key risks and mitigating actions is included in the service area updates in Section four.

1.4 Budget pressures continue to be reported within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Although the new ten-year social rent settlement provides greater income certainty from 2026/27, increased demand and the rising cost of repairs and maintenance, now sharpened by new statutory obligations under Awaab's Law, together with the cost of addressing building-safety compliance following the Regulator's C3 judgement, mean that considerable savings and careful financial management remain necessary to maintain a balanced budget. Further details are set out in section 11. The Dedicated Schools Grant is forecasting an in year overspend of £18.2m, which would increase the cumulative deficit to £38.4m by the end of the financial year. Further details are set out in section 10. The Capital Programme is forecasting an outturn of £326.6m compared to a revised budget of £348.0m. Further details are set out in section 12.

1.5 The tables below show the forecast position against budget for the General Fund, Dedicated Schools Grant and Housing Revenue Account.

Table 1: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for the General Fund

	Budget	Forecast	Overspend / (Underspend)
	£m	£m	£m
Service Reform and Strategy	205.7	205.7	0.0
Children, Young People and Community Development	111.0	111.0	0.0
Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	36.5	36.5	0.0
Finance and Resources	32.7	32.7	0.0

Residents and Housing Services	62.3	71.8	9.5
Subtotal Service Area Budgets	448.2	457.7	9.5
Capital Financing	41.9	41.9	0.0
Central Budgets	11.7	11.7	0.0
Total Budget Requirement	501.8	511.3	9.5
Funding	(501.8)	(501.8)	0.0
Grand Total General Fund Budgets	0.0	9.5	9.5
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funded Activity	0.0	18.2	18.2
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Total*	0.0	27.7	27.7

*DSG and HRA budgets have been presented as net figures in the table above. Gross income and expenditure budgets for the DSG and HRA are shown below.

Table 2: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for the Dedicated Schools Grant

DSG gross income and expenditure			
	Budget	Forecast	Overspend / (Underspend)
	£m	£m	£m
DSG			
Income	(262.2)	(262.2)	0.0
Expenditure	262.2	280.4	18.2
Total	0.0	18.2	18.2

Table 3: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for the Housing Revenue Account

HRA gross income and expenditure			
	Budget	Forecast	Overspend/ (Underspend)
	£m	£m	£m
HRA			
Income	(84.4)	(84.4)	0.0
Expenditure	84.4	84.0	0.0
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 4: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for the Capital Programme

Portfolio/ Programme	Original Budget 2026/27	Revised Budget 2026/27	Current Forecast	FY Variance	
				(Underspend)/ Overspend	(Slippage)/Brought Forward
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Corporate Assets	50.1	61.5	56.8	(0.2)	(4.5)
Affordable Housing Supply	51.3	67.3	66.9	(0.4)	-
Housing HRA & Management	44.9	49.5	49.5	(0.0)	0.0
Regeneration	68.2	79.0	72.9	1.1	(7.2)
Child and Young People	34.3	30.2	30.2	0.0	-
South Kilburn	45.0	60.5	50.4	(2.8)	(7.3)
Grand Total	293.8	348.0	326.6	(2.3)	(19.1)

Current Economic Environment

- 1.6 Since the 2026/27 budget was agreed by Full Council on 23 February 2026, the wider economic situation has become more uncertain. Ongoing conflict in the Middle East has created volatility in global markets, particularly in energy prices. The full impact will depend on how the situation develops, but the immediate effect has been a rise in fuel costs and higher inflation.
- 1.7 CPI inflation increased to just over 3% in March before easing slightly to 2.8% in April. The Bank of England now expects inflation to remain higher for the rest of 2026 than previously forecast, compared with the February assumption of an average rate of 2.5%. Higher inflation increases the cost of delivering council services and creates a risk of overspending in 2026/27 compared with the budget agreed earlier in the year.
- 1.8 Interest rates also remain elevated at 3.75%, following the most recent cut in December 2025. In February, a gradual fall towards 3.25% was expected. However, with inflation now likely to stay higher for longer, interest rates may remain at current levels or even rise. This would increase the cost of borrowing to fund the Council's Capital Programme beyond the assumptions built into the February budget.
- 1.9 Residents in Brent continue to face significant financial pressures. The cost-of-living crisis triggered by the 2022 energy price shock has not fully eased, and the latest rise in energy costs is adding further strain on household budgets. If the economy slows, more residents may require support from the Council. Any increase in demand for support services would

place additional pressure on the Council's finances and reduce the resources available for investment in local services.

Maintaining Financial Control

- 1.10 The £10.4 million savings identified for 2026/27, developed in partnership with the Embrace Change Portfolio, were sufficient to balance the budget based on the forecasts available at the time the budget was set. However, as outlined in this report, the economic environment has become increasingly challenging, and is expected to place additional pressure on services during 2026/27.
- 1.11 Despite the considerable efforts of the Council to manage its financial position, the operating environment remains volatile, with relatively small changes in demand often resulting in significant financial pressures. This is particularly the case in Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care and Housing Needs, where increases in demand, complexity and the cost of provision continue to place pressure on budgets. The Council is also managing the impact of sustained provider inflation, alongside the continuing effects of the cost-of-living crisis on both expenditure and income streams.
- 1.12 The most significant forecast pressure is within the Housing Needs and Support service, where rising levels of homelessness and a shortage of suitable temporary accommodation are forecast to result in an overspend of more than £9.5m. Section 8 of this report sets out the Council's strategy for addressing these pressures.
- 1.13 In response to budget pressures experienced in recent years, the Council introduced a range of spending controls which successfully reduced expenditure and helped mitigate overspending. These measures included proactive vacancy management, tighter controls over agency expenditure and staff payments, and increased scrutiny of spending decisions across all directorates. These controls are now considered business as usual and have been embedded within the Council's day-to-day financial management arrangements to support effective budget control, financial resilience and sound decision-making.
- 1.14 However, spending controls alone are unlikely to be sufficient to mitigate the scale of the challenge. Therefore, with the exception of expenditure required to maintain health and safety, meet statutory obligations or fulfil contractual commitments, all other spending decisions will be subject to enhanced challenge and may be deferred where possible. Directorates will also be required to identify additional in-year savings, cost avoidance measures and opportunities to reduce expenditure wherever possible.
- 1.15 Progress against these actions, together with the financial impact achieved, will be reported regularly to Cabinet throughout the year. Delivering these actions will be challenging. However, they are considered necessary to restore the budget to a sustainable position and protect the Council's overall financial resilience. Officers and Members will continue to work collectively

to minimise the impact on residents while maintaining essential services within the resources available.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the overall financial position and the actions being taken to mitigate the issues arising.
- 2.2 That Cabinet note the prudential indicators for treasury management in Appendix A.
- 2.3 That Cabinet approve the virements set out in section 5.13 of this report.

3.0 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1 This report provides the first assessment of the Council's financial position for 2026/27. Regrettably, the General Fund is currently forecast to overspend by £9.5 million, while the Dedicated Schools Grant is forecasting an in-year deficit of £18.2 million. These figures are concerning at this early stage and underscore the need for close monitoring, strong financial control and further action. It is, however, important that all other service areas besides Residents and Housing Services are currently forecasting a balanced position. This reflects the additional investment made when the budget was set last year and the efforts of services to manage demand within the resources available.
- 3.2 The General Fund pressure is concentrated primarily in homelessness and temporary accommodation. Demand has continued to rise, alongside provider costs and private rents, despite an additional £8 million being added to the Housing Needs budget for 2026/27. This is not a picture of widespread overspending across the Council, but it is the consequence of a housing market in which suitable and affordable homes remain out of reach for too many residents. The Council cannot resolve those pressures alone, but it is taking practical action to reduce costs and improve outcomes.
- 3.3 During the year, 406 new social homes are expected to become available, helping more households move out of expensive temporary accommodation. We are not standing still, with the Council working at pace to reduce our exposure to high temporary accommodation costs, with 89 such households moved out of some of the most expensive accommodation. We also continue to make direct allocations of new council homes to those with the highest housing priority, which in turn has also unlocked significant savings. Adult Social Care and Children's Services are also currently forecasting balanced positions, and the opening of The Gardens children's home will help reduce reliance on costly external placements. Alongside this, the Council expects to continue delivering £324.6 million of capital investment in housing, regeneration, schools, SEND provision and neighbourhood infrastructure.
- 3.4 The most serious medium-term risk remains the Dedicated Schools Grant, with a further in-year deficit of £18.2 million currently forecast. The

Government's decision to provide grant support for 90 per cent of eligible high-needs deficits accrued up to March 2026 is a welcome and significant intervention, subject to approval of Brent's Local SEND Reform Plan. However, it does not remove the continuing pressure created by rising demand and the increasing cost of specialist provision. The Government's fairer funding settlement has strengthened Brent's position, yet homelessness and SEND continue to place considerable pressure on local budgets. Brent remains financially resilient and focused on delivery, but further national action is essential if councils are to protect statutory services while continuing to invest across the borough.

4.0 Revenue Detail

Service Reform and Strategy

Table 5: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for Service Reform and Strategy

Service Reform and Strategy	Budget (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Overspend / (Underspend) (£m)
Adult Social Care	144.6	144.6	0.0
Change Programme	0.7	0.7	0.0
Communications Insight and Innovation	12.3	12.3	0.0
Integrated Care Partnerships	0.2	0.2	0.0
Leisure	1.8	1.8	0.0
Public Health	28.5	28.5	0.0
Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building	16.1	16.1	0.0
Strategy and Partnership (Reform)	1.5	1.5	0.0
Total	205.7	205.7	0.0

Summary

- 4.1 The Service Reform & Strategy (SRS) directorate's budget for 2026/27 includes £2.3m of savings and £25.3m of growth. Of the growth allocation, £12.3m relates to inflationary pressures, while £8.2m reflects demand-led growth across Adult Social Care and Strategic Commissioning, driven by demographic change and rising market costs.
- 4.2 At this early stage of the financial year, the directorate is forecasting a breakeven position by year-end. However, a significant proportion of the budget funds demand-led care packages, where activity levels and unit costs can fluctuate throughout the year. As such, the forecast remains subject to a number of risks and uncertainties, which are outlined in the following sections and may impact the financial position as the year progresses.

Risks and uncertainties

Adult Social Care, Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building and Integrated Care Partnerships.

- 4.3 There remains a number of risks and uncertainties which could impact on the budgets within the SRS department. These include the following:
- 4.4 Demand for social care services has been increasing as people live longer, complexity of needs increases and as children transition into adult social care services. In the 2025/26 financial year, the number of service users increased by 6% from the previous year. Although the increase in client numbers has reduced to 1% by the end of May, there has been an increase in the average costs as new packages are around 14-16% more expensive than those ending due to complexity of need and rising market prices, meaning that even with stable or declining placement numbers, overall expenditure continues to rise. When setting the budgets for 2026/27, growth for both demography and inflation were factored in. Any increases above the modelled growth could cause budget pressures and as such, the trends for both are being carefully monitored with focused attention on higher cost packages.
- 4.5 In comparison to the 2026/27 modelling for Adults Placements that informed budget setting, at Q1 the trend indicates that homecare demand has been reduced but the demand for supported living and residential care have increased as with clients with more complex needs being placed, indicating a potential risk of £3.5m overspend if this is not mitigated. The service is taking a number of proactive steps to strengthen oversight of demand and manage market pressures more effectively. This includes strengthening the decision-making process with a multi-disciplinary panel and reviewing high-cost packages of care to ensure that the level of care is appropriate for the clients, with exploration into alternative solutions also being made, whilst prioritising the well-being of the client.
- 4.6 Recruitment and retention of staff remains a risk nationally in the social care sector. The sector continues to be faced with high staff turnover and vacancy rates. The shortage of qualified staff can have detrimental effects on the care provided to adult service users and added stress on existing staff. The national shortage of care workers has changed the workforce model across social care leading to a reliance on agency staff that are more costly compared to permanent staff. Management continues to focus on agency to permanent conversions as part of its workforce planning strategy and to maintain stability for the clients, with over 20 conversions over the last year. An internal realignment of staffing was also undertaken to better align the structure to Brent's priorities.
- 4.7 Partnership working with the NHS is a key factor in management of finances within the social care sector, with linkages between the Council and NHS for Section 117 and Continuing Healthcare (CHC) clients. This relationship has seen significant improvement during the last year, and the continuation of this

progress will be important to ensure that any financial pressures can be mitigated early on.

Public Health

- 4.8 Public Health is forecast to break even against the 2026/27 budget of £28.5m. The budget reflects the ring-fenced Public Health Grant allocation, including funding now consolidated within the grant for drug and alcohol services and smoking cessation.
- 4.9 Although reported within the main Public Health Grant, these funding streams remain subject to separate monitoring and reporting requirements. Finance and the service will need to track spend against the relevant grant categories, including Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery Improvement Grant (DATRIG) and Stop Smoking activity.
- 4.10 There is an emerging risk from the new sexual health contract, where costs may increase depending on the final contract and demand assumptions. This will be monitored closely and the budget pressure will be managed within the allocated grant funding.
- 4.11 The Public Health reserve balance carried forward into 2026/27 was £10.4m, with £3.6m planned to be drawn down this financial year to various projects including support to the community health and wellbeing strategy, place leadership, family wellbeing centres and knife crime prevention. This will continue to be managed in line with the ring-fenced grant conditions and the reserve plan has been updated to support agreed priorities.

Leisure

- 4.12 Leisure is currently forecast to break even at Quarter 1. The position remains financially sensitive due to reliance on income generation, contract performance and inflation-linked costs. Bridge Park remains closed for 2026/27, reducing the overall leisure offer and placing greater reliance on maintaining income and participation levels across the remaining sites.
- 4.13 Willesden Sports Centre remains the principal financial risk within the Leisure Services forecast for 2026/27. The budget for the year includes provision for the underlying PFI pressure, following the full utilisation of the historic smoothing reserve. Despite this provision, the service continues to manage a number of ongoing risks associated with the PFI arrangement. A formal review of the contract and financial position has now been completed, and work is underway to implement actions aimed at mitigating the budget pressures identified. This includes strengthened contract management, improved financial oversight and closer monitoring of operational performance. Given the scale and complexity of the PFI arrangement, the financial position will be closely monitored throughout the year, with updates provided as part of the Council's regular budget reporting cycle.

- 4.14 Vale Farm is now operating under a new agency contract arrangement. The Quarter 1 forecast assumes the contract operates within the agreed financial parameters, with performance monitored against the guaranteed minimum return and monthly income and expenditure statements.

Communications, Insight and Innovation

- 4.15 Communications, Insight and Innovation is currently forecast to break even at Quarter 1. The service includes Change and Customer Insight, Communications, Digital Strategy and ICT Solutions, including Brent's funding for the Shared Technology Service.
- 4.16 Key risks for 2026/27 include the delivery of savings and securing income opportunities within the conference and events team.

2026/27 Savings

- 4.17 The SRS budget includes savings of £2.3m for 2026/27, to be delivered through a combination of income maximisation, workforce efficiencies, commissioning and procurement savings, digital initiatives and wider service efficiencies. At Quarter 1, delivery is broadly on track, although a number of key dependencies and risks have been identified and continue to be actively monitored. Management focus will remain on confirming delivery timelines, achieving income targets, evidencing reductions in contract expenditure, validating workforce-related savings and implementing mitigating actions where there is a risk of under delivery.

Summary of Key Assumptions

- 4.18 Table 6 summarises the main assumptions made in the forecast which could have a significant impact if there are changes.

Table 6: Summary of key assumptions in forecast for Service Reform and Strategy

Key Assumption	Downside if worse	Upside if better	Mitigations
Increases to the cost of social care packages above what has been modelled, with client numbers remaining in line with what was modelled	Due to increasing demand for supported living and residential placements rather than homecare placements there is a risk of £3.5m over the modelled forecast	If high cost packages can be reviewed to decrease costs to below the modelled cost of care packages this will result in costs less than what was anticipated	The Council is working closely with the service providers and provides robust challenge of individual package costs based on evidence as part of placement reviews.

Increases to social care client numbers above what has been modelled, with package costs remaining in line with what was modelled	Additional budget pressures should there be clients beyond those modelled as part of the MTFS.	Client numbers falling below those modelled would reduce the cost to the Council.	The Council is working on developing PowerBI tools to allow for better monitoring of placements. Consistent monitoring and reporting will be made to facilitate early identification of pressures so mitigating actions can be taken.

Children, Young People and Community Development (CYPCD) (General Fund)

Table 7: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for Children, Young People and Community Development

CYP Department	Budget (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Overspend (Underspend) (£m)
Forward Planning, Performance & Partnerships	58.3	58.3	0.0
Inclusion	3.0	3.0	0.0
Setting and School Effectiveness	0.2	0.2	0.0
Virtual School	0.7	0.7	0.0
Early Help	6.7	6.7	0.0
LAC and Permanency	7.1	7.1	0.0
Children with Disabilities	14.9	14.9	0.0
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	2.3	2.3	0.0
Community Development	1.4	1.4	0.0
Family Support and Child Protection	9.6	9.6	0.0
Community Safety & Prevention	1.9	1.9	0.0

Employment Enterprise and Migration	0.3	0.3	0.0
Central Management & Grants	6.0	6.0	0.0
TOTAL	111.0	111.0	0.0

Summary

- 4.19 The Children, Young People and Community Development (CYPCD) directorate's budget for 2026/27 includes £1.6m of savings and £6.7m of growth. Of the growth allocation, £2.1m relates to inflationary pressures, while £4.6m reflects demand-led growth for children's placements. The budget also includes £4.49m of new Social Care grant funding. (See paragraph 5.12).
- 4.20 At this early stage in the financial year, the Quarter 1 forecast indicates a break-even position for the CYPCD General Fund. However, as the year progresses, financial pressures may emerge, particularly within children's placement services.

Detailed Narrative

- 4.21 The main financial risk within the Forward Planning, Performance & Partnerships (FPPP) service relates to the cost of children's placements, particularly residential care and secure placements for young people.
- 4.22 In recent years, the Council has seen an increase in high-cost residential placements during the second half of the year, creating additional financial pressures. The 2026/27 budget includes growth funding of £6.4m to reflect expected demographic and inflationary pressures and allows for some increase in placements later in the year. The most significant financial impact is likely to arise from new residential placements and secure placements for young people who are remanded. The growth allows for an increase of 6.2 residential placements (on a full-time equivalent basis or FTE) and an overall increase in numbers across the LAC and Children with Disabilities population of 64 FTE.
- 4.23 The placements budget is influenced by several factors beyond residential care numbers. These include changes in the number and cost of other placement types, variations in grant income and external contributions (such as funding for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children), and the number of young people requiring secure placements following serious offences.
- 4.24 The current forecast assumes that the placements budget will break even by year-end. This projection is based on scenario modelling of current placement numbers and placement types and includes an allowance for a net increase of five residential placements above the 48 placements recorded at the end of April. However, demand for placements can fluctuate significantly during the year. Based on current assumptions, the final outturn could range from an underspend of £1.4m if residential placement numbers reduce and remain at

44 throughout the year, to an overspend of £3.2m if placement numbers increase to 58, based on an average annual cost of £374k per placement.

- 4.25 Measures are in place to help manage these risks. The Council's new children's home, The Gardens, is now operational and is expected to accommodate some children during the year at a lower cost than equivalent private sector provision. Children's care plans continue to be reviewed and challenged at Director level to ensure that placements remain appropriate to assessed need. In addition, the Council is working with West London partner authorities to increase the availability of local authority-run residential provision across the sub-region, which will provide further placement options in the future.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport

- 4.26 At this stage in the financial year, the SEN Transport expenditure is expected to remain within the allocated budget of £15.8m. Although the number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) continues to grow, the successful implementation of the Travel Assistance Policy Implementation Plan (TAPIP) has contributed towards managing the cost of this service at a sustainable level.

Risks and uncertainties

- 4.27 Adult Education and Other Service Pressures

There is a potential financial pressure arising from a reduction in the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) grant provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. This reduction coincides with increased staffing, supplies and service delivery costs. A review is currently underway to identify mitigating actions, including securing additional external funding opportunities and controlling expenditure where possible. There is also a risk that planned savings linked to the reduction of contracts for targeted services may not be fully delivered.

- 4.28 Integrated Care Board (ICB) Funding Contributions

There remains a significant financial risk arising from disputes and delays in agreeing cost-sharing arrangements with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for complex care packages. In a number of cases, engagement with the ICB has not resulted in timely resolution, leading to prolonged uncertainty over funding contributions and increasing pressure on the Council's budgets. For 2025/26, income contributions from the ICB totalled £1.3m; however, delays in agreement continue to impact financial planning and expose the Council to potential unfunded costs.

- 4.29 Legal Costs

There is an ongoing financial risk associated with judicial review cases and significant legal costs arising from age assessments for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. These costs are inherently difficult to predict and

have varied considerably, ranging from approximately £300k in both 2023/24 and 2024/25 to £75k in 2025/26. Any resulting financial pressures in the current year will be managed within the overall budgets held by the directorate, which may constrain other areas of spend.

4.30 Children's Social Care Transformation Funding

CYPCD has secured significant new government funding through the Families First Partnership (FFP) programme. This includes £4.49m Children's Social Care Transformation Fund, in addition to the existing £1.4m Children's Social Care Prevention Grant. Together, these funding streams provide an important opportunity to strengthen early intervention and preventative services, including targeted early help, children in need support, and child protection activity. The FFP programme for 2026/27 marks a shift from transformation planning to implementation and service delivery, with all local authorities and safeguarding partners expected to have fully operational reformed services in place by March 2027. The updated April 2026 guidance introduces monitoring indicators and explicit data duties to track the rollout of Family Help and Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPT). The programme aims to deliver long-term improvements by expanding access to coordinated early intervention for families, reducing care entry rates, and lowering dependence on high-cost external residential placements.

2026/27 Savings

- 4.31 The directorate is required to deliver £1.6m of savings in 2026/27 as part of the Council's wider budget strategy. These savings are expected to come from a range of measures, including improved grant management, stronger procurement and contract management, rationalisation of lower-value expenditure, greater use of technology and automation, tighter control of agency costs, a review of fees and charges, and improvements to customer access and service delivery.
- 4.32 At this stage of the financial year, the service is confident that the majority of these savings can be delivered. However, overall savings for the directorate are particularly challenging due to the demand-led and volatile nature of the children's placements budget.
- 4.33 £0.4m of the directorate's allocated savings is currently assessed to be at risk, primarily relating to savings linked to digital transformation and commissioning and procurement activity. Further work is underway with relevant stakeholders to develop and implement plans to secure these savings. If these savings cannot be fully delivered, this would create an in-year overspend. Any such pressure would be reflected in the next quarterly financial update, and appropriate management actions will be taken to maintain overall financial control.

Summary of Key Assumptions

Table 8: Summary of key assumptions in forecast for Children, Young People and Community Development

Key Assumption	Downside if worse	Upside if better	Mitigations
LAC and Care Leaver placements forecast assumes numbers of 823 FTEs and unit costs reflect current trends. Forecast allows for 53 residential placements by the end of the financial year.	An increase in the number of high cost residential or secure placements would place additional pressure on the budget. e.g., an increase by 5 placements in year could cause an additional pressure of £1.9m.	Increased step-down arrangements result in falling number of residential placements. A single stepdown from a residential placement to a semi-independent placement could reduce expenditure by c£0.2m in-year.	Ongoing review of packages for best outcomes and focus on stepdown arrangements to support children to transition from residential to foster and/or semi-independent placements. Supporting the transition of care leavers to their own tenancies, to improve outcomes and independence. Innovative support and partnering with Health for CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing, among other preventative measures. Use of the Council- run care home
Health contributions for CYP placements and Children with	The cost will not be mitigated by these contributions in	It will assist in mitigating overall net spend.	Maximising joint funding approaches with health to ensure

Disabilities (CWD) packages will be lower than the 2025/26 levels.	proportion to the overall demand.		contributions to placement costs where applicable.
Assume numbers of SEN clients requiring transport do not increase significantly and the take up of Travel Assistance is in line with expectations	An increase in the numbers would place additional pressure on the budget	Underspend in the budget	Tracking and monitoring KPIs through SEN Transport Boards. Continuing contract monitoring

Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

Table 9: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	Budget (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Overspend / (Underspend) (£m)
Public Realm	25.7	25.7	0.0
Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience	2.5	2.5	0.0
Property & Assets	8.3	8.2	0.0
Total	36.5	36.5	0.0

Summary

- 4.34 Neighbourhoods and Regeneration Directorate are currently forecasting a breakeven position at Quarter 1.
- 4.35 The 2026/27 budget includes growth funding awarded to the department of £6.8m. This includes £3.8m to account for the expected inflationary and demographic impact on contracts within the department, and an additional £3m investment in Public Realm and Street Cleansing. This Public Realm investment is designed to deliver clearer and more visible improvements in cleanliness across the borough. The budget also reflects the savings target for the directorate of £2.5m.

Risks and uncertainties

- 4.36 Within Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience there are pressures on income generated by Building Control and Planning.

- 4.37 Building Control income targets were set when income from major projects and market share were significantly higher. Since the introduction of the Building Safety Act (BSA) in October 2023, Higher Risk Building applications must be made to the Building Safety Regulator and charged on a cost recovery basis. This change, alongside reduced major development activity, has resulted in a sustained and structural reduction in income that is unlikely to reverse under the new regulatory regime. There is a legal requirement for Building Control income to be applied in line with CIPFA guidance, with some income ringfenced to specific activities and non-chargeable functions expected to be funded through the General Fund. The current income target therefore requires review for current and future years to ensure continued alignment with CIPFA guidance and the legislative framework. Workforce capacity presents a further risk. The service faces ongoing recruitment and retention challenges due to a sector wide shortage of qualified surveyors, with some vacancies remaining unfilled. In addition, the workforce profile is ageing, increasing the risk of loss of specialist expertise and further pressure on service delivery and income generation. The service is actively working to mitigate these pressures in 2026/27 through various measures. Mitigations are already underway, including reviewing recruitment and retention approaches, developing clearer career pathways, and improving market competitiveness through job description and market supplement reviews. Further options, including alternative delivery models such as commissioning, are being explored; however, these are medium term measures and will take time to implement. While government funding has been announced to support training and capability development, the impact of these initiatives is expected to be gradual due to the scale of sector wide challenges.
- 4.38 Planning and Development services continue to face similar pressures, with application and pre-application fee income remaining lower due to the ongoing economic climate. No changes to the fee structure are proposed for 2026/27, and current arrangements will therefore continue, providing a stable position for the service during the year. Income from the Land Charges team is expected to remain a sustainable source of support for Planning and Development. Looking ahead, planning fee reform for local authorities may be introduced in future years; however, these proposals are still under consultation, and the financial impact is not yet clear.
- 4.39 Within Public Realm, the Service Development and Contracts Performance service are expecting a pressure from additional business rate liability from changes in depot operations. Ad-hoc waste contract costs are being monitored closely due to ongoing demands on the service to collect additional waste, the removal of graffiti, and increased new container requests. The service is adapting an improvement strategy through campaigns, promotion of waste diversion and increase recycling participation to absorb some of the above pressures within allocated budgets.
- 4.40 Focus for waste programmes in 26/27 include the roll-out of services required to comply to Simpler Recycling requirements such as the roll-out of food waste collection to flats above shops and properties on North Circular Road as well as the collection of flexible plastics. Other key projects include the roll-out of

twin stream recycling to all 1,400+ communal properties, alongside improvements to bin infrastructure, signage, and containers. A dedicated project team will be established to ensure delivery, performance management, and long-term embedding of improvements. This will ensure that Brent is compliant with the required recycling policies but also improve the recycling performance leading to reduced disposal costs on residual waste.

- 4.41 A strong focus will be placed on driving sustained behaviour change and improving material quality. Key initiatives include expanded education and engagement activity across schools, estates, faith, and community groups. The programme will aim to increase participation, reduce contamination, and improve capture rates across all material streams. In parallel, the service will be enhanced through consistent free provision of reusable recycling sacks for paper and card, food caddies, and caddy liners. Collectively, these initiatives are designed to deliver measurable improvements in recycling performance while ensuring the service remains accessible and aligned with future national requirements.
- 4.42 Within waste contracts upcoming priorities for 2026/27 will centre around a program of works to utilise Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) funding to support the transformation of waste and recycling services. Funded for this was first allocated in 2025/26, with a further £5.3m expected to be received in 2026/27. The proposed approach is to allocate funding across a balanced programme.
- 4.43 Property and Assets must secure replacement tenants for properties with expired leases and current vacancies in order to achieve income targets. To address this risk, the service continues to actively market available space and engage external agents where appropriate. Ongoing cost pressures also remain within Facilities Management, particularly due to overtime requirements across Cleaning and Security services. Mitigating actions are in place, with any underspends within Property and Assets helping to offset these pressures.
- 4.44 Based on the current forecasts of energy prices from the Council's energy supplier, which is based on the contracts they have already bought for future energy supply, Property & Assets are expecting energy costs to the Council to fall in 2026/27. The current estimate is an underspend of £0.6m, which will help reduce the anticipated pressures across Property and Assets.

2026/27 Savings

- 4.45 As part of the savings programme for 2026/27, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration are required to deliver £2.5m of savings. Savings were identified within efficiency and income maximisation programmes, and also departmental specific savings.
- 4.46 Within the directorate specific savings, there are some risks to delivery:

- NR01 26-27 Lane Rental - It was expected the Lane Rental scheme would come into operation in Autumn 2026 and immediately generate income for the Council. There are delays to this scheme whilst its approval transfers from DfT to the London Mayor, and it is now unlikely to be operational and generate any income in 2026/27.
- NR02 26-27 – Asset utilisation. A number of options were considered for this saving, with the final one identified as looking to establish Padel Courts within the Borough. The delivery model of this scheme has yet to be confirmed which is leading to delays. This brings a risk to its income generation ability to achieve the saving.

4.47 The department expects to be able to mitigate these savings in 2026/27, which will ensure that the directorate's full saving commitment is achieved.

Summary of Key Assumptions

Table 10: Summary of key assumptions in forecast for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

Key Assumption	Downside if worse	Upside if better	Mitigations
That newly implemented in-year savings can be achieved. This also assumes that the service would otherwise have broken even.	If the savings are not achieved, it will put pressure on the Council's overall budget.	There are significant pressures on the Council's overall budget, so if further savings are achieved to will go towards alleviating this.	Work has already begun to implement the savings. And alternative proposals are sought where not fully achievable through the original proposal.
Building Control is able to mitigate pressure on its income generation.	In 25/26 the department reported a £630k overspend, without mitigation the same could occur.	The department is able to generate more income providing additional revenue to the Council.	Cases arriving through the BSR are being closely monitored to ensure accurate forecasting. A reserve was created in 2023/24 to mitigate pressures whilst a longer term plan is implemented. In 2026/27 there is £340k remaining.

Recycling performance will improve and material prices for the recyclates will be in the forecast range.	There is a £529k difference between the central and worst case when modelling the cost of the recyclate reprocessing budget.	If recycling improves it will reduce the cost of waste disposal, leading to a rebate on forecast charges. Based on prior years this could be up to £500k.	The monthly data around tonnage, rejections and market prices for recycling are closely monitored. With ongoing work to improve recycling performance.
The waste contract has some variable elements which are paid for as used, for example winter maintenance. It is assumed that usage will be within the expected range.	This is demand led service can create a financial pressure for the service due to severe winter weather.	The expected budget for this element would not be utilised. This could then be used to cover pressures within the service which are mentioned above.	The service is aware of the costs of the variable elements. The volume is therefore closely monitored to ensure that the usage is appropriate.

Finance and Resources

Table 11: 2025/26 Quarter 1 forecast for Finance and Resources

Finance and Resources	Budget (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Overspend / (Underspend) (£m)
Finance Services	11.9	11.9	0.0
Organisational Assurance & Resilience	4.8	4.8	0.0
Shared Technology Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
Human Resources & Organisational Development	4.3	4.3	0.0
Legal Services	5.5	5.5	0.0
Democratic Services	6.2	6.2	0.0
Total	32.7	32.7	0.0

Summary

- 4.48 The Finance & Resources directorate is reporting a breakeven position at Q1.

Risks & Uncertainties

- 4.49 Within Democratic Services, the Complaints department has been noting a significant increase in the volume of complaints received. This puts significant pressure on the staffing of this service to ensure the complaints are resolved. Growth funding has been received to increase the capacity of the team, which will be monitored to ensure it is sufficient to reduce the workload pressure.
- 4.50 The Insurance service has experienced pressure in recent years due to changes to schools' insurance, with competition from a government backed insurance programme. Also, inflation is having an impact on the cost of insurance, due to claims for injuries with the increased values of personal injury settlements, and the cost of vehicle repairs from vehicle damage claims relating to footways and highways. A review of claims will be undertaken to ensure the budget is sufficient for the expected claims.
- 4.51 Shared Technology Services (STS) is expected to breakeven, the costs for Shared Technology Services are split between Brent, Southwark and Lewisham, so income is equal to expenditure for STS. The Brent IT service is managed with the Service Reform and Strategy directorate.

2026/27 Savings

- 4.52 The directorate is required to deliver £1.5m of savings in 2026/27. These savings have all been identified within the directorate as part of the savings programme and include measures across the themes of commissioning & procurement, digital programme, efficiency and workforce.
- 4.53 Work is progressing to ensure saving plans are implemented and at Q1 all saving are expected to be achieved in 2026/27. In particular, with commissioning savings, contracts have been reviewed to ensure the necessary amendments are made to ensure the saving is deliverable in year. On the digital programme, projects are progressing to confirm the proposals that will be implemented which will enable the saving to be delivered in 26/27. Where any savings are not achievable through their original proposal, the department will look for other opportunities to ensure the total savings are still delivered.

Residents and Housing Services

Table 12: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for Residents and Housing Services

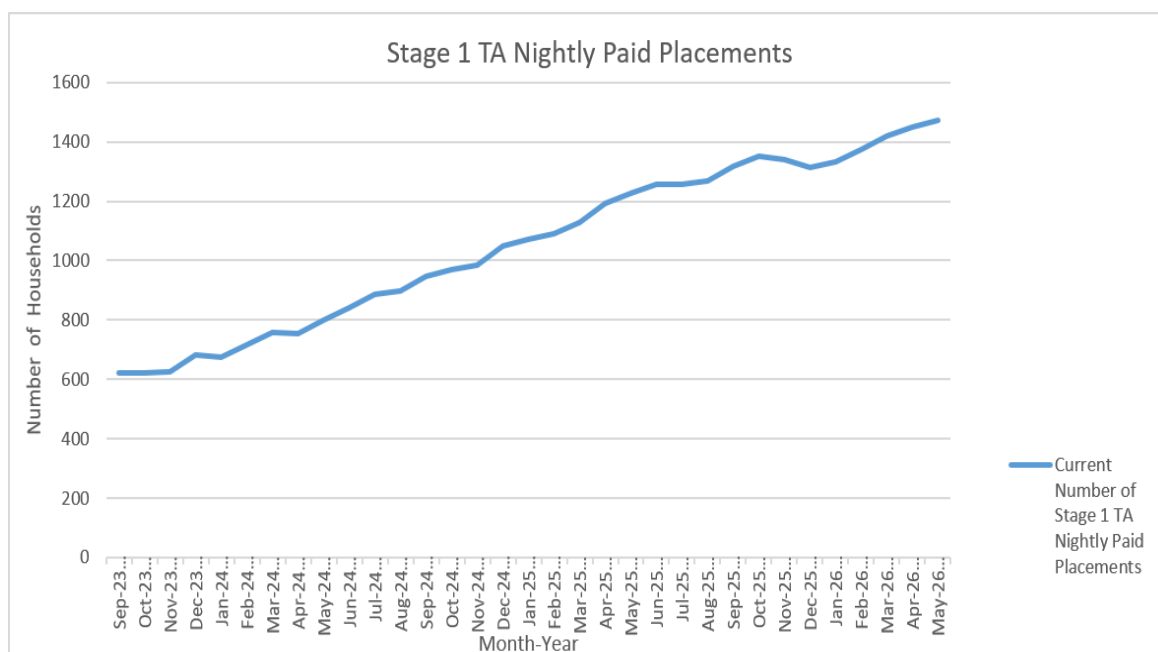
Residents and Housing Services	Budget (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Overspend / (Underspend) (£m)

Housing Needs and Support	37.2	42.2	9.5
Housing Partnership and Tenant Engagement	2.5	2.5	0.0
Private Housing Services	0.1	0.1	0.0
Residents Services	22.4	22.4	0.0
Housing and Resident Services Corporate Director	0.1	0.1	0.0
Total	62.3	71.8	9.5

Summary

- 4.54 The Residents and Housing Service department is currently forecasting a £9.5m overspend for the financial year 2026/27. Significant pressures continue to be experienced by this directorate, largely in the Housing Needs and Support service. While mitigation plans are in place, delivery risks remain, particularly in relation to housing supply and market conditions.
- 4.55 The Housing Needs and Support budget overspent by £11.7m in 2025/26 due to an extremely high level of demand for this service and a lack of affordable Private Rented Sector (PRS) offers. In 2026/27, £8m of growth was built into the base budget, to deal with continuous pressures and demand. Accordingly, this places the 2026/27 budget in a £3.7m overspend position at the outset. Projections and forecasts for 2026/27 are continuously under review, modelling the current demand and costs in comparison to projected trends and movements.
- 4.56 In April 2026, there were 1,428 households in nightly paid accommodation, compared with 1,182 households in April 2025. This represents an overall increase of 9% since December 2025, when 1,312 households were in accommodation, with approximately half of the annual increase occurring between Q3 and Q4. As a result, the 2026/27 financial year begins with a projected overspend of £3.7m, with revised demand for 2026/27 estimated to cost a further £1.9m above initial assumptions.
- 4.57 Since the budget was set in February, there have been continued inflationary pressures, particularly relating to provider costs, although the scale remains subject to ongoing review. The original assumption of a £1.4m increase for 2026/27 reflected the best estimate at that time; however, more recent information suggests average costs have risen by around £10 a night per placement. Based on current activity levels, this could result in expenditure being up to £3.9m higher than initially anticipated for 26/27. These figures remain indicative and will continue to be monitored as part of regular financial updates.
- 4.58 Demand continues to increase in the nightly paid accommodation cohort. There has been an overall increase of 2% (30 households) in the use of nightly paid accommodation since the beginning of the financial year, in line with the

increase observed in 2025/26. While this represents a slower rate of growth compared to previous periods, the substantial increases seen in prior financial years have resulted in a significantly high baseline of households in Stage 1 accommodation. This, coupled with increases in nightly rates from current providers, remains a concern. The slower rate of growth is a direct result of the recent influx of new-build social housing, which has been available for allocation to homeless households.



- 4.59 The Council is expecting 406 new properties to be added to its portfolio during 2026/27 as part of the capital program. These are mostly HRA properties, some of which may house people in temporary accommodation, depending on allocations, therefore alleviating pressures on this service. In 25/26, of the 265 social housing allocations made to homeless households from the properties at Clearwater, Aneurin Bevan Court, and Fulton Road, 162 were direct offers targeting individuals in the most expensive forms of temporary accommodation. These households were prioritized based on their placement in higher priority bands (A and B), with the aim of reducing overall accommodation costs. The remaining 103 properties were allocated through Locata via the Choice-Based Lettings (CBL) system. These were offered to households who submitted bids and are in the highest priority banding, with allocations made in order of longest waiting time. The absence of mandatory auto-allocations for households in the highest priority bands within the Locata system continues to be a limiting factor in managing housing demand effectively. The options for implementing this approach are being explored. An annual cost saving of approximately £4.8m could be achieved on stage 1 accommodation as a result.
- 4.60 If the remaining social housing homes within the current pipeline are made available with an average occupancy of 3 months during the financial year and used to target the households in the most expensive forms of temporary accommodation, this could result in a cost avoidance of circa £1.8m in

2026/27. However, due to the increasing level of demand, the number of households in TA and the associated costs, there is a risk that this benefit could be counterbalanced.

- 4.61 In addition, if a household is moving out of a leased TA unit into the new council accommodation, then the void will be used to decant a family from Stage 1. However, if there is less than six months left on the lease, and the owner does not renew, which has been the case as more landlords are leaving the PRS market, a hand back will be required. Therefore, there is no void to use for a decant resulting in no cost avoidance.

New Supply of Temporary Accommodation & PRS

- 4.62 The increase in supply for new temporary accommodation is achieved by seeking new accommodation via acquisition or leasing.

Acquisition:

- 4.63 While 42 properties have been successfully acquired under the LAHF programme, the transition to bringing these homes into active use has progressed more slowly than anticipated. Following acquisition, some properties have remained vacant due to a combination of process-related delays and timing constraints associated with the utilisation of grant funding. This has led to further pressures on temporary accommodation provision into 2026/27, as households remain in nightly paid accommodation awaiting move-on opportunities. To mitigate this going forward, the team are implementing strengthened reporting and monitoring arrangements and are reviewing end-to-end processes to support a timelier progression from acquisition to occupancy.

4.64 Leasing

Various leasing options continue to be assessed to secure cost-effective nightly paid placements. However, negotiations, assessments and evaluations require time.

- 4.65 To help accelerate progress and strengthen commercial negotiations, Greenlight Commercial & Consulting have been engaged to support this workstream with a number of lease proposals in review. Greenlight also work to decant the top 100 most expensive nightly paid placements to cheaper accommodation. To date, 89 moves have been completed, resulting in a cost reduction of approximately £3,742 per night.
- 4.66 Greenlight sourced over 300 units that are due for completion in 2026/27, with occupancy expected to be staggered throughout the year. These are 10-years plus one day leases, enabling the full LHA rate to be recovered under the housing benefits subsidy rules.
- 4.67 Private Rented Sector Acquisitions - I4B Holdings Ltd

I4B Holdings Ltd continue with an acquisitions program and are on track to deliver 19 street property acquisitions to allow for discharge of duty to households from the housing waiting list into PRS. They regularly review the viability of new build/block purchases which could provide significant numbers of accommodation for the company. This route continues to provide steady investment in cost avoidance measures to mitigate our housing waiting list which currently saves the Council circa £6m per annum on stage 1 accommodation costs.

- 4.68 In April 2024, a new model of support for Brent residents was developed for three years through the piloting of Cost-of-Living Outcome Based Review (OBR) projects and guided by a series of design principles. The approach has a single, joined-up model including the Community Wellbeing Programme aligned with the Resident Support Fund (RSF), to support residents to be more resilient in the longer term and aligns closely with strategic priorities and related projects. The RSF supports the Council's approach towards addressing key community needs through strategic funding and partnerships, ensuring impactful and sustainable support for residents. £1m of recurring funding has been allocated in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to support this model.
- 4.69 Other services within the department are also projecting to achieve a break-even position for the year. The 2025/26 budget has been set considering assumptions around future demographic changes, the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis and inflationary trends. It is based on these assumptions and current trends that the Residents and Housing Services department is forecasting to achieve a balanced financial position. However, there are risks and uncertainties that could impact the year's final financial outturn position.

Risks and uncertainties

- 4.70 Housing Needs and Support continues to represent the most significant area of within for the department. This is primarily driven by an exceptionally high and sustained level of demand for housing services and emergency accommodation, a challenge that is experienced nationally but particularly acute within London. As of the end of 2025/26, Brent received 8,795 homelessness support applications, including 5,309 from single individuals and 3,486 from families. This volume equates to approximately 169 new applications per week, underscoring the sustained and intense demand for housing services. This level of demand reflects a 21% increase compared to the 7,285 applications recorded during the 2024/25 period, with the need for housing support and associated costs remaining elevated. Despite the reduction in overall households, the volume of individuals and families requiring assistance continues to place considerable strain on resources, leading to sustained high costs for the provision of services. The Renters' Rights Act 2025 has now become law and whilst it is anticipated that some landlords will exit the private rented sector market, resulting in a possible increase of homeless applications, it is anticipated the new legislation will have an overall positive impact on homelessness demand. This is because the ban on Section 21 'no fault' evictions in the private rented sector, scheduled to be

implemented on 1 May 2026 means that all new possession claims will have to proceed under Section 8 instead. Landlords will be able to serve a Section 8 notice for reasons such as rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, selling the property or where a close family member needs to move back in. However, there will need to be clear evidence to support the grounds, and the claim can still be contested by the tenant. Projections will be updated once more data becomes available on the impact of the legislation.

- 4.71 Given that these challenges are experienced across London, the availability of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) and annexe accommodation is severely limited throughout the capital. This shortage of suitable accommodation is driving reliance on higher-cost providers and, in some cases, placements outside of Brent. Such arrangements not only increase financial pressures due to elevated accommodation costs but also impose additional burdens on families, including increased travel expenses for children attending schools in Brent.
- 4.72 The supply of settled TA properties, leased from private landlords and intended to transition families out of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) and annexe accommodation, has also declined. This reduction is primarily driven by a decrease in the procurement of new properties under Private Sector Leasing (PSL) schemes, coupled with landlords opting not to renew leases on existing properties upon expiration.
- 4.73 A targeted programme of work has been established to address and contain the projected overspend. Multiple workstreams have been initiated, focusing on improving the affordability of temporary accommodation and exploring new and alternative housing supply options. Council officers are proactively renegotiating contract prices and identifying alternative solutions to relocate some of the highest-cost cases, with the objective of reducing overall expenditure within the Housing Needs service. Officers continue to rigorously assess and manage homelessness applications to prevent or relieve demand where possible. In the 2025/26 financial year, 67% of homelessness approaches were successfully prevented or relieved.
- 4.74 In the 2026/27 financial year, i4B is continuing its street property acquisition programme with an initial target of acquiring 19 homes. i4B, a housing company wholly owned by Brent Council, was established to acquire, let, and manage a portfolio of affordable, high-quality PRS properties. These properties are leased to homeless families at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, enabling the Council to prevent or discharge homelessness duties, thereby reducing reliance on temporary accommodation and associated costs while ensuring families have access to secure and responsible landlords. i4B remains self-financing, with the current portfolio generating annual savings in temporary accommodation costs. This self-financing portfolio generates annual savings exceeding £6m by reducing reliance on temporary accommodation. While new builds and acquisitions alone will not fully resolve the homelessness challenge, the Council is actively utilising its available resources and powers to expand housing supply. Any additional supply

secured through i4B will contribute to mitigating the risk of overspending and help manage future housing costs.

- 4.75 In addition, supported exempt accommodation properties continue to create financial pressures for the Council and represent a budgetary risk for 2026/27. Unlike other landlords, providers of supported exempt accommodation are not bound by Local Housing Allowance (LHA) caps and can charge higher rents once they demonstrate that support services are being provided. Housing Benefit subsidy levels depend on Rent Officer determinations, which are based on the rent claimed by providers. This issue reflects a national challenge, highlighting the need for clearer regulation regarding the criteria that providers must meet to qualify as Supported Exempt Accommodation. Greater clarity on what constitutes minimal care would enable a more consistent approach to assessing individual support needs across the sector. Historically, costs associated with supported exempt accommodation have not posed a significant budgetary pressure for the Council and have been managed within corporate central budgets. However, an overspend of £2.1m occurred in 2025/26 and this area of spend being carefully monitored.
- 4.76 A dedicated working group has been established within the Council with the objective of minimising opportunities for exploitative landlords to enter the Supported Exempt Accommodation market. The group has developed a clear strategy outlining the Council's processes for reviewing both new landlords seeking to join this market and those already operating within it. Senior managers have met with the providers with the greatest subsidy loss to the council to discuss options to reduce this loss. The reviews process will also assess individuals' support care needs and verify that providers are delivering the appropriate level of care. This strategy and reviews process should bring the cost of SEA under control and, in time, should lead to cost avoidance and/or savings. The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 introduced a number of important reforms to the supported housing system, with a particular focus on reforming supported exempt accommodation (SEA). The strategy introduced the Government's requirement of councils to develop a local supported housing strategy by end of 2026/27. It also introduced the Government's intention to introduce a dedicated supported housing licensing scheme that Councils would be asked to deliver. To address this the Council has established a dedicated working group to focus on developing a clear strategy. This will involve reviewing both new and existing landlords and verifying the adequacy of care provision. The Council continues horizon scanning to ensure alignment with emerging regulatory requirements and to inform future operational and financial planning.

2026/27 Savings

- 4.77 A total of £2.6m in savings is planned to be delivered from the department's budgets in 2026/27. Savings delivery across the service areas is progressing broadly in line with planned timelines, with all proposals supported by defined delivery approaches and clear accountability. Income generation initiatives, including Registration, Cemeteries and Licensing, are performing positively, supported by uplifted fees and increased demand.

- 4.78 Workforce-related efficiencies, particularly agency control measures, are being realised through strengthened governance and recruitment to permanent roles, reducing reliance on temporary staffing. Programme-based savings, such as the Resident Experience Board, are advancing, with benefits emerging incrementally as implementation is embedded, though these continue to require close oversight to ensure full financial realisation. Demand-led savings linked to the shift from Housing Benefits to Universal Credit have progressed. However, the Housing Benefit team's caseload remains high due to residual Housing Benefit work and a slight rise in Council Tax Support assessments. The team is monitoring impacts on assessment timescales, and mitigations include recruitment to vacancies and automation. Efficiency savings allocated per service level are largely on track, with delivery plans in place and monitored regularly. Commissioning and Procurement savings arising from long term temporary accommodation leasing deals are in line with planned timelines.
- 4.79 The original plan to deliver £270k of savings through the Xantura platform is no longer viable for 2026/27 due to development delays and increased integration costs; instead, savings will be achieved through enhanced early intervention by increasing staffing capacity within the Family Wellbeing Centres to prevent homelessness.

Summary of Key Assumptions

Table 13: Summary of key assumptions in forecast for Residents and Housing Services

Key Assumption	Downside if worse	Upside if better	Mitigations
The additional number of homeless people can be managed within the existing forecast.	Each person costs on average £326 per week to accommodate, therefore any further increases in demand would result in a circa £0.1m per quarter for every 20 people.	Faster progress on homeless pathways or any decrease in demand will reduce expenditure by £326 per week per person.	The service is focusing on moving homeless clients along the various pathways. Various project workstreams are focusing on sourcing additional housing supply to alleviate some of the pressures.
Rent collection rates for the Housing Needs service will not fall below the	A 5% worsening in the collection rate will cost £0.3m per quarter	A 5% improvement in the collection rate will recover	Collection rates are being closely monitored and investigations into the drivers

anticipated level.		£0.3m per quarter	for the movements in the collection rates are ongoing.
Other inflation linked costs can be contained within existing budgets.	A 3% increase in costs above budgetary assumptions could cost an additional £1.2m per annum	A 3% cost reduction in costs would result in a circa £1.2m saving for the year.	The department continues looking for best way to achieve value for money, utilising the most efficient procurement and service delivery options and negotiations.

5.0 Central items

Collection Fund – Council Tax

- 5.1 The net collectible amount for Council Tax for 2026/27 (after exemptions, discounts and Council Tax Support) as at 31 May 2026 was £253.3m. As at the end of May 2026, the amount collected was 19.2% which is 0.1% lower than the amount collected in the same period in 2025/26, and the percentage collected in the same period in 2024/25.
- 5.2 The service have set an in-year target for 2026/27 of 93.5% collection of Council Tax, which is an increase of 1.9% on the 91.6% achieved in 2025/26. Based on the collection in the year to date, a similar or lower level of collection on the current year liabilities can be expected at the end of 2026/27, compared to previous years, meaning that improvements are required to collection across the remainder of this financial year in order to meet this target.
- 5.3 The collection rate as at 31 May 2026 for those on CTS of working age is 17.5% (17.3% at 31 May 2025, 0.2% increase) with 68% having made a payment towards their 2025/26 council tax bill. The numbers making payment have increased since April following the dispatch of 8,500 soft reminders and 2,300 formal reminders. So far 1,401 have been issued with a summons as no payment has been received following the formal reminder. At the summons hearing on 9 July the Council will obtain liability orders and for some cases deductions from benefits will be set up to reduce the balances. However, the collection for these balances will be slow and likely means that these individuals will carry forward arrears into 2027/28.
- 5.4 To continue with offsetting the impact of the changes on the recipients of CTS, a Hardship Fund was agreed as part of the 2026/27 budget, providing £1.5m of support, £0.4m of which is funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA). As of 31 May 2026, 730 applications have been received for support from this fund and 523 (71%) have been approved. The dispatch of recovery notices have generated more applications for this support.

- 5.5 The Council Tax service has made clear progress following the implementation of the Council Tax Improvement Plan, with additional staffing capacity, more proactive billing and recovery activity, and improved use of data all contributing to stronger performance. Backlogs have been reduced, processing times have improved, and the increased volume and timeliness of reminders and summonses are supporting better in-year collection. In this context, it is important to note that the total amount to collect has increased by £13.9m. Arrears recovery has also strengthened, and while progress remains gradual, early evidence shows that the enhanced processes, targeted interventions and resident-focused engagement are delivering a positive and sustainable improvement in overall collection performance.

Collection Fund – Business Rates

- 5.6 The budgeted net collectable amount for Business Rates (NNDR) for 2026/27 was £159.5m (after exemptions, reliefs and discounts). This was based on the forecast used for the NNDR1 form in January 2026 and has increased by £9.7m from £149.8m in 2025/26. This increase is largely due to the 2026/27 revaluations of the rateable values of non-domestic properties. The rateable value has increased by 20.6% on the rateable value for 2025/26 based on the NNDR1 forecasts. This is 1% above the national average increase for England.
- 5.7 The actual net collectible amount for NNDR as at 31 May 2026 was £156.8m, a decrease of £2.7m from the forecast used in the NNDR1. This is driven by additional empty properties and reductions in the gross rates payable by businesses. Further adjustments to this may occur during the year due to increases or reductions in the number of non-domestic properties and successful appeals against rateable values.
- 5.8 Any movement in the net collectible amount for NNDR does not directly affect the General Fund in the current financial year as the overall resources that the Council receives from the Business Rates retention system are determined in the Local Government Finance Settlement. However, where the actual income to the Collection Fund is different to the budgeted amount, Brent's share of the resulting surplus or deficit estimated in January is distributed to or from the General Fund in the following financial year.
- 5.9 As at 31 May 2026, the amount collected for NNDR was 16.2%, which is 1.6% lower than the amount collected in the same period in 2025/26 (17.8%) and 1.1% lower than the equivalent collection in 2024/25. Collection in 2025/26 was 94.1%, but the service is targeting a return to 95.5% in-year collection in 2026/27.
- 5.10 Collection performance continues to be impacted by external factors, most notably business rates avoidance schemes and the 2026 revaluation. Collection performance has been adversely affected by increased numbers of Checks, Challenges and Appeals (CCAs) submitted to the VOA following NNDR revaluation increases. Higher liabilities have affected some ratepayers'

ability and willingness to pay, leading to requests for collection and recovery holds pending VOA decisions. These delays defer collection activity, particularly on high value accounts and has impacted in year collection and arrears collection performance.

- 5.11 Based on historical data, the long-term collection target for NNDR is 98%. Historically, collection of arrears becomes significantly more difficult with each year that passes after the debt has been raised. Therefore, to achieve the long-term collection target, a marked improvement in the Council's collection of arrears must be seen quickly to make up for the lower expectations for in-year collection. It is also important for the Council to continue to make improvements to in-year collection, as this remains the best way of achieving the long-term target.
- 5.12 Furthermore, there remain a number of factors present in the economy which could have a negative impact on the ability of businesses to pay their Business Rates, such as high interest rates, the increase to employer's national insurance contributions and the reduction in consumer spending power as a result of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

Virements

- 5.13 Table 14 shows the virements and adjustments which have been entered to adjust the budgets at Corporate Directorate level between the budget approved at Full Council in February 2025 and 30 April 2025. Cabinet are recommended to approve these virements.

Table 14: Virements and adjustments in 2026/27 budget between Full Council February 2026 and 30.04.2026

	2026/27 Budget agreed at Full Council 23 February 2026	In-year growth	Transfer of functions between services	Technical Adjustments	2026/27 In-Year Budget at 30.04.2026
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Service Reform and Strategy	204.5	0.2	0.0	1.0	205.7
Children, Young People and Community Development	110.8	0.0	0.0	0.2	111.0
Neighbourhoods and Regeneration	35.8	0.3	0.0	0.4	36.5
Residents and Housing Services	60.2	0.2	0.0	1.9	62.3
Finance and Resources	32.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	32.7
Capital Financing	39.4	0.0	0.0	2.5	41.8

Central Budgets	18.8	(0.8)	0.0	(6.2)	11.7
Core Funding	(501.8)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(501.8)
Total Budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

5.14 In-year growth items are budget movements from the Central Items budget to Departmental budgets which were not actioned at the start of the financial year. The table above includes the following in-year growth items added in April 2026:

- Temporary funding for Business Cases in Service Reform and Strategy (£0.2m) and Neighbourhoods and Regeneration (£0.3m)
- Temporary funding for the Embrace Change Portfolio in Residents and Housing Services (£0.2m)

5.15 Transfers of functions between services are budget movements between Corporate Directorates, which occur when a department is moved from one service to the other. The virement ensures that the department and the related budget remain together. The table above does not include any transfers of functions between services in April 2026.

5.16 Technical adjustments are budget movements resulting from events which are provided for in the MTFS, but only confirmed during the year (e.g. pay award), budget movements resulting from changes to processes (e.g. centralisation of budgets) or other budget movements between directorates resulting from changes to the Council's structure. The table above includes the following technical adjustment items added between Full Council on 23 February 2026 and 30 April 2026:

- Adjustments to allocation of growth and savings and in respect of changes arising from the Fair Funding Review (£1.0m to Service Reform and Strategy, £0.2m to Children, Young People and Community Development, £0.4m to Neighbourhoods and Regeneration, £1.9m to Residents and Housing Services, £0.3m to Finance and Resources, £2.5m to Capital Financing and £6.2m from Central Budgets).

6.0 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

Table 15: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for Dedicated Schools Grant by block

Funding Blocks	Overall DSG Funding 2026/27	Forecast Expenditure	Overspend/ (Underspend)
	£m	£m	£m
Schools Block	129.6	129.6	0.0
High Needs Block	84.7	104.3	19.6
Early Years Block	45.4	44.0	(1.4)
Central Block	2.5	2.5	0.0
Total DSG	262.2	280.4	18.2

Summary

- 6.1 There have been increases across the DSG funding Blocks for 2026/27, bringing the total DSG allocation to £452.2m for Brent. Of this, £176.5m from the School block and £10.6m from the High Needs Block are recouped by the Department for Education (DfE) and paid directly to academies, with a further £3.2m recouped from the Schools Block for National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR), which are paid directly to billing authorities on behalf of schools. This results in a net allocation of £262.2m as reflected in the table above. For 2026/27, no transfer has been made from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, reflecting funding formula constraints and affordability pressures on schools, in contrast to previous years.
- 6.2 The High Needs Block budget is forecast to face a funding deficit of £19.6m in 2026/27. This reflects significant and sustained budget pressures arising from a 10.6% increase in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) as of March 2026, alongside a 12.6% increase in the number of Brent children placed in independent schools over the same period due to insufficient provision within the borough. No additional growth funding has been provided in 2026/27 to address this rising demand or inflationary cost pressures. While the High Needs Block allocation increased by £4.3m, this uplift primarily reflects the consolidation of the annualised Core Schools Budget Grant (CSBG) funding introduced in 2025/26 for special units and resourced provision, rather than new funding to support increasing demand. As a result, the High Needs Block is projected to experience an in-year budget pressure of £19.6m in 2026/27.
- 6.3 The number of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) requiring EHCPs increased from 3,892 in March 2025 to 4,306 in March 2026, representing a growth of 10.6%. This increase has driven projected growth in top-up funding expenditure across in-borough mainstream academies and special schools, placements in independent day special schools due to insufficient in-borough capacity, and alternative education provision for children awaiting placements. Additional pressures have also arisen from a growing number of young people progressing into post-16 provision.
- 6.4 No additional growth funding has been allocated for the 2026/27 financial year to address these forecast pressures. As a result, the funding gap is expected to widen, further intensifying the financial challenges within the High Needs Block.
- 6.5 The Early Years Block is forecasting an underspend of £1.4m in 2026/27, as identified at the budget setting stage. The Early Years allocation for 2026/27 is based on DfE estimates derived from termly census data, in line with the updated funding methodology. In contrast, expenditure is based on local estimates of participation and provision costs. This represents a change from previous years, where both funding and expenditure were aligned to the January census, resulting in greater consistency. As a result, any variance

between estimated and actual participation levels increases the risk of underspend or clawback at year end.

- 6.6 At the end of quarter 1, the Schools Block and Central block are forecast to break even.
- 6.7 The cumulative DSG deficit brought forward from 2025/26 was £20.2m. This includes an in-year deficit of £6.6m recorded in 2025/26. The deficit has been disclosed as an earmarked unusable reserve in line with the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2024.
- 6.8 The Council continues to monitor its High Needs Block Deficit Recovery Management Plan, which outlines a series of long-term actions aimed at managing the cumulative deficit. The plan is overseen by the Corporate Director of CYPCD and the Corporate Director of Finance & Resources who coordinates and monitors actions set out in the Plan. The Plan is grouped into three themes: a) managing demand, b) increasing the sufficiency of local places and c) financial management adjustments. As at the end of quarter 4, 2025/26, cost avoidance against the three themes equated to £1.8m. The combined impact of these longer-term recovery actions, alongside anticipated funding increases, is expected to mitigate the rate of growth in the deficit as much as possible, however, the deficit is still forecast to increase. New Key Performance Indicators will be agreed to monitor progress throughout 2026/27.

Risk and Uncertainties

- 6.9 The DSG cumulative deficit of £20.2m as of March 2026 reflects a continued deterioration in the financial position, driven primarily by pressures within the High Needs Block. Based on the forecast position at Quarter 1, a further in-year overspend of £18.2m is expected in 2026/27, which would increase the cumulative deficit to £38.4m by the end of the financial year. This highlights the ongoing mismatch between funding and demand. While the Government has indicated that it will take an “appropriate and proportionate” approach to deficits arising in 2026/27, the lack of clarity on the scale and limits of this support creates uncertainty for financial planning and risk management.
- 6.10 In respect of historic deficits, the Government has indicated that funding support may cover up to 90% of the accumulated deficit up to March 2026 and committed to support at the same level towards deficits in the 2026/27 and 2027/28 financial years, subject to conditions and the delivery of locally agreed SEND reform plans. This introduces delivery and compliance risk, as access to funding is contingent on meeting specific requirements, and there is a possibility that some of the anticipated 90% support may not be realised if these conditions are not fully met or delivery is delayed.
- 6.11 Although the Government has set out a programme of SEND reforms and additional short-term funding streams, including the High Needs Stability Grant, these measures are at an early stage of implementation and have yet to deliver tangible financial or operational benefits. There remains significant

uncertainty regarding the pace of implementation and whether these reforms will materially reduce demand for EHCPs or the cost of placements, meaning underlying cost pressures are likely to persist in the medium term.

- 6.12 The extension of the statutory override to March 2028 provides temporary mitigation by allowing DSG deficits to be held off the General Fund. From April 2028, the Government's intention to assume responsibility for future SEND costs should reduce the Council's exposure to ongoing in-year pressures. However, this does not resolve the issue of historic and accruing DSG deficits, for which no confirmed long-term solution has yet been set out. As a result, while future risks may reduce, the Council remains exposed to a potentially significant residual liability relating to deficits built up to 2027/28, particularly as further deficits are expected to accumulate over the next two financial years.

7.0 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Table 16: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for Housing Revenue Account

HRA gross income and expenditure			
	Budget	Forecast	Overspend/ (Underspend)
	£m	£m	£m
HRA			
Income	(84.4)	(84.4)	0.0
Expenditure	84.4	84.4	0.0
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0

Summary

- 7.1 Budgets for the Housing Management function sit within the ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which holds a balanced budget for 2026/27 of £84.4m of income matched by £84.4m of expenditure. This is up from £69.3m budgeted in 2025/26 (£73.3m outturn), reflecting the 4.8% rent increase permitted under the Government's new ten-year social rent settlement from April 2026, together with planned growth in the housing portfolio.
- 7.2 The HRA is currently forecasting a break-even position, though it continues to face significant risks and financial pressures.

Risks and uncertainties

- 7.3 While inflation and interest rates have eased from their recent peaks, they continue to exert pressure on both operational and capital costs. CPI inflation has fallen to around 2.8% and the Bank Rate to 3.75%, but both remain above the lows of the previous decade and there is renewed upside risk to inflation. The cost of materials and labour for repairs and maintenance, and of financing new build and improvement programmes, therefore, remains elevated.

- 7.4 The HRA is also contending with elevated demand for repairs and maintenance. A large volume of complex repairs, together with increased instances of damp and mould, continues to strain budgeted resources. This pressure is compounded by Awaab's Law, in force since October 2025, which requires damp and mould and all emergency hazards to be remedied within fixed statutory timescales, with its scope widening to further hazards through 2026 and 2027. These compliance obligations, alongside the underlying demand for responsive maintenance, are expected to continue throughout the year and may push costs beyond original estimates.
- 7.5 The repairs and maintenance contracts introduced for the service add further uncertainty. As they continue to embed, actual costs and the efficiencies they will deliver remain difficult to predict, which could affect expenditure forecasts.
- 7.6 Further pressures stem from the capital programme. While the Government has set out additional funding for the sector – including the Warm Homes Plan, the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund for energy-efficiency works, and building-safety remediation funding – these streams are competitive, time-limited and, for many authorities, insufficient to meet the full cost of environmental priorities and statutory requirements such as carbon reduction and fire safety. Forthcoming standards, including the reformed Decent Homes Standard and proposed minimum energy-efficiency standards for the social rented sector, are expected to add further pressure. This shortfall strains the HRA's capital resources, complicating efforts to invest in sustainable, energy-efficient improvements while balancing other essential needs.
- 7.7 The financial and operational risks of adding 326 properties to the portfolio during the year must also be acknowledged. Portfolio growth can strain management and maintenance resources, raising operational costs and challenging consistent service quality. Careful planning and resource allocation will be critical to ensuring expansion supports long-term financial sustainability.
- 7.8 Managing rent debt is also crucial to the HRA's financial health. The 4.8% rent increase, while underpinning income, adds to affordability pressures for tenants and could raise arrears and bad-debt provisions, directly affecting revenue and the Council's capacity to fund services and maintenance. Persistent rent debt strains financial planning and drives higher write-offs. Robust, ethical debt recovery and proactive tenant engagement therefore remain essential to minimising arrears and safeguarding the service's financial stability.
- 7.9 The Council remains under regulatory scrutiny following its April 2025 self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing, prompted by building-safety compliance failings – including fire-safety actions incorrectly recorded as complete and inconsistencies in asbestos, water-safety and detector data. The Regulator issued a non-compliant C3 consumer grade on 28 May 2025. The Council has since been delivering a Housing and Asset Management Service Improvement Plan, with regular engagement with the Regulator, and

reports that that good progress is being made, with stock-condition survey coverage now above 70% of homes with the target of 100% planned on being achieved this year. The programme nonetheless remains a significant risk and financial pressure on the HRA: remediation and recovery costs are still being quantified, with comparable authorities reportedly incurring around £2.3m in similar circumstances. There is also a risk to grant funding for housing development while the Council operates under regulatory scrutiny, until full compliance is demonstrated.

- 7.10 While the HRA's reserves stand at the target level of 5% of turnover, this is relatively low compared with the Council's peers. The smaller reserve base limits the Council's capacity to absorb unforeseen pressures or emergencies, particularly given the wider strain on its overall reserves. Strengthening reserves will be important to improve financial resilience and flexibility in managing future challenges.
- 7.11 These risks are continuously monitored and reflected in the HRA Business Plan and the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The Government's ten-year rent settlement also provides greater certainty over future rental income, supporting longer-term investment planning.

8.0 Capital Programme

- 8.1 As at Quarter 1, the capital programme is forecasting expenditure of £32.6m against a revised budget of £348.0m for an overall variance of £21.4m. The £21.4m variance comprises net slippage of £19.1m and net underspend of £2.3m. Each board continues to assess its portfolio with key risks including delivery timelines, market conditions and funding dependencies. These are being actively managed through regular oversight and adjustments to ensure the programme remains aligned with strategic priorities and delivery expectations.

Table 17: 2026/27 Quarter 1 forecast for the Capital Programme

Portfolio/Programme	Original Budget 2026/27	Revised Budget 2026/27	Current Forecast	FY Variance	
				(Underspend) / Overspend	(Slippage)/Brought Forward
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Corporate Assets	50.1	61.5	56.8	(0.2)	(4.5)
Affordable Housing Supply	51.3	67.3	66.9	(0.4)	-
Housing HRA & Management	44.9	49.5	49.5	(0.0)	0.0
Regeneration	68.2	79.0	72.9	1.1	(7.2)
Child and Young People	34.3	30.2	30.2	0.0	-

South Kilburn	45.0	60.5	50.4	(2.8)	(7.3)
Grand Total	293.8	348.0	324.6	(2.3)	(19.1)

Budget Adjustments

- 8.2 The Council, at its February 2026 meeting approved a 2026/27 capital budget £293.8m. At the end of the 2025/26 financial year slippage of £102.3m was identified and added to this approved budget.
- 8.3 As at Quarter 1 budgets totalling £48.1 million have been reprofiled out of the 2026/27 budget to give a revised budget figure of £348m. Of the reprofiled amounts, significant items are:
- £30.4m I4B budget reprofiled over future financial years to 2029/30.
 - £5.4m St Raphael's Estate Regeneration moved to 2028/29.
 - £4.0m SEND Capital Programme budget moved to 2027/28.
 - £2.8m in relation to Welsh Harp Post-16 Centre moved to 2027/28.
 - £1.4m budget for Waste Vehicles Purchases reprofiled to 2029/30.

More details on budget revisions are contained in the medium term financial outlook report.

Corporate Assets

- 8.4 The Corporate Assets Board consists of the Corporate Landlord portfolio and Public Realm. Corporate Landlord is responsible for overseeing the strategic management and investment in the Civic Centre, digital strategy, libraries and other council properties while Public Realm relates to improvements to community infrastructure in Brent including roads, parks and CCTV.
- 8.5 Corporate Assets is reporting a net projected variance of £4.7m due mainly to slippage of £3.0m on Gladstone Park Youth and Community Centre Redevelopment as the scheme is subject to planning permission, which is expected to be submitted in the autumn of 2026, and £1.1m slippage on controlled parking works in Beresford Avenue, Mount Pleasant CPZ and North End Road. The slippage is partially offset by forecast accelerated spend on Retained Estates due to essential projects that have been brought forward to 2026/27, with a corresponding decrease in expenditure expected in later years.
- 8.6 As agreed by Cabinet in January 2026 the initial £0.5m of the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund awarded to the Council has been directed towards the priority thematic areas of "Pride in Parks" and "Pride in High Streets / Don't mess with Brent". Specific investments include the refurbishment of Roundwood Park's public toilets, new street signs and posts, and additional CCTV capacity to support effective enforcement.
- 8.7 The second and final £1.0m tranche of this capital funding is included in the 2026/27 budget and will continue to support the priority themes set out above,

alongside an additional theme of “Pride in Estates” - this will support the wider strategic goal to improve community spaces, safety, and the public realm.

- 8.8 The Pride in Place Impact Fund is separate to the broader Pride in Place Programme that the Government has selected Harlesden and St Raphael's to be part of. In each of these local areas, the Council will establish Neighbourhood Boards to develop and oversee investment plans. Recruitment for the Independent Chairs of these Boards is underway. Officers are also currently working through the implications for the Capital Programme.
- 8.9 The revised 2026/27 budget of £61.5m compares to budget of £47.8m in 2025/26, reflecting that the Council has chosen to prioritise public realm improvements and digital transformation. Significant increases in the level of capital expenditure from one year to next puts pressure on capacity and increases the risk of slippage. The large number of small projects within the public realm element of the Board area can be difficult to forecast, especially because the area is especially prone to factors beyond the Council's control such as poor weather or specific grant conditions. A key challenge for the Corporate Landlord area will be realising cashable savings from the Digital Strategy in line with its objectives. This is monitored through quarterly updates to the Capital Programme Board.

Housing

- 8.10 The Affordable Housing Supply Board is forecasting a net variance of £0.4m comprised of £1m underspend mostly against brought forward budgets. This is offset by overspend of £0.7m, including £0.5m against Clock Cottages, which has exhausted its budget due to multiple delays in handover. There is remaining GLA safeguarding grant of £0.5m to finance this project, however any further overspends will need to be funded by additional borrowing.
- 8.11 Delays in handover are one of the most significant risks in the Affordable Housing Supply capital programme as completion on Church End, Alperton Bus Garage and Pharamond has been delayed from the original timetable. The causes of these delays are multi-faceted but include developer delays and the need to seek agreements with multiple stakeholders, such as UK Power Networks. These delays have an impact on the viability of these schemes, which is already under severe pressure due to high build and borrowing costs. Another emerging challenge is new fire safety requirements and officers are putting in place interim measures to comply with the requirements and enable the blocks to be occupied, whilst also collaborating with other London boroughs on longer term solutions.
- 8.12 The Housing HRA and Management Board is forecasting a nil variance, which is important given the financial pressures in the HRA and the need to invest in essential improvements in existing housing. Due to brought forward slippage and identification of one off sources of funding that do not involve additional borrowing, the major repairs budget for 2026/27 has increased by almost £9m compared to 2025/26. Nevertheless, difficult prioritisation decisions are still required given the scale of improvements required.

8.13 Budget changes in the major repairs programme include virements from brought forward slippage (£2.5m) and enfranchisement (£1.2m) to:

- £0.8m for major repairs for which an insurance claim has been submitted. Brent self insures HRA properties up to £0.5m;
- £0.3m for a new programme of structural surveys. This budget may be revised further following the tender exercise;
- £2.0m to complete a major ongoing block refurbishment including contingency;
- £0.3m for adaptations to HRA properties for disabled or elderly residents; and
- £0.3m for staff capitalisation.

Regeneration

8.14 The Regeneration programme is delivering new homes, infrastructure and community assets to support inclusive growth and sustainability. The current forecast is a net variance of £6.1m; £7.2m slippage offset by £1.1m overspend.

8.15 The projected £7.2m slippage is primarily due to design and planning works at Grand Union Canal being delayed, resulting in expected slippage of £3.2m. Staples Corner Growth Area and Neasden Civic Partnership Programme are each showing slippage of £1.1m (total £2.2m) due to updated delivery plans. The level of slippage reflects the complexities of delivering the Council's ambitious regeneration programme with the need to liaise with a variety of stakeholders such as businesses, registered providers and other public bodies.

8.16 Wembley Housing Zones is projecting an overspend of £1.1m mainly due to contract variations agreed to date, the impact of a water leak and the acquisition of Ujima car park freehold. The project is expected to be completed by November 2026 with the delivery of 291 homes (50% affordable) as well as a significant land receipt for the Council

Children and Young People

8.17 The Children and Young People (CYP) Board oversees the planning, delivery, and monitoring of capital investment in Brent's school estate, including projects that support the expansion of school places, improvements to existing facilities, and the development of specialist provision such as SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) infrastructure. The programme ensures that educational environments across the borough are safe, inclusive, and fit for future learning needs. The capital delivery and CYP team liaise closely with schools and the Department for Education to deliver the programme.

8.18 CYP Board is forecasting a nil variance. Some reprofiling of budgets has taken place to more accurately reflect anticipated expenditure:

- SEND Capital Programme - £4m reprofiled to 2027/28 primarily due to delays in works at Woodfield School.
- Welsh Harp Post-16 Centre - £2.8m reprofiled to 2027/28 following revised cost estimates received from the contractor.
- SEND Capital Programme Phase II - £1.6m reprofiled across 2027/28 and 2028/29. This reflects indicative costs returned by the contractor.

South Kilburn

8.19 The South Kilburn regeneration programme continues to deliver significant investment in new homes, infrastructure, and community facilities.

8.20 The procurement process for the Single Delivery Partner (SDP) is progressing well with the contract expected to be awarded in the autumn. Bids have been received from three shortlisted bidders and are currently being evaluated. The SDP model is intended to streamline delivery and improve co-ordination of the major regeneration programme but carries risks such as dependence on a single supplier. Finance and Legal, as well as commercial consultants and legal advisers, are heavily involved in the process to ensure risks from a single provider are addressed, land receipts are maximized and delivery is robust and secure. The £2.8m projected underspend relates to net underspend on SDP sites, due to updated rehousing forecasts and some costs being reclassified as revenue. These budgets are under review as part of the SDP procurement process and will be revised following discussions with the appointed SDP.

8.21 The remaining £7.3m variance in the Capital Programme is slippage, predominantly £5.0m on the District Heat Network project. £12.7m expenditure is still expected in year on design and initial construction. The slippage has been caused by a longer than expected procurement process. A reprofiling exercise will take place following discussions with the contractor and consultants. The GLA's Green Finance Facility have approved a £12.0m loan offering a substantial discount on the Council's usual borrowing rates from the PWLB.

8.22 Longer delivery timetables on the SDP as the partner seeks to maximise land receipts (such as through planning variations to increase the quantity of homes) could impact the viability of the heat network. This creates a balancing effect, whereby any delay in heat network income could be offset through additional receipts. The Council will actively manage this trade-off through the regeneration programme including through the establishment of a fortnightly co-ordination group to ensure that neither the overall development value nor the viability of the heat network scheme is compromised. Delivering the regeneration at pace remains a key priority.

Capital Financing

- 8.23 Capital financing consists of interest costs on prudential borrowing to fund the capital programme and minimum revenue provision (a prudent charge for the repayment of borrowing). The current forecast is a nil variance from the budget of £41.9m. This reflects the £3.0m growth compared to 2025/26, which takes account of the cumulative nature of capital borrowing and minimum revenue provision, as well as current high interest rates.
- 8.24 It is exceptionally challenging to accurately forecast the capital financing outturn as it is reliant on a number of factors beyond the Council's control such as interest rates, the valuation of completed housing transferring to the HRA and whether lenders exercise their options to call LOBO loans. In addition, it is dependent on accurate forecasting of the capital outturn and the timing of capital receipts being in line with expectations. Finance will refine the estimates based on updated interest rates and capital forecasts ahead of Q2.
- 8.25 The Council is managing the risks in line with the approach set out in the Treasury Management Strategy and the advice of external Treasury Advisers. Central to this approach is borrowing "little and often" to take advantage of short-term reductions in interest rates and ensure the Council does not hold cash balances for longer than necessary.

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

- 8.26 In line with changes to the Prudential Code in 2021, the performance of the Council's treasury and capital activities against the approved prudential indicator for the year are now reported quarterly within these financial reports to members. Details of the performance against the indicators in the first quarter of the financial year are in Appendix A.

9.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 9.1 There are no stakeholder and ward member consultation arising from this report.

10.0 Financial Considerations

- 10.1 This report sets out the financial forecast for the General Fund revenue budget, the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme, as at Quarter 1 2026/27. Financial implications of agreeing to this report are included within the forecasts provided.

11.0 Legal Considerations

- 11.1 The law requires that the council must plan to balance its spending plans against resources to avoid a deficit occurring in any year. Members need to be reasonably satisfied that expenditure is being contained within budget and that the savings for the financial year will be achieved, to ensure that income

and expenditure balance (Section 28 Local Government Act 2003: the council's Financial Regulation 2.3 Revenue Budget Monitoring, Forecasting and Overspends).

12.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

12.1 There are no EDI considerations arising out of this report.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

13.1 There are no climate change or environmental considerations arising out of this report.

14.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

14.1 There are no HR or property considerations arising out this report.

15.0 Communication Considerations

15.1 There are no direct communication considerations arising out of this report.

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director, Finance and Resources

Legal considerations provided by:
Pameel Crowther Newman

Finance considerations provided by:
Rav Jassar

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Appendix A – Quarter One 2026/27 Prudential Indicators

Legislative Update

In December 2021, CIPFA published its revised Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code of Practice following concerns around the commercial activity undertaken by several local authorities and the affordability of borrowing plans.

The Code required authorities to not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and all capital expenditure undertaken must be related to the functions of the authority. The Council has not undertaken any activities to invest for a yield or have any commercial plans within the capital programme.

The Code required the Prudential Indicators (which are approved as part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy) to be reported quarterly (from semi-annually) as part of the financial updates and will be a recurring addition to the quarterly financial reports.

Prudential Indicators

The Council has a significant borrowing requirement and balance and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Council's treasury management strategy.

Prudential indicators have been calculated based on revised capital budgets and forecasts in line with the Council's Quarter 1 monitoring report.

Capital Expenditure & Financing at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total 2025/26-2030-31
	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	
Corporate Assets	34.8	61.5	32.6	23.5	15.7	3.5	136.8
South Kilburn	12.3	60.5	31.7	19.4	12.0	6.9	130.4
Regeneration	73.5	79.0	21.3	29.9	25.4	0.0	155.6
Schools	20.5	30.2	35.3	19.5	5.0	0.0	90.0
Affordable Housing Supply	50.5	67.3	76.8	78.7	43.3	0.0	266.1
Housing HRA & Management	18.3	49.5	35.5	24.0	23.0	5.0	137.0
Total Capital Expenditure	209.9	348.0	233.1	194.9	124.4	15.4	915.8

Financed By:							
Grants	65.6	65.8	36.6	19.8	9.0	5.6	136.7
CIL & Section 106	29.2	63.8	30.5	30.8	24.2	2.3	151.7
Capital Receipts	1.2	16.3	37.4	6.0	0.4	0.0	60.1
Earmarked Reserves	1.1	4.7	1.3	1.0	0.1	0.7	7.9
Major Repairs Reserve	11.2	19.1	13.0	13.0	13.0	0.0	58.1
Revenue Contributions	0.5	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.6	1.5	5.6
Borrowing	101.1	176.9	112.7	123.7	77.1	5.3	495.8
Total Capital Financing	209.9	348.0	233.1	194.9	124.4	15.4	915.8

(a) Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement. This is the amount of the Capital Programme that is funded by borrowing. The Council's maximum external borrowing requirement for 2026/27 is shown in the table below. The indicator is set to ensure that the level of proposed capital expenditure remains within sustainable limits and to consider the impact on Council tax and in the case of the HRA, housing rent levels.

External resources consist of grants and Developer contributions. Internal resources consist of use of reserves, capital receipts and revenue contributions.

CFR Movement at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
Opening CFR	1,353.8	1,412.3	1,571.2	1,665.3	1,769.9	1,827.9
Capital Expenditure	209.9	348.0	233.1	194.9	124.4	15.4
External Resources	(94.8)	(129.6)	(67.1)	(50.6)	(33.2)	(7.9)
Internal Resources	(14.0)	(41.5)	(53.3)	(20.6)	(14.1)	(2.2)
MRP excluding PFI and leases	(16.5)	(18.0)	(18.6)	(19.1)	(19.2)	(19.7)
Capital Loans Repaid	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Accounting Adjustments (PFI/Leases)	(26.1)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Closing CFR	1,412.3	1,571.2	1,665.3	1,769.9	1,827.9	1,813.5

(b) Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement

To ensure that over the medium term, debt will only be for capital purposes, the Council should ensure that debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of

capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years. This is a key indicator of prudence. The table below shows that the Council expects to comply with this recommendation during 2026/27.

Gross Debt & the Capital Financing Requirement at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
External Loans	1,074.1	1,174.0	1,235.2	1,274.6	1,317.9	1,343.7
PFI & Leases	61.7	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0
Total External Debt Liabilities	1,135.8	1,234.0	1,295.2	1,334.6	1,377.9	1,403.7
Internal Borrowing	276.5	337.2	370.1	435.3	449.9	409.8
Capital Financing Requirement	1,412.3	1,571.2	1,665.3	1,769.9	1,827.9	1,813.5

(c) Liability Benchmark

The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

Liability Benchmark at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
CFR	1,412.3	1,571.2	1,665.3	1,769.9	1,827.9	1,813.5
LOBO Loans	59.5	39.5	30.0	15.0	10.0	0.0
Non LOBO Loans	1,014.6	1,134.5	1,205.2	1,259.6	1,307.9	1,343.7
Balance Sheet Resources	(496.1)	(453.6)	(453.6)	(453.6)	(453.6)	(453.6)
Net Loan Requirement	1,054.1	1,154.0	1,215.2	1,254.6	1,297.9	1,323.7
Plus Liquidity Allowance	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Liability Benchmark	1,074.1	1,174.0	1,235.2	1,274.6	1,317.9	1,343.7

(d) Authorised limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

The Operational Boundary for External Debt is based on the Council's estimate of most likely i.e. prudent, but not worst-case scenario for external debt. It links directly to the Council's estimates of capital expenditure, the capital financing requirement and cash flow requirements and is a key management tool for in-year monitoring.

Other long-term liabilities comprise finance leases, Private Finance Initiative contracts and other liabilities that are not borrowing but form part of the Council's debt.

The Authorised Limit for External Debt is the affordable borrowing limit determined in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003. It is the maximum amount of debt

that the Council can legally owe. The authorised limit provides headroom over and above the operational boundary for unusual cash movements.

Authorised Limit at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Authorised Limit	1,800.0	2,000.0	2,000.0	2,000.0	2,000.0	2,000.0
Operational Boundary	1,600.0	1,800.0	1,800.0	1,800.0	1,800.0	1,800.0

The Corporate Director for Finance and Resources confirms that there were no breaches to the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary during Quarter One of 2026/27.

(e) Upper Limits on one-year revenue impact of a 1% movement in interest rates

This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans in the current year will be replaced at current rates.

Upper Limits on one-year revenue impact of a 1% movement in interest rates on Maturing Debt at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2026/27	2026/27
	Approved Limit	Actual
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	5.0	0.5
Compliance with limits:		Yes
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	5.0	(0.5)
Compliance with limits:		Yes

(f) Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing

This indicator is to limit large concentrations of fixed rate debt needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates. The Council uses the option date as the maturity date for its LOBO loans. Loans based on existing debt portfolio as at the reported period.

Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing at Q1 2026/27	Upper Limit	Lower limit	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27
			Actual Borrowing 31.05.2026	Actual Borrowing 31.05.2026	Forecast Borrowing 31.03.2027	Forecast Borrowing 31.03.2027	Compliance with limits
	%	%	£m	%	£m	%	
Under 12 months	40.0%	0.0%	133.8	12.6%	125.1	10.7%	Yes
12 months & within 24 months	40.0%	0.0%	50.1	4.7%	50.1	4.3%	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	40.0%	0.0%	180.5	16.9%	174.8	14.9%	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	60.0%	0.0%	165.5	15.5%	244.0	20.8%	Yes
10 years and within 20 years	75.0%	0.0%	130.7	12.3%	164.6	14.0%	Yes
20 years and within 30 years	75.0%	0.0%	230.0	21.6%	269.5	23.0%	Yes
30 years and within 40 years	75.0%	0.0%	60.1	5.6%	30.6	2.6%	Yes
Over 40 years	75.0%	0.0%	115.0	10.8%	115.3	9.8%	Yes
Total			1065.7	100.0%	1174.0	100.0%	

(g) Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income.

Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream at Q1 2067/27	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Financing Costs (Interest & MRP) (£m)	38.9	41.9	41.9	41.9	41.9	41.9
Net Revenue Stream (£m)	431.4	501.8	535.2	568.6	589.6	611.6
Proportion of net revenue stream (%)	9.0%	8.3%	7.6%	7.0%	6.8%	6.6%

Financing costs can be further broken down as follows.

Capital Financing Costs at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated

Total Interest Payable & Expenses	41.1	47.7	53.4	52.3	52.5	51.8
Total Interest Receivable	(24.1)	(25.8)	(31.4)	(31.4)	(31.3)	(31.2)
Net Interest	17.0	22.0	22.0	20.9	21.2	20.6
MRP (Excluding PFI)	16.5	18.0	18.6	19.1	19.2	19.7
Total Interest & MRP	33.5	40.0	40.6	40.0	40.4	40.3
Revenue Contributions to Capital Programme	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Capital Financing Costs	33.5	40.0	40.6	40.0	40.4	40.3

(h) Upper Limit for Total Principal Sums invested over 364 Days

The purpose of this limit is to contain exposure to the possibility of loss that may arise because of the Council having to seek early repayment of the sums invested.

Upper Limit for Total Principal Sums invested over 364 Days at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27
	Actual	Approved	Actual
Upper Limit for Total Principal Sums Invested Over 364 Days	0.0	50.0	0.0

(i) Security

The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit Risk Indicator at Q1 2026/27	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27
	Actual	Approved	Actual
Portfolio average credit rating	A+	A	A+

(j) Liquidity

The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing.

	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27

Liquidity Risk Indicator at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	Actual	Minimum Balance	Actual
Total cash available within 3 months	43.8	20.0	41.2

(k) Investment Forecast

This indicator demonstrates the Council's investment exposure broken down by category for Treasury and non-treasury investments. Non-Treasury investments are directed under the Council's Investment Strategy 2026/27, whilst treasury investments are managed under the Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27.

Total Investment Exposure Indicator at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
Treasury management cash investments	43.6	41.2	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Service investments	31.0	30.4	29.7	28.9	28.1	27.3
Commercial investments: Property	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Investments	74.6	71.6	49.7	48.9	48.1	47.3
Commitments to lend	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Exposure	74.6	71.6	49.7	48.9	48.1	47.3

Service investments are further broken down in the tables below.

Loans & Investments for service purposes: Category of borrower at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Approved Limit	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
i4b Holdings Ltd Subsidiary Loans*	179.2	500.0	211.2	211.2	211.2	211.2	211.2
i4b Holdings Ltd Subsidiary Equity**	43.9		51.9	51.9	51.9	51.9	51.9
First Wave Housing Ltd Subsidiary Loans	33.4		32.9	32.5	32.0	31.5	31.1
Total	256.5	500.0	296.0	32.5	295.1	294.6	294.1

*new £32m capital loan included in 2026/27 onwards

***new £8m equity loan included in 2026/27 onwards*

Service Investments Other Loans £m at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Approved Limit	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
Local Businesses	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Schools, Academies and Colleges	17.1	55.0	16.9	16.7	16.4	16.2	15.9
West London Waste Authority	13.9	20.0	13.5	13.0	12.5	11.9	11.4
Local Charities	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Housing Associations	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Local Residents	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	31.0	150.0	30.4	29.7	28.9	28.1	27.3

(l) Investment Funding

This indicator demonstrates the amount of exposure to borrowing because of investments made for service purposes. These investments are the loans to the Council's subsidiaries i4B Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd.

Investments Funded by Borrowing at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
I4B Loans	179.2	211.2	211.2	211.2	211.2	211.2
I4B Equity	43.9	51.9	51.9	51.9	51.9	51.9
First Wave Housing (FWH)	33.4	32.9	32.5	32.0	31.5	31.1
Schools, Academies and Colleges	17.1	16.9	16.7	16.4	16.2	15.9
West London Waste Authority	13.9	13.5	13.0	12.5	11.9	11.4
Total Service investments	287.5	326.4	325.2	324.0	322.7	321.4
Total Funded by Borrowing	287.5	326.4	325.2	324.0	322.7	321.4

(m) Investment Rate of Return

This indicator demonstrates the rate of return obtained from the different investment categories.

Investments net rate of return at Q1 2026/27	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
Treasury management investments	3.82%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%
Service investments	2.60%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

(n) Other Investment Indicators

Other investment indicators at Q1 2026/27 (£m)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Actual	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
External Debt (Loans)	1,074.1	1,174.0	1,235.2	1,274.6	1,317.9	1,343.7
Net Service Expenditure	431.4	501.8	535.2	568.6	589.6	611.6
Debt to net service expenditure ratio	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2

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	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources
	Lead Member - Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Gwen Grahl)
Medium Term Financial Outlook	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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)	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 020 8937 4043 Email: minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk Rav Jassar, Deputy Director, Corporate & Financial Planning Tel: 020 8937 1487 Email: ravinder.jassar@brent.gov.uk Amanda Healy, Deputy Director, Investment and Infrastructure Tel: 020 8937 5912 Email: amanda.healy@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out the overall financial position facing the Council and highlights the significant risks, issues and uncertainties with regards to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It also sets out the proposed budget setting strategy for 2027/28, which is the Council's minimum legal duty in respect of local authority budget setting, in order to maximise the period of consultation with residents, businesses and other key stakeholders.

1.2. This report is structured as follows:

- Recommendations for Cabinet to approve
- Cabinet Member Foreword
- Economic context
- Medium Term Financial Strategy update
- Proposed revenue budget setting process for 2027/28
- Capital programme
- Housing Revenue Account
- Schools and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)
- Financial Resilience

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 2.1. Note the contents of the report and the potential financial impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 2.2. Agree the budget setting process for 2027/28, including the approach to consultation and scrutiny, as set out in section six of this report.
- 2.3. Note and agree the proposed 2025/26 capital budget carry forwards and capital virements for 2026/27 as set out in section seven of this report.
- 2.4. Note the financial position with regards to the Housing Revenue Account, as set out in section eight of this report; and
- 2.5. Note the financial position with regards to Schools and the Dedicated Schools Grant, as set out in section nine of this report.

3.0 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1 This report sets out the Council's financial outlook to 2031/32 and provides an early assessment of the choices that will be required to maintain a balanced budget over the coming years. Brent enters this period in a stable position when situated in contrast to the many local authorities that have required government intervention. The Government's Fair Funding Review, the reset of the Business Rates Retention System and the first multi-year local government finance settlement in many years have provided a fairer share of resources and much-needed certainty for financial planning. That is a welcome change of direction and reflects a greater recognition of the pressures faced by councils like Brent, that support communities where deprivation remains an enduring factor. Nevertheless, this report is clear that these reforms have not removed the underlying financial challenge. Current modelling identifies a cumulative budget gap of around £50 million between 2027/28 and 2031/32.
- 3.2 This gap largely represents the additional cost of maintaining existing statutory provision in the face of inflation, demographic change and the growing complexity of need. Brent has already agreed £248 million of cuts since 2010, equivalent to almost half of the Council's current net revenue budget, including

£10.4 million of savings that is being delivered as we speak. There is therefore little scope for the Council to repeat the same choices of previous years. The task ahead must be approached strategically, by redesigning services, improving productivity, making better use of technology, generating further income and investing in earlier prevention.

- 3.3 The most significant risks remain in those services over which local government has the least control. An ageing population and increasingly complex care needs are driving higher adult social care costs, while new placements are often substantially more expensive than those that they replace. In children's services, a relatively small increase in highly specialised residential placements can have a significant financial impact. The Dedicated Schools Grant is under severe pressure as the number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans continues to rise. Most immediately, the scale and cost of homelessness remain deeply concerning, with private rents, nightly paid accommodation and provider costs continuing to increase across London. Brent will continue to intervene early, but the solutions to these challenges require national action and further funded reforms.
- 3.4 The Council will also remain disciplined and purposeful in its approach to investment. The revised capital programme provides for more than £1.25 billion of investment over the next five years, including substantial programmes for affordable housing, regeneration, South Kilburn, public assets and additional places for children and young people with SEND. It also includes practical investment in highways, family wellbeing facilities, new CCTV and essential repairs to homes and community buildings. Alongside this, the Pride in Place programme will bring up to £40 million of long-term investment over ten years to Harlesden and St Raphael's, with local neighbourhood boards helping residents shape priorities and direct funding towards the improvements that matter most to their communities. Taken together this investment is not just about improving places and public services. By building new homes, unlocking development and supporting economic growth, the Council can also strengthen its own financial base through additional Council Tax, Business Rates and Community Infrastructure Levy income. Growing Brent's economy and housing supply is therefore essential both to meeting residents' needs and to sustaining the services on which they depend.
- 3.5 The multi-year settlement gives Brent a valuable period in which to prepare, rebuild resilience and shape a new Council Plan that does things differently. That plan must recognise that investment, unlocking opportunity and driving visible change must be a cornerstone of everything that we do. The Embrace Change programme will be central to this approach, bringing together transformation, prevention and neighbourhood working across the Council. The challenge is substantial, and difficult decisions will still be required, but Brent remains financially resilient, focused on delivery and ambitious to make change felt across every corner of the borough.

4.0 Economic Context

- 4.1. UK economic growth remains weak in the short term, with GDP forecast at around 1.0–1.1% in 2026. Growth is expected to recover gradually from 2027, but the outlook remains subdued, limiting Government fiscal headroom and continuing to constrain funding for local government. This reduces the ability of councils such as Brent to expand services beyond core statutory provision.
- 4.2. Inflation remains above target and has become more uncertain due to rising global energy prices. CPI inflation is currently at 2.8% (at April 2026), having fallen from 3.3% in March and is expected to increase further in 2026, potentially peaking at just below 4%, before returning to the Bank of England's 2% target during 2027. This will prolong cost-of-living pressures for residents and increase costs for Council services, particularly where inflation exceeds general CPI.
- 4.3. The Bank of England has held the base rate at 3.75% since December 2025, with the outlook for interest rates now more uncertain. Rates are expected to remain relatively high in the near term to manage inflation, with risks of further tightening depending on external pressures. For the Council, this continues to place upward pressure on borrowing and financing costs.

5.0 Medium Term Financial Strategy Update

- 5.1. Section four of this report has set out the challenging economic context within which Brent Council is operating. This financial year is also the first following substantial reforms to local government funding implemented through the Fair Funding Review and a reset of the Business Rates Retention System. This preceded a multi-year local government finance settlement that provided some much needed clarity on funding for the three-year period from 2026 to 2029. The funding settlement was positive for Brent Council, but additional pressures that have arisen in 2025/26, which are expected to continue into 2026/27, mean that the medium-term outlook remains difficult. These pressures are discussed in further detail in the Financial Outturn 2025/26 and Quarter 1 Financial Forecast 2026-27 reports that are also on this agenda.
- 5.2. This section provides an update on the MTFS position based on the current assumptions contained in the MTFS. The section is structured as follows:
 - Current MTFS position
 - Funding assumptions
 - Service specific pressures, risks and mitigations
 - Revised MTFS position
 - The Embrace Change Portfolio
 - Contribution to Borough Plan objectives

Current MTFS position

- 5.3. The aim of the MTFS is to ensure a long term, stable and sustainable financial position that will allow the Council to achieve its strategic objectives. It reflects the impact of central government funding decisions and the national and local

economic context. It also provides a robust financial framework to support achievement of the Council's overall objectives and delivery of services.

- 5.4. The budget for the forthcoming financial year, alongside the revised Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), is developed progressively throughout the preceding financial year. This process involves extensive modelling to identify and understand budget pressures, including both recurring and historic cost challenges. Detailed financial modelling and sensitivity analysis are undertaken to assess the potential impact of these pressures, enabling the estimation of likely growth requirements and the identification of key risks to the forecasts. This structured approach ensures that emerging budget gaps are identified at an early stage, providing sufficient time to develop and implement mitigating savings and strategies to achieve a balanced budget.
- 5.5. In February 2026, the Council agreed a budget for 2026/27 which closed the assumed budget gap with a package of agreed savings of £10.4m. This package of savings takes the total savings since 2010 to £248m (49% of the net revenue budget for 2026/27). In contrast to previous years, a new collaborative approach has been developed to address the Council's medium-term financial challenge and identify sustainable savings.
- 5.6. This new approach to identifying savings focuses on identifying high-impact opportunities, including cross-directorate working, improving productivity, better use of digital solutions, and increasing income generation. This approach to delivering savings enables the Council to meet its obligation to balance the budget in a way that supports transformative change, but it must be acknowledged that delivering these savings will be challenging and non-delivery of savings is a key risk to the 2026/27 budget and the MTFS.
- 5.7. Further detail on the progress of delivering the savings for 2026/27 is included in the Quarter 1 Financial Forecast 2026-27. At the time the budget was agreed in February 2026, no specific savings had been identified in respect of 2027/28 or 2028/29.
- 5.8. This report should be read alongside the Financial Outturn 2025/26 report and the Quarter 1 Financial Forecast 2026/27 report. The significant overspends detailed in these reports demonstrate that the financial position of the Council has worsened since the February budget report, which has resulted in additional underlying pressures that were not forecast in February, but must be addressed through the MTFS. These pressures are in addition to those already anticipated for future years.
- 5.9. To fund the overspend in 2025/26, a drawdown from earmarked reserves of £16.7m was required, leaving a balance of £24.3m of generally usable reserves (reserves that are not earmarked for a specific purpose). Of this, £20.7m is the General Fund Balance, which represents the Section 151 officer's assessment of the adequate level of reserves required to maintain the Council's financial sustainability (5% of the net revenue budget).

- 5.10. Based on the Quarter 1 forecast, without mitigation the Council would be required to utilise part of the General Fund balance to balance the 2026/27 budget. In this event, the Council would need to make provision for replenishing the General Fund balance in 2027/28, in addition to the existing budget gap identified in this report. The Council will need to consider how this risk can be mitigated, while committing to increase reserves over the next two years to enhance its financial resilience and sustainability.
- 5.11. In response to budget pressures experienced in recent years, the Council introduced a range of spending controls which successfully reduced expenditure and helped mitigate overspending. These measures included proactive vacancy management, tighter controls over agency expenditure and staff payments, and increased scrutiny of spending decisions across all directorates. These controls are now considered business as usual and have been embedded within the Council's day-to-day financial management arrangements to support effective budget control, financial resilience and sound decision-making.
- 5.12. However, spending controls alone are unlikely to be sufficient to manage the scale of the challenge. Therefore, with the exception of expenditure required to maintain health and safety, meet statutory obligations or fulfil contractual commitments, all other spending decisions will be subject to enhanced challenge and may be deferred where possible. Directorates will also be required to identify additional in-year savings, cost avoidance measures and opportunities to reduce expenditure wherever possible.
- 5.13. The modelling and analysis has been refreshed to enable the Council to embark on a two-year budget planning cycle for 2027/28 and 2028/29, which will lead up to the end of the current Spending Review and is covered by the funding provided in the multi-year local government finance settlement. Beyond this, the MTFS has been refreshed to provide a longer term five-year rolling forecast, which now covers the period to 2031/32.
- 5.14. It is important that the refreshed MTFS closely aligns with the new Council Plan. Further detail on the Council's approach to this is set out in section 5.144 (Alignment of the Medium Term Financial Strategy with the Council Plan).
- 5.15. The following sections set out the updated assumptions included in the MTFS, followed by a summary of the revised MTFS position, including the forecast budget gap for the five-year period from 2027/28 to 2031/32.

Funding assumptions

- 5.16. This section sets out the funding assumptions underpinning the revised budget gap in Table 5.

Council Tax

- 5.17. Council Tax is one of the most significant sources of funding for the Council, making up £190.5m (or 38.0%) of total core funding in 2026/27. At the multi-

year settlement in December 2025, the referendum threshold limit (excluding the Greater London Authority (GLA) share) for the financial years 2026/27-2028/29 was set at 5%, including 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept.

- 5.18. As set out when the 2026/27 budget was agreed, there was an implicit assumption from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, built into the multi-year settlement, that all local authorities would increase Council Tax by up to the referendum limit. As the increase would permanently increase the council tax income, it would also reduce the significant funding pressures in 2026/27 and beyond, and support the unprecedented pressures within social care and homelessness. In addition, the GLA precept, which makes up around 23% of the overall Council Tax bill and is subject to their own decision making, was increased by 4.1% in 2026/27 to provide additional funding for services including the Metropolitan police and Transport for London.
- 5.19. The referendum limits for 2029/30-2031/32 will not be known until the next Spending Review, so the current assumption is for an extension of the 5% limit, which has been in place since 2023/24. Therefore, the MTFS assumption for a 4.99% pa increase in Council Tax in 2027/28 and 2028/29 is unchanged and is extended to 2031/32. It is assumed that Brent will bring forward the budgets for these years on the basis of such an increase in Council Tax. This would take the Brent share of a Band D Council Tax charge to c.£2,200 in 2031/32 (£1,724.76 in 2026/27). The GLA share of the Council Tax will be subject to a separate referendum limit that was not confirmed in the Spending Review.
- 5.20. The decision on whether to increase Council Tax is a decision for Full Council at the time of setting the budget for each financial year. However, if the Council Tax is not increased by 4.99% per annum over the MTFS period, the budget gap identified in Table 5 will increase, requiring further savings to offset the loss of funding. For each 1% that Council Tax is increased by below the referendum limit, the Council loses c.£2m of funding as of 2027/28.
- 5.21. Even if the full increase was applied in subsequent years, a 1% lower Council Tax increase applied in 2027/28 would result in a relative reduction of the Council's funding by £2.5m in 2031/32 and the cumulative reduction in funding across the five year period would be £11m. These figures would be £5m and £20m respectively if the lower increase was also applied in 2028/29. Further savings may be required in future years to address the permanent loss of funding relative to the Government's assumed level of Council Tax included in the local government finance settlement.
- 5.22. Brent Council and the GLA recognise that substantial rises in Council Tax cause difficulties for some households and the Collection Fund continues to fund a Council Tax Support scheme for households who are financially vulnerable. In 2026/27 around £28m is being provided to around 23,531 households. In addition, the Council, in partnership with the GLA, created a £1.5m Council Tax Support Hardship Fund in 2025/26 (£0.4m from the GLA) to support vulnerable residents through the transition to the new Council Tax Support Scheme from 1 April 2025. Through this hardship fund a total of 13,124 households were provided support in 2025/26 with the full amount of funding

utilised. Furthermore, for 2026/27 the hardship fund is remaining at £1.5m with the GLA providing £0.4m of the funding.

- 5.23. Furthermore, the Resident Support Fund has made available £1m of additional funds for residents who are having difficulty as a result of the cost-of-living crisis.
- 5.24. The Council's ability to generate Council Tax income to support local services is only partially driven by the Government's decisions on the level of the Council Tax charge. Another significant contributing factor, which the Council has a limited ability to control is the tax base, which is set for budget setting purposes each year by General Purposes Committee (usually in December of the preceding financial year). There are multiple variables that affect the tax base, with varying degrees of control that Brent Council can exercise over them:
- Number of dwellings in the borough
 - Discounts and exemptions applied to bills
 - Council Tax Support
 - Long-term collection rate
- 5.25. The largest single factor affecting the tax base is the number of dwellings in the borough. In 2026/27, in the absence of any discounts and exemptions, the Council would receive an additional £1m of funding for every 580 properties added to the Council Tax list, providing a strong incentive to increase the number of dwellings.
- 5.26. The Government calculated the Council Tax included in Brent's Core Spending Power in the 2026/27 Local Government Finance Settlement on the basis of the average annual growth in the tax base between 2021/22 and 2025/26. Table 2 shows this calculation.

Table 2: Growth in Brent's Council Tax base 2021/22 to 2025/26

Year	Tax base in preceding financial year	Tax base in current financial year	Increase in tax base	% increase
2021/22	97,605	98,450	845	0.9%
2022/23	98,450	98,730	280	0.3%
2023/24	98,730	101,187	2,457	2.5%
2024/25	101,187	103,577	2,390	2.4%
2025/26	103,577	108,617	5,040	4.9%
			Average	2.2%

- 5.27. This average includes the effect of the one-off changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme that were introduced on 1 April 2025. These changes resulted in a large one-off increase to the taxbase, which as part of the local government finance settlement, the government have assumed will continue.
- 5.28. The MTFS is currently assuming average tax base growth of 1.7% pa based on recent trends, the ongoing regeneration of the borough, including sites such as

Wembley Park, and the commitments made in the Borough Plan and Local Plan to deliver thousands of new homes in the borough to meet identified housing need as a result of expected population growth.

- 5.29. The net effect of the use of this average by the Government is that Council Tax included in Core Spending Power for Brent at the 2026/27-2028/29 settlement was higher than the amount included in the budget/MTFS by £1.5m in 2026/27, £3.2m in 2027/28 and £5.3m in 2028/29. By 2028/29, this is the equivalent of 2,788 additional Band D properties.
- 5.30. However, this difference represents only 1% of Brent's total Core Spending Power by 2028/29, meaning that it should not have a material impact on Brent's relative funding position when Core Spending Power is used to discuss this. Furthermore, Brent's increase in Core Spending Power was 9.6%, 7.4% and 7.0% across the settlement, significantly above the thresholds for requiring a funding floor. Therefore, as a result Brent did not lose any funding it would otherwise have received had the assumptions taken into account one-off changes to Council Tax Support.
- 5.31. It is possible that external factors present in the economy, e.g. high interest rates and low economic growth will weigh down on housebuilding in Brent. Recent Government policy announcements on housing targets and proposed changes to planning legislation, increase the likelihood of further tax base growth above the recent average, but progress against this nationally has been slow.
- 5.32. However, taking into account the available data on housebuilding in Brent currently and the pipeline of major schemes that are being delivered, the central assumption remains that annual tax base growth of c.1.7% is reasonable, in line with recent trends. The data will be monitored and analysed further throughout the summer and the assumption will be revised upwards or downwards in the 2027/28 Draft Budget in November.
- 5.33. Also included in the tax base calculations are some mandatory discounts and exemptions and Council Tax Support for pension age claimants, which reduce the tax base. For example, where only one person who is not disregarded for Council Tax purposes is resident in a property, the individual is eligible to claim a 25% Single Person Discount (SPD). The SPD and other mandatory discounts and exemptions are created as a result of Government policy and their application is controlled by legislation. Brent cannot control these factors directly, but must take them into account when producing tax base forecasts.
- 5.34. There are also discretionary schemes, such as the second homes premium (increase) and Council Tax Support for working age claimants (decrease), on which the decision to apply the schemes is taken by Brent Council. Where such schemes are amended, as was the case with the Council Tax Support Scheme in April 2025, the decision is taken separately by Full Council, with the implications then feeding into future tax base calculations.

- 5.35. The final element of the tax base calculation is the long-term collection rate. This calculation makes an assumption about the amount of the overall Council Tax liability that the Collection Fund expects to collect in the long-term, with the remaining income set aside as an impairment for doubtful debt. For 2026/27 and all other years in the current MTFS, this long-term collection rate assumption is unchanged at 97.0%.
- 5.36. This reflects that collection remains lower than before the Covid-19 pandemic, representing a key risk to the MTFS, but that work is also ongoing to improve the recovery of debt and in-year collection of Council Tax, with further investment in the services being made in 2026/27.
- 5.37. It is crucial that the Council makes an accurate assessment now of the amount of the Council Tax income that can be collected, while ensuring that the Council attempts to collect what is due. Any income that must be written off over the amount that was set aside in the impairment will have to be repaid from future revenue budgets. Therefore, if the Council's continued efforts during 2026/27 to improve the collection of Council Tax are not successful, it may be necessary to reduce the long-term collection rate further in 2027/28. Each reduction of 0.1% in the target collection rate will result in a further reduction of resources of c.£0.2m. Conversely, if the efforts are successful, it may be possible to increase the long-term collection rate, thereby increasing the resources available to fund Council services.
- 5.38. A full forecast of the Council Tax base to cover the MTFS period will be developed over the summer and reported to Cabinet in the draft 2027/28 budget in November. This will include a proposed draft tax base for 2027/28 to be agreed at General Purposes Committee in December 2026.

Business Rates

- 5.39. In 2026/27, the Government have delivered the most significant changes to the Business Rates Retention System (BRRS) since it was created in 2013. The key components of the changes are as follows:
- Full reset of the BRRS
 - Changes to the statutory definition of Non-Domestic Rating Income
 - Changes to the Levy/Safety Net
 - Implications for Business Rates Pooling
 - Revaluation of Business Rates liabilities
 - Three new multipliers for businesses, including two for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) businesses replacing the RHL relief

Full reset of the BRRS

- 5.40. The full reset of the BRRS is detailed in full in the Budget and Council Tax 2026/27 report which was sent to Full Council in February 2026. The outcome for Brent's MTFS was:

- New Baseline Funding Level of £132.4m, calculated based on Brent's new relative needs share of the adjusted national Business Rates pool. Section 31 Grants for funded reliefs were included and inflation at September 2025 CPI (3.8%) was added, along with the accumulated growth since 2013. Compensation for historic under-indexation of the multipliers, which was previously included in Core Spending Power as a separate grant, but included in Brent's budget as part of the Business Rates funding line was moved to Revenue Support Grant.
- New Business Rates Baseline of £60.6m. This increased from 2025/26 due to the amendments to the statutory definition of non-domestic rating income (see section 5.41-5.43).
- New Top-Up Grant of £71.8m. This is lower than the grant would have been if the definition of non-domestic rating income had remained unchanged.
- The Baseline Funding Level is then assumed to increase by CPI in September of the year before each financial year (September 2025). The current MTFs assumption is for 2% increases pa, but with inflation currently at 2.8% and expected to increase further during 2026, this will be kept under review.

Changes to the statutory definition of Non-Domestic Rating Income

- 5.41. Amendments to the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013 from April 2026 moved the BRRS from a system calculated based on Net Rates Payable to a system calculated based on Gross Rates Payable. This widens the definition of non-domestic rating income to include the effects of funded reliefs, with the Section 31 grant compensation for those reliefs now being paid to the Collection Fund rather than from MHCLG to the preceptors.
- 5.42. The impact of this on Brent is that increases or decreases to funded reliefs, particularly empty property relief (previously unfunded), no longer have a positive or negative effect on the amount of income received through the BRRS. The risk (and reward) from this system has been taken on by central government and local authorities have greater certainty over budgeting for NNDR income.
- 5.43. The amount that Brent receives from the BRRS system is not affected by this change as that was determined separately as Brent's share of the total non-domestic rating income using the relative needs formulae arising from the Fair Funding Review.

Changes to the Levy/Safety Net

- 5.44. In 2026/27, the Safety Net level, by which an authority's total income from Business Rates cannot fall below that proportion of their Baseline Funding Level, is set at 100%. This is a transitional mechanism designed to protect authorities against any short-term reductions in funding because of the reset.

Brent's budgeted NNDR income for 2026/27 per the NNDR1 form in January 2026 was £59.5m, giving a total NNDR income of £131.3m. This is a shortfall of £1.1m, meaning that Brent will receive a safety net payment in 2026/27 of £1.1m.

- 5.45. In 2027/28, the Safety Net will be set at 97% of the Baseline Funding Level, before returning to the pre-reset level of 92.5% in 2028/29. Brent will therefore only receive a safety net in future years if the income falls further. The current assumption based on historic trends is that growth in the taxbase will result in the income recovering to the Baseline Funding Level in 2027/28 and remaining in line with government assumptions thereafter.
- 5.46. If in future years, Brent's tax base growth is sufficient to produce NNDR income that exceeds the Baseline Funding Level, in contrast to 2025/26, a levy will be payable on the growth. Brent will still retain most of that growth, but a small portion (10% on the first 10% of growth), increasing with the level of growth will be payable, which funds the safety net.
- 5.47. At the time of the Fair Funding Review and the Business Rates reset the government indicated that future resets of the system would be more frequent, without confirming when the next reset would take place. Depending on how long this time period is, this would limit the amount of growth that can be built up in the system before the reset takes place and redistributes it again.
- 5.48. It is not currently expected that a reset will take place during the period of the current MTFS to 2031/32, with the most likely date of the next reset being 2032, to coincide with the three-yearly revaluation cycle. Therefore, the MTFS does not currently assume any changes to the operation of the BRRS during this period.

Implications for Business Rates Pooling

- 5.49. Until 2025/26, Brent was part of the Eight Authority Business Rates Pool, generating £3.7m of additional income for Brent in 2025/26. The changes to the levy system in 2026/27 mean that all of the eight authorities would now pay a levy on any growth. This removed the incentive for the authorities to pool together and as a result the decision was taken to end the Eight Authority Pool arrangement at the end of 2025/26. The income budget for the Pooling Gain was removed in the 2026/27 budget and Brent is now operating as a single authority for the purposes of NNDR.
- 5.50. At this time, it is not expected that this situation will change during the MTFS period, but Brent will continue to consider all of the available options including reforming the Eight Authority Pool (subject to agreement with the other authorities), forming a new pool with a different set of authorities and not joining a pool if it continues to be financially unviable.

Revaluation of Business Rates Liabilities

- 5.51. From 1 April 2026, liabilities for business rates are based on the rateable value (RV) of properties on 1 April 2024, the first revaluation to take place following the introduction of the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023, which made three-yearly revaluations a statutory requirement. Revaluations are carried out by Government, with Brent Council not having any responsibility for the setting of business rates.
- 5.52. This revaluation resulted in a change to the business rates bills for individual businesses in line with the change in the open market annual rental value of the property between 2021 and 2024. Overall, Brent's RV increased to £452.6m, an increase of 21% on 2023.
- 5.53. Under the BRRS, revaluations have a nil impact on the funding received by the Council as the government adjusts the amount receivable by the Council to its Baseline Funding Level. For individual businesses however, the increases in RV would result in increases to the liabilities of those businesses if the multipliers remained unchanged. As it is, revaluations are also revenue neutral, meaning that the existing multipliers were reduced to ensure that the overall Business Rates income at the national level remained the same as it would have been if the revaluation had not taken place.
- 5.54. This means that businesses with an above average increase in RV will have seen an increase in their liability, while businesses with a below average increase or a decrease in RV will have seen a decrease in their liability. Furthermore, in 2026/27 some businesses will receive transitional relief to partially offset large increases in their bills, which will then unwind over the revaluation period to 2029. Businesses not eligible for transitional relief or the Supporting Small Business Scheme will pay a transitional relief supplement of 1p on top of their normal multiplier. Bills will also take into account any other reliefs that a property is eligible for, such as small business rates relief, ensuring that individual businesses are not disproportionately affected by changes to their RV.
- 5.55. The next revaluation is scheduled to take place in 2029, with affect during years three to five of the MTFS period. It is expected that this revaluation will take place in the same way as the 2026 revaluation, with no implications for MTFS funding. Brent Council is liable to pay business rates on its commercial properties where it is the tenant or the property is unoccupied, the largest of which is the Brent Civic Centre. The 2026 revaluation did not result in a material change to this liability and the same is currently assumed for 2029. If future forecasts suggest that the liability will increase by a material amount in 2029, provision for this will be made in a future MTFS.

New Multipliers

- 5.56. In 2026/27, the Government has increased the number of multipliers to five, by introducing new small business and standard multipliers for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) hereditaments at 5p below the National small business and standard multipliers and a High-value multiplier set 2.8p above the National standard multiplier, applicable to all hereditaments with an RV of £500k or

above. The RHL multipliers permanently replace the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief for which a Section 31 grant was previously paid by government.

- 5.57. The Government's changes to the RHL multipliers mean that Retail, Hospitality and Leisure businesses will permanently pay lower rates than businesses in other sectors occupying properties with similar rateable values, recognising the significant impact that higher rates can have on the ability of that sector to operate. However, the new RHL multipliers represent a significantly lower reduction than the relief they replace, which coupled with the revaluation has resulted in some very large increases in business rates bills for some of the businesses in the sector.
- 5.58. The government subsequently announced in January 2026 that a new additional relief for pubs and live music venues would apply for the next three financial years. This provides an additional discount of 15% in 2026/27, with bills for eligible businesses then frozen in real terms in 2027/28 and 2028/29. Brent will be fully compensated for the reduction in income through Section 31 grants.
- 5.59. At this time, no further government support is expected for this or any other sector and it is not clear whether the support provided will extend beyond the 2029 revaluation.

Revenue Support Grant

- 5.60. Revenue Support Grant is another significant source of funding for Brent's revenue budget. Having declined in importance since 2010, the Fair Funding Review has reversed this trend with the consolidation of multiple grants into RSG. At £103.2m in 2026/27, this is 21% of Brent's total Core Funding. However, this consolidation, whilst providing increased flexibility with the funding, does not remove the need for the expenditure previously funded by the separate grants.
- 5.61. The transitional arrangements in the Fair Funding Review will unwind, resulting in further increases in 2027/28 and 2028/29. Finally, inflationary increases at 2% per annum are currently included in all years. By 2031/32, RSG is forecast to be £146.6m, or 23% of Core Funding.

Specific Grants

- 5.62. The Fair Funding Review and the multi-year local government finance settlement that followed resulted in the consolidation of multiple grants into Revenue Support Grant, thereby significantly reducing the amount of different grants provided through the settlement. However, the government also recognised the need for some key funding streams to remain separate to continue delivering on those priorities.
- 5.63. In order to achieve this, the Government created three new consolidated ringfenced grants, along with expanding the existing Public Health Grant (£28.5m). The three new grants are:

- Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant (£8.1m)
 - Children, Families and Youth Grant (£9.0m)
 - Crisis and Resilience Fund (£7.8m)
- 5.64. The Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant brought together the homelessness element of the Homelessness Prevention Grant, the Rough Sleeping Prevention, Recovery and Accommodation Grant and the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant. The two housing grants were previously outside of the settlement and received as part of the service area funding. The temporary accommodation element of the Homelessness Prevention grant was rolled into RSG.
- 5.65. The Children, Families and Youth Grant brought together multiple former grants including the Supporting Families element of the Children and Families Grant, which was previously received by the service (and had itself been consolidated from multiple smaller grants in previous years) and the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant, which was included in the 2025/26 settlement. The allocation also included additional funding (£4.5m in 2026/27, reducing to £3.4m in 2028/29), which has been invested in further prevention activities. The Holiday Activities and Food Programme and Pupil Premium Plus Post-16 Grant (both separately ringfenced) were also brought into this grant.
- 5.66. The Crisis and Resilience Fund brought together the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments, whilst retaining some requirement to maintain the separate streams of support for residents. Both of these grants were previously outside of the settlement.
- 5.67. The funding settlement also provided allocations for 2027/28 and 2028/29, thereby providing increased certainty for budget planning for those years. At this time, all of the consolidated grants are assumed to continue to 2031/32 at the 2028/29 level, with the exception of Public Health to which a 2% inflationary uplift is applied.
- 5.68. In 2026/27, the Local Authority Better Care Grant (£16.5m) remains unchanged from 2025/26. At the local government finance settlement, the allocations for 2027/28 and 2028/29 were included in RSG, but with the expectation that the requirement to pool the funding with the Better Care Fund will continue, resulting in no actual change to where the funding is allocated to. The MTFS currently assumes that this grant will continue to 2031/32 at the same level and for simplicity is included in Specific Grants.
- 5.69. As part of the settlement, the government continued to allocate £5.8m of Recovery Grant to Brent across the settlement, as part of a commitment to provide un-ringfenced funding to areas with greater need and demand for services. This funding is taken from a top-slice of RSG, so what happens with this funding beyond 2028/29 is unclear. All options remain open to the government, including rolling it back into RSG and redistributing the funding

according to relative need as per the Fair Funding Review. In this event, it is likely that Brent would still receive a high share of this funding as a result of its relative need. For simplicity, it has been assumed that Recovery Grant continues into 2031/32 at the same level.

- 5.70. In total, the Specific Grants across the MTFS period remain stable at around £76m, with small decreases in the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant and Children, Families and Youth Grant offset by inflationary uplifts to Public Health Grant.
- 5.71. At present it is not known what the funding environment for local government will be beyond 2028/29, although it is not expected that there will be any more fundamental changes that will result in redistribution of funding as took place in 2026. This will be determined by the next Spending Review, which will result in a pressure on government departments to reduce expenditure to fund increased commitments, particularly in areas such as defence and health. Therefore, the most likely scenario is that any increases to funding for local authorities at that time will be modest.
- 5.72. In common with the approach taken in previous years, these funding assumptions are cautious and actual funding in these years may be higher. However, this prudent approach has enabled Brent to successfully balance the overall budget in recent years, despite significant overspends on front line service budgets. By maintaining a cautious approach, the Council is able to set aside sufficient contingency and reserves to maintain the Council's financial resilience when faced with these unexpected pressures.

Service specific pressures, risks and mitigations

- 5.73. The following sections set out the specific pressures, risks and mitigations for each of the main service Directorates.

Service Reform and Strategy

- 5.74. The adult social care sector continues to face significant and interconnected pressures affecting the quality, accessibility and long-term sustainability of services. These challenges arise within a constrained financial environment and are driven by increasing demand, rising complexity of need, workforce pressures and sustained market cost inflation.
- 5.75. At a national and regional level, local government finances remain under significant strain, driven by rising demand, inflationary cost increases and long-term funding constraints. Analysis by London Councils highlights a widening funding gap across boroughs, with pressures of at least £500m across London in 2025/26, alongside increasing reliance on exceptional financial support to maintain statutory services.
- 5.76. External benchmarking using national datasets, including the Adult Social Care Finance Return (ASC-FR) and wider Department of Health and Social Care publications, confirms that expenditure growth and demand pressures are

consistent across local authorities and reflect systemic rather than localised challenges.

- 5.77. Whilst overall growth in service user numbers has moderated, increasing by approximately 2% between May 2025 and May 2026, demand is increasingly characterised by higher levels of complexity, with individuals presenting later and requiring more intensive and higher-cost support.
- 5.78. This is reflected in the cost profile of care packages, with new placements typically 14-16% more expensive than those ending in the previous year. Benchmarking analysis confirms this trend across residential, nursing and supported living provision, where rising costs are driven by both acuity and sustained market pressures.
- 5.79. At Quarter 1, demand trends indicate a shift in placement types, with reduced reliance on homecare and increased demand for supported living and residential placements associated with more complex needs. This creates a potential financial risk of up to £3.5m if not effectively managed. The directorate is currently forecasting a breakeven position; however, this remains subject to volatility given the demand-led nature of expenditure.
- 5.80. Benchmarking across London and North West London (NWL) demonstrates that Brent is not a high-cost outlier and is managing adult social care expenditure broadly in line with comparator authorities.
- 5.81. Brent's average weekly cost per client (£916) sits within the mid-range of London boroughs and are lower than several neighbouring NWL authorities, including Ealing and Hounslow, and broadly comparable with Barnet. Residential and nursing placement costs are mid-range, with variation driven by need and market conditions rather than inefficiency. This position is reinforced by wider benchmarking through LG Inform, which shows that Brent's spend per head and activity levels are consistent with statistical neighbours and London comparators.
- 5.82. Benchmarking through the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) further indicates that local performance remains broadly aligned with national comparators across key measures including quality of life, independence and safeguarding. This supports the conclusion that financial pressures are primarily driven by external factors, namely increasing complexity of need, workforce challenges and market inflation-rather than local inefficiency.
- 5.83. Inflationary pressures, workforce costs (including London Living Wage requirements) and provider sustainability concerns continue to drive fee uplift requests across the care market.
- 5.84. The Council has adopted a targeted and evidence-based approach to fee uplifts, applying increases selectively to support lower-cost placements and maintain market stability, while avoiding uplifts on higher-cost provision. This approach balances affordability with the need to sustain a resilient care market and is aligned with regional commissioning activity across North West London.

- 5.85. Market intelligence based on Care Quality Commission (CQC) provider data highlights ongoing capacity constraints and pricing variation across the sector, reinforcing the need for strong commissioning and contract management in a shared regional market.
- 5.86. In response to these pressures, the Council is strengthening its approach to demand management and commissioning to improve financial control and value for money. This includes:
- Implementation of a strengthened multi-disciplinary Quality Assurance and Monitoring (QAM) panel to provide enhanced scrutiny of care decisions and costs
 - Increased review and challenge of high-cost packages, supported by benchmarking against regional comparators
 - Enhanced data analytics and monitoring, including the development of Power BI tools to track demand and financial impact in real time
 - Continued focus on alternatives to residential care, including supported living, extra care and home-based provision
- 5.87. In parallel, the introduction of technology-enabled care (TEC) will support more preventative, efficient and person-centred models of care, reducing reliance on higher-cost provision over time.
- 5.88. Workforce challenges remain a key risk across the sector, with high vacancy and turnover rates contributing to increased reliance on agency staffing and associated cost pressures. The Council continues to prioritise workforce development, recruitment and retention initiatives, and agency-to-permanent conversion to improve stability and reduce long-term costs.
- 5.89. Partnership working with the NHS remains integral to managing demand and cost pressures, particularly in relation to Continuing Healthcare and Section 117 responsibilities. Strengthened joint working arrangements are supporting improved financial management and system-wide alignment.
- 5.90. Public Health services are funded through a £28.5m ring-fenced grant and are currently forecast to break even. However, increasing demand-particularly in sexual health services-and more prescriptive grant conditions continue to present financial risks which will require ongoing monitoring and management.
- 5.91. Leisure services remain financially sensitive, with continued reliance on income generation to offset rising costs, particularly utilities. The Willesden Sports Centre PFI contract continues to represent a significant risk following the drawdown of the smoothing reserve, and is subject to enhanced monitoring and contract management.
- 5.92. While Brent's relative cost position compares favourably with peers, the medium-term financial outlook remains challenging therefore the focus will

continue to be on robust demand management, strengthened commissioning and market oversight, workforce stability and service transformation, ensuring that resources are deployed effectively to deliver sustainable, high-quality outcomes for residents over the medium term.

Children, Young People and Community Development (CYPCD)

- 5.93. The financial outlook for the CYPCD directorate's budget continues to be impacted by the volatility and unpredictability of placement costs for Looked After Children (LAC), particularly those with complex needs requiring residential care or secure accommodation. This remains a significant financial risk for the medium term.
- 5.94. A key challenge for the authority is the limited availability of suitable placements, particularly for high-needs and remanded young people. This supply shortage continues to drive up provider fees. Costs for individual high-need placements can exceed £0.5m per annum, with the most expensive residential placement recorded in 2025/26 costing £15k per week. These costs reflect not only the complexity of needs but also ongoing market conditions.
- 5.95. The overall LAC position is low, in Brent compared to neighbouring boroughs during 2025/26 (see Table 3). Early indications for the first quarter of 2026/27 suggest numbers are still low (292) but the pressures in the service are mainly due to the increase in clients with complex needs in residential placements (see Table 4). The reliance on high-cost placements, combined with a limited supply of affordable alternatives, continues to exert sustained pressure on the budget. Sustained efforts will be critical to ensure children are placed in the most suitable and cost-effective settings wherever possible, while maintaining high standards of care and safeguarding.
- 5.96. Table 3: Comparison of numbers of LAC in Brent to statistical neighbours 2022-2025

Number of LAC	2022	2023	2024	2025
Brent	341	319	307	299
Statistical Neighbours	347	358	339	319

- 5.97. Table 4: Average Residential Placements 22/23 to 25/26

Residential placements	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
Full time equivalent numbers (average)	32	32	36	47

- 5.98. The current 2026/27 forecast for the social care placement budget is a break-even position. This represents a central projection based on scenario modelling of the current mix of placement types and numbers and allows for a net increase of 5 residential placements towards the second part of the year, in addition to the 48 reported at the end of April. In the worst-case scenario, there could be an overspend of up to £3.2m, while the best-case scenario would be an underspend of £1.4m.

- 5.99. The Placements budget remains complex and there are other variables, other than residential placements, that could have an impact on the MTFS, such as changes in the client numbers/unit costs of other type of placements or the expected income and contributions to this budget (for example, the Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers grant).
- 5.100. Another pressure relates to young people on remand. In 2025/26, there were a significant number of young people placed in secure remand (6), five of whom were linked to the same serious incident. Remand placements are court ordered (typically under youth justice legislation such as the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 in England) and local authorities have a statutory duty to provide accommodation, often at very short notice. This makes them unavoidable demand, unlike many other placement decisions where there may be some discretion or scope for early intervention to influence outcomes.
- 5.101. To mitigate these pressures, the new Council-run care home “The Gardens” has officially opened and is ready to accommodate clients. (At a lower unit cost compared to the average in the private sector). The new home is expected to provide more stable and cost-effective placement options for some children with complex needs, supporting the broader strategic objective of developing sustainable local provision.
- 5.102. Work continues with the Placements Commissioning Board, led by the Corporate Director of CYPCD to reduce spend and deliver different degrees of success.
- 5.103. The introduction of a new and competitive package for in-house carers in 2024/25 and 2025/26 has not yet resulted in an increase in the number of carers. However, this has not placed pressure on Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) budgets, largely due to a reduction in the overall number of LAC. The groundwork laid through this initiative is expected to strengthen future recruitment as the offer becomes more established.
- 5.104. Promoting greater independence has yielded clear financial and service delivery benefits. The service has successfully reduced the unit cost of supported accommodation placements by ensuring that care leavers claim Housing Benefit where eligible, with deductions made at source from providers. This streamlined financial approach contributed to the savings achieved in the last financial year and is expected to be embedded as “Business as usual”.
- 5.105. Other mitigations include scrutiny of children’s care plans at Director level to ensure children remain in the most suitable setting relative to their assessed needs. Work continues with other West London authorities to improve local authority run residential home sufficiency, with Brent supporting the development of new provision across the sub-region which would be available for spot-purchase.

- 5.106. Looking ahead, further substantial savings are anticipated through continued partnership working with Housing, particularly in securing sustainable move-on accommodation for care leavers. However, this area also presents a significant risk. The ongoing housing crisis in the borough creates challenges in identifying affordable and suitable accommodation, which could limit the pace and impact of planned cost reductions. To mitigate this, the service is working closely with the housing department to explore innovative housing solutions, including access to social housing pathways and improved commissioning of semi-independent placements. Additionally, there is a focus on enhancing transition planning earlier in the care journey to reduce delays in step-down arrangements and ensure care leavers can move on safely and sustainably.
- 5.107. Recruiting and retaining skilled, experienced social workers continues to be a national challenge, often resulting in a dependence on more costly agency staff. However, proactive management within the directorate and the implementation of a staff restructure in 2025/26 led to a reduction of those pressures.
- 5.108. The Directorate received additional grant funding during the year, including Transformation Funding, the Best Start in Life Grant, and the ongoing Prevention Grant. Effective deployment and management of these grants is expected to strengthen early intervention and preventative services, contributing to a reduction in the number of children requiring residential placements over the longer term. This is anticipated to help mitigate demand-led cost pressures and reduce pressure on the general fund budgets in future years.

SEN Transport

- 5.109. Despite continued growth of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), the service successfully implemented the Travel Assistance Policy Implementation Plan (TAPIP) and managed the transport costs in 2025/26, and this work is expected to continue in 2026/27 and beyond. Risks remain, however, as continuing increases in children and young people with an EHCPs may lead to pressures against some of the Council's budgets, including the SEN transport budget. There are also additional risks in addition to general inflation, such as:
- London Living Wage – increase from April 26 is estimated to add £300k onto labour costs on a like for like basis. This pressure was considered in the 2026/27 budget allocation however; there could be further increases in future years.
 - Incremental increases for fleet maintenance – there is an agreement with the SEN Transport provider for an annual rise in the costs for routine maintenance per vehicle to account for the aging of the fleet and inflation. As the fleet ages, there is a risk that some of the buses may need replacing.

Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

- 5.110. Within Public Realm there is expected change in the coming years due to the impact of changes to national waste policy. These policy changes will link with Brent's Borough Plan priority of 'A Cleaner, Greener Future'. To comply with these policies Brent will target improving the recycling rate and reducing waste contamination, which will in turn assist to achieve a cleaner borough, and a climate friendly, sustainable borough.
- 5.111. The first of these national waste policies implemented was Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging in 2025/26. Since then, organisations and businesses started to pay a fee for the packaging they supply to or import into the UK market. In the first year (2025/26) Local Authorities received a basic payment based on publicly available and existing data about tonnages, operations and unit costs gathered from a representative sample of LAs across the UK and L.B of Brent received £5.99m. In the second year (2026/27) the basic payment and any adjustments will be based on data Local Authorities submit to the Scheme Administrator, and as it stands, the expected amount is in the region of approximately £5.3m.
- 5.112. Brent will use this funding to maximise recycling and drive down packaging waste. This will be done by refining key services to improve participation, reduce contamination and reach locations within the Borough currently underserved.
- 5.113. Several service improvement initiatives were introduced throughout the 2025/26 which continues to drive to improve the quality of the recyclable material to keep the waste disposal costs down. The reduction in rejection rates for recyclable material in 2025/26 improved to 14.1%. The service also continued its focus on increasing the diversion of food waste from the general waste stream. 140 new food waste housing units and bins in the Council's estates have been introduced. Looking ahead this initiative will be rolled out across the Borough, including private management estates.
- 5.114. Simpler Recycling regulations were introduced under the Environment Act 2021 and came into force on 31 March 2026 for household waste. The reforms are designed to boost recycling rates and cut the amount of waste sent to landfill or incineration. Brent is largely in compliance with the reforms in terms of the required collections. To ensure full compliance the service will look to mobilise a dedicated project team who will lead on rolling out waste and recycling strategy improvement for communal estates including the roll-out of twin stream recycling to all 1,400+ communal properties, alongside improvements to bin infrastructure, signage, and containers. Furthermore the service will roll-out food waste collection to flats above shops and properties on the North Circular Road as well as the collection of flexible plastics.
- 5.115. Looking further ahead there are additional changes, for which further detail on both the specific requirements and funding that would be available is awaited, to ensure compliance by Brent.
- 5.116. The Deposit Return Scheme is planned to be introduced from 1st October 2027 by the government. This will require a deposit to be paid for a single -use drink

containers under the new deposit return scheme (DRS). Businesses that produces or sells drinks will have new responsibilities. Recyclable containers, which will be repaid when the empty containers returned. This is likely to reduce the volume and composition of the materials collected by the Council, and therefore likely reduce the recycling tonnages. This may reduce costs but inadvertently but will also reduce the potential income generation for the Council via any on sale of materials. The UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS) is expanding to include energy from waste (EfW) facilities starting in 2028. This is likely to have a significant financial impact to Brent and the other partners of the West London Waste Authority engaged in waste to fuel activity. Early estimates suggest the impact of this could be costs of £2m in the first year of the change.

5.117. Within Neighbourhoods & Regeneration, Inclusive Regeneration and Climate Action remain heavily reliant on planning fee income, including Building Control, and face increasing financial risk. Changes arising from the Building Safety Regulator have significantly reduced the Council's ability to bid for major schemes, with referral levels remaining low and income recovery constrained, alongside a wider slowdown in development activity across the Borough. These market pressures are compounded by a workforce risk, as a high proportion of experienced staff are approaching retirement age; loss of capacity would directly reduce the ability to deliver services and generate income, creating a risk of further income shortfalls. These factors represent a risk to the service's financial sustainability, with limited scope to mitigate through income growth alone unless budget assumptions are realigned to reflect these ongoing constraints.

5.118. Property and Assets faces ongoing risks in achieving income targets due to lease expiries and void properties, requiring continued effective marketing and tenant acquisition. In addition, sustained cost pressures within Facilities Management, particularly from overtime across Cleaning and Security services, may impact financial performance over the medium term, though mitigation through budget management and offsetting underspends is being pursued.

Residents and Housing Services

5.119. The Residents and Housing Services department continues to experience significant pressures predominately attributable to the high level of demand on housing services. The Housing Needs and Support budget experienced a substantial overspend of £11.7m in the 2025/26 financial year. This was primarily driven by an exceptionally high and sustained level of demand for homelessness services, compounded by a persistent shortage of affordable Private Rented Sector (PRS) accommodation. In response, the 2026/27 budget was increased by £8m to close the budget gap. This enhancement in funding aims to support the department in managing the ongoing pressures and escalating costs associated with providing temporary and emergency accommodation, while continuing to deliver vital homelessness prevention and support services. Multiple projects and interventions focused on increasing housing supply have been developed, and officers are proactively working to contain costs within the expanded budget envelope. Projections and financial

forecasts are under continuous review, incorporating the latest data on service demand and cost trends to ensure the budget remains responsive to emerging pressures.

- 5.120. The department has also been proactive in mitigating the impacts of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis on Brent residents and businesses. In 2026/27, the Household Support Fund has been merged with the Discretionary Housing Payments into the consolidated Crisis and Resilience Fund providing additional resources to assist vulnerable households. Brent's allocation from the Crisis and Resilience Fund is £7.8m, an increase of £1.3m (19%) when compared to the 2025/26 allocation. The fund is earmarked for households receiving free school meals, Care Leavers, Disabled households on Housing Benefits, Credit Union, Immigration advice, Debt advice, Employment support and external partners. A portion of the grant is reserved for reactive support, enabling timely assistance to residents experiencing acute hardship.
- 5.121. In April 2024, a new model of support for Brent residents was developed for three years through the piloting of Cost-of-Living Outcome Based Review (OBR) projects and guided by a series of design principles. The approach has a single, joined-up model including the Community Wellbeing Programme aligned with the Resident Support Fund (RSF), to support residents to be more resilient in the longer term and aligns closely with strategic priorities and related projects. The RSF supports the Council's approach towards addressing key community needs through strategic funding and partnerships, ensuring impactful and sustainable support for residents. £1m of recurring funding has been allocated in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to support this model.
- 5.122. Housing Needs and Support remains the most significant financial pressure within the department. As of the end of 2025/26, Brent received 8,795 homelessness support applications, including 5,309 from single individuals and 3,486 from families. This volume equates to approximately 169 new applications per week, underscoring the sustained and intense demand for housing services. In April 2026, there were 1,428 households in nightly paid accommodation, compared with 1,182 households in April 2025. This represents an overall increase of 9% since December 2025, when 1,312 households were in accommodation, with approximately half of the annual increase occurring between Q3 and Q4.
- 5.123. Since the Housing Needs budget was set in February, there have been continued inflationary pressures, particularly relating to provider costs, although the scale remains subject to ongoing review. The original assumption of a £1.4m increase for 2026/27 reflected the best estimate at that time; however, more recent information suggests average costs have risen by around £10 a night per placement. Based on current activity levels, this could result in expenditure being up to £5m higher than initially anticipated for 2026/27. These figures remain indicative and will continue to be monitored as part of regular financial updates.

- 5.124. Ongoing benchmarking and analysis conducted by London Councils reinforce the scale of housing pressures faced across the capital. Their latest data projects a 75% rise in average payments for TA compared to a 23% increase in market rents over the last five years, far exceeding budgeted assumptions. Brent has experienced an 85% rise in its homelessness net expenditure between 2024/25 and 2025/26. Across all service areas, London boroughs face a collective funding shortfall of at least £1 billion in 2025-26. These figures illustrate both the scale of the challenge and the pressure on temporary accommodation budgets.
- 5.125. The availability of suitable B&B and Annex accommodation remains severely constrained throughout London, forcing councils to rely on higher-cost accommodation providers and placements outside their own boroughs. Such arrangements increase financial pressures through elevated accommodation costs and impose additional social and logistical burdens on families, including travel expenses related to children attending schools in Brent. The supply of settled temporary accommodation properties, especially those leased under Private Sector Leasing (PSL) schemes, has declined due to reduced procurement of new properties and landlords' reluctance to renew leases upon expiry. This decline further exacerbates the challenge of moving families out of costly emergency accommodation into more stable housing.
- 5.126. The Council has implemented a targeted programme of work encompassing multiple workstreams aimed at improving the affordability of temporary accommodation and exploring new and alternative housing supply options. Officers are engaged in renegotiating contract prices and identifying opportunities to relocate some of the highest-cost cases to more cost-effective solutions. The department continues to rigorously assess homelessness applications to prevent or relieve demand where possible; in 2025/26, 67% of approaches were successfully prevented or relieved.
- 5.127. In the 2026/27 financial year, i4B is continuing its street property acquisition programme with an initial target of acquiring 19 homes. i4B, a housing company wholly owned by Brent Council, was established to acquire, let, and manage a portfolio of affordable, high-quality PRS properties. This self-financing portfolio generates annual savings exceeding £6m by reducing reliance on temporary accommodation. These properties are leased to homeless families at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, enabling the Council to prevent or discharge homelessness duties, thereby reducing reliance on temporary accommodation and associated costs while ensuring families have access to secure and responsible landlords. i4B remains self-financing, with the current portfolio generating annual savings in temporary accommodation costs. While new builds and acquisitions alone will not fully resolve the homelessness challenge, the Council is actively utilising its available resources and powers to expand housing supply. Any additional supply secured through i4B will contribute to mitigating the risk of overspending and help manage future housing costs.
- 5.128. Supported exempt accommodation presents an additional financial and budgetary risk. Providers in this sector are not bound by LHA caps and may charge higher rents by demonstrating the provision of support services.

Housing Benefit subsidy levels are determined by Rent Officer assessments of claimed rents, creating a challenge in managing costs. This issue reflects a national concern, highlighting the need for clearer regulatory frameworks and consistent criteria to define supported exempt accommodation and assess minimal care requirements. Historically managed within central corporate budgets, this area saw a £2.1m overspend in 2025/26 and remains under close scrutiny.

- 5.129. The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 introduced a number of important reforms to the supported housing system, with a particular focus on reforming supported exempt accommodation (SEA). The act introduced the Government's requirement of councils to develop a local supported housing strategy by end of 2026/27. It also introduced the Government's intention to introduce a dedicated supported housing licensing scheme that Councils would be asked to deliver. To address this the Council has established a dedicated working group to focus on developing a clear strategy. This will involve reviewing both new and existing landlords and verifying the adequacy of care provision. The Council continues horizon scanning to ensure alignment with emerging regulatory requirements and to inform future operational and financial planning.
- 5.130. The government has also set out plans to end the use of hotels to hold asylum seekers by 2029, which may shift the responsibility to local authorities and create further pressures for the Housing Needs budget. Councils are legally obligated to provide housing for individuals once their asylum claims are processed, resulting in additional temporary accommodation placement costs. This is in an environment of existing financial strains due to rising homelessness and limited housing stock.
- 5.131. The above overview outlines the key financial risks, pressures, and mitigation strategies associated with the Housing Needs and Support service within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, providing a picture of the challenges faced and the Council's proactive response to manage demand, control costs, and protect service delivery.
- 5.132. While Housing Needs and Support remains the most significant area of financial pressure within the department, other services across the Residents and Housing directorate, though not without challenges, are currently managing within their allocated budget envelopes. These services continue to experience pressures linked to inflationary increases, rising service demand, and wider socio-economic conditions. However, robust budget monitoring arrangements are in place, supported by regular horizon scanning to identify emerging risks early. Where financial pressures are identified, appropriate mitigating actions are developed and implemented in a timely manner to maintain financial sustainability and ensure the continued delivery of core services.
- 5.133. The Council's housing needs and support services are closely aligned with its broader financial strategies and budget monitoring through a focus on prevention, sustainability, and long-term cost efficiency. The priority to create more affordable and accessible housing directly supports efforts to reduce

reliance on expensive temporary accommodation, which continues to be a significant budget pressure. By investing in social housing, early interventions and prevention, the Council aims to stabilise housing supply and reduce emergency housing costs over time. In addition, the Council's commitment to tackling poverty and improving health outcomes supports targeted interventions that reduce homelessness risk and associated costs, enabling more effective budget forecasting and monitoring. These priorities ensure that resources are allocated where they have the greatest impact, supporting both fiscal responsibility and social outcomes.

- 5.134. The department's use of the CRF and the Cost-of-Living OBR model directly support Brent's financial strategy by focusing on early intervention and long-term cost reduction. These initiatives align with the "Prosperity and Stability" priority by targeting support to vulnerable households, helping to prevent homelessness and reduce demand for costly temporary accommodation. The £1m recurring funding in the MTFS reflects a strategic investment in resilience-focused services, while the earmarked and reactive elements of the CRF enable flexible, responsive budget management. This integrated approach supports effective budget monitoring, ensuring resources are used efficiently and aligned with Brent's wider priorities.

Finance and Resources

- 5.135. In January 2026 Southwark Council formally issued its notice to exit the Shared Technology Services partnership. The intended completion date for this is 31st March 2028. A programme has commenced to plan and coordinate Southwark's exit, and to also review the implications for the remaining partners, including Brent.

Capital Financing

- 5.136. Interest costs on the Council's prudential borrowing that funds the capital programme are the biggest driver of the capital financing outturn. This means that wider global factors, including the recent war in Iran and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, have placed pressure on the Council's medium term financial outlook as they have led to interest rate increases. Further global events or other interest rate shocks would place severe pressure on revenue budgets.
- 5.137. The Council's exposure to interest rate risk has increased in recent years because prudential borrowing has increased to £1,074.1m at 31 March 2026 compared to £659.1m five years earlier. This reflects the Council's ambitious capital programme, including the significant self-delivery of affordable housing and major invest to save initiatives such as investment in temporary accommodation acquisition and digital transformation. In addition, the reduction in the availability of suitable grants and the reduction in suitable internal resources (such as reserves) have meant an increased dependence on borrowing to fund the programme. Borrowing is forecast to increase to £1,274.6m by 31 March 2029.

5.138. £3 million growth has been built into the budget for 2026/27 to manage this pressure. The sensitivity of the capital financing outturn to macro-economic factors and interest rates make it exceptional difficult to forecast over the three-year period of the MTFS. Other factors that complicate capital financing outturn forecasting is that it is highly dependent on the capital outturn, the valuation of social housing appropriating to the HRA and whether LOBO loans are called.

Revised MTFS position

5.139. Table 5 provides a summary of the revised budget gap over the five-year period from 2027/28 to 2031/32, incorporating all of the assumptions set out in the previous sections. The assumptions relating to growth in service demand and inflation remain highly uncertain at this stage; however, for modelling purposes, these have been extrapolated into future years. It should be noted that this growth relates to existing statutory services rather than the introduction of new services and is required simply to maintain current service levels.

Table 5: Revised budget gap 2027/28-2031/32

	2027/28 (£m)	2028/29 (£m)	2029/30 (£m)	2030/31 (£m)	2031/32 (£m)
In year budget gap	5.0	15.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Cumulative budget gap	5.0	20.0	30.0	40.0	50.0

5.140. This table represents the gap between the available funding and the budget requirement for services. The frontloading of the grant funding in the multi-year local government finance settlement means that it is possible to profile the budget gap for 2027/28 and 2028/29 as shown, with a budget gap of £5m in 2027/28 and £15m in 2028/29, but the overall budget gap for these years is unchanged. This will provide the opportunity for services to rebuild resilience, allow time for transformation, change and digital opportunities to deliver and prepare for the challenges that lie ahead.

5.141. However, the budget gap over the remainder of the MTFS period is expected to continue at c.£10m per annum, meaning that the Council is facing a cumulative budget gap of c.£50m over this period.

5.142. This highlights that Brent continues to face significant financial challenges, despite the additional resources received through the Fair Funding Review. There also remains considerable uncertainty regarding funding from 2029/30 onwards, which will only be clarified following the next Spending Review. At that point, local government funding is likely to come under increased pressure, driven by rising demands on national budgets, particularly in defence and health.

5.143. Work will continue over the summer to refine these estimates and produce a revised forecast. The updated position will be reported to Cabinet in November

2026, along with the draft proposals for how the budget will be balanced in 2027/28 and 2028/29. The proposals taken forward by Cabinet in November will form the basis of the consultation to be carried out between November and January 2027, before the final budget is approved at Full Council in February 2027.

Alignment of the Medium Term Financial Strategy with the Council Plan

5.144. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a critical enabler of the Council's strategic ambitions and must be fully aligned with the Council Plan. This alignment ensures that financial planning and resource prioritisation is directly driven by, and supports, the Council's agreed priorities, enabling both effective delivery of outcomes for residents and a sustainable long-term financial position for Brent.

5.145. Alignment between the MTFS and the Council Plan will ensure that:

- The Council balances ambition with financial resilience.
- The Council is equipped to deliver its strategic priorities in a way that maximises positive outcomes for residents.
- Financial planning and advice are embedded within the policy and delivery framework, ensuring that priorities are deliverable within available resource.
- Financial sustainability is maintained, with appropriate consideration given to risks, pressures, and long-term affordability.

5.146. The strategic alignment of the Council Plan and the MTFS will also act as a key driver of transformational change across the organisation. This includes major programmes such as the Embrace Change Portfolio, which aim to reshape how services are designed and delivered.

5.147. The Embrace Change Portfolio is strengthening the Council's ability to deliver transformation in a more strategic, coordinated, and financially sustainable way, with clearer alignment to corporate priorities. All major change programmes are required to define clear outcomes, financial and non-financial benefits, and delivery milestones, with progress monitored through strengthened portfolio governance and reporting. The Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO) works alongside programme teams, Finance and Corporate Management Team (CMT) to provide challenge and assurance on delivery confidence, monitor risks and issues, and validate the realisation of expected benefits. This ensures that planned savings are achievable, sustainable and fully evidenced before they are incorporated into the MTFS.

5.148. By linking transformation activity directly to financial strategy, the Council can ensure that change initiatives are both strategically aligned and financially viable, delivering efficiencies and improved outcomes.

5.149. To achieve this level of alignment, the Council will need to strengthen its ways of working by:

- Adopting a more coordinated and assertive approach to planning and delivery.
- Improving integration between service planning, financial management, and performance oversight.
- Ensuring that directorates operate within a consistent and aligned framework.

5.150. This will support more effective cross-organisational collaboration and decision-making.

5.151. The work that is currently underway to develop Brent's next Council Plan will help the Council to shift towards a more integrated cross-organisational approach that shifts away from siloed working. The Plan, which will be developed over the next few months, will provide a clear sense of what Brent's priorities are, why they are priorities, and how the organisation will work to deliver on them. Ensuring officers have a strong understanding of the Council Plan will help to support a cultural shift, which, combined with strengthened systems and processes, will be essential to achieving sustainable alignment between the MTFS and the Council Plan.

6.0 Proposed revenue budget setting process for 2027/28

6.1. The proposed budget setting process following this Cabinet meeting is as follows:

1. Draft budget for 2027/28 and new savings proposals are presented to Cabinet in November 2026.
2. The proposals, together with any changes made by Cabinet, will form the basis of consultation between November 2026 and February 2027 with residents, businesses and other key stakeholders.
3. The Budget Scrutiny Task Group will review the budget proposal and report accordingly.
4. The General Purposes Committee will review the calculation of the Council Tax base in December 2026; and
5. After the statutory processes of consultation, scrutiny and equalities have concluded, a draft budget will be presented to Cabinet to recommend a final budget and Council Tax to the February 2027 Council meeting.

7.0 Capital programme

- 7.1. In 2025/26, the Council spent £209.7m against the final budget of £328.9m, outlined in table 6 below:

Table 6 - 2025/26 Final Outturn Position					
Portfolio / Programme	Budget as at Feb 2026 (Final Budget)	Outturn	Over / (Under) Spend to Budget	Over / (Under) spend split	
				2026/27 (Slippage) / Accelerated Spend C/FWD	(Under) / Overspend for Repurpose and Removal
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Corporate Assets	48.3	34.7	(13.6)	(13.8)	0.2
South Kilburn	26.9	12.3	(14.6)	(15.5)	0.8
Regeneration	84.2	73.5	(10.8)	(10.9)	0.1
Children & Young People	25.5	20.5	(5.0)	(5.2)	0.2
Affordable Housing Supply	119.3	49.2	(70.1)	(51.8)	(18.3)
Housing HRA & Management	24.5	19.6	(4.9)	(5.2)	0.2
Grand Total	328.9	209.7	(119.1)	(102.3)	(16.8)

- 7.2. The 2025/26 outturn position was £119.1m lower than the revised budget. Further details on the outturn position are provided in the Financial Outturn 2025/26 report. It is proposed that the slippage and accelerated spends from 2025/26 are adjusted in the 2026/27 budget, and that any under and overspends are removed. This amounts to a net increase to the proposed 2026/27 budget of £102.3m.

- 7.3. Table 7 illustrates virements, reprofiling and other budget adjustments from 2026/27 to 2030/31, with further narrative detail provided below:

Table 7 - Budget Adjustments Breakdown 2026/27 to 2029/30						
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
2025/26 variance to Budget c/fwd	102.3					102.3
Additional New Budget						
Family Wellbeing Centres	0.3					0.3
New Millenium Day Centre	0.1					0.1
Public Safety CCTV	0.5					0.5
Highway Maintenance	0.9					0.9

Table 7 - Budget Adjustments Breakdown 2026/27 to 2029/30						
Carlton & Granville Protective Works	1.0					1.0
Structural Surveys	0.3					0.3
HRA Major Repairs - Insurance	0.8					0.8
Taken from Capital programme contingency:	(2.8)					(2.8)
Taken from budget c/fwd:	(1.1)					(1.1)
Virements & Corrections						
Barham Park Projects Correction	(1.1)					(1.1)
Healthy Streets & Parking TFL Correction	(1.5)					(1.5)
Hillside Corridor - Morland Gardens Correction	0.3					0.3
Church End Youth Anchor Correction	0.2					0.2
Enfranchisement	(0.9)					(0.9)
Major Repairs Programme	0.9					0.9
Taken from Capital programme contingency:	2.2					(2.2)
Reprofiling (in 2026/27)						
Wembley High Road Transformation	(1.0)	1.0				0.0
Waste Vehicles Purchase	(1.4)			1.4		0.0
I4B	(30.4)	9.8	10.1	10.5		0.0
St Raphael's Estate Regeneration Improvements	(5.4)		5.4			0.0
Empty Property Grants	(0.6)		0.6			0.0
SEND Capital Programme	(4.0)	4.0				0.0
Welsh Harp Post-16 Centre	(2.8)	2.8				0.0
Childcare Expansion Project	(0.2)	0.2				
Youth Facilities Capital Investment Programme (REFCUS)	0.3	(0.3)				0.0
SEND Capital Programme Phase II	(1.6)	0.7	0.9			
Leopold Relocation	(1.0)	1.0				0.0
Total	54.2	19.1	17.0	12.0	0.0	102.3

7.4. Additional New Budget

7.4.1. £0.3m to improve outdoor spaces at Preston Park Family Wellbeing Centre and Willow Nursery.

- 7.4.2. £0.1m Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding to build the New Millennium Garden of Peace and Life.
- 7.4.3. £0.5m for additional public safety CCTV with anticipated funding from the GLA.
- 7.4.4. £0.9m for Highway Maintenance funded by additional Department for Transport grant.
- 7.4.5. £1.0m for protective works at Carlton and Granville, including repairs to the roof.
- 7.4.6. £0.3m for a programme of structural surveys on HRA blocks to identify preventative repairs – taken from brought forward slippage against the Enfranchisement project.
- 7.4.7. £0.8m for major repairs from fire damage such as 13 Tillett Close – taken from brought forward slippage against the Major Repairs and Maintenance Programme.
- 7.5. Virements and Corrections
 - 7.5.1. £1.1m accounting correction to Barham Park projects – this correction reflects that Barham Park Trust is a separate entity and does not affect the funding available or planned investment in 26/27.
 - 7.5.2. £1.5m removal of budget from the Healthy Streets and Parking programme due to changes in expected TFL funding.
 - 7.5.3. £0.3m correction to Hillside Corridor for Morland Gardens Feasibility, which was approved by Cabinet in June 2025.
 - 7.5.4. £0.2m correction to Church End Youth Anchor, which was approved by Cabinet in 2024/25.
 - 7.5.5. Transfer of £0.9m Enfranchisement budget to the Major Repairs Programme as the HRA prioritises essential works including Kilburn Square Tower Block.
- 7.6. Reprofiling in 2026/27
 - 7.6.1. Reprofile of £1.0m for Wembley High Road Transformation as works are expected to take place in 2027/28.
 - 7.6.2. Reprofile of £1.4m for Waste Vehicles Purchase in 2029/30, as larger spend is expected towards the end of the contract term when vehicles will come to the end of their useful life.
 - 7.6.3. Reprofile of £30.4m of the £40m I4B loan facility over the next 4 financial years, in line with the Company's planned drawdown

- 7.6.4. Reprofile of £5.4m for St Raphael's Estate Regeneration to 2028/29 in line with plans to deliver waste management improvements before delivering the wider estate improvements.
- 7.6.5. Reprofile of £0.6m Empty Property Grants budget to 2028/29 based on expected works pipeline.
- 7.6.6. Reprofile of £4.0m for SEND Capital Programme to next financial year due to delays in works at Woodfield School and pending confirmation of DfE contribution to St Gregory's.
- 7.6.7. Reprofile of £2.8m for Welsh Harp Post 16 Centre to next financial year following revised cost estimates from the contractor.
- 7.6.8. Reprofile of £0.2m for Childcare Expansion to next financial year for future nursery provision.
- 7.6.9. Reprofile of £0.3m for Youth Facilities out of 2027/28 into 2026/27 due to forecast acceleration on the project.
- 7.6.10. Reprofile of £1.6m for Send Capital Programme Phase 2 over the next 2 financial years to reflect indicative costs returned by the contractor.
- 7.6.11. Reprofile of £1.0m for Leopold Relocation to next financial year as works are now due to start in summer 2027.
- 7.7. The revised budget position for 2026/27 to 2030/31 is summarised in Table 8 below:

Table 8 - Capital Programme Revised Budget 2026/27 to 2029/30						
Board	2026/27 Revised Budget	2027/28 Approved Budget	2028/29 Approved Budget	2029/30 Approved Budget	2030/31 Approved Budget	Total 2026/27 to 2030/31
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Corporate Assets	61.5	32.6	23.5	15.7	3.5	136.8
South Kilburn	60.5	31.7	19.4	12.0	6.9	130.4
Regeneration	79.0	21.3	29.9	25.4	0.0	155.6
Children & Young People	30.2	35.3	19.5	5.0	0.0	90.0
Affordable Housing Supply	67.3	76.8	78.7	43.3	0.0	266.1
Housing HRA & Management	49.5	35.5	24.0	23.0	5.0	137.0
Total	348.0	233.1	194.9	124.4	15.4	915.8
Approved Feb 26	293.8	214.0	177.9	112.5	15.4	813.5
Budget Adjustments	54.2	19.1	17.0	12.0	0.0	102.3

Capital Pipeline

- 7.8. The current programme includes £472.2m across 16 pipeline schemes. The capital pipeline is a list of potential future investment projects identified by each sub-board. Projects are evaluated against their contribution to statutory requirements; links to corporate strategic priorities; ability to generate revenue savings; and occasionally on their ability to generate future capital receipts or other financial returns for the Council.
- 7.9. The pipeline is reviewed monthly at Capital Programme Board. Schemes are promoted to the main programme after details are refined and business cases or other reports are prepared by officers and approved by Cabinet.

8.0 Housing Revenue Account

- 8.1. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account containing the income and expenditure relating to the Council's landlord duties in respect of approximately 12,000 dwellings, including those held by leaseholders. It is set each year in the context of the 30-year HRA Business Plan, which is reviewed annually to support horizon-scanning and the early identification and mitigation of financial and operational risks.
- 8.2. The 2025/26 outturn was a break-even position, with the general HRA balance preserved at £4.5m. The 2026/27 budget, approved by Full Council in February 2026, is also set to break even, supported by a 4.8% rent increase. As gross rent rises in 2026/27, this balance falls from 7% of the 2025/26 rent base to approximately 5.8% of the 2026/27 base, close to the Council's 5% minimum threshold. The reserve also remains below the average of comparable London authorities, and some £2.8m of it relates to a one-off provision for the Granville refurbishment. The level of genuinely uncommitted headroom is therefore modest, and rebuilding resilience is a key medium-term objective.
- 8.3. Following four years of rent reductions (2016/17 to 2019/20) and a below-inflation cap in 2023/24, rent policy has now stabilised. From 1 April 2026 the Government has, for the first time, provided a 10-year settlement permitting annual increases of CPI plus 1% to 2036. For 2026/27 this equates to a 4.8% uplift (September 2025 CPI of 3.8% plus 1%), generating approximately £2.9m of additional income. The Business Plan already assumes CPI+1% across its life, so the settlement provides welcome certainty rather than new headroom.
- 8.4. The single most significant opportunity to strengthen the HRA's bottom line is rent convergence. Many of the Council's social rents remain below their "formula rent" — the benchmark set by property value, local earnings and property size — and the gap has widened over successive years of rent restraint. At Brent, raising all social rents to formula rent would yield approximately £3.7m per annum. The Government has now confirmed a convergence mechanism within the 10-year settlement: from 2027/28, rents on below-formula homes may rise by £1 per week above CPI+1%, increasing to £2 per week from 2028/29, until formula rent is reached. This is expected to add £18.6m to the HRA over the first ten years of the Business Plan (around

£1.86m per annum, net of voids and bad debt). The strategic priority is to apply convergence to every eligible property each year, and to continue letting all new builds and re-lets at formula or affordable rent, so that the maximum permissible income is captured across the settlement period.

- 8.5. The account nonetheless faces sustained pressure. Inflation continues to drive up the cost of materials, labour and services, particularly in repairs and maintenance, where demand — including damp, mould, disrepair and the new statutory obligations under Awaab's Law — remains elevated and the benefits of the new repairs contracts are still embedding. Capital delivery is constrained by limited government funding for fire safety, energy efficiency and carbon reduction, and the planned expansion of the stock adds operational complexity. The most significant medium-term risk is the cost of borrowing: as the Council draws increasingly on prudential borrowing to fund new supply, HRA interest costs rise materially over the Business Plan period and are the dominant driver of cost growth in its later years.
- 8.6. The Council's April 2025 self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing, and the resulting C3 consumer-standards grading, require continued investment in building safety and stock-condition data. The associated improvement programme is underway, with £18.3m budgeted for major repairs and fire safety in 2026/27 (an increase of £5.1m), including a substantially expanded programme of stock-condition surveys. Beyond its regulatory purpose, this investment in data is itself a strategic enabler: accurate stock knowledge underpins a shift from costly responsive repairs towards planned, preventative maintenance.
- 8.7. Reforms to Right to Buy (RTB) receipts also support the HRA. Newly built social and affordable homes are now exempt from RTB for 35 years; the rule allowing 100% of replacement homes to be funded from RTB receipts has been made permanent; from 2026/27 receipts may be combined with grant; and from 2027/28 the spending window extends from five to ten years. Together these measures improve the retention of stock and give greater flexibility to fund development.
- 8.8. Within this context, the Business Plan remains in long-term surplus, but near-term resilience is tight and the later years are exposed to rising costs. A range of strategic measures is therefore being developed to strengthen the bottom line, prioritising income maximisation, followed by cost control and legitimate structural opportunities. The principal measures are set out below.
- 8.9. The highest-impact opportunities, in priority order, are set out below:
 - **Rent convergence (income)** — apply the £1, then £2, per-week uplift above CPI+1% to every below-formula home each year. Worth around £18.6m over ten years, and up to £3.7m per annum at full convergence — the single largest lever.
 - **Planned, data-led repairs (cost)** — use the expanded stock-condition data to move from responsive to preventative maintenance, containing the

largest pressure and reducing disrepair claims, and recalibrate new-build appraisals to realistic lifecycle costs.

- **Service charge cost recovery (income)** — move towards full recovery of eligible tenant and leaseholder service and management costs, including s.20 major works.
- **Structural measures** — combine RTB receipts with grant, attribute Council Tax on void and decant units to the General Fund where chargeable, and direct New Homes Bonus to HRA priorities.
- **New supply as cross-subsidy (income/strategic)** — prioritise development that both grows HRA income and relieves the General Fund, since each letting to a homeless household saves c.£17k in temporary-accommodation costs.

8.10. In summary, the HRA Business Plan remains sustainable over the long term, but the next few years are finely balanced, with rising interest and repairs costs the principal risks. The measures set out above led by income maximisation through rent convergence are intended to strengthen the bottom line, rebuild reserves towards peer levels, and safeguard the long-term sustainability of the account. They will be developed further, and their impacts quantified, through the Business Plan refresh and ongoing budget monitoring.

9.0 Schools and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

9.1. At the end of 2025/26, the total school reserves balance increased by £1.6m, marking an improvement compared to the previous year's reduction of £1.0m in 2024/25. While this indicates a short-term strengthening of overall reserves, the underlying position across schools remains fragile. The increase in reserves masks ongoing pressures affecting several individual schools. Falling pupil numbers, particularly within the primary phase, continue to reduce funding allocations, as income is largely driven by pupil led funding. The decline in income is not always matched by an equivalent reduction in costs, particularly where schools face fixed or rising expenditure pressures such as staffing, energy, and inflationary costs. As a result, some schools are increasingly reliant on reserves to maintain financial stability, which is not sustainable over the medium term. Without a stabilisation in pupil numbers or adjustments to the cost base, there is a risk that reserves will begin to decline again, and that more schools may move into deficit positions in the future years.

9.2. At the end of the 2025/26 financial year, eight schools were operating with deficit balances, unchanged from the previous year. These schools will require licensed deficit agreements supported by robust recovery plans to return to financial stability. While four of the schools in deficit in 2024/25 have successfully recovered to a positive reserves position, this has been offset by four other schools that have moved into deficit during the year, having previously held surplus balances.

- 9.3. Brent provides targeted financial oversight and recovery support to schools that fall into deficit. The core support includes licensed deficit arrangements, where the Council allows a school to operate with a licensed deficit if it has a robust, council approved plan to clear the deficit, usually within three years. Monitoring and support will be provided to the schools in deficit with deficit recovery planning, with Finance and the School Effectiveness Team working with headteachers and governors to create, monitor, and review a detailed recovery plan. The Council uses a risk based framework to track progress and intervene when needed.
- 9.4. The DSG closed the 2025/26 financial year with an in-year deficit of £6.6m, increasing the cumulative deficit from £13.6m in 2024/25 to £20.2m. This position is primarily driven by sustained pressures within the High Needs Block, which recorded an overspend of £8.2m linked to ongoing demand for SEND provision. However, this pressure was partially offset by a £1.0m underspend in Early Years block, £0.3m within the Schools Block, and £0.2m within the Central School Services block.
- 9.5. The Early Years under-spend is mainly driven from the additional funding from the DfE to cover the increase in provision of free childcare for working parents from September 2025 to 30 hours. This allocation was provided based on an estimated take up of hours by working parents in Brent. However, take-up has been lower than predicted by the DfE, leading to underspends of £0.6m reported against the under 2- to 2-year-old and the 2-year-old working parent entitlements. The local authority has made a provision for the potential clawback in funding from the DfE, following its final in-year adjustment exercise due in July 2026.
- 9.6. The HN Block funding has not increased in cash terms for 2026/27, combined with a continued rise in EHCPs, the deficit is forecast to grow significantly over 2026/27 and 2027/28 despite mitigating actions to reduce the resulting financial impact. The in-year deficit for 2026/27 is estimated at approximately £18.2m, rising to a projected in year deficit of £29m in 2027/28. It is anticipated that around 90% of these in-year deficits will be funded by the government, leaving approximately £1.8m and £2.9m respectively to be met from general fund reserves. This is in addition to the £2.0m already accounted for within the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy to cover the expected 10% contribution towards cumulative deficits up to March 2026.
- 9.7. The DSG forecast is based on a mitigated position, reflecting the anticipated impact of the Council's SEND reform programme on demand and cost trajectories. Key assumptions include moderating EHCP growth to around 6% (from an unmitigated position of c.10%) and reducing reliance on independent non-maintained placements from 8% to 5% of the EHCP cohort by 2029. These changes are supported by the planned expansion of local specialist provision (412 additional special school places and 46 ARP places) and strengthened early intervention. Based on current modelling, these mitigations are expected to deliver significant cost avoidance, including £3.25m from reduced independent placements, £155k from reduced out-of-borough placements, and approximately £1.24m from slower EHCP growth.

- 9.8. The risk also remains that the number of EHCPs will continue to rise. The trend in Table 9 shows that the number of children with EHCPs continued to grow, albeit at a reduced rate based on published data.

Table 9: Annual increase in EHCPs 2020-2026

Brent EHCPs as per SEN2 Return	Jan 20	Jan 21	Jan 22	Jan 23	Jan 24	Jan 25	Jan 26
Number of EHCPs	2426	2784	2938	3251	3500	3795	4172
Brent % Increase	12%	15%	6%	11%	8%	8%	10%
National % Increase	10%	10%	10%	9%	11%	11%	TBC

- 9.9. While the Government has indicated that it will take an “appropriate and proportionate” approach to managing DSG deficits in 2026/27 and 2027/28, the absence of confirmed detail regarding the scale, eligibility, and conditions of this support creates ongoing uncertainty for financial planning and risk management. In the short term, the extension of the statutory override to March 2028 provides temporary mitigation by allowing DSG deficits to be held separately from the General Fund accounts.
- 9.10. Looking further ahead, the Government has signalled its intention to assume responsibility for future SEND-related pressures from April 2028, which should reduce exposure to ongoing in-year High Needs deficits. However, this does not fully address the issue of historic and accumulating DSG deficits. As a result, the Council remains exposed to a potentially significant residual liability relating to deficits built up to 2027/28, particularly as further deficits are expected to arise over the next two financial years.
- 9.11. The SEND reforms are intended to help reduce pressure on mainstream schools by improving their ability to support pupils’ needs without needing an EHCP. This includes clearer expectations for what schools should provide, earlier support for pupils, more consistent funding, and stronger accountability for inclusion. However, it is uncertain how much impact this will have in the medium term. Schools still face funding pressures, staffing shortages, and limited capacity, and parents are likely to continue seeking EHCPs because of the legal protections they offer. As a result, while the reforms are a step in the right direction, they are unlikely on their own to significantly reduce EHCP numbers or pressures on the High Needs Block without continued local effort and system-wide change. The DSG forecast is based on a mitigated position, reflecting the anticipated impact of the Council’s SEND reform programme on demand and cost trajectories. Key assumptions include moderating EHCP

growth to around 6% (from an unmitigated position of c.10%) and reducing reliance on independent non-maintained placements from 8% to 5% of the EHCP cohort by 2029. These changes are supported by the planned expansion of local specialist provision (412 additional special school places and 46 ARP places) and strengthened early intervention. Based on current modelling, these mitigations are expected to deliver significant cost avoidance, including £3.25m from reduced independent placements, £155k from reduced out-of-borough placements, and approximately £1.24m from slower EHCP growth.

10.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 10.1. The detailed approach to the statutory consultation process for the setting of the 2027/28 budget will be set out as part of the draft budget report to be presented to Cabinet in November 2026.

11.0 Financial Considerations

- 11.1. The financial implications are set out throughout the report.

12.0 Legal Considerations

- 12.1. Standing Order 19 sets out the process that applies within the Council for developing budget and capital proposals for 2027/28. There is a duty to consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers on the Council's expenditure plans before each annual budget under Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The council also has a general duty refers to as the "best value duty" to consult representatives of council tax payers, service users and others under Section 3 (2) Local Government Act 1999. This duty applies at formative stages of decision-making.

13.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 13.1. There are no EDI considerations arising out of this report.

14.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 14.1. There are no climate change and environmental considerations arising out of this report.

15.0 Communication Considerations

- 15.1. There are no communication considerations arising out of this report.

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director, Finance and Resources

Legal considerations provided by:

Nadeem Khan

Finance considerations provided by:

Rav Jassar

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 Brent	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration
	Lead Member(s) Cabinet for Regeneration and Planning (Councillor Matt Kelcher) & Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health (Councillor Liz Dixon)
Bridge Park Complex Regeneration Proposals	

Wards Affected:	Stonebridge
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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:	Two Appendix 1: Bridge Park Masterplan Images Appendix 2: Leisure Centre Images
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Neil Martin, Head of Capital Delivery 020 8937 4203 neil.martin@brent.gov.uk Eugene Minogue, Head of Active Wellbeing (Leisure) 020 8937 3599 eugene.minogue@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the wider regeneration proposals for the Bridge Park Complex and Unisys site, including the development of a new leisure centre as part of the council-led elements of the scheme.
- 1.2. The report seeks endorsement of recommendations for Cabinet consideration, including the revised leisure centre facility mix and phasing

proposals. It also sets out the proposed funding strategy and outlines the pre-tender considerations for the procurement of the main contractor and several decisions to progress the development subject to planning permission.

- 1.3. The revised leisure centre facility mix has been informed by current strategic evidence, including completed Facilities Planning Model (FPM) evidence, ongoing Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) work, the emerging Built Facilities Strategy (BFS), independent commercial appraisal and engagement with Sport England.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the current position on the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) decision and awarding of the Certificate of Immunity for Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre and Technology House.
- 2.2 Acknowledges the wider Bridge Park masterplan and the planning strategy for the site and agrees for the council to submit their elements of the planning application which will include the provision as set out in paragraphs 3.2.6 – 3.2.11.
- 2.3 Agree the revised facility mix for the new leisure centre and the scheme delivery phasing proposals for the council-led development, with the leisure centre forming Phase 1 and the Adult Education and Community Building forming Phase 2, as set out in paragraphs 3.2.12 – 3.2.27.
- 2.4 Notes the creation of a Community Engagement Group to refine the design and facility mix for Phase 2 of the council's development.
- 2.5 Approves the use of a call-off procedure under the SCAPE Construction Framework for the contracts for Phase 1 of the Bridge Park Regeneration Programme on the basis of the pre - tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.2.39 of the report.
- 2.6 Delegates authority to award the pre-construction services and main works contracts to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Regeneration.
- 2.7 Approves a revised total capital budget of £53.50m to deliver Phase 1 of the Bridge Park regeneration. The capital budget for Phase 2 (Adult Education and Community Building) will follow in a separate paper in due course.
- 2.8 Agrees the use of up to £39.00m of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy funding for Phase 1 of the Bridge Park regeneration programme.
- 2.9 Note that the Conditional Land Sale Agreement (CLSA) is contingent upon planning and financial condition and delegate authority to the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Lead

Member for Planning and Regeneration to finalise and complete the CLSA and enter into the final transfer agreement and any other ancillary documents that may be required.

- 2.10 Subject to planning approval, delegates authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration to agree to appropriate the lands under section 122 Local Government Act 1972 and thereafter, engage the powers conferred by section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to override easements and other rights.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1.1 The Hillside Corridor regeneration proposals as set out in the June 2025 Cabinet report help to meet several outcomes within the Borough Plan.
- 3.1.2 The five sites (Bridge Park, Twybridge Way, Morland Gardens, Roy Smith House, Bernard Shaw House) will contribute towards Strategic Priority 1: Prosperity and Stability in Brent. Specifically, in addition to the new leisure centre, the sites will provide new affordable homes and training and skills opportunities through the new provision for Brent Start and new employment/work opportunities in the Affordable Workspace
- 3.1.3 The Hillside Corridor also contributes to Strategic Priority 3: Thriving Communities to allow the local community to be involved in and lead on activities for their communities. Three sites are proposed to have community facilities, and the council has sought input from the community to help shape these facilities.
- 3.1.4 At Bridge Park, a new leisure centre with enhanced facilities compared to the existing centre will contribute towards Strategic Priority 5: A Healthier Brent. The new leisure centre and public realm spaces in Stonebridge will provide greater opportunities for Stonebridge residents to access good quality facilities and open spaces to improve their physical and mental health. The new leisure centre will also support the council's wider transition from traditional leisure provision towards an Active Wellbeing approach, with facilities designed to support prevention, inclusion, swimming attainment, physical activity and long-term health outcomes. The new centre is also intended to form a key part of the integrated borough-wide Active Wellbeing model being developed for the 2031 strategic horizon.
- 3.1.5 Brent's Leisure Centres are key to the mental and physical health of residents and this proposal has a strong alignment to Brent Council's priorities for the borough. The council's most recent Borough Plan [Moving Brent Forward Together for 2023 - 2027](#), outlines Strategic Priority 5: A Healthier Brent, which aims to tackle health inequalities, particularly through co-designed approaches with communities, improve physical health and provide more accessible facilities in public spaces.

- 3.1.6 Similarly, the [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027](#) provides a further detailed breakdown of health and wellbeing priorities, including Healthy Lives, Healthy Places, Staying Healthy and Healthy Ways of Working, and includes a comprehensive set of action plans for how each priority will be achieved.
- 3.1.7 The council needs to provide and future proof its leisure facilities to allow Brent's residents to have access to as many opportunities as possible to improve their health. The new Bridge Park Leisure Centre will contribute to this by providing modern, accessible and publicly available facilities within a part of the borough where the evidence identifies significant health, activity and deprivation-related need.
- 3.1.8 The council and its development partner SRED are proposing to redevelop the area and create a thriving, inclusive neighbourhood for generations to come. The council has been developing its current plans for Bridge Park for more than a decade. In 2013 the council consulted on the different options for the Leisure Centre. The least preferred option, supported by approximately 5% of respondents, was to leave the site as it was. In 2017 the council entered into a Conditional Land Sale for Bridge Park in order to replace the converted bus garage with a new purpose-built leisure centre. Following a further public consultation, the vision for Bridge Park was agreed by Cabinet in 2019. The scheme has stalled due to the legal proceedings regarding the land ownership. Now that this has been resolved, the council is keen to move forward to deliver the vision with enhanced facilities for the community.
- 3.1.9 The council recognises and appreciates the role that Bridge Park has played in an important chapter in Black British history and the community's achievements in creating this space in the 1980s to empower local Black residents. We are committed to working with the community to ensure this history is celebrated within the new development.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1. Since the last Cabinet report in June 2025 regarding the redevelopment of Bridge Park, there has been significant developments relating to the progress of the redevelopment proposals for the Bridge Park complex and the neighbouring Unisys site. This report provides an update to Cabinet and requests several decisions to continue the progress to provide the redevelopment.

Historic Building Application Update

- 3.2.2. As per the Cabinet report in June 2025, Harlesden People's Community council have commenced a Save Bridge Park Campaign and submitted listing applications to Historic England to place Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre and Technology House on the National Heritage List for England. The developer, Stonebridge Real Estate Development (SRED) has also submitted Certificate of Immunity (CoI) from listed status for the same buildings and their Unisys site.

- 3.2.3. In December 2025, Historic England confirmed that the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport will not list the buildings and was minded to issue a Col for the three buildings.
- 3.2.4. In January 2026, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) confirmed that an appeal had been lodged against these decisions and at the time of drafting this report, DCMS has not confirmed the outcome of this appeal and review. However, they did state that unless or until the original decision is overturned, the original decision not to list stands however the COI will not be issued until a decision has been reached on the review.
- 3.2.5. Cabinet is asked to note this update and officers and SRED are in touch with DCMS to obtain an update on when the appeal process will be concluded.

Bridge Park Complex and Unisys Site Masterplan

- 3.2.6. The council development sits as part of a wider development plan for the Bridge Park Complex and Unisys site. Appendix 1 provides some images of the entire development and the following are included as part of the proposals:
- 234 room hotel
 - Restaurant
 - Retail spaces
 - Community spaces
 - 1,157 homes
 - Public realm including squares, open space and a Bridge Park legacy garden
 - New Leisure Centre with a main pool and learner/teaching pool
 - Adult Education and Community Building
- 3.2.7. The hotel, restaurant and retail will provide employment opportunities for the local community as well as community spaces to hire and use. The public realm, including the squares and open spaces will be available for all Stonebridge residents so increasing the public open spaces available in this part of the borough.
- 3.2.8. The Bridge Park Legacy Garden will recognise that Bridge Park is a valued place for many local residents and that it was a symbol of community togetherness for many years. It is proposed the legacy garden will be co-designed with the community steering group to do justice to the site's history and legacy.
- 3.2.9. The council's developer partner, Stonebridge Real Estate Development (SRED) are proposing a hybrid planning application with some elements submitted as detailed and other submitted as outline. The planning application is expected to be submitted this autumn.
- 3.2.10. The parts of the development that SRED will be responsible for that will be submitted as detailed include accommodation blocks C, D, E and F, the main

open space in the centre of the site and the access road. The remainder will be submitted as outline and delivered in future phases. Reserved matter planning applications will be required to submit the detailed requirements of the outline elements.

- 3.2.11. This means that there will be homes and public realm delivered in phase 1. The elements the council will be responsible for delivering will also be in a phased approach and is detailed in the paragraphs below.

Revised Leisure Centre Facility Mix and Phasing Proposals

- 3.2.12. The June 2025 report set out a revised facility mix, specifically setting out the council will deliver two distinct buildings; a leisure centre to the front of the site with the community space and adult education centre proposed to the rear in a separate building.
- 3.2.13. Since then, Officers have maintained structured engagement with Sport England as a statutory consultee at the planning stage. Sport England expects major leisure centre developments to be supported by current, comprehensive strategic evidence. This engagement has informed the revised facility mix and the ongoing design development.
- 3.2.14. To this end, the council's ongoing Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) work has informed the review of the Bridge Park facility mix. This includes completed bespoke Facilities Planning Model (FPM) evidence for swimming pools and sports halls, the emerging Built Facilities Strategy (BFS) and other related infrastructure strategies. An independent commercial and operational appraisal has also been undertaken to test the deliverability and sustainability of the facility mix options. Together, this work provides a current and integrated evidence base against which the Bridge Park facility mix can be assessed.
- 3.2.15. The final swimming pool FPM identifies a borough-wide shortfall of approximately 650m² of water space, both at present and projected forward to 2041. Bridge Park was modelled as a specific 'what if' scenario and is shown to address part, but not all, of this unmet demand, reinforcing the importance of maximising the effectiveness of the provision delivered.
- 3.2.16. The modelling demonstrates a significant equity impact, with the proportion of residents living in areas of higher deprivation within a 20-minute catchment increasing from approximately 12% to around 80% following delivery of Bridge Park. As a local authority facility, Bridge Park will be one of the few guaranteed sources of publicly accessible swimming provision for children, families, schools and residents with lower confidence and/or additional needs.
- 3.2.17. The FPM evidence and industry guidance highlight that meeting future need is not solely a question of additional lanes, but of providing flexible water space. Learner and teaching pools enable parallel programming, different water temperatures, improved peak-time utilisation and higher learn-to-swim throughput. These factors are critical to improving swimming attainment,

supporting lifelong physical activity, and delivering long-term Active Wellbeing outcomes for current and future generations.

3.2.18. In response to the strengthened and updated strategic evidence, the facility mix has been revised to include a learner/teaching pool alongside the main pool. This addition strengthens the learn-to-swim capacity, programming flexibility and income potential without materially altering the overall building footprint. Officers will continue to work with Sport England to ensure the new centre is aligned with the borough's place-based Active Wellbeing approach and supports future programming, partnership working and community outcomes.

3.2.19. Further, the council-led development is proposed to be delivered in two distinct phases.

- Phase 1: Leisure Centre
- Phase 2: Adult Education and Community Building

3.2.20. Phase 1 will be designed to RIBA Stage 3 which will allow a detailed planning application to be submitted for this part of the wider Bridge Park redevelopment proposals.

3.2.21. Subject to a successful planning determination, the intention is to then seek to appoint a contractor to design and build the leisure centre. The revised leisure centre facility mix includes:

1. Main Pool (25m, six lane pool)
2. Learner/Teaching Pool (10 x 13m with a moveable floor)
3. 100+ station Fitness Suite
4. 4-court Sports Hall
5. Activity Space for soft play / active play
6. Three Group Exercise Studios
7. Studio Cycling Studio
8. Steam & Sauna facilities
9. Modern café facility with commercial kitchen
10. Wet Changing Village
11. Dry changing for Gym/Fitness/Sports Hall

3.2.22. The new leisure centre will be a modern, more flexible and more sustainable facility than the previous centre. The revised mix provides additional water space, improved teaching and programming capacity, enhanced fitness and studio provision, and active play space, supporting both community access and long-term operational sustainability. Images of the new centre are included in Appendix 2.

3.2.23. Table 1 below provides an updated indicative delivery timetable for the leisure centre at Bridge Park:

Table 1 – Indicative delivery timetable for the leisure centre

Milestone	Target Delivery Date
Complete RIBA 3 Designs	August 2026
Anticipated Listing Application Appeal Outcome	July 2026
Planning Application Submission	October 2026
Planning Application Determination	July 2027
Complete Contractor Procurement	August 2027
Complete RIBA 4 Designs	March 2028
Start on site	April 2028

- 3.2.24. Phase 2 will be designed to RIBA Stage 2 and will be submitted as an outline planning application for this part of the wider Bridge Park redevelopment proposals.
- 3.2.25. This allows flexibility on the scope of the facilities within this building and links to the proposal to set up a community engagement group for the Hillside Corridor and Bridge Park following consultation in 2025. It will enable the council and the local community to work collaboratively to refine the Phase 2 building, the Bridge Park Legacy Garden and the wider community facilities needed at Bridge Park, while allowing the Phase 1 leisure centre to progress through detailed planning based on the agreed evidence-led facility mix.
- 3.2.26. Subject to a successful planning determination, the council would seek to procure a design team to work collaboratively with the community engagement group and the council to refine the designs for approval and implementation.
- 3.2.27. Therefore, Cabinet is asked to approve the revised leisure centre facility mix and the phasing approach for the council led elements of the Bridge Park Masterplan, and to acknowledge the wider Bridge Park Masterplan which includes the above provision and phased delivery approach.

Leisure Centre Main Contractor Procurement

- 3.2.28. Subject to a successful planning determination, the council will require the services of a main contractor to complete the design and build of the leisure centre as phase 1 of the council's development.
- 3.2.29. Officers are proposing a two-stage design and build approach with a pre-construction contract allowing for the contractor to complete the design from the end of RIBA Stage 3 to the end of RIBA Stage 4 and a delivery agreement or works contract to build the leisure centre and handover to the council (RIBA Stages 5 – 7).
- 3.2.30. The Bridge Park Regeneration Programme will require contracts for professional services and works ('the Contracts'), and Officers recommend the use of the SCAPE Construction Framework ('the Framework') to procure the Contracts. Officers have been liaising with representatives from the

SCAPE Framework and following their proposal to the council, and the review of various framework options, it was determined that the SCAPE Framework offered the most cost-effective route to market.

- 3.2.31. The SCAPE Framework has the following process that is to be followed, subject to successfully completing the previous stage to the client's satisfaction.

Step 1: Selection Process

- 3.2.32. There are two delivery partners on the SCAPE Framework at the estimated value of the leisure centre contract, Morgan Sindall and Willmott Dixon. Both contractors are leading providers of leisure centres across the country and through current early market engagement activity are very keen to be the selected partner.
- 3.2.33. The Selection Process is formed of qualitative technical questions and an interview process. This will focus on capability, proposed team, approach to delivery and understanding of the project. The council will select the highest scoring partner at step 1.

Step 2: Viability / Feasibility Report

- 3.2.34. Once a preferred contractor is selected, the SCAPE framework allows for a free of charge viability / feasibility period of eight weeks. However, as the design will have progressed to RIBA Stage 3 at the point of this step, the council will adopt an enhanced two-stage Design and Build approach which divides stage two D&B into 2A & 2B. Under this approach, the framework's permitted viability stage will be used as Stage 2A D&B of the enhanced two-stage process.
- 3.2.35. Stage 2A provides a defined alignment and assurance gateway between contractor selection and entry into a full pre-construction agreement. During Stage 2A, the council, the appointed Employer's agent and cost consultant and preferred contractor will align and agree:
- Scope and quality requirements
 - An estimated cost plan
 - Programme and key milestones
 - Governance and review arrangements
 - Design and operational requirements linked to the agreed facility mix
 - Accessibility, inclusion and customer journey requirements
- 3.2.36. No design development is undertaken during Stage 2A and there is no cost incurred by the council during this stage. The stage provides a clear decision

point, allowing the council to confirm value for money and deliverability before progressing further.

Step 3: Pre-Construction Agreement & Step 4: Main Works

- 3.2.37. Following the successful completion of the above steps, the council would enter into a pre-construction agreement and the stage 2B design development is completed. All cost proposals will be developed on an open-book basis and independently reviewed by the council's appointed cost consultant, Mott MacDonald, to provide assurance on cost certainty and value for money prior to progression.
- 3.2.38. Upon successful completion of the pre-construction agreement, the council would enter into the works contract and build the scheme (step 4).
- 3.2.39. Therefore, Cabinet is asked to approve the pre-tender considerations in table 2 below as well as delegate authority to award the contract for the professional services contract and main works contract to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Regeneration.

Table 2: Pre-tender Considerations

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
(i)	The nature of the Goods / Services / Works.	Two-stage design and build contract for the new Bridge Park Leisure Centre	
(ii)	The value.	£35m excluding VAT.	
(iii)	The contract term.	The Contract will be for approximately four years, assuming a two-year build programme and 12 months defect liability period.	
(iv)	The tender procedure to be adopted.	The tender procedure to be adopted is a mini competition, via the SCAPE Framework	
(v)	The procurement timetable.	Stage in Procurement	Indicative dates
		Selection Period (Step 1)	Feb 27 – April 27
		Feasibility / Stage 2A (Step 2)	May 27 – July 27
		Corporate Director Approval for pre-construction contract	Aug 27
		Award pre-construction contract	Aug 27
		Commence pre-construction contract	Sept 27

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
		Corporate Director approval for main works contract	March 28
		Commence works contract	April 28
		Contract practically completes	March 30
		End of contract (end of defects liability period)	March 31
(vi)	The evaluation criteria and process.	Selection Period (Step 1) Quality / Technical 100% Bidder Capability Understanding of project Proposed team / resources Approach to delivery (programme) Relevant leisure centre delivery experience Approach to accessibility, inclusion and customer journey Understanding of operational requirements and long-term maintainability	
(vii)	Any business risks associated with entering the contract.	No specific business risks are considered to be associated with entering into the Contract.	
(viii)	The council's Best Value duties.	The use of the SCAPE Framework represents best value for the council as suppliers have been pre-vetted, possess the required experience and accreditations to execute delivery. The selection process will also test bidder capability to deliver a modern leisure centre that meets the agreed facility mix, supports long-term operational sustainability and provides value for money over the life of the asset.	
(ix)	Consideration of Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	As this is a works contract, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 does not strictly apply to the procurement although the outcome of the Contract is designed to benefit those living in Brent. Social value considerations will nevertheless be reflected through the council's procurement approach, including opportunities linked to local employment, skills, supply chain access and community benefit where appropriate.	
(x)	Any staffing implications,	There are no implications for council staff arising from the procurement.	

Ref.	Requirement	Response
	including TUPE and pensions.	
(xi)	The relevant financial, legal and other considerations.	Financial – See Financial Considerations in Section 5 below.
		Legal – See Legal Considerations in Section 6 below.
		Other – See other sections within this report.
(xii)	Sustainability	The scheme will be BREEAM Excellent and have a number of sustainability elements such as air source heat pumps, a connection to the site's district heat network and solar panels. The procurement will need to ensure these requirements are protected through design development and delivery.
(xiii)	Key Performance Indicators / Outcomes	Appropriate Key Performance Indicators / Outcomes will be included in the Contract.
(xiv)	Policy requirements including the National Procurement Policy Statement; prompt payment; London Living Wage; modern slavery; and carbon reduction	The potential supplier will be required to provide the works in accordance with all relevant policy requirements, to include those detailed in the National Procurement Policy Statement, to comply with a 30 day payment requirement, to provide evidence of wage compliance, evidence due diligence in supply chain (including modern slavery) and provide report on carbon emission and sustainability initiatives during contract delivery. The Contract will require the payment of the London Living Wage
(xv)	Sharing information to allow understanding of the council's procurement policies and decisions	All relevant policies and information have been shared with the potential supplier during the procurement process.
(xvi)	Steps undertaken to remove or reduce barriers for SME participation in	Officers have considered whether any steps can be taken to remove or reduce barriers for SME participation in the procurement. It is considered that the procurement process recommended is appropriate for the works required and upholds the principles of equal treatment, transparency, and non-discrimination.

Ref.	Requirement	Response
	the procurement	
(xvii)	Contract Management	The appropriate contract management provisions will be included in the Contract.

Conditional Land Sale Agreement

3.2.40. In January 2017, Cabinet approved the council entering into the Conditional Land Sale Agreement (CLSA) at Bridge Park. The CLSA had four conditions:

1. Vacant possession
2. Trust claim to land
3. Planning approval
4. Viability

3.2.41. Condition one has been successfully completed following the council acquiring the scrapyard and closing the leisure centre and Technology House. Condition two has been completed following the outcome of the legal action taken by HPCC against the council regarding their claim to a land interest in the site. The outcome of the legal action was that the council was the sole landowner.

3.2.42. Conditions three and four are intrinsically linked as a viable scheme could have implications for planning considerations and vice versa. It is expected that the proposed redevelopment as set out above will secure a successful planning determination and that the proposed redevelopment is viable for SRED and the council.

3.2.43. To this end, Cabinet are asked to delegate authority to the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, Regeneration and Property to finalise and complete the CLSA.

Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) eligibility

3.2.44. Subject to the buildings at the Bridge Park complex not being listed following the appeal review by DCMS, a successful planning determination, the satisfactory completion of the CLSA and the appointment of the main works contractor, officers are proposing using up to £39m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) as part of the funding for the new leisure centre at Bridge Park. The council's Infrastructure and Regeneration Programme Board endorsed the use of SCIL for this project.

Table 3 – Proposed Investment Strategy

Contributing Funding	Amount (£m)
Minimum land sale agreement	8.5
Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL)	39.0
Borrowing	2.50
Total	50.0

- 3.2.45. **Strategic Alignment:** There are several strategies and policies that the new leisure centre meets which supports the use of SCIL for this project. These include:
1. Brent Borough Plan 2023 – 2027: Strategic Priority 5
 2. Brent Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021-2030: Reduces carbon emissions through low carbon heat technology.
 3. Brent Local Plan 2019 – 2041: Identified as a site within the local plan (Policy BSSA7).
- 3.2.46. Brent's Leisure Centres are key to the mental and physical health of residents, and this proposal has a strong alignment to Brent council's priorities for the borough. The council's most recent Borough Plan, '[Moving Brent Forward Together for 2023 - 2027](#)', outlines Strategic Priority 5: A Healthier Brent, which aims to tackle health inequalities, particularly through co-designed approaches with communities, improve physical health and provide more accessible facilities in public spaces.
- 3.2.47. Similarly, the [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027](#) provides a further detailed breakdown of health and wellbeing priorities, including Healthy Lives, Healthy Places, Staying Healthy and Healthy Ways of Working, and includes a comprehensive set of action plans for how each priority will be achieved.
- 3.2.48. The strategic case for the new leisure centre is also informed by the council's ongoing Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) work, completed bespoke Facilities Planning Model (FPM) evidence for swimming pools and sports halls, the emerging Built Facilities Strategy (BFS), independent commercial and operational appraisal, and ongoing technical engagement with Sport England. This provides a current evidence base for the revised facility mix and supports the new leisure centre as a key piece of community infrastructure within the wider Bridge Park regeneration programme.
- 3.2.49. **Statutory Obligations:** The proposal to utilise SCIL for the new leisure centre at Bridge Park is considered to meet the requirement for the SCIL to be spent on infrastructure to support development. The project will deliver a new leisure centre that will allow residents and wider users access to a public leisure centre providing a wide range of activities, on either a pay and play basis or membership.
- 3.2.50. **Financial Return:** The leisure centre will be part-funded through the land sale agreement proceeds and is expected to generate a management and operational surplus. This is supported by the independent commercial and operational appraisal and recent leisure procurement learning. Any future external funding opportunities, including through Sport England, will continue to be explored, but no external funding is assumed within the proposed funding strategy. Any confirmed external funding or increased capital receipt would reduce the level of SCIL required.

- 3.2.51. **Demand and Demographic Changes:** The new leisure centre demonstrates a significant equity impact, with the proportion of residents living in areas of higher deprivation within a 20-minute catchment increasing from approximately 12% to around 80% following delivery of Bridge Park. As a local authority facility, Bridge Park will be one of the few guaranteed sources of publicly accessible swimming provision for children, families, schools and residents with lower confidence and/or additional needs. This supports the Council's wider Active Wellbeing approach by providing universal public infrastructure with particular benefit for communities facing the greatest barriers to participation.
- 3.2.52. In summary, the new leisure centre at Bridge Park is considered to meet the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. It will provide modern and enhanced community infrastructure, support growth and regeneration in Stonebridge, respond to identified leisure and active wellbeing need, and provide a financially sustainable facility capable of generating operational income. Cabinet is therefore requested to approve the use of SCIL for the new leisure centre at Bridge Park and agree the investment strategy for Phase 1.
- 3.2.53. The wider site regeneration proposals are anticipated to bring in significant Community Infrastructure Levy receipts for the council.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 In the Cabinet report from June 2025, it set out the outcome of the public consultation completed in November 2024 and February 2025.
- 4.2 The council asked respondents whether they were interested in being part of a community / advisory steering group for the Hillside Corridor and Bridge Park. 37% of respondents answered yes and provided their contact details.
- 4.3 The council has collated the contact details and will use these to support the establishment of a community engagement group as the scheme progresses through the next stages of planning and design development, taking account of the outcome of the listing applications and appeals.
- 4.4 The intention is for this group to work with the council to assist in shaping the facilities for phase 2 of the council development, the design and content of the Bridge Park Legacy Garden as well as the future of the other sites within the Hillside Corridor. In relation to the Phase 1 leisure centre, the agreed facility mix will continue to be progressed through the planning and design process, informed by the strategic evidence set out in this report. Future engagement will also help inform how the centre is programmed, accessed and connected to local partners and communities, including through Brent Active Together and the wider Active Wellbeing approach.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 The proposed total phase 1 capital budget to deliver Phase 1 is £53.50m of which £7.66m had already been spent by 31 March 2026. This is an increase of £0.18m from the budget approved by Full Council as part of budget setting.

5.2 The following table sets out the capital budget in more detail.

Table 4 – Phase 1 Capital Budget

Expenditure Type	£m
Historic Spend to end FY 21/22	3.46
Construction	38.64
Fees	6.00
Staff Capitalisation	0.50
Contingency	4.90
Total	53.50

5.3 When Cabinet first approved a £50,000,000 budget for Bridge Park in 2019, the intention was for this to cover both Phase 1 and Phase 2. However, this report was based on a high-level feasibility assessment of the buildings and since this report, the requirements and constraints of the site and buildings are better known and so the costs to deliver the scheme have increased. Further, the construction industry has seen significant cost increases due to a number of national and international events impacting on inflation and resource availability. This means that the cost for the new leisure centre will be significantly higher than assumed in 2019 and only Phase 1 will be covered by the current funding envelope. The budget request for Phase 2 will follow in a separate report.

5.4 The current budget is supported by robust estimates and have been validated by external cost consultants. They include a 10% contingency reflecting the potential for further cost inflation before the works can start.

5.5 The proposed financing for costs and future budget post 2021/22 is as follows:

Contributing Funding	Amount (£m)
Minimum land sale agreement	8.5
Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL)	39.0
Borrowing	2.50
Total	50.0

5.6 There is sufficient SCIL available which includes a pipeline allocation of £47.9m for the wider Bridge Park / Hillside Corridor development. Therefore, there is sufficient SCIL funding available for the proposed £39.0m financing.

5.7 £39.0m is however a significant use of SCIL reducing the amount available for other projects. Therefore, officers are exploring alternative funding sources such as Sport England and potential increases in the capital receipt from the

land sale. Should other sources be available, officers will reduce the SCIL allocation.

- 5.8 The proposed financing includes £2.50m of borrowing. Assuming interest costs of 5% and minimum revenue provision (a prudent charge for the repayment of borrowing) of 4%, this will result in annual cost to revenue budgets of £0.25m. This is anticipated to be covered by the management and operational surplus. This is supported by the independent commercial and operational appraisal of the revised facility mix and recent leisure procurement learning from Vale Farm Sports Centre.
- 5.9 The current costs to secure the vacant Bridge Park Complex is approximately £0.20m per annum. There are also ongoing Business Rates liabilities for the council from the vacant site. These costs are expected to continue at least in part until such time that the demolition works take place, the CLSA completes and the part of the site being sold is no longer owned by the council.

6.0 Legal Considerations

Contractor Procurement

- 6.1 The SCAPE Framework referred to at paras 3.2.30 - 3.2.39 of the report was let before 25 February 2025. By virtue of transitional provisions (enacted immediately before the Procurement Act 2023 came into force), any call offs of services contracts and the main build contract under the current SCAPE Framework will be governed by the Procurement Regulations 2015 until it expires.
- 6.2 The Council's Contract Standing Orders provide that no formal tendering procedures apply where a contract is called off under a framework established by another contracting authority, provided the Director of Law has confirmed that participation in the Framework is legally permissible, and provided there is sufficient budgetary provision for the call off.
- 6.3 The procurement is subject to the council's own Standing Orders in respect of High Value Contracts and Financial Regulations given that the value of council's element of the procurement is £35m. Cabinet approval of the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.2.39 above and the inviting of tenders is required as recommended at the recommendation in Paragraph 2.5.
- 6.4 Express Cabinet authority is required for the delegation proposed in the recommendation at Paragraph 2.6, as the estimated contract values for the services and works proposed in the report fall outside the existing scope for the exercise of delegated authority (allowing approval for tender and award of council contracts) by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration or the Lead Member.
- 6.5 Approval of a revised total capital budget of £53.50m to deliver Phase 1 of the Bridge Park regeneration as proposed at Recommendation 2.7 requires compliance with the capital programme monitoring and decision-making

processes and limits within the Scheme of Virements for Capital Programme as set within the Financial Regulations in Part 2 of the Constitution.

- 6.6 Under Financial Regulation 27, Cabinet may make such virements within the Capital Programme as are necessary to ensure that overall spending is within the resources available, and it can bring forward, delay or stop projects as necessary to achieve this.
- 6.7 Under Financial Regulation 28, Cabinet may vire funding between both project and programme headings, to another without limit provided that reductions are not made to funding of projects below the level that is contractually committed; spending commitments in future years are not made beyond the resources already committed to the relevant projects/programmes within the Capital Programme.
- 6.8 When exercising any decision under delegated authority, the Corporate Director for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration is obliged, under Para 10 (e) of the Financial Regulations, to ensure that no function is exercised or decision taken if, in his reasonable opinion, this would or would be likely to result in discretionary spending of a capital nature significantly exceeding the approved capital budget /budgets in either the current or any future year. Where the overspend is considered unavoidable (or where not incurring it would result in breach of statutory requirements or serious failure to deliver agreed corporate priorities) it must nonetheless be reported at the first available opportunity

Section 203 – Appropriation of Land

- 6.9 s.122 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the council to appropriate council land for planning purposes. In considering whether or not the council owned land within the sites to be appropriated for planning purposes, thereafter, engaging the powers conferred by section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth, to consider:
- Whether the land which is to be appropriated is already owned by the council (this is a prerequisite to appropriation)
 - Whether the land which is to be appropriated is no longer required by the council for the purposes it is currently held (this is a prerequisite to appropriation)
 - Whether the purposes for which the council would be appropriating the land is a purpose authorised by Statute (in the case of land to be appropriated for planning purposes, the relevant purposes would be authorised by section 232 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
 - Whether the proposed redevelopment of the relevant sites would be in the public interest. There is a compelling case in the public interest to appropriate the sites for planning purposes as developing the sites would

serve the public interest by providing new and improved leisure provision, community facilities and housing and accordingly, such development outweighs the effect of the appropriation on the private rights of individuals

- Whether the public interest benefits which would arise from the redevelopment of the relevant sites would be sufficient to justify the interference with any private rights, such that the interference was proportionate
- Whether the council could (in the alternative) acquire the land compulsorily for the purposes of the redevelopment
- Whether any related financial liabilities of the council would be indemnified and
- Whether prior consultation had taken place.

6.10 The council has the power to override third party rights in accordance with section 203 Housing and Planning Act 2016. This power is useful for the council when developing its land to ensure that third parties with certain rights over the sites are overridden. Section 203 prevents third parties from obtaining an injunction to prevent redevelopment, however, compensation may be payable. The council is required to consult with third parties prior to invoking section 203 and the officers should therefore ensure that they build in a period of consultation prior to the commencement of construction and assessing the level of compensation payable.

6.11 Therefore, subject to planning approval, Cabinet is requested to delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration to agree to appropriate the lands under section 122 Local Government Act 1972 and thereafter, engage the powers conferred by section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to override easements and other rights.

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. Brent Council also internally recognises care experience and socio-economic status as protected characteristics.

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 An Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of the June 2025 Cabinet report. The actions from that analysis were completed following the closure of the current Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre.
- 7.4 The proposals set out in this report represent a new phase of decision making, including the delivery of a new leisure centre, revised phasing, procurement arrangements and the wider Bridge Park regeneration masterplan. A new EIA is being initiated alongside the progression of the regeneration proposals, which will assess the equality impacts of the project as a whole. It will be developed and updated as the scheme progresses and will inform subsequent stages of decision-making. This will include consideration of the revised leisure centre facility mix, accessibility of the new building, the future operation and programming of the centre, and the potential impacts and benefits for children and young people, disabled residents, older residents, women and girls, residents living in areas of higher deprivation, and communities who may face barriers to participation.
- 7.5 The revised facility mix is expected to support positive equality and health equality outcomes by providing publicly accessible swimming, fitness, sports hall, studio and active play provision in Stonebridge. The inclusion of a learner / teaching pool alongside the main pool is particularly relevant to children, families, schools, disabled residents, less confident swimmers and residents with additional needs, as it increases opportunities for swimming lessons, inclusive programming and flexible use.
- 7.6 The EIA process will continue to inform the design, access, programming and operational planning for the new centre, including how the facility connects with the wider Active Wellbeing approach and local place-based partners. This will help ensure that equality considerations are embedded through the next stages of design development, planning, procurement and future operation.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 The design and construction of a new building provide an opportunity to revitalise the site with environmental sustainability as a key consideration, with the potential for installing low carbon technologies and building fabric considerations that meet the environmental sustainability expectations of the Local Plan, the London Plan and Building Regulation requirements. This is particularly important for a modern leisure centre, as swimming pools and wet-side facilities are energy-intensive assets and need to be designed to minimise long-term carbon impact and operating costs. The external roof will provide a screened External Plant area to house dedicated plant that is suitable for external environments such as Air Source Heat Pumps, Generators, AHU's etc. Additionally, solar PV arrays are proposed to be located over the Sports Hall roof.

- 8.2 It is also proposed that the leisure centre site would be a car-free development, save for parking for blue badge holders, which would also support a reduction in the site's associated carbon footprint and contribute to improved air quality in the area. The design and wider public realm proposals will also need to support safe and accessible walking, cycling and public transport access to the centre.
- 8.3 The wider masterplan proposes new green spaces so increasing the urban greening factor and biodiversity net gain of the development. This will support the wider regeneration objectives for the site by improving the quality of public realm, contributing to climate resilience and creating a more attractive environment for residents and visitors.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 9.1 The council is still awaiting the outcome of the listing and Col applications for the buildings at Bridge Park. Although DCMS confirmed that the buildings would not be listed the appeal process is yet to be concluded so there is a risk that this position may change and the buildings become listed.
- 9.2 There are no direct Human Resources implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Property implications are addressed through the wider regeneration proposals, including the Conditional Land Sale Agreement, the proposed phasing of the council-led development and the approach to appropriation set out elsewhere in this report.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 An external public relations company (Four Agency) has been jointly commissioned by Brent and SRED to manage the pre-planning public consultation process for Bridge Park given that is a major regeneration scheme.
- 10.2 Consultation was undertaken with the public during November 2024 – January 2025 and March – May 2025. This involved exhibition events, meetings drop-in sessions and online information and questionnaires. A further public exhibition will be held as part of the planning application requirements.
- 10.3 The council will continue to keep residents updated on progress against key project milestones through a community advisory group once established, who will be involved in shaping the future of the Hillside Corridor and/or the development of the Bridge Park site.
- 10.4 Future communications will need to explain clearly that the proposals form part of the wider Bridge Park and Hillside Corridor regeneration programme. This includes the new leisure centre as Phase 1 of the council-led development, alongside future proposals for the Adult Education and Community Building, the Bridge Park Legacy Garden, public realm and wider community infrastructure.

- 10.5 Communications on the new leisure centre should explain that the revised facility mix is evidence-led and has been informed by current and ongoing strategic work, technical engagement and the need to provide modern, accessible and financially sustainable leisure provision. Communications should also manage expectations by making clear that any future external funding opportunities will continue to be explored but are not assumed within the proposed funding strategy.

Related document(s) for reference:

- June 2013: [Decision - Bridge Park redevelopment proposals](#)
- February 2014: [Decision - Bridge Park](#)
- July 2015: [Decision - Bridge Park Redevelopment - Bridge Park - to enter into Heads of Terms](#)
- January 2017: [Decision - Bridge Park - Approval to Enter into the Conditional Land Sale Agreement](#)
- February 2019: [Decision - New Bridge Park Centre](#)
- June 20225: [Decision - Future of Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre](#)

Report sign off:

Jehan Weerasinghe

Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and
Regeneration

Legal considerations provided by:

Ratna Mhaikar, Senior Lawyer Capital Projects

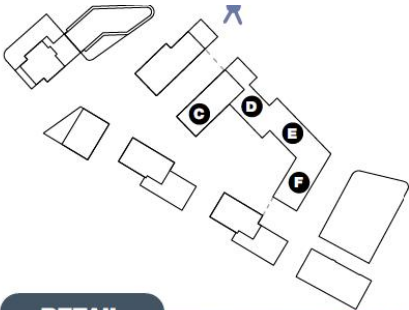
Finance considerations provided by:

Oliver Simms, Head of Finance

**PUBLIC REALM AND LANDSCAPE
CHARACTER AREAS**



VIEW FROM BRENTFIELD ROAD



CO-WORKING

RETAIL



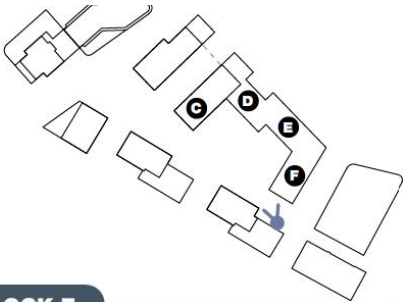
VIEW FROM BLOCK G



RAISED GROUND FLOOR DWELLINGS

BLOCK C

BLOCK F



VIEW OF THE COMMUNITY SPACES



Appendix 2 – Leisure Centre Images



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	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
	Lead Member - Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning (Councillor Matt Kelcher)
Brent Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024-25	

Wards Affected:	All, excluding parts of Alperton, Harlesden and Kensal Green, Stonebridge and Tokyngton where Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation is the Local Planning Authority
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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 A: Brent Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Jonathan Kay, Head of Regeneration 020 8937 2348 Jonathan.Kay@brent.gov.uk James Renwick, Infrastructure Planning Manager 020 8937 2844 James.Renwick@brent.gov.uk Max Turnpenny, Planning Policy Officer 020 8937 1655 Max.Turnpenny@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report introduces the Council's sixth Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), which is prepared in line with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (amended 2019).
- 1.2 The Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement outlines how much CIL and S106 income was received for the previous year, what it was spent on, and future spending priorities. The IFS is published on the Brent Council website each

year. Reporting in this way allows our communities, as well as the developers who pay CIL and S106, to have a better understanding of how contributions are used to invest in and deliver infrastructure in Brent.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 For Cabinet to note the content of this report and approve the Brent Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25 for publication on the Council's website.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1.1 Whilst local authorities do not have macroeconomic powers, we can make a significant difference to our local economies. We have a crucial role in promoting inclusive growth that benefits all of our residents, and one of the key levers we have to achieve this is through the delivery of infrastructure and investment funded via Section 106 contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- 3.1.2 I have seen first-hand in my own ward the real difference that this kind of investment can make. High-profile schemes such as the hairdressing academy, a new community centre, and expanded youth services demonstrate how targeted investment can strengthen communities, create opportunities, and support local growth.
- 3.1.3 The Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2024/25 provides an important opportunity to share this story more widely across our borough. It highlights the positive impact of development in Brent through the delivery of infrastructure that supports the growth set out in the Local Plan and aims to benefit all of our communities. This year's statement records over £150 million of Strategic CIL (SCIL) at year end for allocated and pipeline infrastructure schemes. It is important to recognise that the planning, funding, procurement and delivery of major infrastructure projects takes place over many years, with SCIL playing a key role alongside other funding sources in supporting both our current capital programme and future priorities.
- 3.1.4 Whilst CIL and S106 funding must be used to address the demands that development places on an area, there is scope to deliver this in creative and collaborative ways to maximise the impact of these resources. This approach is closely aligned with the Borough Plan, particularly Thriving Communities Priority 3: Desired Outcome 1 of enabling our communities.
- 3.1.5 Neighbourhood CIL (NCIL) has been a particularly strong example of this in practice. Through NCIL, communities are encouraged to work together and put forward bids for local investment. These projects have delivered tangible improvements, supported local growth, and strengthened community ownership, demonstrating the Council's commitment to working with and empowering residents.

- 3.1.6 The Borough Plan includes commitments to provide affordable housing, tackle climate change, air quality, employment and training, skills, and education.
- 3.1.7 The IFS demonstrates how the Council is meeting strategic priorities through the deployment of CIL to fund infrastructure, the approval of affordable housing and the collection and subsequent allocation of affordable housing and carbon offset financial contributions to projects, improving the lives of current and future residents.
- 3.1.8 The IFS also links to and aligns with the priorities and ambitions of several other Council plans and policies including:
- Brent Local Plan (2019-2041)
 - Inclusive Growth Strategy (2019-2040)
 - Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy (2021-2030)
 - Brent Air Quality Action Plan (2023-2027)
 - Flood Risk Management Strategy (2025)
 - Long Term Transport Strategy (2015-2035)
 - Affordable Workspace Strategy

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 The Council has been collecting the borough's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) since July 2013. CIL is a levy applied to most developments granted planning permission (generally payable when they commence) and it helps deliver the infrastructure needed to support the regeneration and growth of the area. CIL is important in demonstrating to communities the benefits that new development can bring, including through key infrastructure projects, place-making and local improvements.
- 3.2.2 This is the Council's sixth IFS, and it covers the financial year **2024/25**. It has been prepared in line with the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2019 and covers income and expenditure relating to CIL, Section 106 (S106) planning obligations and S278 highways agreements.
- 3.2.3 The IFS, where possible sets out future spending priorities on infrastructure in line with the growth identified in the Brent Local Plan, Borough Plan, Capital Programme and Pipeline, and Long Term Transport Strategy.
- 3.2.4 The planning, funding and delivery of major infrastructure projects to support new development and growth takes many years, and CIL is allocated within the framework of the Council's capital programme governance arrangements.
- 3.2.5 Borough CIL receipts can be broken down into three portions – Strategic CIL, Neighbourhood CIL, and Administration CIL. A Mayoral CIL of £60 per sqm is collected as well and passed on to Transport for London (TfL) on a quarterly basis. The borough keeps 4% of this levy for administrative purposes. All London boroughs are subject to this levy, with the money used to fund the Elizabeth Line.

- 3.2.6 Strategic CIL must be used to fund the improvement or replacement of infrastructure (e.g. education, transport facilities, medical facilities, schools, sporting, and open space/recreation facilities) that supports development and growth in the borough. SCIL can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure, or to repair failing existing infrastructure, if that infrastructure is necessary to support development.
- 3.2.7 The Council also enters into S106 agreements with developers - a mechanism which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms. S106 agreements are focused on localised, site-specific mitigation of the impact of development. CIL, on the other hand, is designed to raise funds for infrastructure needed generally as a result of an increase in development in an area and is spent on infrastructure projects across the borough.
- 3.2.8 The IFS is a statement of income and expenditure as required by the CIL regulations, and not a statement on the process of allocation of CIL and S106.

3.3 Summary CIL performance in 2024/25

- 3.3.1 Summary CIL performance in 2024/25 is drawn from the IFS 2024/25 tables and set out below, with the IFS 2024/25 and full tables, projects and analysis at Appendix A of this report.

Table 2: Total Brent CIL Demand Notices & Receipts 2024/25

Brent CIL receipts of £18.933m received during 2024/25 are broken down as Strategic CIL (80%) Neighbourhood CIL (15%) and CIL Admin (5%).

Brent CIL Item	Amount
The total value of CIL set out in all demand notices (sent to those who have provided a commencement date to pay CIL) issued in 2024/25*	£7,719,269.64
Total BCIL demand notices	£7,719,269.64
The total amount of SCIL received	£15,145,450.30
The total amount of NCIL received	£2,841,029.56
The total amount of CIL Admin received	£946,656.97
Total BCIL receipts received	£18,933,136.83

**Demand notices are invoices for CIL payment and may not be due to be paid in the same financial year as the financial year in which they are issued.*

Table 5: Total SCIL allocated in 2024/25

Total SCIL Allocated	£40,088,000.00

Table 6: Total SCIL expenditure in 2024/25

Total SCIL Expenditure	£6,184,050.00

Table 7: SCIL and NCIL receipts position at the end of 2024/25

£156.926m SCIL and £21.003m NCIL receipts were available to spend on new infrastructure at the end of 2024/25. For SCIL the vast majority of receipts are either formally allocated to commissioned schemes or earmarked for capital programme pipeline schemes.

CIL Type	Allocated	Pipeline	Unallocated	Total
SCIL	£62,257,669.18	£88,482,200.00	£6,186,953.88	£156,926,823.06
NCIL	£2,475,585.41	N/A	£18,528,225.85	£21,003,811.26

3.4 Summary of S106 performance in 2024/25

- 3.4.1 During the reported year, 22 S106 planning agreements and 3 Unilateral Undertakings were negotiated and agreed to secure the onsite site-specific mitigations and financial contributions required to make new developments acceptable in planning terms, which are outlined in paragraph 3.1.2 of the IFS. Table 11: S106 Receipts

Regulation Requirement	S106 Amount
The total amount of money to be provided under any planning obligations which were entered into during 2024/25	£12,344,602.83
The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received during 2024/25	£2,601,298.38
The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was collected in years previous to 2024/25 and carried forward into 2024/25 which has not been allocated by the authority prior to 2024/25	£6,465,054.45

Table 13: Summary of S106 allocation and expenditure

Regulation Requirement	S106 Expenditure
The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was allocated but not spent during 2024/25 for funding infrastructure	£649,871.68
The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was spent by the authority (including transferring it to another person to spend)	Spent by Brent: £5,342,906.25 Transferred to TfL: £0.00 Total: £5,342,906.25

- 3.4.2 The total amount of money received (under any planning obligations) during any year which was retained at the end of 2024/25 is £17,952,767.25. Table 8 shows the breakdown of these funds. Appendix 2 of the IFS shows the projects which had S106 money allocated to them in 2024/25.

Table 14: S106 receipts position at the end of 2024/25

Total Unallocated S106 Funds	Total Allocated S106 Funds	Total
£8,287,315.92	£9,665,451.56	£17,952,767.25

- 3.4.3 294 affordable housing units were secured under s106 planning agreements (172 Social Rent, 91 Intermediate, 31 Social Rent). The names of the schemes along with the detailed breakdown of affordable housing units secured are in Table 12 of the IFS.
- 3.4.4 During 2024/25 the Council entered into 6 S278 highways agreements for highways improvements and changes associated with new developments, which are outlined along with the description and value of these highway works in Table 15 of the IFS.

3.5 Future spending priorities

- 3.5.1 The Brent Local Plan outlines proposals to accommodate development up to 2041. Over this time, it is forecast that the borough will continue to see a significant increase in its population, similar to levels seen over the last 20 years. This will require a substantial number of new homes, jobs and associated physical and social infrastructure.
- 3.5.2 The planning, funding, procurement and capital delivery of major infrastructure projects to support new development and growth takes many years. To support this, a programme of capital expenditure and Strategic CIL will be used to invest in infrastructure which will help to support the growth and development of the borough and help residents in accordance with Borough priorities. Indicative areas of spend and items of infrastructure will be set out in the forthcoming update to its Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). It will consider short, medium, and long-term projects, the Council's existing capital programme and pipeline, and help guide decisions on future SCIL allocations.
- 3.5.3 The Council will continue to focus the spending of CIL and S106 receipts on essential infrastructure to support the level of growth outlined in the Local Plan and the projects identified in the IDP. It will do this jointly with partners through effective and ongoing engagement, ensuring key infrastructure is delivered at the right time and in the right place to support growth and development. As reported to Cabinet in May 2025, Brent's current IDP was published in 2019 and is due to be reviewed and updated over 2026-27.
- 3.5.4 SCIL funds have matured over several years; prudent financial practice and good future infrastructure planning demands that the fund is judiciously allocated over time. This allows for important infrastructure coming forward in the future to be funded. In view of this, the Council is due to update its IDP to help with the future planning of infrastructure across the borough, ensuring it aligns with the growth anticipated to come forward in the Local Plan and Borough Plan priorities. This provides transparency to residents, members,

infrastructure providers and the wider development industry on the type of infrastructure required to support long-term growth and development of the borough.

- 3.5.5 It is important to highlight that although a significant amount of SCIL has been collected over the past years, the Council has nevertheless secured a significant amount of infrastructure investment through other mechanisms. These include planning consents, infrastructure provided within developments, and funding for infrastructure secured via S106 legal obligations. Infrastructure has also been secured through work that has been undertaken with partners such as the Department for Education and TfL.

It should also be noted that CIL is dependent on development activity, which is cyclical, and that government emergency housebuilding measures include temporary CIL reliefs which may lower CIL receipts for the next few years.

Next Steps

- 3.5.6 Following Cabinet, if approved, the IFS would be published online at; <https://www.brent.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-guidance/community-infrastructure-levy-and-section-106#howcilisspent>.

Alternative Options Considered

- 3.5.7 The requirement to produce an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement is set out in the amended CIL regulations (2019). The Council must prepare an IFS for 2024/25 and publish it online. The IFS should have been published on the Brent Council website before 31st December 2025 per the CIL regulations but was delayed. For these reasons it is advised the IFS 2024/25 is published as soon as practical, and no alternative options have been considered.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 Quarterly reporting on infrastructure priorities and projects, as well as CIL and S106 expenditure and income, has been provided to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property over the financial year. This reporting provides clear links back to decisions, which in turn help to deliver priorities and objectives of the Brent Local Plan and other Borough priorities. The IFS 2024/25 was presented to the Cabinet Member in advance of Cabinet 27th July 2026.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. Any future allocation of SCIL will be subject to the process agreed by Cabinet in May 2025.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 The CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended, 2019) require local planning authorities to produce an Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement and publish it each year by 31st December.
- 6.2 The Infrastructure Funding Statement must include
- 6.2.1 details of how much CIL has been collected and how it has been spent; and
- 6.2.2 details of how much money has been collected through S106 Agreements and how it has been spent;
- 6.3 The matters which must be included in the Infrastructure Funding Statement, and the matters which may be included in an Infrastructure Funding Statement are prescribed in Schedule 2 of the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended 2019), these include (but are not limited to):
- The total value of CIL set out in all demand notices issued in the reported year;
 - The total amount of CIL receipts for the reported year;
 - The total amount of CIL receipts, collected by the authority before the reported year but which have not been allocated;
 - The total amount of CIL receipts, collected by the authority before the reported year and which have been allocated in the reported year;
 - The total amount of CIL expenditure for the reported year; and
 - The total amount of CIL receipts, whenever collected, which were allocated but not spent during the reported year.
 - In relation to CIL expenditure for the reported year, summary details of:
 - The items of infrastructure on which CIL (including land payments) has been spent, and the amount of CIL spent on each item;
 - The amount of CIL spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, with details of the items of infrastructure which that money was used to provide (wholly or in part); and
 - The amount of CIL spent on administrative expenses pursuant to regulation 61, and that amount expressed as a percentage of CIL collected in that year in accordance with that regulation.
 - In relation to CIL receipts, whenever collected, which were allocated but not spent during the reported year, summary details of the items of

infrastructure on which CIL (including land payments) has been allocated, and the amount of CIL allocated to each item.

- In relation to S106 receipts for the reported year:
 - the total amount of money to be provided under any planning obligations which were entered into during the reported year;
 - the total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received during the reported year;
 - the total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received before the reported year which has not been allocated by the authority;
 - summary details of any non-monetary contributions to be provided under planning obligations which were entered into during the reported year, including details of:
 - in relation to affordable housing, the total number of units which will be provided;
 - in relation to educational facilities, the number of school places for pupils which will be provided, and the category of school at which they will be provided;
 - the total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was allocated but not spent during the reported year for funding infrastructure;
 - the total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was spent by the authority (including transferring it to another person to spend);
 - in relation to money (received under planning obligations) which was allocated by the authority but not spent during the reported year, summary details of the items of infrastructure on which the money has been allocated, and the amount of money allocated to each item;
 - in relation to money (received under planning obligations) which was spent by the authority during the reported year (including transferring it to another person to spend), summary details of:
 - the items of infrastructure on which that money (received under planning obligations) was spent, and the amount spent on each item;
 - the amount of money (received under planning obligations) spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, with

details of the items of infrastructure which that money was used to provide (wholly or in part);

- the amount of money (received under planning obligations) spent in respect of monitoring (including reporting under regulation 121A) in relation to the delivery of planning obligations;
- the total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) during any year which was retained at the end of the reported year, and where any of the retained money has been allocated for the purposes of longer term maintenance (“commuted sums”), also identify separately the total amount of commuted sums held.

6.4 The Infrastructure Funding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the CIL Regulations and includes all the mandatory requirements together with additional information regarding “pipeline” schemes to present a comprehensive report of the funding and associated infrastructure projects.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 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.

7.2 The infrastructure projects have been established as part of the evidence work to support the Local Plan which has been subject to Equality Impact Assessment. This has informed the policies and projects including analysis of potential alternatives, to seek to reduce adverse impacts and wherever possible improve the outcomes for those with protected characteristics and the social, economic, and environmental outcomes of the Plan.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 The Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 and set out to do all reasonable in the Council's gift, within available resources and competing priorities, to aim for carbon neutrality for the borough by 2030. The Council has subsequently adopted a Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy (2021-2030) which sets out the council's route map to achieve this aim.

8.2 The IFS demonstrates Brent's commitment to the Brent Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy through showcasing the use of CIL and S106 allocations which meet the key themes of the document, in particular:

- Key Theme 2 (Sustainable Travel) – ‘Area of Focus 1. Supporting and Encouraging Active Travel’ through the Neasden Town Centre Connectivity and Place Strategy SCIL project;
- Key Theme 3 (Homes, Buildings and the Built Environment) – ‘Area of Focus 1. Improving Energy Efficiency’ through the Social Housing Decarbonisation S106 project;
- Key Theme 4 (Nature and Green Space) – ‘Area of Focus 1. Enhancing Green Spaces and Biodiversity’: Chalkhill Parks Improvements, Heather Park Dog Station, Lawrence Avenue Open Space Improvements, and One Tree Hill Paths S106 projects; and
- Key Theme 5 (Supporting Communities) – ‘Area of Focus 3. Brent Carbon Offset Fund’ through the collection and deployment of Carbon Offset S106 contributions throughout the financial year.

8.3 Since 1 October 2016, under the London Plan, any development that fails to achieve on-site zero carbon must make cash in lieu contributions to a Carbon Offset Fund within the borough that they are operating, collected via S106. These contributions are used to fund local carbon reduction projects, thereby offsetting the development’s carbon emissions shortfall.

8.4 The London Plan requires local planning authorities to:

- Set up a Carbon Offset Fund that is ring-fenced to secure delivery of carbon savings within the relevant LPA;
- Set a price for carbon, i.e. price per annual tonne of carbon, that developers pay to make up any shortfall in on-site carbon savings, securing contributions through S106 agreements;
- Identify a suitable range of projects that can be funded through the Fund;
- Put in place suitable monitoring procedures to enable reporting to the GLA.

8.5 The GLA issued specific guidance on the Carbon Offset Fund in 2022, which set out that the primary purpose of Offset Funds is for carbon reduction projects in homes and buildings, with specific criteria related to the amount of carbon reduction achieved. However, the GLA issued an additional guidance note on Carbon Offset Funds in October 2025 which recognised the importance and value of enabling the delivery of climate actions more broadly – including as match funding for grant applications. The guidance note set out examples of the offset fund being utilised more broadly such as on district heat networks, urban greening and green infrastructure initiatives, adaptation measures, community projects and feasibility studies. The GLA stated that they *‘broadly deem these types of projects as appropriate use of the funds when they form part of a wider suite which includes mitigation projects that directly reduce*

carbon as well'. In essence, relaxing the previous guidance and allowing local authorities more discretion on their use from an environmental sustainability perspective.

- 8.6 Since Cabinet agreement was obtained in October 2022, the Council previously allocated its Fund via a three-way split between Housing (60%), Community Schools (30%), and other (10%). A decision was made by Brent's Cabinet at its meeting on 14th October 2024 to remove the percentage allocation split, but with a retained focus on the three aspects to enable the fund to be utilised in a more agile and flexible way going forward.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate).

- 9.1 There are no Human Resources/Property implications as a result of this report.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 The IFS will be published on the Brent Council website as soon as practical after Cabinet approval scheduled for 27th July 2026.

Report sign off:

Jehan Weerasinghe

Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

Legal considerations provided by:

Paul Weeks

Finance considerations provided by:

Oliver Simms

Brent Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/2025



Brent

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BOROUGH PROFILE



POPULATION OF
BRENT **339,800**

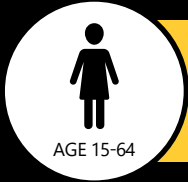
A RISE OF **9%**
SINCE 2011
CENSUS

CHANGE BY AGE 2011-21



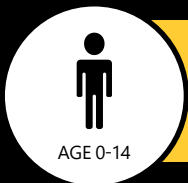
AGE 65+

+21%



AGE 15-64

+9%



AGE 0-14

+3%



20,000

CHILDREN AGED 0-4

▼ 11%
2011-21



40,700

CHILDREN AGED 5-14

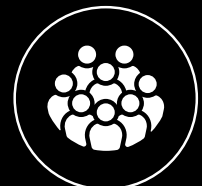
▲ 11%
2011-21



5th largest London
borough by population



118,600 households - 8%
increase since 2011



7,859 people per square
kilometre. 14th highest
population density in London



24

UNDERGROUND/
OVERGROUND STATIONS



2

NATIONAL RAIL STATIONS



89

STATE FUNDED SCHOOLS



100

PARKS INCLUDING
RECREATION AND SPORTS
GROUNDS

Contents

Introduction	5
Overview	6
 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	 7
Overview	9
Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL)	11
Summary of SCIL projects commissioned in 2024/25	11
Future SCIL spending priorities	20
Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL)	21
Future NCIL spending priorities	24
 Section 106 Planning Agreements	 25
Overview	27
Summary of S106 projects commissioned in 2024/25	29
 Section 278 Highway Agreements	 36
 Appendices	 39
Appendix 1	40
Appendix 2	41

1. Introduction

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Brent has the 5th largest population in London with a population of 339,800 and is the 6th largest borough by area. It is projected to grow by at least 25% and reach 425,000 people by 2041.
- 1.2 The Brent Local Plan outlines an ambitious strategy to accommodate development in the borough to 2041. To support this growth, significant investment in infrastructure will be required.
- 1.3 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) supports the Local Plan. It sets out short, medium, and longer-term infrastructure requirements to address growth needs. The IDP is used to support the allocation of Community Infrastructure (CIL) and Section 106 (S106) funding.
- 1.4 It is important to note that the CIL and S106 financial contributions collected and presented in this Infrastructure Funding Statement have all been generated as a result of development schemes being delivered in the borough, which in turn is invested back into the borough to enable and support further growth and regeneration. This statement highlights the circular benefits of regeneration and development.

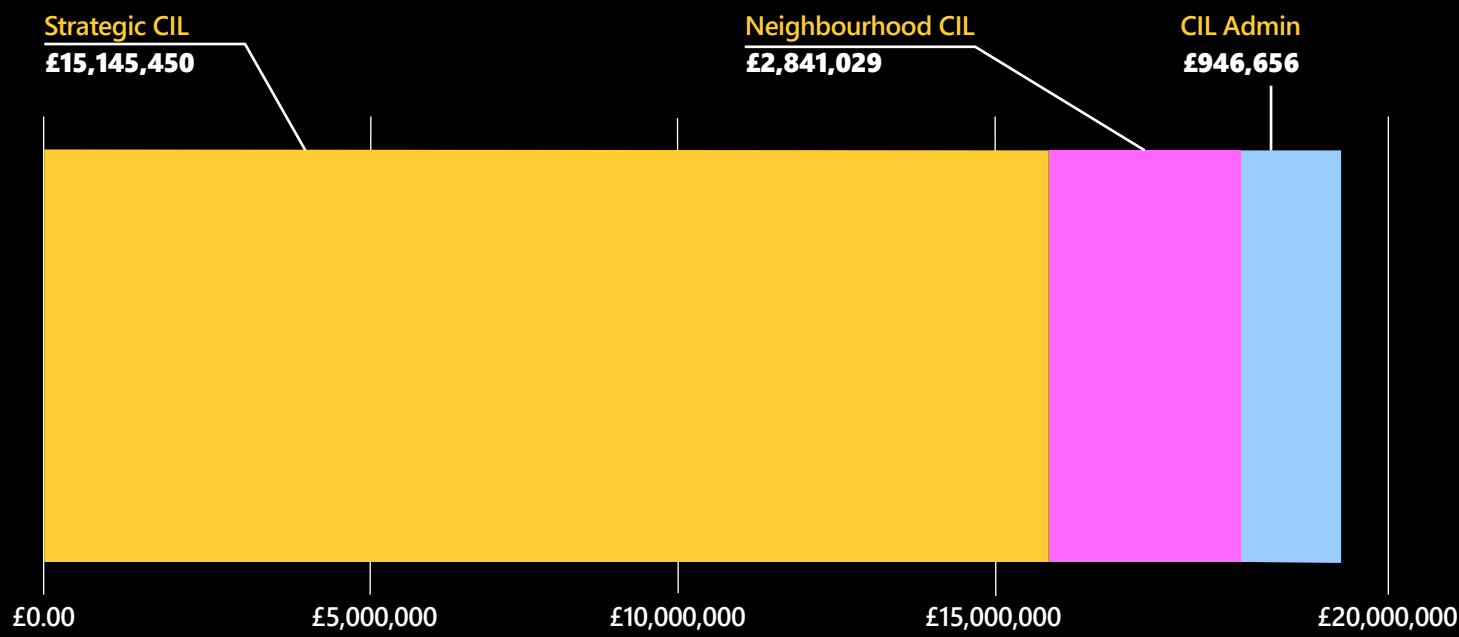
The Infrastructure Funding Statement

- 1.5 This is the Council's sixth Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), and it covers the financial year 2024/25. It has been prepared in line with the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2019 and covers income and expenditure relating to CIL, S106 obligations and S278 highways agreements for the financial year 2024/25. It sets out what infrastructure has been delivered to date via CIL and S106 planning obligations. It also, where possible, sets out future spending priorities on infrastructure in line with the growth identified in the Brent Local Plan, Borough Plan, Capital Pipeline and Long Term Transport Strategy.
- 1.6 The Council uses S106 obligations and CIL to support development and mitigate its impacts and maximise the benefits and opportunities from growth to deliver the priorities of the Borough Plan (the Council's Corporate Plan) and the Brent Local Plan.
- 1.7 The IFS is a statement of spend as required by the regulations and not a statement on the allocation process of CIL and S106. CIL is allocated within the Council's Capital Programme governance arrangements. The programme has regard to the corporate strategies listed in the Borough Plan, Black Community Action Plan, Poverty Commission Action Plan, Inclusive Growth Strategy, Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy and the Long Term Transport Strategy. The Capital Pipeline, Local Plan and IDP are intrinsically linked to this with any project seeking a CIL allocation required to go to the Capital Programme Board. Any new project seeking a CIL allocation of more than £500,000 is then required to go to Cabinet for final approval.
- 1.8 The IFS will help communities and developers to understand how the level of growth outlined in the Local Plan can deliver tangible outcomes and investment in infrastructure projects such as new public realm, health facilities, schools, transport, and open space that will support long-term growth and development of the borough.

2. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

CIL COLLECTION BREAKDOWN 2024-25



£18,933,136

Total amount of Borough CIL collected in 2024-25

£6,184,050

Total amount of SCIL spent in 2024-25

£1,029,296

Total amount of NCIL spent in 2024-25

ALLOCATIONS IN 2024-25 | PROJECTS APPROVED FOR FUNDING



Strategic
CIL

£40,088,000

Allocated across five SCIL projects



Neighbour-
hood CIL

£260,976

Allocated across two NCIL projects

2 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 2.1.1 The Council has been collecting the borough's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) since July 2013.
- 2.1.2 CIL receipts can be broken down into three distinctive portions – the Strategic CIL (SCIL), the Neighbourhood CIL (NCIL) and the Administration CIL. In addition, all London Authorities are required to collect a Mayoral CIL (MCIL). This is set by the Mayor of London and is required to be passed on to TfL on a quarterly basis to pay for the Elizabeth Line.

Table 1: CIL Portions Description

Portion	% of Receipts	Process
Brent Strategic CIL	70% plus	Spend decided by the Council according to its strategic infrastructure priorities. Spend must support development in Brent, although does not have to be spent by Brent.
Neighbourhood CIL	15% to neighbourhoods or 25% where a neighbourhood plan is in place	A round of bids inviting communities to suggest projects for NCIL funding.
CIL Administrative expenses portion	Up to 5%	Spend applied to administrative expenses for collection and enforcement in line with legal restrictions on the use of this funding.
Mayoral CIL Administrative expenses portion	Up to 4% of MCIL received	

- 2.1.3 Strategic CIL must be used to fund the improvement or replacement of infrastructure (e.g. education, transport facilities, medical facilities, schools, sporting, and open space/recreation facilities) that supports growth in the borough. Whilst it cannot be used to resolve pre-existing deficiencies, it can secure improvements to existing infrastructure if it is shown that this supports development, and this request is eligible for CIL funding in line with CIL regulations.
- 2.1.4 The tables below outline how the Council has performed in terms of Brent CIL receipts and expenditure for the reporting year – **2024/25**, in line with Regulation 121. Brent CIL is made up of Strategic CIL (SCIL), Neighbourhood CIL (NCIL) and CIL Admin.

Table 2: Brent CIL Demand Notices, Receipts & Expenditure 2024/25

CIL Item	Amount
The total value of CIL set out in all demand notices (sent to those who have provided a commencement date to pay CIL) issued in 2024/25. These may not all be due to be paid in the same financial year as the financial year in which they are issued.	£7,719,269.64
The total amount of CIL receipts collected in 2024/25	SCIL: £15,145,450.30 NCIL: £2,841,029.56 CIL Admin: £946,656.97 Total: £18,933,136.83
The total amount of CIL (SCIL and NCIL only) receipts, collected by the authority in the years prior to 2024/25, but which have not been allocated prior to 2024/25	£100,098,111.42
The total amount of CIL (SCIL and NCIL only) receipts collected by the authority, or by another person on its behalf in the years prior to 2024/25, which have been allocated in 2024/25	SCIL: £40,088,00.00 NCIL: £260,976.00 Total: £40,348,976.00
The total amount of CIL expenditure in 2024/25 (<i>includes SCIL & NCIL spend only</i>)	SCIL: £6,184,050.00 NCIL: £1,029,296.33 Total: £7,213,346.33
The amount of CIL spent on administrative expenses pursuant to regulation 61	Brent Admin: £476,026.00
The percentage of CIL received in 2024/25 spent on administrative expenses pursuant to regulation 61	Brent Admin: 2.01%
The amount of CIL spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, with details of the items of infrastructure which that money was used to provide (wholly or in part)	Not applicable
Unused CIL Admin transferred to SCIL	£0.00

2.1.5 The breakdown of the total CIL collected by Brent in 2024/25 is set out below:

Table 3: Total Brent CIL Collected 2024/25

CIL Type	Total Receipts
Total SCIL Collected for Brent in 2024/25	£15,145,450.30
Total NCIL Collected for Brent in 2024/25	£2,841,029.56
Total Brent Admin Collected for Brent in 2024/25	£946,656.97
Total CIL Collected for Brent in 2024/25	£18,933,136.83

- 2.1.6 Mayoral CIL returns for 2024/25 are shown below. A total of **£63,659,447.78** of MCIL was transferred to the Mayor of London to pay for the Elizabeth Line since 2012.

Table 4: Total Mayoral CIL Collected 2024/25

Mayoral 24/25	Mayoral	Admin (4%)	Total
Q1 Apr - June 2024	£1,518,320.54	£63,263.35	£1,581,583.89
Q2 Jul - Sep 2024	£1,389,960.64	£57,915.05	£1,447,875.69
Q3 Oct - Dec 2024	£923,636.71	£38,484.88	£962,121.59
Q4 Jan - Mar 2025	£1,391,599.04	£57,983.27	£1,449,582.31
Totals:	£5,223,516.93	£217,646.55	£5,441,163.48

2.2 Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL)

- 2.2.1 In 2024/25 the following infrastructure projects were allocated Strategic CIL funding:

Table 5: SCIL Allocations in 2024/25

Infrastructure Project	SCIL Allocation	Ward(s)
Church End Neighbourhood Green Corridors Programme	£3,000,000.00	Church End & Roundwood
Neasden Civic Partnership Programme	£7,400,000.00	Neasden
Roy Smith Community Space Fit Out	£624,000.00	Stonebridge
South Kilburn New Primary School and South Kilburn Park Upgrade	£17,300,000.00	Kilburn
Wembley Housing Zone	£11,230,000.00	Wembley Hill
Total SCIL Allocated	£40,088,000.00	

- 2.2.2 A summary of each of the SCIL projects commissioned in 2024/25 is provided below.

Church End & Roundwood Neighbourhood Green Corridors Programme

- 2.2.3 Brent Council Cabinet approved up to £3m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) for the Church End and Roundwood Neighbourhood Green Corridors Scheme.

Following the area's selection as a Green Neighbourhood pilot in 2022, Sustrans was commissioned to explore the feasibility of walking, cycling, and green infrastructure improvements in Church End and Roundwood. The resulting feasibility study included concept designs and a linked package of works that, through extensive public engagement, reflected priority locations and interventions.

The scheme is expected to deliver significant benefits, including reduced carbon emissions, improved air quality, and increased levels of walking and cycling. The scheme will also foster stronger community engagement through a collaborative co-design approach, ensuring that local needs and aspirations are reflected in final outcomes.

Among the range of measures to be delivered as part of the scheme are:

- Measures to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists (including provision of safe and secure pedestrian and cycle links and facilities).

- Measures to improve the quality and resilience of the street scene (including the provision of new places to stop and rest, and additional shade and shelter).
- Measures to reduce the dominance of private motor vehicles (including potential for new and amendments of existing 20mph zones and town centre urban realm schemes, and traffic restrictions).



CGI of Church End & Roundwood Neighbourhood Green Corridors Programme (Source: LBB)

Neasden Civic Partnership Programme

- 2.2.4 Brent Council Cabinet approved up to £7.4m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) for Neasden Civic Partnership Programme (NCPP), focused on Neasden Town Centre, located in an area in need of regeneration and designated for growth. The vision is to revitalise Neasden Town Centre and improve links with neighbouring communities and development of the surrounding area.

The NCPP is an opportunity to deliver place-based interventions in and around Neasden Town Centre, to address the severance, traffic congestion, air pollution, poor townscape, and deprivation that blights the area. By improving movement, connectivity, and public realm, the NCPP will integrate Neasden Town Centre within local and strategic ambitions for regeneration and growth.

The NCPP is underpinned by core proposals across three strategic programme areas summarised as follows:

- 1) **Public Realm** – Wayfinding for Neasden Town Centre and route to Neasden Underground Station and Neasden Stations Growth Area, with new signage, lighting, landscaping, public art, green infrastructure for Neasden Town Centre, sustainable urban drainage system, pocket forest trees, and low-level planting.

2) **Community Programming** – Meanwhile Community Space: a demountable two storey building with access stairs, lift and signage, internal first floor fit out for workspace and community uses, installed on top of a Council owned car park.



Artist impression of Neasden Meanwhile Community Space (Source: LBB)

3) **Eastern Gyratory** – Reconfiguration, new access road, pavement, crossings, lighting, and street furniture, to define and open up the gateway to Neasden Town Centre, improve access to The Grange open space, improve the route to Neasden Underground Station and Neasden Stations Growth Area. Subject to TfL approvals.



Map showing proposed changes to Neasden Eastern Gyratory (Source: LBB)

Roy Smith Community Space Fit Out

- 2.2.5 Brent Council Cabinet approved up to £0.624m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) to convert the ground floor commercial unit of Roy Smith House block in Hillside, Stonebridge into a community venue and flexible event space for use by the local community. The unit hosts an approximate 250m² commercial unit that is currently unoccupied.

Design development includes a full fit-out for the venue to comprise of a commercial kitchen, café, bar, and serving area with seating, an event space, a training suite, toilets, and a staff office with a kitchenette. Moveable partitions have formed part of the design to allow the space to be tailored to various community events or activities.

A separate exercise will be undertaken to market the property and attract bids from suitable provider(s) to manage and deliver services for the local community. The provider(s) will be expected to deliver a range of activities for local communities including provision of advice and guidance, services for young people, employment and skills support, as well as other tailored and community offers.



Photograph of Roy Smith House, Stonebridge (Source: LBB)



Photograph of Roy Smith House community space fit out (Source: LBB)

South Kilburn New Primary School

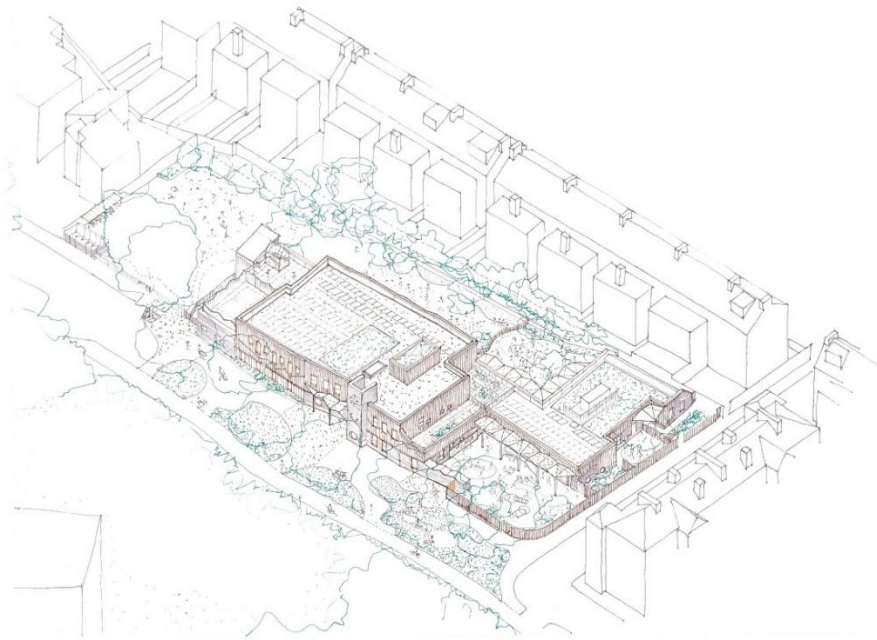
- 2.2.6 Brent Council Cabinet approved up to £12.9m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) for the construction of a 1 FE primary school with a nursery and the infrastructure to expand to a 2FE school to meet the needs stemming from demographic growth arising from the regeneration programme.

There are currently two schools within the South Kilburn masterplan. Carlton Vale Infant School (CVI) is a 2 Form Entry (2FE) Community Infant School, with Brent as the landowner. Kilburn Park Juniors (KPJ) is a 2FE Junior Foundation School with the foundation as the landowner.

Officers proposed the continued provision of the South Kilburn School to be pursued through a new school building on the CVI site. Delivery of the new school building at the CVI site was initially proposed to be funded as part of the South Kilburn Regeneration Programme. The recommended development option included the following:

- A new build 1 Form Entry school aligned with Department for Education's area guidance (BB103) on the CVI site with the infrastructure to expand to a 2FE school by building additional classrooms in the future.
- 588 homes including 528 homes on MWD and A&B site and a further 60 homes on the KPJ site.
- 12.4% affordable homes (73 homes).
- Necessary enhancements to KPJ school to enable the decant of CVI school during the period of the new school build.
- Nil land receipt.

South Kilburn Urban Park



Architect drawing of plans for South Kilburn Urban Park (Source: LBB)

Brent Council Cabinet approved up to £4.4m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) to transform South Kilburn Open Space into the South Kilburn Urban

Park. The park caters to a wide range of community needs, and investment will provide improved connections, choices of activities and recreational opportunities for both existing and new residents.

The South Kilburn Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document sets out the requirement of accessible, high-quality public spaces to foster community cohesion and improve residents' quality of life. The landscape and public realm proposals within the Masterplan look to improve the existing green spaces on the estate. Alongside the proposed improvements to Carlton Vale Boulevard, public open space, and green infrastructure networks, the South Kilburn Urban Park will provide the single most important piece of green infrastructure for the South Kilburn Masterplan.

The proposed landscape strategy of the South Kilburn Urban Park includes ecological enhancements and activation of the open space through a network of safe routes, creating opportunities to bring together new and existing residents of South Kilburn. The proposed improvements include new cycle and pedestrian connections, a new multi-activity area, youth space, gym trail, woodland play area and earthworks, enhanced biodiversity, community orchard, and growing space, and a proposed community pavilion that can accommodate community space and café.

Wembley Housing Zone - Public Courtyard & Community Centre

- 2.2.7 Brent Council Cabinet approved up to £11.23m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) for a new Publicly Accessible Courtyard and Community Centre in the Wembley Housing Zone regeneration of the eastern end of Wembley High Road.

Wembley Housing Zone was designated by the Mayor of London in 2015. Brent Council are working with Wates to deliver the vision to restructure and revitalise the eastern end of Wembley High Road to provide new homes, jobs, infrastructure and a new sense of place. Redevelopment of two key council-owned sites at Cecil Avenue and the former Ujima House is underway and due to complete by the end of 2026.

Land on Wembley High Road, East of Cecil Avenue will deliver a high-quality housing-led mixed-use courtyard development and SCIL will fund a new public courtyard garden and new fully fitted out community centre as part of the scheme.

The new public courtyard garden will increase access to open space for local people and visitors to the area, support community wellbeing and quality of life, and provide new play spaces for children of all ages and abilities. The new public courtyard garden will also increase the urban greening factor through new planting and trees, reducing carbon emissions and the urban heat island effect in the local town centre.



CGI of Land on Wembley High Road, East of Cecil Avenue (Source: LBB)

The new fully fitted out community centre will offer local people and community groups' access to space and facilities for community events and activities, supporting social interaction, and sustainable and liveable communities. The community centre will achieve an excellent rating under the BREEAM certification for non-domestic buildings to ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction.



Architect drawing of planned Community Centre for Wembley Housing Zone (Source: LBB)

2.2.8 In 2024/25 SCIL was spent on the following infrastructure projects:

Table 6: SCIL Expenditure in 2024/25

Infrastructure Project	SCIL Expenditure	Ward(s)
Alperton Housing Zone Parks Improvements	£255,831.00	Alperton & Wembley Central
Carlton Vale Boulevard	£2,152.00	Kilburn
Grand Union Canal Bridge	£40,924.00	Alperton
Harlesden Library	£16,161.00	Harlesden & Kensal Green
South Kilburn Open Space	£31,101.00	Kilburn
Learie Constantine Centre Redevelopment – New Community Centre	£631,331.00	Willesden Green
Medical Centre – Alperton, South Kilburn, Wembley	£696,404.00	Alperton, Kilburn, Wembley Park
Neasden Town Centre Connectivity and Place Strategy	£105,868.00	Dollis Hill & Welsh Harp
Neville House, Winterleys, Carlton House and Carlton Hall (NWCC)	£249,014.00	Kilburn
Northwick Park Mortuary Expansion	£6,143.00	Northwick Park
Picture Palace	£1,476,375.00	Harlesden & Kensal Green
Preston Community Library Redevelopment – New Community Facility	£653,250.00	Preston
Roy Smith Community Space Fit Out	£39,625.00	Stonebridge
South Kilburn New Primary School	£41,375.00	Kilburn
Wembley Hostile Vehicle Measures (HVM)	£281,254.00	Wembley Park
Wembley Housing Zone - Public Courtyard & Community Centre	£1,657,242.00	Wembley Hill
Total SCIL Expenditure	£6,184,050.00	

Table 7: SCIL and NCIL receipts position at the end of 2024/25

CIL Type	Allocated	Pipeline	Unallocated	Total
SCIL	£62,257,669.18	£88,482,200.00	£6,186,953.88	£156,926,823.06
NCIL	£2,475,585.41	N/A	£18,528,225.85	£21,003,811.26

SCIL Commissioned (Allocated)	Total
North End Road (Wembley Transport Improvements)	£546,403.49
Medical Centre - Wembley, Alperton, South Kilburn	£2,673,999.99
Neville House, Winterleys, Carlton House & Carlton Hall (NWCC)	£961,961.59
Wembley Hostile Vehicle Measures (HVM)	£60,085.50
Carlton Vale Boulevard	£1,895,498.00
Preston Community Library Redevelopment - New Community Facility	£605,451.46
Learie Constantine Centre Redevelopment - New Community Centre	£568,668.76
Brent Indian Community Centre Redevelopment - New Community Centre	£1,200,000.00
Grand Union Canal Bridge	£6,814,075.72
Alperton Housing Zone Parks Improvements at One Tree Hill and Mount Pleasant Open Spaces	£269,635.39
Picture Palace	£1,923,624.82
Neasden Town Centre Connectivity and Place Strategy	£94,132.00
Grove Park Pavilion refurbishment	£500,000.00
Northwick Park Mortuary Expansion	£894,477.62
Wembley Housing Zone	£9,572,758.00
Roy Smith Community Space Fit Out	£584,375.00
Church End Neighbourhood Green Corridors	£3,000,000.00
South Kilburn New Primary School	£12,858,625.33
South Kilburn Open Space	£4,368,898.51
Neasden Civic Partnership Programme	£7,400,000.00
Alperton Step Free	£5,000,000.00
West London Orbital	£465,000.00
Total SCIL Commissioned (Allocated)	£62,257,669.18
SCIL Pipeline Schemes	Total
Carlton and Granville Social Infrastructure	£2,500,000.00
Pedestrian crossing Willesden Lane/Cavendish Road/The Avenue junction NW6	£235,000.00
Youth Facilities across the Borough	£2,150,000.00
St Raphaels Estate	£5,597,200.00
Healthy Streets	£3,000,000.00
Willesden Green High Street, Library to Dudden Hill Lane Junc. Corridor Improvements	£3,000,000.00
Willesden Lane Corridor Improvements	£2,000,000.00
Additional NWCC	£5,000,000.00
Hillside Corridor (Bridge Park)	£65,000,000.00
Total SCIL Pipeline Schemes	£88,482,200.00
SCIL Unallocated	Total
Unallocated	£6,186,953.88
Total SCIL Unallocated	£6,186,953.88
Grand Total	£156,926,823.06

NCIL Commissioned (Allocated)	Total
Harlesden	£314,596.35
Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum	£165,811.31
Kilburn	£112,378.53
Kingsbury & Kenton	£231,284.37
Sudbury Town Neighbourhood Forum	-£437.00
Wembley	£371,698.04
Willesden	£635,527.36
Boroughwide	£314,590.50
Multi-Neighbourhood	£330,135.95
Total NCIL Commissioned (Allocated)	£2,475,585.41
NCIL Unallocated	Total
Unallocated	£18,528,225.85
Total NCIL Unallocated	£18,528,225.85
Grand Total	£21,003,811.26

Future Spending Priorities

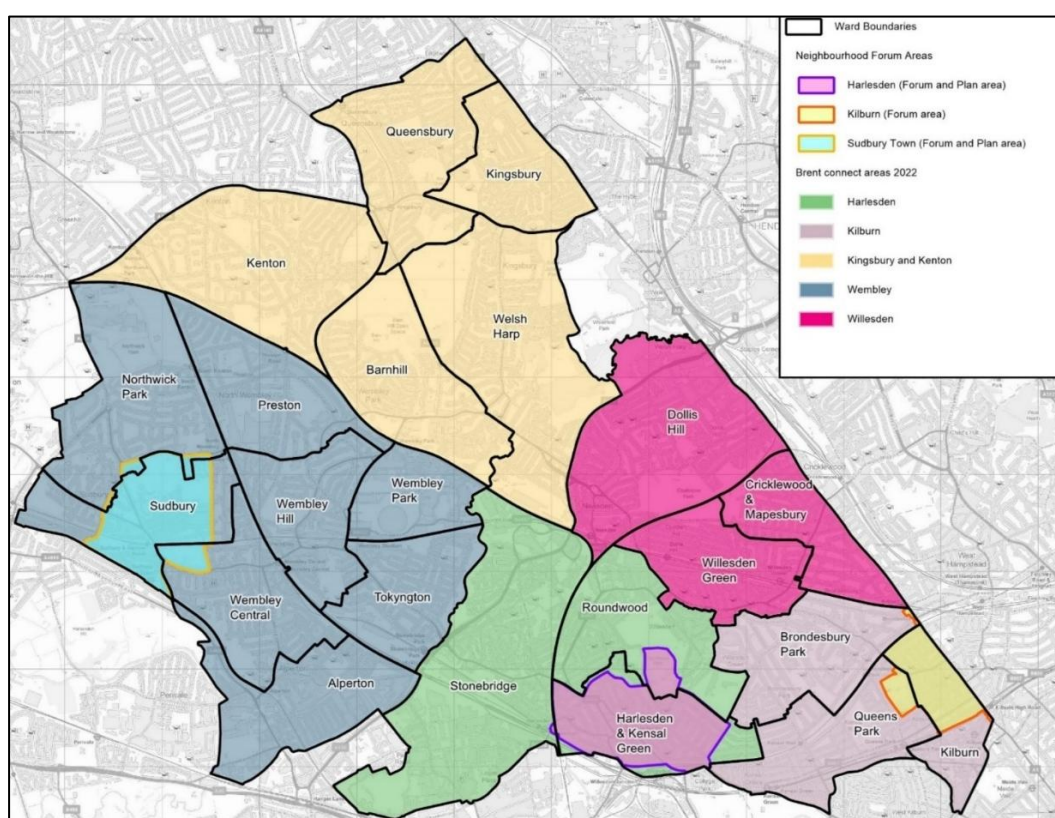
- 2.2.9 The Brent Local Plan outlines proposals to accommodate development up to 2041. Over this time, it is forecast that the borough will continue to see a significant increase in its population, similar to levels seen over the last 20 years. This will require a substantial number of new homes, jobs and associated physical and social infrastructure.
- 2.2.10 The planning, funding, procurement and capital delivery of major infrastructure projects to support new development and growth takes many years. To support this, a programme of capital expenditure and Strategic CIL will be used to invest in infrastructure which will help to support the growth and development of the borough and help residents in accordance with Borough priorities. Indicative areas of spend and items of infrastructure will be set out in the forthcoming update to its Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). It will consider short, medium, and long-term projects, the Council's existing capital programme and pipeline, and help guide decisions on future SCIL allocations.
- 2.2.11 The Council will continue to focus the spending of CIL and S106 receipts on essential infrastructure to support the level of growth outlined in the Local Plan and the projects identified in the IDP. It will do this jointly with partners through effective and ongoing engagement, ensuring key infrastructure is delivered at the right time and in the right place to support growth and development.
- 2.2.12 SCIL funds have matured over several years; prudent financial practice and good future infrastructure planning demands that the fund is judiciously allocated over time. This allows for important infrastructure coming forward in the future to be funded. In view of this, the Council is due to update its IDP to help with the future planning of infrastructure across the borough, ensuring it aligns with the growth anticipated to come forward in the Local Plan and Borough Plan priorities. This provides transparency to residents, members, infrastructure providers and the wider development industry on the type of infrastructure required to support long-term growth and development of the borough.

- 2.2.13 It is important to highlight that although a significant amount of SCIL has been collected over the past years, the Council has nevertheless secured a significant amount of infrastructure investment through other mechanisms. These include planning consents, infrastructure provided within developments, and funding for infrastructure secured via S106 legal obligations. Infrastructure has also been secured through work that has been undertaken with partners such as the Department for Education and TfL. It should also be noted that CIL is dependent on development activity, which is cyclical

2.3 Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL)

- 2.3.1 The CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) stipulate that at least 15% of CIL receipts generated must be spent on Neighbourhood Projects. Whilst the legislation does not prescribe a process for how Neighbourhood CIL is allocated, the expectation is that priorities for spend are agreed with the local community.
- 2.3.2 A CIL Neighbourhood may also contain a Neighbourhood Forum with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. In this case, up to 25% of CIL funds collected from liable developments within the Neighbourhood Forum boundary may be spent on priorities identified by the Neighbourhood Forum. NCIL collected within a Neighbourhood Forum may only be spent on projects put forward that will solely be within the relevant Neighbourhood Forum area and that meet the CIL Regulations.
- 2.3.3 There are three designated Neighbourhood Forums in Brent: Harlesden, Kilburn, and Sudbury Town. Sudbury Town and Harlesden both have adopted a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.3.4 In line with the CIL Regulations, NCIL can be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, parks and green spaces, public realm improvements, cultural and sports facilities, healthcare facilities, and other community facilities, provided it is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the area. The NCIL must be spent on priorities agreed in consultation with the local community. These priorities must be aligned with the needs of the local community. CIL funding has no immediate deadline and therefore is available on a rolling annual basis. It is important to recognise that CIL receipts can only be spent on capital projects, although associated revenue spending to maintain those capital items is also permissible.
- 2.3.5 Brent is divided into five CIL Neighbourhoods: Harlesden, Kilburn and Kensal, Kingsbury and Kenton, Wembley, and Willesden. Figure 1 below shows the CIL Neighbourhoods and their relationship with Neighbourhood Forums and Neighbourhood Plans.

Figure 1: Brent's CIL Neighbourhoods and Neighbourhood Forum/Plan Areas



2.3.6 Arrangements for spending Brent's NCIL 2024/25 were formally approved by Cabinet on 13 February 2017 and updated in April 2023. The funding strategy for 2020-2023 which will be used for decisions on expenditure of NCIL was agreed by Cabinet on 14 January 2019.

2.3.7 All shortlisted projects for NCIL funding must demonstrate that they:

1. Meet the CIL Regulations (2010);
2. Address the impact(s) of development and supports ongoing development in the neighbourhood the project is being delivered in;
3. Reflect the neighbourhood priorities within the neighbourhood the project is being delivered in;
4. Reflect the strategic priorities of the Council within the Borough Plan, meeting the theme of the specific NCIL round;
5. Are one-off projects that do not require additional revenue funding in their delivery or operation (or identify how additional revenue funding may be met) but must have a lifespan beyond the funding and continue as part of the required infrastructure;
6. Benefit diverse Brent communities, reflecting the demographics of the neighbourhood that the project is being delivered in; and
7. Represent value for money.

2.3.8 In 2024/25, the Community Grants (NCIL) were distributed using a formula agreed on by Cabinet in April 2023. The table below sets out this approach, ensuring that the Council maintains its obligations to apportion the money accurately in line with statutory guidance.

Table 8: NCIL Community Grants Formula

Brent Connects Area	No. of Wards	NCIL Project Spend
Harlesden	3	£136,000.00
Kilburn	3	£136,000.00
Kingsbury & Kenton	5	£227,000.00
Wembley	8	£365,000.00
Willesden	3	£136,000.00
Brent Connect Area Total	22	£1,000,000.00
Boroughwide	ALL	£500,000.00
Overall Total	22	£1,500,000.00

NCIL performance in 2024/25

- 2.3.9 For the reported year, **£2,842,347.66** of NCIL was collected.
- 2.3.10 **£1,029,296.33** was spent on projects during the same period.
- 2.3.11 Through the bidding process undertaken in 2023/24, two projects over the value of £100,000.00 required Cabinet approval and received it on 15 July 2024.
- 2.3.12 Table 9 outlines the total NCIL allocation and projects by NCIL Neighbourhood in 2024/25. Appendix 1 shows which wards each project worked across.

Table 9: NCIL Allocations by NCIL Neighbourhood

NCIL Neighbourhood	No. of Projects	Allocation
Harlesden	0	£0.00
Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum	0	£0.00
Kilburn	0	£0.00
Kingsbury & Kenton	0	£0.00
Sudbury Town Neighbourhood Forum	0	£0.00
Wembley	0	£0.00
Willesden	0	£0.00
Boroughwide	1	£114,000.00
Multi-Neighbourhood	1	£146,976.00
Totals:	2	£260,976.00

Summary of Projects Approved in 2024/25**Step Up Hub: Community Safety Community Leadership Programme**

- 2.3.13 The aim of this social infrastructure project is to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged people impacted by development by providing support to further equality, social justice, social mobility, and community cohesion. The programme combines academic learning, with practical tasks, helping learners address real-world problems. The structured course will be supplemented by mentoring and coaching support. Course content will focus on community cohesion

and crime reduction and include delivering interventions to address anti-social behaviour which has increased with the increase in development.

Tenterden Pavilion

- 2.3.14 This project will provide funding for a new football pavilion at Tenterden Sports Ground in Kenton, suitable for a grassroots level football club (Forest United (1973) Youth Football Club Limited). The project is required to obtain match funding, and no NCIL funds will be released without evidence of the additional funding, as agreed by Cabinet.



Tenterden Sports Ground (Source: LBB)

Future NCIL Spending Priorities

- 2.3.15 The NCIL bidding process was paused during 2024/25 due to a review of the NCIL application and bidding process and no further funds were awarded.
- 2.3.16 The Neighbourhood Priorities consultation was carried out between 26 June to 23 July 2023. These priorities are set to remain in place until Summer 2026.
- 2.3.17 The table below sets out the consultation findings on the top four priorities for each Brent Connects area:

Table 10: Brent Connects Priorities

Harlesden	Kilburn	Kingsbury	Wembley	Willesden
Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour	Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour	Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour	Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour	Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour
Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling	Education and Employment	Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling	Education and Employment	Public Realm, Green Spaces and Parks
Public Realm, Green Spaces and Parks	Community & Culture	Community & Culture	Public Realm, Green Spaces and Parks	Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling
Town Centre and High Streets	Public Realm, Green Spaces and Parks	Education and Employment	Sports, Recreation and Play Space	Town Centre and High Streets

3. Section 106 Planning Agreements

SECTION 106 CONTRIBUTIONS



£2,601,298

Total amount of S106 collected in 2024-25

£5,342,906

Total amount of S106 spent in 2024-25

£4,140,811

Total amount allocated to S106 projects in 2024-25



294
Affordable Housing units secured in 2024-25

172 London Affordable Rent

91 Intermediate

31 Social Rent



ALLOCATIONS IN 2024-25



£24,800
Employment and Training



£383,231
Parks



£1,981,028
Regeneration



£937,145
Highways



£762,966
Sustainability



£8,000
Transportation



£43,640
Landscape

3 Section 106 Planning Agreements

- 3.1.1 The Council enters into Section 106 (S106) obligations with developers - a mechanism which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms. S106 obligations are focused on site-specific mitigation of the impact of development such as securing affordable housing or requiring improvements to an access road. CIL, on the other hand, is designed to raise funds for infrastructure needed generally as a result of an increase in development in an area and is spent on community infrastructure projects across the borough.
- 3.1.2 During 2024/25, a total of 22 S106's and 3 Unilateral Undertakings were negotiated and agreed. 17 of these were new applications and 5 were S73 Deed of Variations.

New S106 Agreements:

- 1 Forty Lane, Wembley, HA9 9DZ
- 1-8 Sevenex Parade & 2a London Road, Wembley, HA9
- 163-165 Edgware Road, London, NW9
- 298-300 High Road, London, NW10 2EN
- 5 Gibbons Road, London, NW10 9BR
- 6 Deerhurst Road, London, NW2 4DE
- 6 St John's Road, Wembley, HA9 7JD
- 82, 84, and 86 Olive Road, London, NW2 6UP
- Fairfield Court, Longstone Avenue, NW10 3TS
- Land at 370 High Road and 54-68 Dudden Hill Lane, London, NW10
- Land at 380 High Road and 54-68 Dudden Hill Lane, London, NW10
- Land between Park Avenue North and, Griffin Close, London, NW10
- Land rear of 390-408, High Road, Wembley, HA9
- Northwick Park Hospital, Watford Road, Harrow, HA1 3UJ
- Oman Court, Oman Avenue, London, NW2 6AY
- Symal House and 421 Edgware Road, London, NW9
- Wembley Point, 1 Harrow Road and 5-15 Harrow Road, Wembley HA9

S73 Variation S106s:

- 100 Beresford Avenue, Wembley, HA0 1QJ
- 110 Walm Lane, London, NW2 4RS
- Blackbird Hill, London, NW9 8RR
- Fairgate House, 390-400 and 402-408 (Even), High Road, Wembley, HA9
- Wembley Park Station Car Park and Train Crew Centre, Brook Avenue, Wembley, HA9

Unilateral Undertakings:

- 35 Blackbird Hill, London, NW9 8RS
- 60-62 High Street, London, NW10 4LL
- Land at Garages rear of Sylvia Court, Wembley, HA9

3.1.3 Table 11 provides an update on the S106 receipts for the reporting year 2024/25.

Table 11: S106 Receipts for 2024/25

Regulation Requirement	S106 Amount
The total amount of money to be provided under any planning obligations which were entered into during 2024/25	£12,344,602.83*
The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received during 2024/25	£2,601,298.38
The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was collected in years previous to 2024/25 and carried forward into 2024/25 which has not been allocated by the authority prior to 2024/25	£6,465,054.45

**Subject to index linking and future calculations for Carbon Offsetting and Affordable Housing.*

3.1.4 With regard to affordable housing, **294 affordable housing units were secured** on the following major developments:

Table 12: Affordable Housing Units Secured in 2024/25

Site Name	Breakdown of Affordable Units Secured in 24/25	Total Units Secured in 24/25	Ward
6 St. John's Road, HA9 7JD	48 Intermediate 31 Social Rent	79 100% Affordable Housing	Wembley Hill
Land at 370 High Road and 54-68 Dudden Hill Lane, NW10	48 London Affordable Rent	301 16% Affordable Housing	Roundwood
Symal House, NW9 0HU	51 London Affordable Rent	252 20% Affordable Housing	Queensbury
Wembley Point, HA9 6FA	73 London Affordable Rent 43 Intermediate	515 23% Affordable Housing	Tokington
Total Secured in 2024/25	Total Affordable Units: 294 172 London Affordable Rent 91 Intermediate 31 Social Rent	Total Units: 1,147	

Table 13: S106 Allocation and Expenditure

Regulation Requirement	S106 Amount
The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was allocated but not spent during 2024/25 for funding infrastructure	£649,871.68
The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was spent by the authority (including transferring it to another person to spend)	Spent by Brent: £5,342,906.25 Transferred to TfL: £0.00 Total: £5,342,906.25
Total amount allocated to infrastructure projects in 2024/25 and the amount spent from these allocations. The items of infrastructure which were allocated money during 2024/25 (received under planning obligations) and the amount spent on each item is shown in Appendix 2	Allocated: £3,178,865.68 Spent: £3,695,913.02
The amount of money (received under planning obligations) spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, with details of the items of infrastructure which that money was used to provide (wholly or in part)	Not applicable
The amount of money (received under planning obligations) spent in respect of monitoring (including reporting under regulation 121A) in relation to the delivery of planning obligations	£612,307.00

- 3.1.5 The total amount of money received (under any planning obligations) during any year which was retained at the end of 2024/25 is **£17,952,767.56**. Table 14 shows the breakdown of these funds.

Table 14: S106 receipts position at the end of 2024/25

Total Unallocated S106 Funds	Total Allocated S106 Funds	Total Funds
£8,287,315.92	£9,665,451.64	£17,952,767.56

- 3.1.6 A total of £4,140,811.24 was allocated across 13 different S106 projects in 2024/25. The tables in Appendix 2 show the projects which had S106 money allocated to them in 2024/25. A summary of the S106 projects allocated money in 2024/25 is provided below.

Beresford Road Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ)

- 3.1.7 This project will encourage inward investment and mitigate against the potentially harmful impact of additional traffic resulting from development in the Beresford Road area. Some outcomes of this project will include resident parking bays, shared use parking bays, waiting restrictions, loading bays, Disabled Persons Parking Places, and weight restrictions in residential streets. Wider benefits in the area include improved road safety in the area, better access for emergency and

utility services, priority for local residents to park, removing commuter parking, less cars on the road, less noise, and less pollution.

Brent Artist Development and Business Support Programme

- 3.1.8 The Council is funding the Artist Studio Company (ASC) to carry out a Business Support Programme for creatives that live and work in Brent. The Artist Studio Company is an affordable workspace provider to the creative sector in London. ASC have since 2018 occupied a premises at the canal-side development at 243 Ealing Road in Alperton and are under the remit of the Creative Enterprise Zone.

The Business Support Programme will consist of:

- A series of business-related online workshops, focusing on topics such as marketing, fundraising, exhibitions, finance, websites, partnerships and networking, tax and accounting, and business planning.
- A mentorship session and/or one-to-one support session where selected creatives receive tailored support with their creative business from an industry professional.
- A series of exhibitions where participants showcase their work to the public, peers, and mentors in the creative industry.

Brent Phase 2 Local Area Energy Plan

- 3.1.9 The Phase 2 Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) builds on the Phase 1 Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) which was delivered for West London in Summer 2023. Brent is part of a collective project alongside Barnet, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, and Harrow, being coordinated by the GLA and led by Ramboll. The purpose of the work is to complete the evidence base and plan for decarbonising the energy system at a local level in the coming years with clear sight of sub-regional opportunities and interdependencies.

LAEPs are recognised as the leading method for translating national Net Zero targets into local energy system action with plans that are collaborative, data-driven and cost-effective. The results are a fully costed, spatial masterplan that identifies the change needed to the local energy system and built environment to decarbonise, detailing 'what, where, when and by whom'. LAEPs sets out the total costs, changes in energy use and emissions, and sets these out over incremental time periods to meet net zero targets.

The LAEP scope addresses electricity, heat and gas networks, future potential for hydrogen, the built environment (industrial, domestic, and commercial) and its fabric and systems, flexibility, energy generation and storage, and providing energy to decarbonised transport.

Brent has completed Stages 1-3 of the LAEP (Phase 1) as part of a group of West London boroughs in Summer 2023, which was funded by the GLA. Brent is now working with its four West London borough partners to complete Stages 4-7 (Phase 2). As part of this process, the West London boroughs will use the LAEP to investigate the aggregation and scale up of local opportunities, projects, and action that is more likely to attract investment to support the implementation of net zero action. The LAEP supports Brent's climate ambitions and the Mayor of London's 2030 Net Zero Target ('Accelerated Green Pathway'). The Mayor is

supporting the development of LAEPs across each sub-region in London, and West London is leading the way.

Chalkhill Linear Park

- 3.1.10 Chalkhill Linear Park has had a hard prune of all the shrubbery in the shrub beds to remove all the dead vegetation. New plants will be planted in the planting season to increase the variety of shrubs in the beds. Several suitable trees are due to be planted. Three litter bins have been installed, and these have made a difference in reducing the amount of litter around Chalkhill Linear Park. The works are expected to complete in Summer 2026.

Corporate Estate Heat Decarbonisation Plan

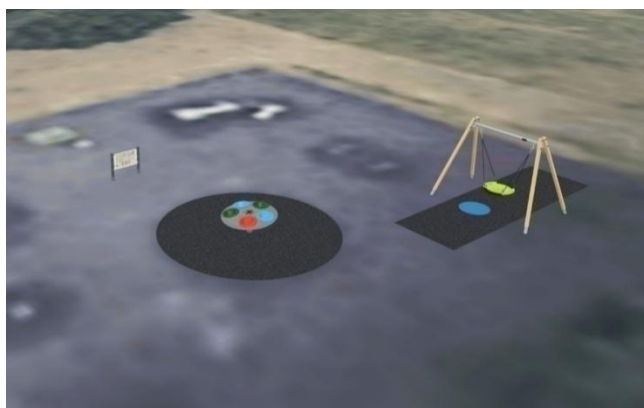
- 3.1.11 The Council has set an ambitious target to achieve net zero emissions (scope 1 & 2) across its borough corporate portfolio by 2030. In September 2024, Turner & Townsend was commissioned by Brent Council to undertake a Corporate Estate Heat Decarbonisation Plan, with the aim to understand the energy efficiency and decarbonisation options available for Brent's corporate estate. Turner & Townsend advised Brent Council on how they can reduce emissions at these sites through preferred decarbonisation options. The Heat Decarbonisation Plans (HDPs) help ensure that Brent Council is in a strong position to apply for funding opportunities such as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) when available.

Maybank Open Space Playground

- 3.1.12 The aim of this project is to enhance the existing playground at Maybank Open Space. The playground is near a new build development and the park itself is home to football pitches and a sports club house. It will provide a more welcoming visit for playground users and encourage the younger generation to explore a healthier lifestyle. High quality open spaces also improve the quality of life for those who visit; especially when they do not have their own garden.

The playground, although in working condition, could benefit from a more inclusive, vibrant offering. An injection of colour and some additional items will provide local children with an up-to-date play offering. Improvements to the aesthetics of the space would assist in setting a precedent for perceptions of the rest of the ward. An inclusive roundabout item will be the first of its kind introduced into a Brent park and will be an upgrade on the existing item. We hope to introduce new coloured safety surfacing under another existing item as well as floor graphics to add some colour to the play environment. This will have an immediate visual impact. The aim is to explore a sensory board to meet needs of Special Educational Needs (SEN) children and further explore sensory play.

Not implementing these improvements at the space would be a missed opportunity to improve the offering to park users at a site mostly dominated by sport for the older age ranges. Some small enhancements will enable the space to be used by a wider range of children, providing some SEN items that should form a vital element of any play space at this time. The playground improvements would allow for play provision that is not available currently in the surrounding area. The playground is in need of some minor works to engage public interest, which in this case can be done with some small improvements at a relatively low cost.



How new equipment would fit into existing floor plan (Source: LBB)

Northwick Park Pavilion Upgrade

- 3.1.13 Northwick Park Pavilion is in a central position in Northwick Park, with a full complement of services including a large hall, reception space, and twenty-four changing rooms. The park is home to thirteen football pitches, three cricket wickets, one artificial cricket wicket, and three Gaelic football areas. The pavilion provides facilities to all and is vital to the sports offering in the area. It is also used as a polling station.

The primary benefit of this project is the improvement of health and safety conditions. Upgrading the plumbing system and other infrastructure will reduce the risk of health-related issues, ensuring a safe environment for all visitors and users. The upgraded pavilion will enable the park to accommodate a wider range of sports, community events, tournaments, and school programs, which will increase bookings and usage, boosting revenue potential. By improving the comfort and quality of the pavilion's amenities, users will enjoy a better overall experience, which will enable greater community engagement, increase repeat bookings, and attract new visitors. A modern, functional pavilion will support increased footfall, making the park more welcoming. The upgrade will contribute to public health by encouraging more people to participate in sports and fitness activities, which can have long-term benefits for the community's well-being. The improvements will ensure the pavilion remains operational, with a reduced need for frequent repairs and closures, with upgraded energy and water-saving features to ensure that the facility operates sustainably, reducing long-term operational costs.

Upgrading the park sports pavilion will provide significant benefits to the community, ensuring that the facility can continue to serve as a hub for sports and recreation for years to come. The improvements will address critical health and safety concerns, enhance the user experience, and enable the pavilion to accommodate the growing demand for sports events and activities. By investing in the refurbishment of the pavilion, we are ensuring a healthier, safer, and more vibrant community space for all to enjoy. There is potential for increased use by the number of new residents who will living right next to the park and facility once the nearby development is completed.

St John's, Linden, Dagmar, Mostyn, King Edward VII, and Oakington Street Trees

- 3.1.15 This project will enable the planting of new trees in the public realm of Wembley Hill, Wembley Town Centre, and adjacent residential areas of Wembley Hill and Tokyngton Wards, including the Oakington area. Community involvement and

engagement has shown significant resident interest in the project. New trees will link and connect other recent tree planting initiatives in and around Wembley Town Centre and Wembley Growth Area. These trees will contribute to additional trees in the Oakington Manor Area Urban Forest which have already begun being planted with GLA funds.

Initial survey and consultation work has begun with the aim of delivering main tree planting in Winter 2025/26. The project will link to a new biodiversity project restoring elm trees to the landscape of Wembley. There is currently one surviving historic elm at Wembley Triangle. It will also enable a gift of flowering cherry trees from the Japanese government to be planted in the project area.

Tenterden Open Space

- 3.1.16 The existing planting scheme dates back many decades and has experienced several changes in the vicinity, which have affected both the terraced walls and plants. The aim for the landscaping scheme is to retain as far as is practicable the existing materials and create a new landscape that uplifts the entrance.

The plan is to carry out an overhaul of the existing planting scheme. Taking into account sunlight levels and ground conditions, the Council seeks to introduce a welcoming, colourful planting scheme that offers variation and interest throughout the year. The location will hopefully become a vibrant focal point for those entering the park, whether walking, cycling or by car. The goal is that the terraces can be retained and restored with a simple, colourful, and functional planting scheme, while access to the gardens is improved.

Uxendon Manor School Heat Pump

- 3.1.17 The works at the school involved removing the existing oil boiler, pipework, and equipment in the basement boiler room, and the existing radiators across the school. The new heating system was placed in an acoustic enclosure to mitigate noise, and new plant equipment, pipework and a control system were installed in the boiler room. Fan convector units were installed across the school in place of the existing radiators. The works commenced at the end of July 2024. Heating and hot water was maintained at the school during the works, and the new heating system was installed and operational in December. Completion was achieved in March 2025 and school representatives were trained on use of the new system.

Wembley Housing Zone - Affordable Housing

- 3.1.18 Wembley Housing Zone was designated by the Mayor of London in 2015. Brent Council are delivering the vision to restructure and revitalise the eastern end of Wembley High Road to provide new homes, jobs, and infrastructure. Regeneration in this gateway location will help link the established Wembley Town Centre with the new Wembley Park regeneration.

In 2023, Brent Council and Wates agreed to redevelop two key sites on Wembley High Road to provide new homes, commercial and community spaces, within a new and improved public realm. Brent Council and Wates have since worked in partnership to update scheme designs and planning permissions to meet latest building and fire safety regulations. Works are now underway at both sites.

Land on Wembley High Road, East of Cecil Avenue will deliver a high-quality housing-led mixed-use courtyard development. The scheme will deliver 237 new homes (37% affordable), including larger family and wheelchair housing, as well as commercial, community and a publicly accessible garden. Main works began in April 2024, and the scheme is due to complete by the end of 2026.



CGI of Land on Wembley High Road, East of Cecil Avenue (Source: LBB)

Ujima House will deliver 54 new homes (100% affordable), commercial and café uses. Demolition of the former Ujima House office building was completed in August 2024 and main works started at the end of 2024. The scheme is due to complete by the end of 2026 and the new building will be called Zephaniah House.



CGI of Ujima House (Source: LBB)

Wendover Road Bike Hangars

- 3.1.19 Brent Council has installed two bicycle hangars (secure cycle parking units) on Wendover Road, providing secure cycle parking. A subsidy for both annual rental fees and key deposits has been offered to Refugee Education UK for 2.5 years, covering up to eight spaces. At the end of the 2.5-year period, the eight subsidised spaces will continue to be offered to Refugee Education UK as a priority. However, standard rental charges will apply at that time (currently, per space the annual rental fee is £50.00, with a £25.00 refundable key deposit. Charges are subject to review after two years). The remaining four spaces are available to the general public.

Secure cycle parking plays a vital role in promoting sustainable travel by reducing the risk of bicycle theft and giving residents the confidence to choose cycling as a regular mode of transport. It also encourages healthier lifestyles, reduces traffic congestion, and contributes to improved air quality.



Bike Hangar on Wendover Road (Source: LBB)



Bike Hangar on Wendover Road (Source: LBB)

4. Section 278 Highway Agreements

4 Section 278 Highway Agreements

- 4.1.1 Section 278 (S278) of the Highways Act 1980 allows a developer to carry out works to the public highway. This is generally necessary where planning permission has been granted for a development that requires improvements to, or changes to, public highways.
- 4.1.2 During 2024/25 the Council entered into six S278 highways agreements. The associated developments along with the description and value of these highway works are outlined below.

Table 15: S278 Agreements in 2024/25

Development	100 Beresford Ave, HA0
Description of works	Footway widening, provision of layby parking and loading, and speed table.
Value of works	£142,335.81
Status	Defect monitoring ends 20 October 2025.
Development	Fairgate House, 390-400 High Road, Wembley, HA9
Description of works	Provision of emergency access and modification to existing loading bay.
Value of works	£83,043.50
Status	Legal agreement is in travelling format.
Development	NE01, Rutherford Way (Engineers Way), HA9
Description of works	Footway widening and provision of parking and loading bays.
Value of works	£127,961.56
Status	Agreement is in travelling format. Work commenced on 19 May 2025 and is not yet completed.
Development	LUL Car Park, Brook Ave, HA9
Description of works	Footway reconstruction and footway widening.
Value of works	£279,282.20
Status	Agreement is in travelling format.
Development	5 Kingswood Ave, Wembley, HA9
Description of works	Resurfacing of existing road to transform the street to home zone.
Value of works	£94,201.52

Status	Agreement is in travelling format.
Development	Dennis Jackson Centre, London Road, HA9
Description of works	Formation of new vehicular access and alteration of existing turning circle layout.
Value of works	£99,742.13
Status	Works to be delivered in July 2025 by the Council's term contractors.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Allocated NCIL Projects and Spend in 2024/25

Physical or Social Infrastructure	Project	Organisation	Summary of Project	Brent Connect Area	NCIL Allocated	NCIL Spend
Social	Community Safety Community Leadership Programme	Step Up Hub	This course is for Brent residents to complete a one-year course consisting of both academic learning and practical exercises. Recruitment of participants occurred in Summer 2025, with at least 20 people enrolling in a 12-month Postgrad Degree in Law and Community Leadership.	Boroughwide	£114,000.00	£28,500.00
Physical	Tenterden Pavilion	Forest United (1973) Youth Football Club Limited	This project is for a new football pavilion at Tenterden Sports ground in Kenton, suitable for a grass roots level football club. The project has until the end of the year to obtain match funding, and no NCIL funds will be released without evidence of the additional funding, as agreed by the Cabinet.	Multi-Neighbourhood	£146,976.00	£0.00
				Totals:	£260,976.00	£28,500.00

Appendix 2 – S106 Projects Allocated Money in 2024/25 and their Spend

Table 1 – S106 Infrastructure Projects Allocated Money in 2024/25 and their Spend.

Project Type	Project	S106 Allocated	S106 Spent	Expected Completion	Ward
Sustainability	Brent Phase 2 Local Area Energy Plan	£50,000.00	£0.00	Winter 2025/26	Boroughwide
Parks	Chalkhill Linear Park	£35,799.04	£0.00	Summer 2026	Barnhill
Sustainability	Corporate Estate Heat Decarbonisation Plan	£89,502.70	£89,502.70	Completed	Boroughwide
Parks	Maybank Open Space Playground	£12,859.11	£0.00	Summer 2025	Sudbury
Parks	Northwick Park Pavilion Upgrade	£296,679.49	£0.00	Autumn/Winter 2026	Northwick Park
Regeneration	Meanwhile Affordable Workspace South Kilburn	£165,000.00	£0.00	2025/26	Kilburn
Landscape	St John's, Linden, Dagmar, Mostyn, King Edward VII, and Oakington Street Trees	£43,640.24	£0.00	Winter 2025/26	Wembley Central
Parks	Tenterden Open Space	£37,893.80	£0.00	Spring 2027	Kenton
Sustainability	Uxendon Manor School Heat Pump	£623,463.30	£623,463.30	Completed	Kenton
Regeneration	Wembley Housing Zone Affordable Housing – Additional Funding	£1,816,028.00	£1,816,028.00	2025/26	Wembley Central
Transport	Wendover Road Bike Hangars	£8,000.00	£0.00	Summer 2025	Harlesden
	Totals:	£3,178,865.68	£2,528,994.00		

Table 2 – S106 Non-Infrastructure Projects Allocated Money in 2024/25 and their Spend.

Project Type	Project	S106 Allocated	S106 Spent	Expected Completion	Ward
Highways	Beresford Road Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ)	£937,145.56	£0.00	2025/26	Stonebridge
Employment & Training	Brent Artist Development and Business Support Programme	£24,800.00	£0.00	Spring 2026	Alperton
	Totals:	£961,945.56	£0.00		



**Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley Park, Wembley HA9 0FJ**

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	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration
	Cabinet Member Regeneration and Planning (Councillor Matt Kelcher)
West London Waste Plan Regulation 19 consultation	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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:	Two Appendix A: Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the West London Waste Plan Appendix B: Integrated Impact Assessment Please note, due to their size, the above appendices have been published as a supplementary pack to the main Cabinet agenda The following additional supporting documents are available to view under the heading “West London Waste Plan” via the following link: Brent Local Plan (adopted 2022) Brent Council Appendix C: Schedule of Changes between Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 Appendix D: Regulation 18 Draft West London Waste Plan Consultation Statement Appendix E: Habitats Regulations Assessment Appendix F: Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Appendix G: Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Appendix B) Members are asked to note that the following additional consultation documents will also be available to view under the above link in advance of the Cabinet meeting:

	Integrated Impact Assessment Non-technical summary • Assessment of existing capacity • Assessment of safeguarded waste sites for release • Construction, demolition and excavation waste arising to 2041 • Hazardous waste arising to 2041 • Strategically Significant Waste Flows • Waste management Topic Paper • Circular Economy Topic Paper • Climate Change Topic Paper
Background Papers:	Adopted West London Waste Plan (2015) National planning policy for waste (2014) GOV.UK
Contact Officer(s):	Hilary Seaton, Principal Planning Policy Officer 020 8937 1427 hilary.seaton@brent.gov.uk Harry Burchill, Planning Policy Team Leader 020 8937 3935 Harry.Burchill@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. The new West London Waste Plan will form a part of the Local Development Plan and will be used for determining planning applications for waste development within Brent and across West London. The current Waste Plan, adopted in 2015, is now outdated and in need of replacement.
- 1.2. The new Waste Plan identifies sites for waste facilities and provides planning policies to guide decisions on planning applications for those sites, with the aim of reducing waste, increasing recycling and ensuring the proper treatment of waste in line with the waste hierarchy, as close to source as possible. It will help ensure that waste is managed in the most appropriate areas, protecting residents' living conditions and providing environmental and economic benefits.
- 1.3. The draft Plan has been prepared jointly with the London Boroughs of Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond Upon Thames and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) over approximately two years and includes amendments that have been made in response to comments received through the previous ('Regulation 18') consultation that was carried out earlier this year. The Plan must be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination by a government deadline of 31 December 2026 before its formal adoption (subject to successful examination) by each of the planning authorities. This paper contains the draft policies together with a discussion of

the comments that were received. The full draft plan that will be consulted on has been appended to this paper.

- 1.4. Cabinet approval is sought to undertake public consultation ('Regulation 19') for an eight-week period, commencing in August 2026. A report will then be prepared seeking approval from Full Council in November 2026 that the Waste Plan is approved as "sound", subject to the conclusion of the Regulation 19 consultation, so that the Plan can be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is requested:

- a) to approve the publication of the proposed submission version of the West London Waste Plan ('Regulation 19') and associated evidence base documents for consultation and consultation arrangements outlined in this report;
- b) to approve delegated authority being given to the Head of Planning and Development Services (in consultation with the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration) to make minor modifications to the Proposed Submission version of the West London Waste Plan and accompanying documents prior to public consultation, including inserting any outstanding process or background elements, making presentational, typographical and accuracy amendments and finalising evidence base documents (in conjunction with other participating authorities);
- c) to agree that the WLWP in its current form is "sound" and therefore to recommend the Plan as such to Full Council in November, and recommend that Full Council in turn authorise submission of the Plan and associated documents to the Secretary of State for examination, subject to the conclusion of the Regulation 19 consultation. These documents will include the representations received during the Regulation 19 consultation process and any suggested amendments to the Plan in response to these.

3.0 Detail

Cabinet Member Foreword & Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1 The West London Waste Plan (WLWP) is one of the key documents in the Council's strategy and policy portfolio and the emerging updated version will replace the current version, which was adopted in 2015. It is anticipated that the policies of the emerging West London Waste Plan will contribute to the achievement of the five strategic priorities set out in the Borough Plan. Policy WLWP 1 seeks to retain and optimise essential waste infrastructure which, together with associated economic activity, will help to deliver the Borough Plan's priority of 'Prosperity and Stability' in Brent. Policy WLWP 4, which promotes high quality and resilient waste facilities and Policy WLWP 6, which

requires proposals for waste related development to incorporate circular economy principles and promote resource efficiency, will contribute to delivering the priorities of 'A Cleaner, Greener Future', 'Thriving Communities', 'The Best Start in Life' and 'A Healthier Brent'.

Background

- 3.2 The WLWP forms part of the local development plan for each of the participating authorities, alongside the London Plan and each authority's Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans. The policies within the document are the main consideration when determining planning applications for waste related development and are also relevant when determining applications for non-waste development close to waste sites and developments that involve the production of waste.
- 3.3 The current West London Waste Plan, which was adopted in 2015, is considered in many respects to be 'out-of-date' in the context of newer national and regional planning policy. Plans regarded as not being up-to-date have less weight in planning decision-making. The WLWP therefore needs to be updated or replaced.
- 3.4 An updated WLWP has been prepared with the support of waste planning consultants BPP Consulting and representatives from each of the west London Boroughs and OPDC (the participating authorities). Its production is being managed by the West London Alliance (WLA). The new document will cover the period up to 2041 (the end of the period of the current London Plan).
- 3.5 The new WLWP will provide an up-to-date set of policies to determine planning applications for waste related development and ensure that sufficient suitable capacity is available to manage waste in West London over the next 15 years. The updated Plan also provides for the Household, Industrial, and Commercial (HIC) waste apportionment and management targets for construction and demolition waste set out in the 2021 version of the London Plan.
- 3.6 Brent's Cabinet ([Cabinet Report 8th September 2025: Brent Development Plan Documents Review](#)) delegated authority to the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Regeneration, Planning and Property to approve Development Plan consultation material to be issued and its consultation in the stages prior to any final draft plan proposed to be submitted for examination.
- 3.7 In line with this approach, the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Regeneration, Planning and Property approved the 'Regulation 18' consultation on the draft updated West London Waste Plan based on the consultation arrangements set out in the [West London Waste Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Report](#). Authority was delegated to the Head of Planning (in consultation with the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration) to make minor modifications to the draft document prior to consultation. The public consultation on the Regulation 18 Draft Updated West London Waste Plan took place between 11th December

2025 and 5th February 2026. Ealing Council hosted the consultation portal on behalf of all the local authorities. Details of the consultation and the consultation documents are available here: [Regulation 18 West London Waste Plan consultation portal](#). The consultation process and responses received are summarised from paragraph 3.26 of this report.

- 3.8 Officers are now seeking approval to publish the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the WLWP (The Regulation 19 version) for comments relating to soundness and legal compliance. This is the version of the WLWP that the participating authorities intend to submit to the Secretary of State for independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate and its production has been informed by the comments received at Regulation 18 stage.
- 3.9 The West London boroughs and OPDC are seeking to submit the updated WLWP to the Secretary of State of State by December 2026, so that it can be prepared and examined under the current plan making system and avoid any abortive work associated with the transition to the new plan-making system. It should be noted that the suite of Regulations to enact the new system came into effect on 25th March 2026 (including The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026). Guidance in relation to the process is being progressively released by the Government.
- 3.10 This report outlines:
- (a) The scope and content of the emerging Regulation 19 document;
 - (b) Progress made on the document to date;
 - (c) The consultation undertaken on the Regulation 18 version of the draft updated WLWP, the responses received and outcomes of the process; and
 - (c) The next steps in the plan making process, including the expected publication arrangements and the submission of the Proposed Submission version of the West London Waste Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

The adopted West London Waste Plan

- 3.11 The adopted West London Waste Plan contains seven policies that are used to determine planning applications related to waste development across the WLWP area. It categorises waste sites across West London and identifies site allocations to meet the London Plan (2011) waste apportionments for the management of waste predicted to arise from households, business and industry up to 2031.

The emerging West London Waste Plan

- 3.12 The Regulation 19 version of the WLWP follows a similar format to the current adopted plan. Key elements include an assessment of the amount of waste to be managed in West London over the plan period (waste arisings), an updated list of safeguarded waste sites across west London with sufficient waste

management capacity to manage expected waste arisings and updated policies against which planning applications for waste related development will be determined.

Vision and Objectives of the emerging West London Waste Plan

- 3.13 The Regulation 19 version of the WLWP contains a high-level vision which sets out what the WLWP is seeking to achieve by the end of the WLWP period and a series of strategic objectives, that provide a framework to realise the vision. These elements have been developed with input from officers, drawing on the content of the various plans and strategies from each of the participating authorities.

Policies in the Regulation 19 WLWP

- 3.14 The policies included in the draft updated WLWP are as follows:

- Policy WLWP 1 – Safeguarding and Optimising the Waste Site Network: Keystone policy to make the most of the existing network of waste sites.
- Policy WLWP 2 – Provision of Additional Waste Management Capacity: Policy making provision for compensatory and windfall (additional) capacity.
- Policy WLWP 3 – Residual Waste Management & Energy Recovery: Policy defining specific conditions under which capacity for the management of residual waste may be supported.
- Policy WLWP 4 – Ensuring High Quality and Resilient Waste Facilities: Policy setting out waste specific requirements/standards that facilities need to meet.
- Policy WLWP 5 – Recovery and Disposal of Waste to Land: Policy defining specific conditions under which proposals for non-inert landfill, placement of inert waste and excavation/mining of existing landfills may be granted planning permission.
- Policy WLWP 6 - Circular Economy & Resource Efficiency: Policy setting out the requirements for proposed development to fulfil certain sustainability criteria.
- Policy WLWP 7 - Provision of Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure: Policy providing for new wastewater treatment capacity to be developed and existing capacity to be enhanced where needed.

Safeguarded Sites

- 3.15 To be in general conformity with the London Plan, the WLWP is required to identify sufficient waste management capacity to manage the projected construction and demolition (C&D) waste arisings and the total London Plan

household, industrial and commercial (HIC) waste apportionment for west London. The following types of sites are safeguarded in the emerging WLWP for this purpose:

- Sites with extant (existing) planning consents for a waste use;
- Sites with a waste use that is subject to a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development (CLEUD); and
- Sites with a waste use that is deemed to be lawful over time or ancillary to another lawful use.

3.16 Ten sites in the part of the London Borough of Brent for which Brent Council serves as the local planning authority are proposed to be safeguarded in the emerging WLWP. These are set out in the table below. Site plans are included in Appendix 3 of the WLWP.

Site reference and location	Operator	Types of waste processed
B04: Neasden Sidings, Drury Way, Wembley	Quattro Limited on behalf of WRG (Midlands) Limited	CDEW* (Excavation)
B05: Atlas Road Wembley	O'Hara Bros. Aggregates Limited	CDEW
B06: Unit 4, Second Way, Wembley	HAWK Rubbish Clearance Limited	CDEW
B07: SRC Aggregates Wembley Depot	Sewells Reservoir Construction Limited	CDEW
B10: Unit 28, Fourth Way WTF	Brent Oil Contractors Limited	Hazardous
B12: Unit 2, Hannah Close	London Energy Ltd	HIC
B13: Alperton Lane Waste Transfer Station	Sortera	CDEW / HIC / Hazardous
B14: Brent Transfer Station, Alperton Lane	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	HIC
B15: Wembley Transfer Station & Recycling Facility	Biffa Waste	HIC
B16: off Great Central Way, Neasden	L & B Haulage & Engineering Contractors Ltd	CDEW

* CDEW = Construction, demolition and excavation waste

HIC = Household, industrial and commercial waste

3.17 Three sites in the part of the London Borough of Brent for which OPDC serves as the local planning authority are proposed to be safeguarded. These are set out in the table below, with their site plans included in Appendix 3 of the WLWP.

Site reference and location	Operator	Types of waste processed*
B01: Twyford WTS Abbey Road	West London Waste Authority	LACW
B02: 100 Twyford Abbey Road	Bridgemarts	CDEW
B08: Willesden F Sidings Rail Freight Terminal	Cappagh Public Works Limited	CDEW (Excavation)

* CDEW = Construction, demolition and excavation waste
LACW = Local Authority collected waste

- 3.18 The WLWP also identifies six existing waste sites across the WLWP area, which fall within areas identified for redevelopment in local planning authority Local Plans for non-waste uses. These sites are proposed for release from safeguarding on the basis that the WLWP area has a surplus of waste management capacity and their continued safeguarding and use for waste management may conflict with wider planning and regeneration objectives. If the waste management capacity offered by these sites were to be lost, surplus capacity for the management of HIC and C&D waste would still remain.
- 3.19 Of the six sites, one is in Hounslow, two are in OPDC's area and three are in Brent. The three sites in Brent proposed for release from safeguarding are set out in the table below. These waste sites are all within the 'Neasden Goods Yard' site and are within the area covered by the adopted Local Plan site allocation BEGA1 'Neasden Stations Growth Area' and the adopted Neasden Stations Growth Area Masterplan SPD. Comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment is envisaged across this area.

Site location	Operator	Consented use*
Mitre Works, Neasden Lane	European Metal Recycling Ltd	Metal recycling (Apportioned waste)
Land at Neasden Goods Yard	X-Bert Haulage	Waste transfer (CDEW)
Unit 6 Neasden Goods Yard	X-Bert Haulage	Waste transfer (CDEW)

* CDEW = Construction, demolition and excavation waste

Key benefits for Brent residents

- 3.20 Having a Plan for waste land use and development helps ensure that people's waste is managed in the most appropriate areas locally. It helps ensure that it happens in a way that has the least impact on people's living conditions or interference with economic activity (for example through the processing of waste itself or the activity generated around it, such as vehicle movements).
- 3.21 The older a Plan is, the less weight it holds, opening the borough up to a higher chance of development in places that people do not want.

- 3.22 Safeguarding existing waste sites will help ensure that sufficient waste management capacity is retained locally. This will be of benefit to Brent residents, Brent-based businesses and those engaged in construction and similar activities across the borough, as sites in the Plan offer opportunities for waste generated locally to be managed locally, with the environmental benefits and cost benefits that brings.
- 3.23 Safeguarding waste management capacity provided at existing waste sites will also make it less likely that new sites for waste management will need to be found in the future. It can be challenging to successfully accommodate new waste uses within an existing built environment, owing to conflict with adjacent uses, for example.
- 3.24 The Plan process also allows the Council to consider releasing existing sites for other uses where conditions (such as surplus capacity) allow. In this case, the Plan proposes that three existing waste sites in Brent are released from safeguarding to be redeveloped for other uses. This would assist the delivery of the regeneration of the Neasden Goods Yard sites in line with the Neasden Stations Growth Area Masterplan aspirations to deliver other development that the borough needs. A current planning application for these sites proposes the delivery of 1,150 homes, 604 student bedspaces and non-residential floorspace alongside other benefits.

Evidence Base for the emerging WLWP

- 3.25 BPP Consulting has prepared a Waste Capacity Assessment Report, which assesses the management capacity of existing waste sites across the plan area. This determines if sufficient qualifying capacity is available in west London for the waste apportionments set out in the current London Plan 2021 to be met. A survey of the waste operators that run the principal waste sites across west London was undertaken to test the findings of this work.
- 3.26 The Capacity Assessment Report forms a key part of the evidence base for the Regulation 19 version of the WLWP and has been updated in the light of comments received at the Regulation 18 stage. The assessment of safeguarded sites continues to show a surplus of waste management capacity for both HIC and C&D waste. This means that the amount of waste that can be managed by the sites identified in the plan exceeds the waste apportionments set out in the current London Plan. There is, however, a possibility that the waste apportionments could increase as part of the London Plan Review.
- 3.27 A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) relating to the sites has also been prepared as part of the evidence base by Metis Consultants.

Integrated Impact Assessment

- 3.28 Land Use Consultants (LUC) were commissioned in October 2023 to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), comprising the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA), and Habitats

Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Regulation 18 draft WLWP. The IIA appraises the likely environmental, social, economic, health and equalities effects of the vision, objectives and policies. An updated IIA Report will be published as part of the consultation on the Regulation 19 version of the WLWP. The HRA specifically focuses on the potential effects the policies of the new WLWP may have on certain designated nature conservation sites, and is contained in a separate HRA report, which will also be published for consultation.

- 3.29 The key findings of the IIA are that overall, the vision, strategic objectives and policies in the Regulation 19 WLWP are likely to have a range of minor positive and significant positive effects, particularly in relation to moving waste management up the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle), helping to reduce CO2 emissions, supporting the local economy, and health and wellbeing. A number of mixed minor positive and negative effects were identified for the environmental objectives because of the potential negative impacts associated with waste-related development, depending on when and where development comes forward. However, policies within the emerging WLWP and other parts of the development plan provide criteria to minimise the adverse effects of such development should it come forward. No significant negative effects were identified for the Regulation 19 WLWP.
- 3.30 The Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening highlighted the potential for some likely significant effects on Richmond Park SAC (Special Area of Conservation); South West London Waterbodies SPA (Special Protection Area)/Ramsar; Wimbledon Common SAC; Windsor Forest & Great Park SAC; Burnham Beeches SAC and Lee Valley SPA/Ramsar site. It is noted that some environmental impacts could arise from development proposals coming forward in unspecified locations, rather than within the safeguarded existing sites. However, the Appropriate Assessment process concluded that the environmental safeguards within the WLWP draft policies, along with environmental permitting requirements, are sufficient to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of these designated nature conservation sites. The Habitat Regulations Assessment is available as a background paper to this report.

Consultation on the Regulation 18 Draft West London Waste Plan

- 3.31 The Regulation 18 version of the Draft Updated West London Waste Plan was issued for consultation across all participating boroughs on 11th December 2025. A 'call for sites' exercise inviting potential additional sites for inclusion in the Plan formed part of this process. The consultation ran for 8 weeks until 5th February 2026. The process was undertaken in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements, including the provisions of Brent's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
- 3.32 The consultation portal was hosted on Ealing Council's website but also highlighted on the web pages of the participating authorities. Hard copies of the consultation documents were made available for inspection at main offices and libraries across West London. An in person drop-in information event was held

in each of the participating boroughs over the course of the consultation period. Two online drop-in information events were also held.

Responses to the Regulation 18 Consultation

- 3.33 Representations on the Regulation 18 version of the WLWP were received from 77 separate individuals and organisations. A summary table of the responses received and a comprehensive Consultation Report have been prepared. The key issues raised are summarised in the following paragraphs:
- 3.34 *Waste Capacity Calculations:* Some concerns were raised regarding the Identified capacity of safeguarded sites (the calculated amount of waste that sites are assessed to be able to manage in any year within the plan period). For example, the GLA noted that the capacity of some sites is based on the maximum throughput of waste at the site over the last five years (which is the GLA's default approach), while the capacity of other sites is calculated based on other data. Some site owners did not agree with the capacity attributed to their sites.
- 3.35 *Release of Safeguarded Sites:* The GLA raised concerns regarding the proposed release of six identified sites without expressly requiring the provision of alternative waste management provision elsewhere to compensate for the loss (compensatory capacity).
- 3.36 *Policy WLWP 1: Safeguarding and Optimising the Waste Network:* The GLA noted that as drafted, part G of policy WLWP 1 supported the release of safeguarded waste sites for other land uses through the development management process, without securing compensatory capacity. They considered that this part of the policy conflicted with policy SI9 of the London Plan, which requires compensatory capacity to be provided if sites are redeveloped for non-waste purposes.
- 3.37 *Discrepancies in the definition of waste sites:* The GLA and others noted discrepancies between the definition of a waste site in the draft Regulation 18 WLWP and that contained in the current London Plan.
- 3.38 *Need for additional policy on wastewater:* Thames Water Utilities identified a need for an additional policy in the plan related to wastewater treatment infrastructure.
- 3.39 *Response to the Call for Sites exercise:* Three sites were submitted in response to the 'call for sites' process undertaken as part of the Regulation 18 consultation. Two of the proposed sites are located in Hillingdon and one is located in Hounslow. One of the Hillingdon sites comprises an extension to an existing safeguarded facility. The other site at Broadwater Lake proposes a new waste management facility. However, this site has since been granted planning consent for a leisure-based use. The remaining site in Hounslow is an existing waste site that has, through the Plan-making process, been identified as operating unlawfully, and the submission is to support an application to

regularise the operation. Details of the submitted sites are contained in the Consultation Statement.

- 3.40 *Site Specific representations:* A number of comments were received in relation to the proposed safeguarded sites identified in the draft WLWP. In general terms, these comments were made on the principle of safeguarding a particular site (either supporting or objecting to the proposed safeguarding) or the proposed waste management capacity figures for the site (noting that the figures should be reduced or could be increased). Comments made in relation to specific safeguarded sites can be found in the Consultation Statement.
- 3.41 *Heathrow Airport Ltd representations:* Heathrow Airport Ltd noted that several safeguarded sites are located in the proposed airport expansion area, two of which may be at risk should the proposed expansion proceed. In addition, the Plan should recognise that airport expansion will generate a significant amount of construction and demolition waste and may place a significant burden on existing waste management facilities across West London.
- 3.42 *Engagement with other London Boroughs:* Comments were received from other Boroughs outside of the west London area that are not part of a waste planning group and are requesting to make use of the surplus of waste management capacity that is identified in the plan to meet their unmet needs.
- 3.43 Westminster City Council stated that it has been unable to identify sites within its boundary and would welcome the opportunity to join the West London waste planning partnership to plan positively for its unmet need.
- 3.44 Tower Hamlets Council is a Unitary Waste Plan Making Authority (i.e. not part of a Waste Plan-making group) and has identified a shortfall in meeting its waste management needs. Noting the surplus capacity identified in the plan, Tower Hamlets is seeking to transfer 192,370 tonnes per annum of HIC waste and 56,935 tonnes per annum of C, D and E waste capacity to west London to meet its own waste needs.
- 3.45 Lambeth Council noted that a slight shortage of waste management capacity had been identified over the period of its Local Plan and would like to explore the potential to accommodate unmet need in West London. Lambeth noted that this matter could be progressed through a Statement of Common Ground.

Changes to the Regulation 18 Version

- 3.46 All responses made at the Regulation 18 stage have been carefully considered and a number of changes are proposed as a direct result of the comments received. The changes are detailed in the Schedule of Changes report and a tracked changes version of the Regulation 18 Draft Updated West London Waste Plan is available as a background document. Some of the key changes that are proposed to the Regulation 18 version of the WLWP are summarised below:

Executive Summary

- Additional text to provide a factual update on the London Plan review and the current position regarding the proposed expansion of Heathrow Airport

Chapter 2: Introduction and Background

- Text updated to explain the process of preparing the Regulation 19 version of the WLWP.
- New 'How to Comment' text added to note that comments are invited on the overall soundness and legal compliance of the plan at the Regulation 19 stage.

Chapter 3: The Plan Context

- Reference added to confirm the release of safeguarded waste sites for other land uses within the boundaries of the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation.

Chapter 4: Waste Management in West London

- Contextual information in this chapter has been moved from the main body of the Plan to an Appendix.

Chapter 5: The Policy Context

- Chapter updated to note that Harrow's Local Plan 2021-2041 has now been adopted.
- Additional text noting that the proposed expansion of Heathrow Airport would place pressure on certain existing waste sites.

Chapter 6: Vision and Objectives

- No substantive changes are proposed to this chapter.

Chapter 7: Future Requirements for Waste Management Capacity

- Figures for the total waste management capacity for processing Household, Industrial and Commercial (HIC) waste have been updated in response to comments relating to the management capacity of specific safeguarded sites. The management capacity for HIC waste has decreased slightly from the Regulation 18 version of the plan.
- Updated text noting that continued engagement will take place regarding the potential to accommodate unmet needs from other London Boroughs.

Chapter 8: Future Waste Management Capacity in West London

- No substantive changes are proposed to this chapter

Chapter 9: Proposed Policies

- Minor textual changes to the policies.
- Deletion of Part G in Policy WLWP 1 in response to comments received from the GLA about conflict with policy SI9 of the London Plan.
- Additional supporting text to explain how the key provisions of WLWP 1 should be interpreted. In particular, Part F lists a number of criteria that will be given weight when assessing proposals to release safeguarded sites, including 'wider market conditions'. Additional text to explain this term has been added to the supporting text.
- Minor updates added to WLWP 2 to explain how the policy criteria should be applied.
- No substantive changes have been made to WLWP 3.
- In relation to WLWP 4, specific reference is added to note that measures should be incorporated into the design of facilities to minimise the risk of bird strike in response to comments received from the Ministry of Defence. The supporting text has also been amended to include reference to securing biodiversity net gain in accordance with statutory requirements.
- The supporting text to WLWP 5 has also been amended to include specific reference to reducing the risk of bird strike where waste is disposed of to land.
- No substantive changes are proposed to WLWP 6.
- Addition of policy WLWP 7: Provision of Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure in response to comments received from Thames Water Utilities.

Chapter 10: Glossary

- No substantive changes are proposed to this chapter.

Chapter 11: Appendix 1 - Monitoring Framework:

- No substantial changes are proposed.

Chapter 11: Appendix 2 - List of Safeguarded Waste Sites

- Updates to the capacity figures for some sites.
- One site in Hillingdon (HI14 in the WLWP) is proposed to be removed from the Plan.

Chapter 11: Appendix 3 - Maps of Safeguarded Sites

- Site boundaries have been amended in some instances in response to comments received.

Chapter 11: Appendix 4 - Replacement Policies in the West London Waste Plan:

- No substantive changes are proposed.

Assessment of Submissions Received Through the Call for Sites Process

- 3.47 The submissions received in response to the Call for Sites exercise have been subject to a thorough assessment to determine their suitability for inclusion in the Regulation 19 version of the WLWP. This process assessed the sites against criteria related to their characteristics (size and planning status), site suitability (site configuration, existing uses, proximity to sensitive receptors and transport considerations) and other planning considerations, such as the planning designations that related to the sites. A score was assigned to each site against these criteria to determine their suitability. In addition, the sites were also assessed through the updated Integrated Impact Assessment as 'reasonable alternative' site options considered during preparation of the plan.
- 3.48 Taken together, the assessment process and IIA findings do not support the inclusion of any of the three sites submitted through the Call for Sites process in the Regulation 19 version of the WLWP. Further information on the findings of the assessment process is available in the background documents attached to this report.

Publication of the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Version of the WLWP

- 3.49 The Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the West London Waste Plan is attached to this report at Appendix A and is scheduled to be published for comment over an eight-week period starting in August 2026, once it has the necessary authority for consultation by all of the participating authorities. This version of the plan is the one which (following the relevant independent examination process) the authorities want to be adopted. Regulation 19 will be the final opportunity for stakeholders to submit comments on the Plan prior to its examination. At Regulation 19 stage, stakeholders will be invited to comment only on whether the Plan is legally compliant and whether it meets the tests of soundness as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. They will also be asked whether they wish to appear at an Examination hearing session.

Methods of Engagement at the Regulation 19 Stage

- 3.50 The approach to the consultation process will meet statutory requirements, including the provisions of Statements of Community Involvement (SCI) for

each borough. The following methods are intended to be used for the consultation:

- A website-based portal for updates, consultation materials and opportunities for involvement.
- Information will be published on Borough and OPDC websites and documents will be made available for inspection at main Council Offices and libraries.
- Notification of the process by each of the participating authorities in line with SCIs, (generally) emailing stakeholders in its area using details held on consultation databases.

Duty to Cooperate

- 3.51 The Government has confirmed that the provisions of the 'duty to cooperate' process have been removed from the plan-making system. However, the requirement for Councils to engage in relation to strategic matters will continue and will be a key consideration for Inspectors when assessing the soundness of plans submitted for examination. Discussions with key stakeholders will continue throughout the forthcoming stages of preparing the WLWP, including with the London authorities who are seeking to rely on the surplus waste management capacity identified in the Regulation 19 WLWP.

Next Stages in the Plan Making Process

- 3.52 Subject to the approval of the recommendations outlined above, the Regulation 19 version of the WLWP will be published for comment over an eight-week period commencing in August 2026. Views will be sought on the overall soundness of the plan, as assessed against the tests of soundness set out in the NPPF, and its legal compliance.
- 3.53 During the remaining plan-making process, other activities will include:
- Maintaining dialogue with the GLA to ensure the Regulation 19 version of the WLWP is in general conformity with the current and emerging London Plan.
 - Continuing with engagement activities, including preparing and agreeing statements of common ground with neighbouring authorities and relevant organisations as needed.
 - Engaging in governance activities, including briefings with Members from each of the participating west London boroughs.
- 3.54 Following the Regulation 19 publication period, it is intended that a report will be taken to Full Council in November 2026, to present the documents proposed to be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination and to seek authorisation to submit these documents to the Secretary of State for formal examination. These documents will include the Plan at Appendix A of this

report, the representations received during the Regulation 19 consultation process and any suggested amendments to the Plan in response to these. The following documents will be submitted with the Plan:

- The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA);
- A submission policies map;
- A statement setting out: who was invited to make representations on the plan at Regulation 18 consultation stage, how those representations were invited, a summary of the main issues raised, and how the representations were taken into account; and the number of representations made under Regulation 20 (in response to consultation at Regulation 19 stage) and a summary of the main issues raised;
- Copies of all representations made under Regulation 20 (in response to consultation at Regulation 19 stage); and
- Such supporting documents which the LPA considers are relevant to the preparation of the plan (these will include the evidence base).

3.55 As part of the examination process, which will include a series of public hearing sessions, the participating authorities can ask the inspector to recommend main modifications to the plan where necessary to make the plan sound and legally compliant. Any main modifications are then subject to a further period of public consultation (timescale determined by the Inspector) alongside an updated IIA. The Inspector will then consider any representations made on the main modifications as part of the examination.

3.56 At the end of the examination the Inspector will produce a report setting out recommendation(s) and the reasons for them. The participating authorities will be required to publish this report. There are three possible outcomes to the examination:

- The Inspector finds that the WLWP is sound and legally compliant as submitted: in these circumstances the Inspector must recommend that the plan is adopted;
- The Inspector finds that the plan is unsound and/or legally noncompliant as submitted, but that it is possible to make it sound and legally compliant by making 'main modifications' to it. In these circumstances the Inspector must recommend the necessary modifications, if requested to do so. The modifications must relate directly to the reasons why the Inspector has found the plan unsound or legally non-compliant; or
- The Inspector finds the plan unsound and/or legally non compliant as submitted, and that it is not possible to make it sound and legally compliant by making modifications to it.

- 3.57 Following the receipt of the Inspector's Report and subject to its conclusions, the participating authorities will then be in a position to adopt the new West London Waste Plan. For Brent, the decision to adopt will be one taken by Full Council.
- 3.58 Whilst 'main' modifications may have to be recommended by the Inspector for the Plan to be found 'sound', these must be proposed to the Inspector by the participating authorities. Any such modifications cannot be so substantial that they fundamentally alter the Plan. This should mean that the Council will not be put into a position where it has a fundamental issue with the final version of the Plan that the Inspector recommends it should adopt. If officers perceive this is a risk, the proposed main modifications the authorities are proposing to the Inspector will be subject to prior consideration by Council.

Options

- 3.59 There are two options open to the Cabinet:
- a) Proceed with the recommendations that the Plan is found to be sound, subject to the conclusion of the Regulation 19 consultation, and agree to recommend the Plan as such to Full Council in November in order for Full Council to authorise the submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State for examination.
 - b) Do not proceed with the recommendations

Option a)

- 3.60 The West London Waste Plan is one of the key documents in the Council's policy framework. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local plans to be reviewed and updated as necessary at least once every five years. After this, plans are regarded as not being up-to-date and tend to be given less weight in planning decision-making.
- 3.61 The current WLWP was adopted over 11 years ago. It is being reviewed to provide an up-to-date set of policies to determine planning applications for waste related development and ensure that sufficient capacity is available to manage expected waste arisings over the next 15 years, including addressing the HIC waste apportionment targets and the management targets for C&D waste set out in the adopted and emerging London Plans.
- 3.62 The Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides a timetable for the review of the documents that form part of the development plan, which includes the WLWP. The current LDS anticipates Publication of the emerging WLWP in Summer 2026 and Submission in December 2026.
- 3.63 Considering the NPPF requirement for local plans to be regularly reviewed and updated along with the benefits associated with an up-to-date WLWP, it is recommended that Option a) is pursued.

- 3.64 Specifically in order to allow time for the Plan to proceed through the Regulation 19 consultation stage and for the results of this consultation and suggested responses to be agreed between the participating local authorities and reported to Full Council in November 2026, the consultation would need to commence in August 2026.

Option b)

- 3.65 Option b) would involve not approving the draft updated WLWP for publication. This decision would delay the adoption of the new WLWP, meaning that the participating west London boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Richmond upon Thames and the OPDC would not have an up-to-date Waste Local Plan against which to determine planning applications for waste related development. Significant delay could result in LB Brent not being able to participate in the WLWP production process. This would also prevent the other participant local authorities from progressing towards adoption of the Plan, because the Plan is based on a joint strategy with waste management requirements pooled and capacities shared across the West London area.
- 3.66 It would also increase the risk of missing the Government's December 2026 submission expectation (for plans to progress under the current plan making system). Considering the benefits to the Council of progressing towards an up-to-date WLWP and the lack of compelling reasons for departing from option a), it is recommended that option b) is not pursued.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 Briefings have been offered to Members of all the political parties within the Council. To date, briefings have been provided to Conservative Party and Liberal Democrat Members and to the new Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property. The Members who previously held the positions of Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property and Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power were briefed at earlier stages. The Member who previously held the position of Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement also attended a briefing hosted by the West London Alliance and delivered by the consultants, BPP. The Members who currently hold these positions have all been offered a briefing by the Planning team. The proposed Regulation 19 consultation arrangements are outlined in paragraph 3.42 of this report. Appropriate notifications consistent with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement will be carried out for this and subsequent stages of the plan preparation process.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The preparation of the West London Waste Plan is being coordinated by BPP Consulting, with specialist input from Land Use Consultants (Integrated Impact Assessment) and Metis (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment). The project is being managed by the West London Alliance.

5.2 The total cost of the project, covering consultancy services and project management, is up to £29,500 per borough per annum over the plan preparation period, with Brent's contribution covered by the Local Plan review reserves budget.

5.3 The cost of not proceeding with the recommendations for the WLWP (option b)) would likely result in costs greater than the £29,500 per year for Brent.

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 This Plan is being prepared under the 'legacy' plan-making system, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ("the 2004 Act") and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the 2012 Regulations"), as saved by transitional provisions.

6.2 Representations received during the Regulation 18 stage have been taken into account in helping to shape the Regulation 19 submission draft. The local planning authority will follow the statutory procedures set out in Regulation 19 of the 2012 Regulations for the upcoming Regulation 19 stage consultation.

6.3 Following the Regulation 19 publication (consultation) period, approval will be sought from Full Council to submit the plan to the Secretary of State for examination under section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 The Equality Act 2010 introduced the public sector equality duty under section 149. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Council also internally recognises care experience and socio-economic status as protected characteristics. The Council must, in exercising its functions, have "due regard" to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

7.2 The preparation of the WLWP is being informed by an Integrated Impact Assessment (attached as a background paper to this report), which includes an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA). The EqIA and its criteria are embedded within the IIA objectives used to appraise the emerging WLWP, rather than being undertaken as a separate assessment.

- 7.3 With regards to equality, the IIA notes that the vision, strategic objectives and policies for the emerging WLWP are likely to have a negligible effect on protected characteristics given their strategic nature, their focus on waste management issues, and as the Plan does not allocate land for development. However, the emerging WLWP does indirectly give consideration to the potential effects of waste development on specific groups, where there may be increased vulnerability to the effects of waste management facilities and processes, including air pollution, climate change, employment opportunities and social deprivation.
- 7.4 Consultation on the emerging WLWP and its IIA at Regulation 18 stage gave stakeholders/residents the opportunity to comment on the documents and any likely adverse impacts of policies and proposals on specific groups. The publication of the Regulation 19 version of the WLWP and its IIA will allow stakeholder/resident views on the documents in relation to any likely adverse impacts of policies and proposals on specific groups to be identified and carefully considered prior to the submission of the Plan and its IIA to the Secretary of State for examination. The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day-to-day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 Climate change and environmental considerations are central to the Vision of the West London Waste Plan, with broad alignment to the five key themes within Brent's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy. It has been constructed with due consideration to environmental sustainability via a comprehensive Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment which accompany the report.
- 8.2 This vision is reflected in the WLWP's five Strategic Objectives and in the seven policies which would be used to determine applications for planning consent for waste related development in west London. Each of the five objectives have factored in the importance of environmental sustainability in some form.
- 8.3 The Vision reflects this via a focus on allowing waste materials to be managed as a valuable resource, keeping them in circulation through innovative re-use, repair, and high-quality recycling for as long as possible in line with circular economy principles. It also advocates a zero-waste to disposal approach, the establishment of a network of Circular Economy Hubs, minimising carbon emissions from west London's waste management system and improving energy efficiency, encouraging the increased use of low-carbon transport, with greater use of rail river freight supported by electric and low-emissions vehicles and promotes waste infrastructure that is resilient to extreme weather effects of climate change.
- 8.4 It also considers the ecological emergency, and the potential impact on biodiversity and habitats. The plan states that as a general principle, proposed development should have no significant adverse effects on local biodiversity and opportunities to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure on and

around the site should be maximised to improve visual amenity and provide ecological benefit. Biodiversity net gain should also be secured in line with the statutory framework and any local policy requirements set out in the development plans of each LPA.

9.0 Communication Considerations

- 9.1 There will be an appropriate level of the Communications team's support to raise awareness, e.g. potentially through council social media notifications to complement the engagement measures set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Councillors will be made aware of the consultation through the Members' bulletin. The consultation will be hosted through a joint consultation portal with the participating West London authorities. Those on the Council's planning policy database will be notified of the consultation.

Related document(s) for reference:

November 2025 [Decision - Draft West London Waste Plan Regulation 18 Consultation](#)

Report sign off:

Jehan Weerasinghe
Corporate Director Neighbourhoods & Regeneration

Legal considerations provided by:
Paul Weeks

Finance considerations provided by:
Georgia Stowebridge

	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
	Lead Member - Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport and Public Realm (Councillor Promise Knight)
Authority to Undertake a Trial of a Cross-Pavement Charging Solution for Electric Vehicles on the Public Highway	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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)	Annekatriin Dennemann, Principal Transport Planner, Spatial Planning 020 8937 3553 Annekatriin.Dennemann@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Cross-pavement charging solutions (XPS) present an opportunity for residents without access to off-street parking to charge an electric vehicle (EV) on-street using their domestic electricity supply. This provides users with the twin advantages of convenient and cost-effective charging. This report sets out details of a proposed limited trial of XPS in Brent which, if successful, could be rolled-out to other parts of the borough.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

For Cabinet to approve:

- 2.1 Undertaking a limited trial of electric vehicle pavement channels, to enable the Council to gauge the suitability of the technology and to establish suitable criteria/processes for possible wider deployment across Brent.

2.2 The budget for the project, including all relevant costs as set out in the report.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1.1 Among the Council's main transport and environmental commitments is to mitigate the impact of traffic, improve air quality and to encourage more sustainable travel in Brent. A key priority in this regard is to facilitate the uptake of electric and other zero emission vehicles. Recognising that many residents do not have access to off-street parking, the Council has made great strides in recent years to develop an extensive network of on-street EV charge-points – with more planned over the coming years.
- 3.1.2 Despite this, a major barrier to the up-take of EVs is the cost disparity between public on-street and private home charging – with the former often more expensive than the equivalent cost of charging from home. At a time when many residents are facing a continued cost of living squeeze, our aim is to address this barrier by providing those without access to off-street parking with the means to charge cheaply and safely from home using cross pavement charging solutions. This, in turn, will enable us to create a less polluted, more sustainable borough.
- 3.1.3 One of the Borough Plan five specific priorities is to build 'A cleaner, greener future'. Further expansion of the borough's EV charging infrastructure to support the continued transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to EVs will help achieve this.
- 3.1.4 The Brent Long Term Transport Strategy Review 2022 details a range of measures and interventions aimed at helping to mitigate the impact of traffic and facilitate healthy, sustainable travel in Brent – with a priority being to facilitate the uptake of electric and other zero emission vehicles. Brent's Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Plan 2022-2041 was developed in support to bring about a step change in the provision of publicly available EV charging facilities.
- 3.1.5 Fuel use and emissions from road transport is one of the key sources of CO2 emissions in Brent, representing 22% of the borough's territorial carbon dioxide emissions. The Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021-2030 set out in key theme 2, Transport, that petrol and diesel road journeys will have at least halved by 2030 whilst residents' journeys by walking, cycling or public transport should have increased. Many of Brent's drivers have already changed from a petrol or diesel car or van to an electric vehicle.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 Brent residents currently have access to an extensive network of around 1,000 on-street EV chargepoints in operation across the borough - installed, operated and maintained by various chargepoint operators (CPOs). Work is ongoing to further expand the borough's EV infrastructure, including through the

Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme, as a means of helping Brent's residents make the switch from petrol and diesel cars and vans to EVs.

- 3.2.2 Whilst the number of EVs on Brent's streets has been steadily growing over recent years – influenced, in part, by the Government's Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) mandate which will see the phasing out of sales of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2035, one of the barriers to further uptake is the cost of on-street charging in comparison to the cost of charging from home. A key factor in this is the Value Added Tax (VAT) differential, with energy drawn from public chargepoints being subject to 20% VAT, whereas EV drivers with access to off-street parking and able to charge via their home energy supply are charged 5% VAT.
- 3.2.3 In recent years cross-pavement charging solutions have begun to enter the EV infrastructure market offering EV drivers, particularly those without access to off-street parking, a new way to charge vehicles. Primarily, these solutions allow users to access their home electricity supply for EV charging on-street, which can be cheaper and more convenient than depending solely on public chargepoints. Additionally, when properly installed, they help reduce safety risks associated with trailing or unsecured charging cables across the footway.
- 3.2.4 In 2020 Brent entered an agreement with Trojan Energy to trial their 'flat and flush' charging solution in several Brent streets. One of the variants trialled was Trojan AON, which involved the installation of EV chargepoints in the footway, which were then connected to the residents' domestic electricity supply via an underground cable, enabling them to charge their vehicles on-street at a much lower cost. Although limited in scope, the trial was successful and proved popular with users and the majority of these chargepoints remain operational. Discussions with Trojan Energy were held around expanding the trial, but following the company's take-over by another chargepoint operator, it is unclear at this stage if this model will be continued in the longer-term.
- 3.2.5 In March 2026, the Council was successful in securing grant funding for the sum of £169,000 from the Department of Transport (DfT) to undertake a trial of electric vehicle pavement channels. The trial will enable the Council to gauge the suitability of the technology and to establish suitable criteria and processes for possible wider deployment across Brent. Details of how the trial will work are set out below.

3.3 Trial Details

Purpose and Scope

- 3.3.1 The aim of the trial is for the Council to assess if pavement channels are a suitable solution for charging EVs on street and to determine if they should form part of Brent's wider EV charging infrastructure offer. Since cross-pavement charging solutions (XPS) will not be suitable for every household, they are not seen as a replacement for public EV charging but will instead complement it – helping more people make the switch to EVs. The Government is clear that the

roll-out of public charging should not be delayed due to XPS roll-out and see pavement channels as a complementary charging solution limited to specific locations and use cases.

- 3.3.2 Brent has been allocated grant funding totalling £169,000 towards the capital costs of installing pavement charging channels. The per unit funding contribution for these channels is capped at £1,200, meaning the funding allocation would support the rollout of 141 channels. However, it is proposed that initially the trial be limited to 60 locations to test the viability of the charging solution itself and to hone the various application, installation and management processes that will need to be set up.
- 3.3.3 The trial will run for 12 months and will be closely monitored. An initial review will be undertaken after six months, with data and feedback collected from trial participants, suppliers and other key stakeholders used to inform any changes to the trial that may be required. A full review of the trial will be undertaken after 12 months and a monitoring report published. At this stage, and in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, a recommendation will be made to either:
- a) expand the trial (utilising the remaining grant funding);
 - b) roll out pavement channels more widely; or
 - c) close the programme.

Rationale for approach

- 3.3.4 It is proposed to undertake a limited trial over a defined timeframe to allow the Council to gather information and insights before making longer term decisions on future support for XPS. This approach will enable the Council to test and refine its offer/processes and reduce the level and impact of risk to residents and the authority.

Site Selection and Trial Participation

- 3.3.5 Ahead of the launch of the trial, Brent residents are currently being invited to register their interest in taking part in the trial via the Council's website [Electric Vehicle Charging | Brent Council](#). Residents are advised that registering interest does not guarantee that a charging channel will be installed at their property and will be subject to further assessment. To date, around 80 people have registered interest in participating in the trial.
- 3.3.6 As a next stage, residents will be provided with more detailed information regarding conditions for participation in the trial, including the criteria, arrangements, timescales and costs for the supply, installation, operation and ongoing maintenance of the charging channel and, where required, the home chargepoint. At this stage, residents will be able to make a more informed decisions as to whether they wish to participate in the trial.

3.3.7 Work is currently underway to define the criteria that will be used to determine whether a resident/property is suitable for inclusion in the trial. Key criteria that will likely determine whether a pavement channel can be installed at a property include:

- No existing off-street parking;
- Footway width and composition (XPS are generally not suitable to be installed across very wide footways or grass verges);
- The proximity of utilities and street furniture, in particular lamp columns and utility cabinets, and other metal objects, which could pose a '[dual touch](#)' risk;
- The proximity of street trees – with the need to avoid damaging tree roots;
- Whether other kerbside interventions are planned at that location (including, but not limited to, on-street public charging infrastructure; cycle parking and other active travel infrastructure/improvements; tree planting and other environmental measures (e.g. Rain Gardens, SUDS, etc.).

3.3.8 Other qualifying criteria are likely to include the need for residents to either own, or be in the process of purchasing, an EV. A key focus for the trial will be existing blue badge holders – many of whom struggle to access existing on-street public charging infrastructure.

Ownership

3.3.9 Some XPS suppliers offer end-to-end management solutions, including directly handling resident applications, installation, and ongoing maintenance. This can result in more efficient handling of the various processes and potentially offer cost savings to the resident. This approach has the benefit of reducing the Council's costs and responsibilities but also limits the level of control it has over how the infrastructure is installed and managed, as well as potential negative impacts from any issues that may arise with the supplier (e.g. financial instability, poor service, high costs, etc.).

3.3.10 The Council will process the initial resident applications, for which a £100 non-refundable application fee will be payable to the Council. For the trial, officers in the Transportation Planning team will undertake the site assessment to determine which locations are suitable for inclusion. To reduce the Council's ongoing operational involvement, it is proposed to defer to the expertise of suppliers on the installation, maintenance and operation of their own product. It is proposed that the supplier of the XPS retains ownership of the solution. The benefits of this approach include:

- Suppliers have greatest level of subject matter expertise, reducing need for the Council to upskill in-house resource;
- Suppliers have greatest understanding of their own product.

- Supplier may be able to offer point of contact to respond to queries from residents.
- Lower exposure to risk, although some liability ultimately still falls to the local highway authority, i.e. the Council, who remains responsible for the highway.
- Supplier is responsible for maintenance.

3.3.11 Additional considerations that will need to be explored as part of the trial include:

- Any difficulties in integrating XPS into wider highways services and assets.
- The share of liabilities between the supplier and the highways authority requires agreement.
- Ownership of assets may need to be transferred in future.
- Requirement to manage ongoing relationship with supplier.
- Planning Permission and Section 50 street works licences requirement can increase costs and timeframes for deployment.

Liability and Insurance

3.3.12 The type of ownership is a key factor in liability and therefore the level of insurance required by each party. The Highway Authority is under a non-delegable statutory duty to maintain highways under the Highways Act 1980. The main insurance considerations are outlined below:

Public liability insurance:

- Should be held by the owner of the XPS device. If this is, as proposed, the supplier, it will cover against injury and accidental damage caused by a fault in the XPS equipment, e.g. a cable channel becoming unseated from a pavement.
- Benchmarking with other local authorities will inform the Council's decision on the level of indemnity required by the owner of the XPS device.
- The Council's public liabilities associated with XPS may already be adequately covered by an existing insurance policy.

Indemnity insurance:

- Held by the user of the XPS device as required within their user agreement.
- Covers the user and the local authority against injury and accidental damage caused by non-criminal misuse of the XPS, e.g. not fitting a charging cable correctly into a cable channel.
- In some cases, some or all elements of this type of insurance cover may be provided by the user's existing home and/or car insurance policy but the level of such insurance cover may fall short of the claim level that the Council's insurance could cover and whether EV charging related claims would be included. This should be evidenced through the trial participant's current policy documents.

Planning Consent

3.3.13 A key component of the delivery process of cross-pavement charging solutions (XPS), and EV infrastructure more generally, is gaining appropriate planning permissions. In the context of XPS, the need for planning permission to be granted prior to installation can vary depending on a number of factors. Planning permission is required for certain types of development, this currently includes some forms of XPS and the associated chargepoints that are installed alongside the XPS. The need for planning permission depends on who is installing, where the installation will be located, and whether part or all of the installation is considered a permitted development under national planning law – meaning that planning permission would not be required.

3.3.14 As planning consents apply differently to private chargepoints and assets in the public realm, it is important to distinguish between:

- a. The XPS itself – the pavement channels that are permanently placed on or over the public highway.
- b. The private domestic chargepoint – typically installed at the resident's property.

3.3.15 However, by taking a more active role in the delivery of XPS, local authorities may be able to remove the need for planning permission to install XPS in the public highway through the works falling within “permitted development” under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 12. This sets out permitted development rights for *“the erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by or on behalf of a local authority [...] of [...] electric vehicle charging points and any associated infrastructure”*.

3.3.16 It is important to note that “electric vehicle charging points and any associated infrastructure” are listed as a single item within this permitted development (as opposed to two separate items. Local authorities should therefore consider whether this permitted development is applicable where the XPS and

associated EV chargepoint are two separate devices, installed by two different installers. A common component of both of these approaches to delivering XPS is that the local authority (or parties acting on its behalf) must conduct the installation.

3.3.17 Permitted development rights under Schedule 2, Part 2, Class D of GPDO set out the requirement for the installation, alteration or replacement of an electrical outlet mounted on a wall for recharging electric vehicles to be set within an area lawfully used for off-street parking. Electric vehicles that are parked on street and would charge via a cable fed through pavement channel in the public highway and connected to a domestic EV chargepoint would therefore fall outside of the remit of permitted development so that applying residents would be required to apply for planning permission for the domestic EV chargepoint.

3.2.18 Where XPS is installed by a supplier that is not acting directly on behalf of the local authority (e.g. they are acting on behalf of a resident who has requested XPS), the installation is likely to be classed as a “development” under the [Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Part III, Section 55](#), and therefore require planning permission to be granted by the local authority prior to installation.

Installation

3.3.19 The Highways Act 1980, Part V, Section 62 states that highways authorities “*may carry out, in relation to a highway maintainable at the public expense by them, any work (including the provision of equipment) for the improvement of the highway*”. If the local authority considers XPS to be a “highways improvement”, they may choose to apply the powers conferred on them by this legislation to conduct the installation.

3.3.20 It is proposed that the supplier (or subcontractor) who are familiar with the solution installs the XPS after they obtain the necessary permissions from the Council. The supplier’s installers are likely to have experience of fitting a given XPS in different types of location and different types of property. No additional resource or upskilling would be required from the Council’s highway maintenance contractors.

3.3.21 Under this approach, planning permission would therefore be required for XPS equipment as well as for the domestic chargepoint installed within the front of the property. In addition, the XPS supplier (or their civils subcontractor) must apply for a streetworks licence. This could increase delivery time and potentially cost.

Maintenance

3.3.22 In the interest of limiting on-going maintenance pressure on the Council, simplifying the maintenance process for both the Council and residents as well as removing liability for maintenance from the Council, it is proposed that the supplier will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of the XPS. By placing the responsibility for upkeep with the supplier, who should have commercial interest in ensuring consistent, adequate standard of upkeep, the resource required from the Council to coordinate maintenance will be

minimised. However, this approach also places limitation on the Council's ability to control the standard of maintenance and upkeep of the cross-pavement channel. This should be addressed by placing a contractual obligation on the supplier for essential and structural maintenance of the channel.

- 3.3.23 It is proposed that the resident would remain responsible for routine maintenance, such as removal of any debris. This may require contractual obligation to be placed on the resident outlining their responsibilities to carry out day-to-day upkeep.

Step by Step Trial Process and Cost Recovery

- 3.3.24 The following process sequence is recommended (subject to contractual agreement with cross-pavement channel provider):

1. Council registers resident's expression of interest in taking part in the trial (currently under way).
2. Council procures a suitable cross-pavement charging channel provider and tasks them to deliver, an initial trial of 60 cross-pavement channels at locations on the public highway across the borough. This will include installation, ownership, operation and on-going maintenance of the channels.
3. Council undertakes site assessment (criteria tbc). A non-refundable application fee applies to residents who are eligible for participation in the trial. (This is the approach for the trial. If the XPS was to be rolled out more widely across the borough following the trial, then residents would be required to formally apply for a cross-paving channel).
4. Where site conditions are favourable the Council provides conditional approval to the resident for a pavement channel on condition that:
 - a. the resident receives planning consent for installation of a charge point and the charging channel (application fees apply).
 - b. the resident commits to installing a charge point, for example through a user agreement.
5. Supplier provides residents with cost estimates for supply, installation and on-going maintenance for cross-pavement channel.
6. Residents apply, where necessary, to the Council for planning consent for installation of charge point and the cross-pavement channel. (application fee applicable).
7. Residents apply for home charge point grant funding from OZEV with evidence that they have conditional Council approval for a pavement channel (optional).

8. Residents receive conditional approval for home charge point grant.
9. Residents sign-up to agreement with supplier for supply, installation, operation and on-going maintenance of pavement channel.
10. Supplier applies to the Council for consent and a licence to install channel (application fee applicable).
11. Residents pay for home charge point and instruct government registered installer with its installation and issuing of appropriate safety certification.
12. Residents pay supplier for supply and installation of channel. An annually renewable administration fee may also be payable. It is proposed that this would be collected by the supplier and passed on to the Council as part of contractual agreements between the supplier and the Council.
13. Home charge point is installed. Safety certificate is submitted to Council.
14. Supplier tasks their contractor with installation of pavement channel. Channel is installed and will remain in the ownership of supplier.
15. Supplier invoices residents for supply and installation of pavement channel.
16. Residents receive the £1,200 per channel EVPC grant as a *de facto* discount for the channel and its installation.

3.2.25 The cost to residents of participating in the trial will vary, with the exact cost being determined by the factors and processes outlined above. However, it is likely that the cost will exceed the £1,200 per channel grant.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 The approach proposed for undertaking a trial of XPS in Brent has been developed in close consultations with officers from different Council teams, including Highways Management, Healthy Streets & Parking, Planning, Finance, Legal, Equalities as well as Organisational Assurance and Resilience. The trial approach is also informed by a range of formal guidance including the Government's [Cross-pavement solutions for charging electric vehicles - GOV.UK](#) and [London Councils' Cross-pavement EV charging report 0.pdf](#). In addition, officers are in regular dialogue with other London boroughs who are actively undertaking, or considering whether to undertake, trials of XPS.
- 4.2. Officers have also engaged in dialogue with Members and residents interested in the trial and how it will work. Their questions and suggestions have helped inform the criteria and processes around site selection and application for taking part in the trial.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 Brent has been allocated DfT grant funding totalling £169,000 towards the capital costs of installing pavement charging channels. The per unit funding contribution for these channels is capped at £1,200, the funding allocation would therefore support the rollout of 141 channels. There is no requirement for match funding from the local authority as part of the grant funding arrangements.
- 5.2 Residents pay the various costs related to purchasing, installing, and maintaining a cross-footway solution. As the cost of the whole process - including resident application, supply and installation of the pavement channel will exceed the funding cap of £1,200 per unit, the remaining costs are expected to be met by the residents participating in the trial. The grant funding will essentially function as a discount to trial participants.
- 5.3 Under the proposed delivery mechanism, the Council will also incur an estimated £14,100 capital costs associated with initial site assessments. This will be funded using non-refundable application fees received from eligible residents.
- 5.4 The total budget request is therefore £183,100 to cover initial site assessment costs and the Council's contributions for a maximum of 141 EV pavement channels.
- 5.6 The installed EV pavement channels will be owned and managed by the supplier. This delivery mechanism reduces risk for the Council.
- 5.7 The mechanism for distributing the grant has been designed based on external VAT advice. By providing a grant to residents, the Council's payment is out of scope of VAT limiting VAT risks to the Council.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 Pursuant to paragraph 9.5 of Part 3 of the Constitution, The Corporate Director for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement and the Corporate Director Finance and Resources Enforcement approved the Council's entry into a grant agreement for the Electric Vehicle Pavement Channels Grant in the sum of £169,000 for the purpose of:
 - i. Undertaking a trial for electric vehicle pavement channels, to enable the Council to gauge the suitability of the technology and to establish suitable criteria/processes for possible wider deployment across Brent;
 - ii. Subsidising the capital costs associated with the purchase, installation and operation of pavement channels on the public highway.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 The public sector duty set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its public 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, care experience, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.
- 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 Road transport is the main source of nitrogen dioxide (NO_x) and a significant contributor to particulate matter (PMs) in Brent, two of the most dangerous pollutants, which contribute to the premature death of nearly 10,000 people a year in London. Motor vehicles are currently responsible for 49% of NO_x emissions and 30% of PM₁₀ emissions in the borough. Facilitating the uptake of low/zero emission vehicles through increased provision of electric vehicle charging facilities provides significant opportunities to improve air quality across the borough and will benefit the health of everyone who lives or works in or visits Brent. Measures such as cross-pavement charging channels, that will enable more drivers without access to off-street parking to switch to EVs from internal combustion engines, may positively impact the health and wellbeing of residents.
- 7.4 In addition, the potential to save on the cost of charging an EV by being able to use the lower taxed domestic electricity supply, could particularly support some drivers who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Furthermore, drivers with disabilities, including Motability customers, could also benefit from being able to access EV charging closer to their home, where public on-street chargepoints may not be easily accessible to them. This indicates that there may be positive equality impacts on people with disabilities.
- 7.5 To ensure fairness and inclusivity during the trial, any aspects of individual XPS locations, that might have the potential to disproportionately or negatively impact on individuals or groups with protected characteristic, notably disability, age, and pregnancy, will be taken into consideration as part of finalising the site selection criteria. No installations will take place without defined safety and accessibility criteria, and any policy proposals emerging from the pilot will undergo an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure any negative impacts are mitigated. As part of the trial monitoring and evaluation any emerging impacts will be reviewed to determine any further anticipated impacts as part of planning for the next phase of the project, should this be decided to go forward.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 Supporting and encouraging Brent drivers in the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to EVs is seen as a key facet to helping tackle the climate and emergency and poor air quality in the borough. Amongst the key actions identified in the Brent Climate Ecological Emergency Strategy and the Brent Air Quality Action Plan, and in line with the environmental goals set by London Councils, include plans for petrol and diesel road journeys to have at least halved by 2030 and for the borough's EV charging infrastructure to be expanded. The EV cross-pavement charging channels proposed to be delivered as part of the trial will further support these aims.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 9.1 London Borough of Brent have been awarded LEVI capability funding of £123,408 for the period from 2026/27 to 2028/29 to ensure Brent, alongside other local authorities, have the staff and capability to plan and deliver chargepoint infrastructure, which can go beyond just LEVI programme delivery. This will be delivered annually as a grant payment from the Department for Transport under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 9.2 This funding contributes to the staffing cost of the EV & Shared Mobility Programme Coordinator role, supporting Brent's overall EVI capability. The trial will be delivered by the EV & Shared Mobility Programme Coordinator, once they are in post (expected Autumn 2026), supported by existing staff resources.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 Communications regarding the proposed trial have already been issues, alongside further information on the Council website informing residents about the trial and how to register interest in participation. Further work on a wider communications programme will be developed ahead of the roll-out of the trial.

Report sign off:

Jehan Weerasinghe

Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration

Legal considerations provided by:
Hussain Ali,

Finance considerations provided by:
Yemi Adekunle,

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	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services
	Lead Member - Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters (Councillor Robert Johnson)
Housing Damp and Mould Policy	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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:	Two Appendix A: Draft Damp and Mould Policy Appendix B: Damp and Mould Policy Equality Impact Assessment
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Spencer Randolph, Director Housing Services 020 8937 2546 Spencer.randolph@brent.gov.uk Gary Mitchell, Head of Housing Property Services 020 8937 2956 gary.mitchell@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1. This report shares Brent's new Damp and Mould Policy (see Appendix A), including:

- The Council's approach to combatting the prevalence of damp and mould in our Council homes.
- The consultation and engagement findings.
- The commitments captured within the policy and the progress made to bring those commitments to life.

- How we will deliver and monitor the strategy's progress and impact.
- 1.2. The policy is designed to act as the framework to meet the expectations of our residents whilst ensuring we remain compliant with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 which includes what is known as "Awaab's law" named after the tragic death of Awaab Ishak.
 - 1.3. It is proposed to monitor the strategy through a regular scheduled performance meeting chaired by the Director of Housing Management and provide regular feedback in terms of performance to the Housing Management Advisory Board.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to:

- 2.1. Endorse Brent's new Damp and Mould Policy
- 2.2. Comment on the status and next steps to deliver the policies commitments.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1.1 This Damp and Mould Policy sets out Brent's commitment to ensuring that every resident has access to a safe, healthy and a well-maintained home. The policy provides the framework through which we will meet our statutory obligations under Awaab's Law and establishes a clear approach to preventing, identifying and resolving damp and mould across our housing stock.
- 3.1.2 This is fundamentally about resident safety and wellbeing. Damp and mould are not simply property management issues; they are significant public health concerns that can have serious consequences for residents, particularly children, older people, pregnant women, disabled residents and those with respiratory conditions. The policy adopts a zero-tolerance approach and makes clear that we will not unfairly attribute damp and mould to residents' lifestyles.
- 3.1.3 Alongside compliance with the law, this policy supports our wider ambition to provide safe, decent and sustainable homes, reduce health inequalities and improve outcomes for residents.
- 3.1.4 It reflects the lessons learned nationally and locally and demonstrates our determination to put residents at the centre of everything we do.
- 3.1.5 The new Damp and Mould policy contributes most directly to the Borough Plan's 'A Healthier Brent' priority, as well as 'Prosperity and Stability in Brent', ensuring that residents have safe and secure places to live, managing the hazards which are created by conditions where damp and mould are present in council homes.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1. The requirement to keep the Council's social housing free from damp and mould that could be considered prejudicial to the health and wellbeing of our residents has been in place for decades (Housing Act 1957 set out the fit for human habitation criteria).
- 3.2.2 Legislation to ensure this was delivered more effectively evolved and notably Councils had to comply with a Decent Home standard from 2001 which set out the facilities and requirements a tenant must expect to be provided with, and this included that a property should be free from damp and mould.
- 3.2.3 In 2006 the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) which requires all social landlords to assess their properties against 29 specific hazards that could be prejudicial to health, and the 1st hazard listed is Damp and Mould. This legislation also set out what a local authority should do if Damp and Mould were identified.
- 3.2.4 In November 2022 a coroner's report was published which concerned the death of a two-year-old child Awaab Ishak. The coroner found Awaab had died of a severe respiratory condition brought on by prolonged exposure to black mould spores. Further it found that Rochdale Boroughwide homes were at fault for not dealing with the damp issues in his home.
- 3.2.5 This tragic death had a significant impact on all social landlords. The government felt that having the HHSRS was not sufficient to protect residents and brought in from October 2025 what is known as Awaab's law under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. This has mandated in a very prescriptive way how all local authorities must manage hazards under the HHSRS. The role out of this is being done in stages and from October 2025 the hazard that concerns damp and mould became a legislative requirement.
- 3.2.6 Phase two of Awaab's law goes live in October 2026 and the further hazards that will have a similar mandated requirement for local authorities under this legislation which are:
- Excess cold and excess heat
 - Fire and electrical hazards
 - Structural collapse and explosions
 - Falls associated with baths, stairs, level surfaces, or between levels
 - Domestic/personal hygiene and food safety hazards
- 3.2.7 This policy deals only with Damp and Mould but the requirements to meet the following hazards is being assessed.
- 3.3 Public Health, Inequalities and Safeguarding

- 3.3.1 Brent Council recognises that damp and mould are not solely housing condition issues, but also significant public health and safeguarding concerns. Exposure to damp and mould can have serious consequences for physical and mental health, particularly for babies, young children, older people, pregnant women and residents with respiratory conditions, disabilities or compromised immune systems.
- 3.3.2 We acknowledge that housing conditions can contribute to wider health inequalities and that the impact of damp and mould can be disproportionately experienced by residents facing socio-economic disadvantage, overcrowding, language barriers or other vulnerabilities.
- 3.3.3 Our approach is therefore grounded in prevention, early intervention and equity, ensuring that support is targeted to those at greatest risk of harm.
- 3.3.4 Where damp and mould issues may place a child, young person or adult at risk of harm, Brent Council will adopt a safeguarding-led approach.
- 3.3.5 Staff and contractors will remain alert to potential safeguarding concerns, make referrals where appropriate, and work in partnership with health services, children's services, adult social care and other agencies to protect residents and improve outcomes.
- 3.3.6 Through this policy, Brent Council aims not only to comply with statutory requirements and Awaab's Law, but also to improve health outcomes, reduce inequalities and ensure that every resident is able to live in a safe, healthy and dignified home.
- 3.3.7 Housing services will work collaboratively with NHS partners, Public Health, Adult Social Care, Children's Services and other agencies where a resident's health or welfare may be affected.

3.4 Consultation and engagement findings

- 3.4.1 We initially delivered consultation with a group of residents when looking at what we needed in our new contracts which went live in October 2025. This formulated the basis for this draft where we went out via our web site for feedback and to our Resident's Association chairs group.
- 3.4.2 The feedback received from residents has made the following recommended changes to our policy:
- Revised the process from 3 to 2 access attempts.
 - Internal process for categorisation of the cases and addition of a chasing letter.
 - Addition of detail on the recourse a residents may pursue should they be unhappy with the council's response to a report of damp and mould.

- Addition of 'tenants should proactively report damp and mould, including where it has reoccurred'.
- Addition of Complaints Policy and Compensation and Remediation Policy.

3.5 The strategy's priorities and commitments

3.5.1 The strategy is categorised into six main priorities each of which is supplemented by specific commitments to ensure Damp and Mould is effectively managed in line with legislative requirements.

3.5.2 The priorities are:

A. New Build Damp and Mould Management

- Damp and mould prevention will be considered throughout the building lifecycle—design, construction, handover, occupation, refurbishment and end-of-life.
- Designs and specifications will consider ventilation, insulation, heating and moisture pathways. We ensure that ventilation systems and design comply with Approved Document F (2021) and relevant ventilation maintenance guidance.

B. Risk-Based and Proportionate Control

- A proportionate, evidence-based approach will be applied. Properties will be prioritised by risk, considering factors such as age, construction type and occupancy density.
- Resource is targeted where the risk to health or asset condition need is greatest.
- Vulnerability factors (e.g., children, older people, respiratory conditions) must be considered in line with UKHSA guidance.

C. Governance and Accountability

- Clear lines of accountability underpin effective damp and mould management. Established governance boards including the Building Safety Compliance Project Board and the Audit & Assurance Committee review damp and mould.

D. Competence and Training

- All staff and contractors responsible for property inspections, repairs, or resident engagement are trained in identifying, assessing and responding to damp and mould.

- Competence is verified and maintained through ongoing CPD and independent accreditation where applicable.

E. Resident Engagement and Inclusion

- Residents will receive clear information on how to recognise and report damp and mould, what actions the Council will take, and expected timeframes.
- Residents will receive communications in line with Awaab's Law.
- Brent Council communicates in accessible formats and languages, provides targeted support for vulnerable residents, and engages residents in consultation on improvement programmes.

F. Monitoring, Audit and Continuous Improvement

- Performance is monitored through regular KPI reports to the Brent Housing Compliance Board, focusing on response times, recurrence rates, and resident satisfaction.

3.5.3 The attached draft policy (Appendix A) explains how it is proposed to deal with damp and mould and what the resident can expect and how we will oversee.

3.6 Delivering and monitoring the strategy

3.6.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the Director of Housing Management will ensure the commitments in this policy are achieved and adhered to. This will be through a series of key performance indicators and regular reporting to the relevant boards including residents through the Housing Management Advisory Board and the Resident Associations chairs group.

3.7 Next steps

3.7.1 Following presentation and approval at Cabinet, the final version of the strategy will be embedded into a designed and accessible format.

3.7.2 We are also seeking comments on the status and next steps outlined to deliver the policies commitments and on the proposed approach to monitoring.

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

4.1 The lead member was briefed at the time on the issues and what was planned as part of a wider brief to improve housing. In addition, the Housing Management Advisory Board has considered the the work being undertaken on damp and mould.

4.2 It is hoped to invite all members to a one-off session on Housing and the key aspects that underpin delivery of the service and damp and mould is one of these areas.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The costs of delivering this policy fall on the ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account (HRA), through which the Council meets its landlord responsibilities for its approximately 12,000 homes. The policy formalises and consolidates an approach that is already being resourced, and its financial implications are being managed within existing HRA revenue and capital budgets rather than through new spending commitments.
- 5.2 Meeting the statutory timescales introduced by Awaab's Law — an emergency response within 24 hours, an inspection within 10 working days, safety works within five working days of inspection, and preventative works within 12 weeks — requires sufficient surveyor and operative capacity. Additional surveyors have been recruited and are funded within the repairs and maintenance budget. The greater awareness created by the new regime, together with the policy's proactive, zero-tolerance approach to reporting, is expected to increase case volumes and associated reactive repair activity, particularly in the short term, consistent with the elevated repairs and maintenance position experienced in 2025/26.
- 5.3 Where a home cannot be made safe within the required timescales, the policy commits the Council to interim measures — such as two-stage mould treatments and the deployment of dehumidifiers — and, where necessary, to temporary decants. An increase in decants has already been experienced. The related accommodation and disturbance costs are contained within existing budgets but represent an area of pressure that will be monitored closely.
- 5.4 The most significant financial lever is the shift from reactive repair towards planned, preventative investment. Capital works that address the root causes of damp and mould — improved ventilation, insulation, heating and damp-proofing — reduce recurrence and lower future reactive maintenance costs. This investment is delivered through the HRA capital programme, including the expanded programme of major repairs and stock-condition surveys for 2026/27, and is aligned with the Council's wider stock-investment and Decent Homes commitments.
- 5.5 Timely and effective delivery of the policy is also expected to reduce the incidence and cost of disrepair claims, and of compensation awarded through the Council's complaints process or ordered by the Housing Ombudsman. Early intervention therefore protects the HRA from avoidable legal, compensation and remediation costs, reinforcing the financial case for acting promptly.
- 5.6 The policy carries a number of recurring supporting costs, including competence training for staff and contractors as required under the Awaab's Law regulations, case-management and record-keeping systems (with case data retained for a minimum of six years), and the collection of resident vulnerability and diversity data to target services effectively. These are accommodated within existing service budgets.

- 5.7 From October 2026, Phase 2 of Awaab's Law extends the statutory regime to further categories of hazard, including excess cold and heat, falls, and fire and electrical safety. The financial implications of Phase 2 are being assessed and will be reflected in future budgets and in the HRA Business Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The sustained cost of meeting these statutory obligations underlines the importance of continued investment in the condition of the stock and of maintaining the longer-term financial resilience of the HRA.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 Damp and mould in residential housing engages a robust and evolving legal framework, placing significant statutory and regulatory obligations on local authorities in both their landlord and enforcement roles.
- 6.2 Under the Housing Act 2004, local authorities have a mandatory duty to take enforcement action where damp and mould constitute a Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This includes powers to issue improvement notices, prohibit occupation, or undertake emergency remedial action.
- 6.3 As landlords, councils are subject to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (s.11) and the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, which require properties to be maintained in repair and be fit for occupation. Damp and mould linked to disrepair or posing a health risk may give rise to tenant claims for damages, specific performance, or rent repayment.
- 6.4 The introduction of Awaab's Law (in force from October 2025 for social housing and extending further from 2026) imposes strict statutory timeframes for responding to damp and mould. These include urgent action for emergency hazards and defined periods for investigation and remediation. Failure to comply exposes the authority to legal enforcement, compensation claims, and reputational risk.
- 6.5 Local authorities must also comply with Housing Ombudsman expectations, which require a proactive "zero tolerance" approach, timely investigations, clear communication, and consideration of vulnerability, particularly where children or individuals with health conditions are affected.
- 6.6 There are additional obligations under the Equality Act 2010, requiring authorities to consider the needs of vulnerable tenants and make reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Damp and mould cases may also engage public health duties and, in severe circumstances, expose the authority to scrutiny through coronial processes or judicial review.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 There are several factors which influence damp and mould, and the makeup of our residents is considerably diverse. It is clear that we need to run our data across multiple diversity strands, but we currently have a lack of data in some areas. We are currently collecting diversity data with a planned approach for

home visits and an additional resource as we recognise the importance of getting this so we can tailor our service effectively.

- 7.2 The concern we have is that there is a link between dampness and poverty, and it is important to understand the demographics of where our damp cases are affecting. This is likely to happen in a few months (October) once the data is loaded.
- 7.3 Brent outlines its commitment to support marginalised groups - through tailoring service delivery and tackling inequality - within the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-28 and we are mindful of this gap.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 The Brent Damp & Mould Policy aligns with initiatives under the Brent Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy which aim to help residents to keep their homes warm in winter and comfortable in summer. Residents meeting certain eligibility criteria may additionally be able to receive a free energy advice consultation through the Brent Well and Warm scheme, delivered by Groundwork's Green Doctors.

9.0 Communication Considerations

- 9.1 The policy includes a number of standards we need to deliver to our residents. We have a plan for rolling communications that will ensure we are compliant with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 which sets out a number of standards
- 9.2 This will include further messages on combatting damp and mould, and the service standard residents can expect.
- 9.3. A number of summer roadshows are also planned where the team will be sharing information on what we do. The Housing Engagement team will be co-ordinating this.

Report sign off:

Tom Cattermole

Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services

Legal considerations provided by:
Stephen Akpan & Fabian Peters

Finance considerations provided by:
Michael Jarratt

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London Borough of Brent

Damp and Mould Policy

This policy provides a framework for meeting the requirements of Awaab's Law and associated guidance, and defines how Brent Council will investigate, resolve and prevent occurrences of damp and mould within its managed housing stock.

Owner:	Spencer Randolph, Director Housing Services Gary Mitchell, Head of Property Services	
Approved by:	Cabinet	Date: To be included subject to approval date
Review cycle: (years)	Every 2 years	
Next review date:	27/07/2028 (subject to approval date)	



Foreword

This Damp and Mould Policy sets out Brent's commitment to ensuring that every resident has access to a safe, healthy and well-maintained home. The policy provides the framework through which we will meet our statutory obligations under Awaab's Law and establishes a clear approach to preventing, identifying and resolving damp and mould across our housing stock.

This is fundamentally about resident safety and wellbeing. Damp and mould are not simply property management issues; they are significant public health concerns that can have serious consequences for residents, particularly children, older people, pregnant women, disabled residents and those with respiratory conditions. The policy adopts a zero-tolerance approach and makes clear that we will not unfairly attribute damp and mould to residents' lifestyles.

Alongside compliance with the law, this policy supports our wider ambition to provide safe, decent and sustainable homes, reduce health inequalities and improve outcomes for residents.

It reflects the lessons learned nationally and locally and demonstrates our determination to put residents at the centre of everything we do.

Councillor Robert Johnson

Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters

Regulatory Standards, Legislation and Codes of Practice

Regulator:	The Regulator of Social Housing
Legislation:	Brent Council recognises and acknowledges its legal duties and obligations under legislation relating to damp and mould. The areas of law that are relevant to this policy include: • Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. • Awaab's Law (2025 Regulations). • Housing Act 2004. • Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). • Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018. • Environmental Protection Act 1990. • Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. • Building Regulations 2010 – Part C. • Equality Act 2010. • UKHSA Damp and Mould Guidance. • Decent Homes Standard. • Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould (2021). • BS 5250:2021. • Approved Document F – Ventilation. • RSH Safety and Quality Standard (Apr 2024).
The policy also operates in the context of:	• Complaints Policy • Compensation and Remediation Policy • Fire Safety Policy • Gas Safety Policy • Electrical Safety Policy • Legionella Policy • Repairs Policy • Vulnerable Residents and Reasonable Adjustments Policy • Asset Management Strategy • Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy

Contents

1. Purpose	4

2. Scope	5
2.1 Definitions- Understanding damp and mould	5
3. Our Values	6
3.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	6
4. Policy Statement	6
5. Guiding Principles	7
6. Public Health, Inequalities and Safeguarding	8
7. Damp and mould remediation process	9
7.1 Triggers for the repairs process, including how residents can report damp and mould	9
7.2 Investigation Protocol	9
7.3 Initial Response and Interim Measures	11
7.4 Identifying the root cause	11
7.5 Repair and Remediation Works	11
7.6 No Access Process	12
7.7 Complaints	12
8. Ongoing damp and mould management	12
8.1 Design and Construction	12
8.2 Refurbishment and Change of Use	12
9. Resident engagement and communication	12
10. Tenant responsibilities	13
11. Monitoring and Compliance	13
11.1 Review	13
11.2 Monitoring process	14
11.3 Training	14
12. Roles and Responsibilities	15

1. Purpose

Brent Council is committed to providing safe and well-maintained homes for our tenants. This policy provides a framework for meeting the requirements of Awaab's Law and

associated guidance, and defines how Brent Council will investigate, resolve and prevent occurrences of damp and mould within its managed housing stock. We recognise the significant impact damp and mould can have on the lives of residents and this policy reflects our commitment to tackling this in a consistent and robust way.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All residential properties owned or managed by Brent Council, including general-needs housing, supported and sheltered schemes and temporary accommodation.
- All Brent Council staff, contractors and partners involved in housing management, maintenance, asset management or compliance functions that affect the condition of dwellings.

2.1 Definitions- Understanding damp and mould

Damp is the accumulation of moisture within a property. It can affect building materials (such as walls, floors, ceilings and foundations) and/or home furnishings and belongings (such as carpets, curtains, furniture and clothing). Damp can also lead to the growth of mould.

Damp can occur for a variety of reasons:

- i. Condensation damp- occurs when moisture within the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings. This is the most common form of damp. Conditions that can increase the risk of condensation are – inadequate ventilation, inadequate heating, inadequate thermal insulation, high humidity and poor building design and construction.
- ii. Penetrating damp- water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roof, windows or floors.
- iii. Rising damp- is moisture from the ground that rises up through parts of the buildings in contact with the ground (walls and floors). It is usually found in older properties and is often it is due to defective damp proof courses and membranes.
- iv. Traumatic damp- can be caused by leaking water from waste and heating pipes, overflowing baths or sinks, burst pipes or defective water storage vessels inside the building. Traumatic damp can also originate from outside the property, for example from another building or from environmental flooding
- v. Mould- a type of fungus which grows in moist environments. It frequently appears alongside condensation on cold outside walls and surfaces and in places where the air does not circulate well. The moisture created can also damage clothes, furnishings, and decoration, and leaves a musty smell.

Exposure to mould spores can cause a wide range of symptoms including rashes, itchy eyes, sneezing, coughs, dizziness, and nausea.

The long-term effects of mould exposure can be more severe for vulnerable people, people with respiratory conditions and those with a weakened immune system.

3. Our Values

3.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

This policy embodies Brent Council's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within our work and the services we provide. Please refer to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy here: [brent-equity-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2024-28-digital-version-v2.pdf](#)

This policy aims to ensure that all reports of and resulting remediation works for damp and mould are treated consistently and fairly regardless of age, disability, gender re-assignment, race, religion, belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, care experience, socio-economic status and other relevant characteristics such as carer status or immigration status.

Brent Council will ensure that damp and mould management measures consider the diverse needs of residents and staff, including those with language barriers or additional vulnerabilities. This includes ensuring communication and information are accessible, with translation and interpretation services and alternative formats available as needed. Officers will proactively identify communication barriers and make reasonable adjustments as necessary.

This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment which found no adverse impact on residents with protected characteristics.

4. Policy Statement

Brent Council recognises that damp and mould represent significant health and safety risks, particularly to vulnerable residents. Exposure can contribute to respiratory illness, structural deterioration, and non-compliance with statutory housing standards.

Our policy is to:

- Comply with all legislation, codes of practice and guidance relevant to damp and mould in domestic premises, including the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and Awaab's Law.
- Take action to prevent damp and mould by maintaining homes in good repair and addressing defects promptly.

- Ensure Competence and Accountability through qualified staff and clear governance and monitoring arrangements.
- Engage Residents and Stakeholders so that residents understand how to report concerns, what to expect from investigations, and how they can help maintain healthy environments.

This policy supports Brent Council's wider commitment to safe, decent and sustainable homes in line with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and the Decent Homes Standard.

Brent Council adopts a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould, in line with Housing Ombudsman recommendations, and will not unfairly attribute these issues to residents' lifestyles.

5. Guiding Principles

Brent Council's approach to implementing this policy is guided by the following principles:

A. Damp and Mould Management

- Damp and mould prevention will be considered throughout the building lifecycle—design, construction, handover, occupation, refurbishment and end-of-life.
- Designs and specifications will consider ventilation, insulation, heating and moisture pathways. We ensure that ventilation systems and design comply with Approved Document F (2021) and relevant ventilation maintenance guidance.

B. Risk-Based and Proportionate Control

- A proportionate, evidence-based approach will be applied. Properties will be prioritised by risk, considering factors such as age, construction type and occupancy density.
- Resource is targeted where the risk to health or asset condition need is greatest.
- Vulnerability factors (e.g, children, older people, respiratory conditions) must be considered in line with UKHSA guidance.

C. Governance and Accountability

- Clear lines of accountability underpin effective damp and mould management. Established governance boards including the Building Safety

Compliance Project Board and the Audit & Assurance Committee review damp and mould.

D. Competence and Training

- All staff and contractors responsible for property inspections, repairs, or resident engagement are trained in identifying, assessing and responding to damp and mould.
- Competence is verified and maintained through ongoing CPD and independent accreditation where applicable.

E. Resident Engagement and Inclusion

- Residents will receive clear information on how to recognise and report damp and mould, what actions the Council will take, and expected timeframes.
- Residents will receive communications in line with Awaab's Law.
- Brent Council communicates in accessible formats and languages, provides targeted support for vulnerable residents, and engages residents in consultation on improvement programmes.

F. Monitoring, Audit and Continuous Improvement

- Performance is monitored through regular KPI reports to the Brent Housing Compliance Board, focusing on response times, recurrence rates, and resident satisfaction.

6. Public Health, Inequalities and Safeguarding

Brent Council recognises that damp and mould are not solely housing condition issues but also significant public health and safeguarding concerns. Exposure to damp and mould can have serious consequences for physical and mental health, particularly for babies, young children, older people, pregnant women and residents with respiratory conditions, disabilities or compromised immune systems.

We acknowledge that housing conditions can contribute to wider health inequalities and that the impact of damp and mould can be disproportionately experienced by residents facing socio-economic disadvantage, overcrowding, language barriers or other vulnerabilities.

Our approach is therefore grounded in prevention, early intervention and equity, ensuring that support is targeted to those at greatest risk of harm.

Where damp and mould issues may place a child, young person or adult at risk of harm, Brent Council will adopt a safeguarding-led approach.

Staff and contractors will remain alert to potential safeguarding concerns, make referrals where appropriate, and work in partnership with health services, children's services, adult social care and other agencies to protect residents and improve outcomes.

Through this policy, Brent Council aims not only to comply with statutory requirements and Awaab's Law, but also to improve health outcomes, reduce inequalities and ensure that every resident is able to live in a safe, healthy and dignified home.

Housing services will work collaboratively with NHS partners, Public Health, Adult Social Care, Children's Services and other agencies where a resident's health or welfare may be affected.

7. Damp and mould remediation process

This section of the Policy sets out our approach to tackling damp and mould once it has been reported.

7.1 Triggers for the repairs process, including how residents can report damp and mould

Residents can report damp and mould by using [My Account](#), by calling 020 8937 2400 or by emailing dampandmould@brent.gov.uk

A referral may also be made by a contractor or a Brent Council member of staff if they identify damp and mould at the property or are concerned that damp and mould may be present.

7.2 Investigation Protocol

Every report of damp or mould will trigger an investigation. Each case will be immediately risk-assessed considering any vulnerabilities, property type and severity of the issue. The outcome of the risk assessment will determine how a case is categorised in terms of severity and the next steps the council will take.

In line with Awaab's Law, the following categorisation of severity applies:

- Significant hazard that poses a serious risk of harm that a reasonable landlord would treat as urgent. A 'significant risk of harm' is defined in the regulations as 'a risk of harm to the occupier's health or safety that a reasonable lessor with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe as a matter of urgency'.

- An emergency hazard that poses an imminent risk of harm, which must be made safe within 24 hours. An 'imminent and significant risk of harm' is defined in the regulations as 'a risk of harm to the occupier's health or safety that a reasonable lessor with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe within 24 hours'.

Examples of hazards that could be emergency hazards requiring emergency action include, but are not limited to:

- gas or carbon monoxide leaks
- broken boilers
- total loss of water supply
- electrical hazards such as exposed wiring
- significant leaks
- broken external doors or windows that present a risk to home security
- prevalent damp and/or mould that is having a material impact on a tenant's health
- significant structural defects or disrepair

Any vulnerabilities are considered at the point of triage and this will inform how the case is categorised if appropriate. Factors that make an individual especially vulnerable to the effects of damp and mould include (but are not limited to):

- Age (children and the elderly)
- Pregnancy
- Disability
- Respiratory illness or condition (for example asthma)

For further information on addressing vulnerabilities, please see the Vulnerable Residents and Reasonable Adjustments policy.

The table below explains the process Brent Council will take once a case of damp and mould is reported:

Stage	Action	Timescale
Report Received	Logged and triaged immediately.	Immediate
Emergency Hazard investigation	Investigate potential emergency hazards and make the property safe. Interim measures implemented (for example mould	within 24 hours

	wash, dehumidifiers) if full repairs cannot commence immediately.	
Significant Hazard investigation	Inspection Scheduled and Conducted – visual inspection and property assessment completed.	within 10 working days
Written summary to the tenant	Written summary provided to resident confirming actions.	within 3 working days of inspection
Relevant safety works	Complete repairs to make the home safe	within 5 working days of inspection (or sooner if risk high)
Preventative works	To stop the hazard from recurring	Began as soon as was reasonably practicable and complete within 12 weeks

7.3 Initial Response and Interim Measures

Where immediate repair cannot be completed, the Council will implement interim measures such as:

- Temporary removal of surface mould using safe cleaning agents. A 2-stage mould treatment will be undertaken within 5 days of the report to remove the immediate hazard.
- Deployment of dehumidifiers.
- Increasing ventilation or heating.
- Temporary relocation if the health risk is significant.

7.4 Identifying the root cause

Our surveyors will take actions to identify the underlying cause of damp and mould (for example a leak, condensation, thermal bridging or drainage defect) which could include using moisture meters, thermography or inspection.

7.5 Repair and Remediation Works

Repairs are completed using approved materials and methods that address both the cause and effects of damp. All works will be recorded with before-and-after evidence. Improvement works will consider energy performance improvements to prevent recurrence (for example insulation, heating or ventilation upgrades).

7.6 No Access Process

If access is refused, at least two attempts must be made. Following two attempts, the case will be reviewed and if appropriate recategorised to a priority 4 action. A letter will be sent to the resident to ask that they get in touch to arrange a re-visit. They will have 60 days to do so, after which time the case will be closed.

Should there be extenuating circumstances or vulnerabilities, these will be considered before a case is closed.

7.7 Complaints

Where a resident is unhappy with the council's response to a report of damp and mould in their home, they may wish to make a complaint in line with the council's Complaints Policy. In some circumstances, including where there has been a service failure, they may be entitled to receive compensation in line with the Housing Compensation and Remedies Policy.

8. Ongoing damp and mould management

This section details how Brent Council will manage damp and mould throughout the lifecycle of a property.

8.1 Design and Construction

- All new homes must meet Building Regulations Part C and F and include as-built information (ventilation type, air permeability, insulation standards).

8.2 Refurbishment and Change of Use

- Before refurbishment or change of occupancy, existing damp and mould risks will be reviewed.
- All properties will be let free from damp and mould.
- Refurbishment projects will include ventilation upgrades or insulation improvements where surveys identify deficiencies.

9. Resident engagement and communication

Brent is committed to clear communication with residents on damp and mould. This includes providing them with the information they need to both prevent and react to incidents of damp and mould. We encourage residents to report safety concerns as soon as they appear so that they can be promptly addressed.

Information Provision

Residents receive information on:

- How to report damp and mould issues.
- What actions the Council will take and expected timescales.
- Advice on heating, ventilation and condensation control.

Communication Methods

Information will be distributed through many channels, including resident newsletters, noticeboards, digital channels and resident meetings. Resident information will be provided in accessible formats and translated where required in line with the Equality Act 2010.

10. Tenant responsibilities

Brent Council is committed to working with residents to help maintain a safe living environment. It is a shared responsibility between tenants, staff and contractors to make sure that incidents of damp and mould are reported and acted upon in a timely manner. Tenants should proactively report damp and mould, including where it has reoccurred.

Tenants should take all reasonable steps to prevent damp and mould, including through ventilating the property, drying clothing outside and keeping the home warm where possible. Brent Council will support residents in doing this by regularly providing information on prevention and responding promptly to reported issues.

11. Monitoring and Compliance

11.1 Review

Brent Council has monitoring and governance processes to ensure this policy is effectively implemented and remains in place. The following monitoring and audit mechanisms are used:

- The Building Safety Compliance Project Board and Housing Tenant Satisfaction Improvement Programme Board each receive reports on damp and mould on a regular basis.
- Key performance indicators (KPIs) include timeliness of inspections and repairs, completion rates, recurrence levels and resident satisfaction.
- Damp and mould repairs and remedial actions are tracked through NEC.
- Weekly meetings are held with contractors where damp and mould is reviewed.

- All case data, photographs, and reports are digitally stored, retained for a minimum of six years. This ensures visibility and traceability throughout the building lifecycle.

This policy is reviewed every 2 years, unless otherwise required and version control can be found in the footer of the document.

11.2 Monitoring process

KPIs reported monthly include:

- % emergency repairs completed within target
- % emergency repairs follow on works completed within target
- % urgent repairs completed within target
- % standard repairs completed within target
- Resident satisfaction with the repairs

Complaints

Complaint meetings are held weekly to analyse trends and to take forward any lessons learnt. These inform ways of working and will result in changes to process as required.

11.3 Training

Brent Council is committed to ensuring that all staff and contractors involved in damp and mould remediation and prevention are competent to perform these tasks. We invest in training to maintain knowledge and skill regarding Building Safety, and in this context specifically damp and mould.

Our overarching goal is to have an organisational culture where safety is embedded, and everyone knows their role in keeping our residents safe in their homes.

Training Framework

All staff, managers, and contractors involved in activities related to damp and mould must receive training proportionate to their duties. Training will cover the requirements of this and other inter-related council policies, site-specific procedures, and emergency arrangements. Training will meet the competency requirements defined under the Awaab's Law 2025 regulations.

Training Responsibilities

- Managers are responsible for ensuring that all team members receive training on the council's statutory duties
- Contractors must provide and be able to evidence training for staff in line with their contractual obligations

Manager and Executive Training

Senior managers receive regular training to ensure our leaders understand Building Safety at a strategic level and can competently direct resources and make informed decisions.

Contractor and Partner Training

We require that any contractors working on damp and mould are qualified to do so. Contract terms stipulate competency requirements. Staff induction documents for both new external contract staff and council staff are shared reciprocally to ensure alignment of process and a collaborative approach to tackling damp and mould.

Competence Monitoring

The Council keeps records of training completed by staff. We also encourage formal qualifications for relevant staff. We consider staff competent when they possess both the training and experience necessary for the task. CPD (Continuing Professional Development) is supported, such as staff attending external seminars, Building Safety conferences, or attain membership in professional bodies.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Brent Council operates a clear governance framework that defines strategic accountability and operational responsibility for keeping all housing assets free from damp and mould.

Internal and Councillor Oversight

Accountability is supported through the Council's governance framework includes the Building Safety Compliance Board, internal audit, and reports to the Cabinet Executive, Scrutiny Commission and Audit & Assurance Committee.

Area Tenancy Managers

Area Tenancy Managers are responsible for supporting the local delivery of this policy within their areas. This includes maintaining a general awareness of property conditions through routine estate activity and engagement with residents, facilitating access for inspections and works, keeping appropriate records, and promptly reporting and escalating any suspected damp and mould issues. Area Tenancy Managers are not responsible for diagnosing or assessing technical causes, which remains the responsibility of qualified technical officers.

Contractors

Brent Council engages qualified contractors for inspection, testing and remedial works. All contractors must be appropriately accredited and demonstrate competence in damp and mould diagnosis, sampling, and remediation. They must notify Brent immediately if serious health risks or structural issues are identified and ensure resident safety during all works.

Brent Council Employees

Surveyors and technical staff must be appropriately qualified to diagnose the causes of damp and mould and to develop suitable remedies to address those causes.

All employees must cooperate with the Council's Damp and Mould safety arrangements, follow safe systems of work, complete relevant training, and report hazards or defects promptly.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Damp & Mould Policy
DEPARTMENT:	Service Reform and Strategy
TEAM:	Policy, EDI & Performance
LEAD OFFICER:	Katie Shevas
DATE:	19.03.2026

EIA Guidance is available online, please reach out to equality@brent.gov.uk for any further support.

SECTION A – SCREENING

1. Briefly and clearly describe the policy, proposal, change, or initiative, and what it is trying to achieve.

This policy sets out the housing service's approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould in our housing stock. Under Awaab's Law the council is required to act in a robust and timely manner upon receipt of a report of damp and mould. This policy captures our approach to meeting these statutory obligations.

2. Are there any groups who may be impacted by your proposal? For reference, Q4 lists all protected groups.

This policy will impact all council tenants affected by damp and mould regardless of any protected characteristic(s), as it requires a robust and proactive response to its prevention and remediation. The groups positively impacted are babies and young children, the elderly, those with a disability and pregnant people. These groups are particularly vulnerable to the effects of damp and mould and therefore having a robust policy in place will benefit them should damp and mould become present in their home.

3. If no groups are affected, explain why.

N/A

4. Mark with an “X” the potential impact of the policy or proposal on different groups. You can mark more than one box for each group.

Characteristic	IMPACT		
	Positive	Neutral/None	Negative
Age - People of different age groups.	X		
Care Experience - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	X		
Disability - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	X		
Gender reassignment - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	X		
Pregnancy and Maternity - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	X		
Race and Ethnicity - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	X		
Religion or belief - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	X		
Sex - Differences between men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	X		
Sexual Orientation - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	X		
Socio-Economic Status – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	X		
Other relevant groups* <i>[replace this text and specify where appropriate]</i>			

* Other relevant groups could include Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans, among others. Review the EIA Guidance for more information.

5. Complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

SCREENING CHECKLIST		
	YES	NO
Does the policy or proposal have implications for eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, or fostering good relations among different groups?		X
Does it relate to an area with known inequalities?		X
Would it add, change, or remove services used by any groups listed in Q4?	X	
Does it have negative or positive equality impacts on any groups listed in Q4?	X	
If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, proceed to section B. If you have answered NO to ALL the above, proceed straight to section C.		

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

6. What data and evidence have you used to understand potential impacts? This could include service user data where relevant. If there is little or no evidence, explain why, and note any plans to improve data collection in future, adding this to the Action Plan in Section E.

Whilst we do not have data on those groups most affected by damp and mould in Brent specifically, there is a plethora of scientific evidence which highlights those groups who are more detrimentally impacted by damp and mould. It is this evidence and data which has informed the classification of potential impacts. The Government Guidance on damp and mould highlights the evidence: [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK](#)

7. For each characteristic:
- Provide detail for the impact listed in the response to Q4 in the left-hand box.
 - Provide data and evidence to explain how you reached your conclusion in the right-hand box.
- Relevant data sources for Brent and its residents can be found in the EIA Guidance document.

Age	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
While damp and mould related health outcomes may affect people regardless of age, babies and children, and the elderly are particularly vulnerable to the effects of damp and mould. Both groups are at a heightened risk of developing respiratory issues and negative health impacts due to exposure. This policy outlines the process for prioritisation of reported cases, which specifies that when a report is received where a child or elderly person is resident, the case will be prioritised.	Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK

Care Experience	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
This policy positively impacts all residents living in Brent Housing by enforcing a robust and clear approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould, regardless of care experience.	

Disability	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.

While damp and mould related health outcomes may affect people regardless of disability or health issues, people with respiratory problems such as allergies and asthma, those with a weakened immune system such as those having chemotherapy, and those with existing skin problems such as atopic eczema, are more sensitive to the effects of damp and mould. As well as physical health impacts, damp and mould can have a negative impact on the mental health of tenants. The policy takes a proactive approach to addressing and resolving issues of damp and mould in properties, thereby reducing the negative impacts this can cause on health and wellbeing. This policy outlines the process for prioritisation of reported cases, which specifies that when a report is received where there is a particular vulnerability as a result of a disability, the case will be prioritised.	Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK

Gender Reassignment	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
This policy positively impacts all residents living in Brent Housing by enforcing a robust and clear approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould, regardless of gender reassignment.	Whilst we do not have specific data or evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of this policy on those with this protected characteristic, we know that everyone is vulnerable to the negative impacts of damp and mould and therefore all residents benefit from the robust policy to tackle it.

Marriage and Civil Partnership	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
This policy positively impacts all residents living in Brent Housing by enforcing a robust and clear approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould, regardless of marriage or civil partnership.	Whilst we do not have specific data or evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of this policy on those with this protected characteristic, we know that everyone is vulnerable to the negative impacts of damp and mould and therefore all residents benefit from the robust policy to tackle it.

Pregnancy and Maternity	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.

Pregnant women, their unborn babies and women who have recently given birth, may have weakened immune systems, resulting in a particular susceptibility to the negative health outcomes because of exposure to damp and mould. This policy outlines the process for prioritisation of reported cases, which specifies that when a report is received where there is a pregnant person residing at the property, the case will be prioritised.	Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK

Race and Ethnicity	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
This policy positively impacts all residents living in Brent Housing by enforcing a robust and clear approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould, regardless of race or ethnicity.	Whilst we do not have specific data or evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of this policy on those with this protected characteristic, we know that everyone is vulnerable to the negative impacts of damp and mould and therefore all residents benefit from the robust policy to tackle it.

Religion or Belief	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
This policy positively impacts all residents living in Brent Housing by enforcing a robust and clear approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould, regardless of religion or belief.	Whilst we do not have specific data or evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of this policy on those with this protected characteristic, we know that everyone is vulnerable to the negative impacts of damp and mould and therefore all residents benefit from the robust policy to tackle it.

Sex	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
This policy positively impacts all residents living in Brent Housing by enforcing a robust and clear approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould, regardless of sex.	Whilst we do not have specific data or evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of this policy on those with this protected characteristic, we know that everyone is vulnerable to the negative impacts of damp and mould and therefore all residents benefit from the robust policy to tackle it.

Sexual Orientation

Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
This policy positively impacts all residents living in Brent Housing by enforcing a robust and clear approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould, regardless of sexual orientation.	Whilst we do not have specific data or evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of this policy on those with this protected characteristic, we know that everyone is vulnerable to the negative impacts of damp and mould and therefore all residents benefit from the robust policy to tackle it.

Socio-Economic Status	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.
This policy positively impacts all residents living in Brent Housing by enforcing a robust and clear approach to the prevention and remediation of damp and mould, regardless of race or ethnicity. However, the policy does acknowledge that some residents may be more likely to experience damp and mould in their home and the resulting negative health outcomes as a result of hardship. Hardship can mean residents struggle to heat their homes, which increases the likelihood of damp and mould occurring. The policy outlines our approach to providing residents with information on how they can prevent damp and mould, and highlights how to access support in keeping their homes warm.	Whilst we do not have specific data or evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of this policy on those with this protected characteristic, we know that everyone is vulnerable to the negative impacts of damp and mould and therefore all residents benefit from the robust policy to tackle it.

Other Relevant Groups	
Provide detail for the impact listed in Q4.	Provide supporting data and evidence.

8. Summarise any engagement activities with relevant groups (this may replicate some of the information listed in Q7). State whether those involved represent the people affected by your proposal, or whether more engagement is needed, which should be added to the Action Plan in Section E.

A public consultation on the draft policy will run from 30 th March for 6 weeks, giving all residents, including the relevant groups listed above, the opportunity to provide their views on the policy.

9. Provide more detail on any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

N/A	Page 297

SECTION C – CONCLUSIONS

10. Summarise your overall conclusions based on the analysis:

- If there are no impacts, state that here, and **do not complete sections E or G.**
- If you decide not to move forward, explain why, and **do not complete sections E or G.**
- If there are negative impacts, explain what you'll do to reduce them. If you choose to continue despite negative impacts, or if negative impacts remain following your action plan, provide a justification for your decision.
- If there are positive impacts, explain how these could be strengthened, where possible.

This policy has a positive impact on all Brent Housing residents, including those with protected characteristics.

SECTION D - RESULT

Select one of the following options with an "X".		
A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE/ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN AND MONITORING

Unless your proposal has no equality impacts or you are not moving forward, complete the table below to track specific actions to:

- Reduce negative impacts and increase positive outcomes.
- Monitor actual or ongoing impacts.
- Record plans to improve data collection.
- Plan any further engagement or analysis that may be required.

Use the 'Status' column on the right to indicate whether the action is yet to start, is in progress, or has been completed.

Issue Identified	Action	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Status

11. Describe how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

	Signature	Date
Officer:	Katie Shevas	09/06/2026
Reviewing Officer or Head of Service	Gary Mitchell	12/06/2026

SECTION G – REVIEW

EIAs are live documents and should be reviewed regularly, especially if there are actions still to be completed or if the proposal has significant equality impacts.

When to review

- Review every 6 months until all actions in the Action Plan above are complete.
- If new data, feedback, or changes to the service arise, revisit the EIA to make sure it's still accurate.

Who should review

- The same officer who completed the EIA should carry out the review. If there's been a staffing change, the new lead officer should take over.

What to update

- Use the Status column in the Action Plan above to show progress (e.g. Not Started, In Progress, Completed). Add comments and updates in the table below — include any new data, evidence, or feedback.

When reviews can stop

- Once all actions are complete and no further equality impacts are expected, you can stop reviewing the EIA.
- Add rows to the table below as necessary until all actions are completed.

<u>Date of 1st Review:</u>	
Officer:	
Comment on progress toward specific actions, and provide any data and evidence updates:	
Reviewing Officer or Head of Service:	
<u>Date of 2nd Review:</u>	
Officer:	
Comment on progress toward specific actions, and provide any data and evidence updates:	
Reviewing Officer or Head of Service:	
<u>Date of 3rd Review:</u>	
Officer:	
Comment on progress toward specific actions, and provide any data and evidence updates:	
Reviewing Officer or Head of Service:	

	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Service Reform and Strategy
	Lead Member – Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Gwen Grahl)
Corporate Performance – Q4 2025/26 Performance Summary	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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 A: Borough Plan Scorecard
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Jon Cartwright, Head of Change and Customer Insight 020 8937 1742 Jon.Cartwright@brent.gov.uk Grace Hall, Policy and Performance Manager 020 8937 1471 Grace.Hall@brent.gov.uk Anisha Fernandes Senior Performance Officer, Partnerships 020 8937 3927 Anisha.Fernandes@brent.gov.uk Daniel Henderson Senior Performance Officer, Partnerships 020 8937 2841 Daniel.Henderson@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an end of year summary of Brent Council's performance for 2025/26.

- 1.2 Throughout 2025/26, Cabinet has received detailed quarterly performance reports , highlighting the latest performance position, key drivers and actions being taken where required. This report represents the final update for the year 2025/26, providing a broad end-of-year assessment across each Borough Plan priority. This summary focuses on overall progress across 2025/26, key achievements, common themes and areas requiring continued focus.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to consider and endorse the 2025/26 performance reporting set out in section 3 of the report.

3.0 Detail

Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1 This report includes detailed end of year reporting against the full suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) developed to monitor delivery of the desired outcomes (i.e., 'what success will look like' measures) set out in the *Borough Plan 2023-2027: Moving Brent Forward Together*. This includes overall progress updates for key activities and targets aligned to each of the Borough Plan's five priority areas:

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

End of year Borough Plan performance

- 3.2 The following section provides an end of year summary for 2025/26 performance. More detailed information on KPI performance can be viewed on the dashboard contained in Appendix A.

Prosperity and Stability in Brent

- 3.3 The performance data identifies clear strengths in resident access to support, skills and employment activity, social value delivery and council housebuilding, alongside continued pressure in housing demand and some support services. This reflects both local demand and wider national conditions, particularly in housing and affordability, while also showing the effect of stretching targets in a number of areas.

- 3.4 Housing remains the area of greatest challenge within this priority. Demand for homelessness support and temporary accommodation has stayed high through the year, shaped by sustained pressure in the private rented sector and wider cost of living pressures. Performance on some affordable housing measures has also been affected by delivery timing and pipeline factors, including the timing of acquisitions and completions, rather than a lack of underlying activity. The year-end position on Houses in Multiple Occupation has similarly been influenced by the transition between licensing schemes.
- 3.5 Against this more challenging backdrop, there were a number of positive results across the year. Community Hubs continued to provide an important front door for residents, particularly at times of increased financial pressure. Brent Works continued to support residents into good quality employment and apprenticeships, including London Living Wage roles and opportunities in growth industries. Brent Start also maintained strong achievement rates, and social value activity continued to create local opportunities through apprenticeships, work experience and use of local suppliers.
- 3.6 Some support services experienced expected year-end pressure, including Resident Support Fund processing and elements of benefits administration, reflecting seasonal demand and higher volumes of resident contact. There were also signs of continued improvement in some support services, with benefits change in circumstance events processed more quickly over the year and performance meeting the Q4 target. The year also closed with further delivery of new council homes and continued success in bringing empty properties back into use, both of which support the borough's longer-term housing supply ambitions. Taken together, this priority presents a mixed but understandable year-end position, with strong performance in several enabling and preventative services alongside more entrenched pressures in housing and demand-led support.

Cleaner, Greener Future

- 3.7 Overall, the Cleaner, Greener Future priority presents one of the strongest and most consistent year-end positions in the Borough Plan scorecard. The priority closed the year with no red indicators, reflecting sustained delivery across core environmental services as well as continued progress on longer-term climate and active travel ambitions.
- 3.8 Performance remained strong in the Council's day-to-day environmental and highways services. This included timely repair of Category 2 defects, strong performance in residential fly-tipping clearance and investigation, continued formal enforcement activity, and good results in street cleansing. The year-end position on waste also remained positive, with recycling sustained above target and residual household waste continuing to track in the right direction. Taken together, this points to stable operational delivery in services that are highly visible to residents.
- 3.9 The priority also saw continued progress against the Council's wider environmental and climate objectives. This included further retrofit of council

housing, continued reduction in emissions from the council's own estate and operations, and expansion of infrastructure that supports lower-carbon travel, including electric vehicle charging, bike hangars and School Streets. These areas demonstrate that operational delivery is being matched by continued movement on the borough's longer-term transition agenda.

- 3.10 Community action also remained an important part of delivery, with the Together Towards Zero programme supporting a wide range of local environmental projects across the borough. While some of the climate-related indicators are annual or contextual in nature, the overall end-of-year picture for this priority is clearly positive. It combines strong frontline service performance with continued progress on the strategic shifts needed to support a cleaner, greener and more sustainable Brent.

Thriving Communities

- 3.11 Overall, Thriving Communities presents a positive end-of-year position, with no red indicators reported for this priority. The year-end picture reflects continued resident engagement with cultural, community and support services, alongside ongoing delivery of grants and neighbourhood-based activity. It also shows the value of community infrastructure that remains highly visible and well used across the borough.
- 3.12 Libraries continued to perform strongly and remain one of the clearest strengths within this priority, with sustained demand across both visits and book issues over the course of the year. This was supported by targeted work at service level to strengthen local engagement, particularly with schools and community groups, where performance has been more variable between sites. More widely, a broad programme of community engagement activity continued across the borough, including resident forums, local events and partnership activity with community organisations.
- 3.13 Grant funding and practical support also remained an important part of delivery in this priority. A range of grant programmes continued to attract strong interest, with some funding rounds oversubscribed, demonstrating active engagement from residents and community organisations. The Resident Support Fund also remained heavily used, with work continuing to reduce outstanding applications as the year closed. Attendance at Brent Connects varied across the final round of meetings and was affected by local circumstances and timing factors. Learning from this and feedback from residents provides useful insight for the council to consider in terms of any future engagement model. Taken together, this priority closes the year in a broadly positive position, with examples of strong engagement and service use alongside some variation in participation and demand.

The Best Start in Life

- 3.14 Overall, the data within the Best Start in Life priority shows both strong areas of delivery and some more persistent challenges linked to children's social care and care leaver engagement. The picture is shaped in part by the

complexity of need in some cohorts and, in a number of areas, by stretching targets or measures based on relatively small groups of young people, where quarter-to-quarter changes can appear more pronounced.

- 3.15 There were clear strengths at year end. Family Wellbeing Centres continued to maintain a strong reach across the borough, even though performance fell just short of the ambitious target based on unique users. Youth participation also remained positive, with Brent Youth Parliament activity exceeding expectations and providing a visible route for young people to contribute to wider civic and scrutiny activity. Quality assurance activity involving Care Quality Ambassadors and care leavers also remained strong, supporting oversight of supported accommodation and residential provision.
- 3.16 The more challenging areas within this priority relate primarily to care leaver engagement and some child protection and participation measures. Attendance at Brent Care Journeys and the Care Leavers Hub was lower at the end of the year, influenced in part by timing and seasonal factors, but these remain important areas for continued attention. The proportion of children subject to a second or subsequent child protection plan also remains a key pressure, although the position continues to be understood in the context of wider audit findings, London comparators and improvement work following inspection.
- 3.17 The year-end position also showed some improvement in education, employment and training outcomes for looked after children and care leavers, with the strongest performance coming at the close of the year, although some measures remained just below target. Overall, this priority closes the year with a mixed but understandable position: strong delivery in several preventative and participation-focused services, set alongside more entrenched challenges in care leaver engagement and children's social care that will continue to require focused improvement activity into 2026/27.

A Healthier Brent

- 3.18 A Healthier Brent closes the year with a mixed but broadly positive position. There is strong performance in several preventative and community-based health measures, alongside continued pressures in parts of adult social care. As with other priorities, the year-end picture reflects both local service pressures and the wider context facing health and care systems nationally.
- 3.19 There were clear strengths across public health and prevention activity at year end. New birth visits continued to perform strongly, reablement outcomes remained positive, and Brent Health Matters maintained a high level of engagement with community organisations and residents through health promotion events and health checks. Together, these measures demonstrate the reach of the council's preventative work and its continued focus on engaging and building trust with communities that may be less likely to access health and care services through traditional routes.

- 3.20 The most significant challenge within this priority remains the timeliness of Care Act assessments, where demand has continued to affect performance. Work is underway to increase assessment capacity and reduce waiting times, and changes to the national performance framework will also reshape how this area is monitored from 2026/27. The year-end position on long-term support needs for younger and older adults is less favourable against local targets, although this partly reflects short-term placements converting into longer-term support following review activity, and in the case of older adults remains close to the London benchmark.
- 3.21 Performance in structured drug and alcohol treatment remained close to the year-end target, although final reported figures were affected by the usual lag in national data publication. Overall, this priority closes the year showing strong delivery in prevention, outreach and reablement, alongside sustained pressure in adult social care assessment and demand-led services. This will remain an important area for continued attention into 2026/27.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 KPIs for the Borough Plan 2023-27 were developed in consultation with directorate performance leads and approved by Corporate Management Team.
- 4.2 Balanced scorecard measures have been developed in consultation with Lead Members, Corporate Directors and nominated service leads.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 There is no statutory duty to report regularly to Cabinet on the Council's performance, however under the Local Government Act 1999 section 3 a best value authority has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Guidance provides that: 'for many people, the services provided by their local authority have a very significant impact on their quality of life and provide their main experience of public services. It is vital that these services are delivered to a high standard, and in ways that are responsive to the needs of their users'.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 There are no direct diversity implications. The Learning, growth and culture 'perspective' of the Balanced Scorecard is designed to increase visibility of some existing EDI measures in relation to Brent staff.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 Indicators that support delivery of the Brent Climate Emergency Strategy are included in the 'Cleaner, Greener Future' section of this report and in the first iteration of the Corporate Balanced scorecard.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 There are none.

11.0 Communication Considerations

11.1 We are working closely with Communications and Engagement colleagues around approaches to engaging on the development of the Council Plan.

Related document(s) for reference

Cabinet (9 March 26) - [Corporate Performance update and Q3 reporting](#)

Report sign off:

Rachel Crossley

Corporate Director, Service Reform & Strategy

Legal considerations provided by:

Pameel Crowther Newman

Finance considerations provided by:

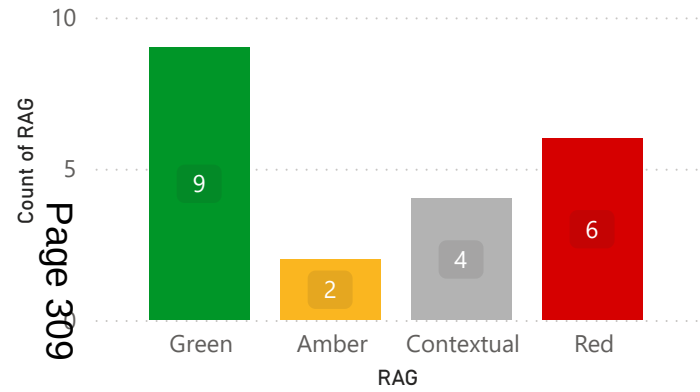
Ravinder Jassar

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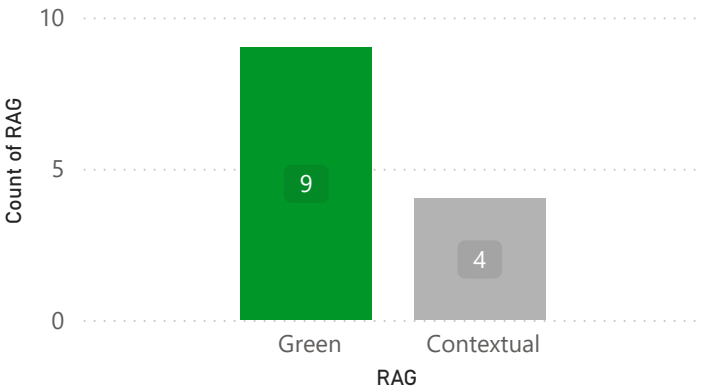
Borough Plan Performance Dashboard - March 2026



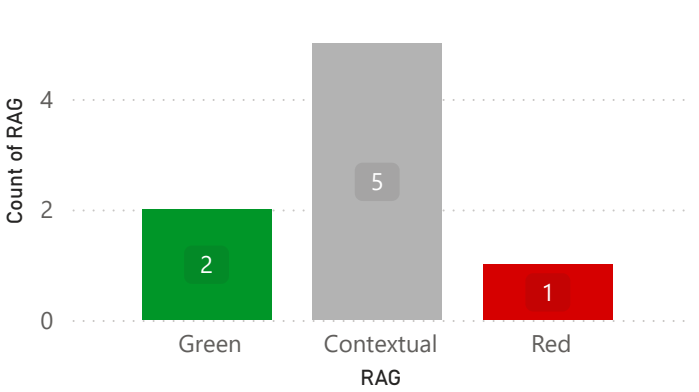
Prosperity and Stability in Brent



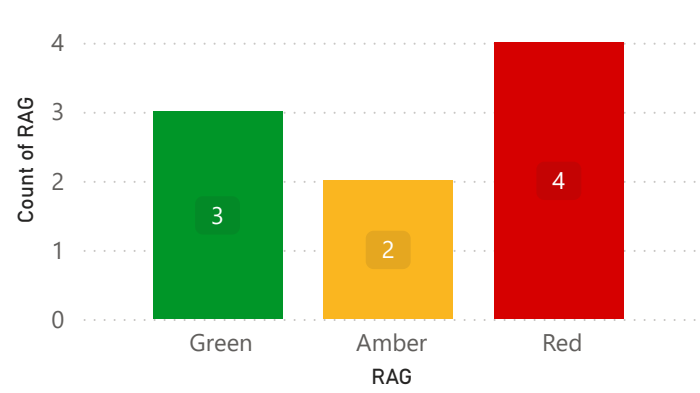
A Cleaner Greener Future



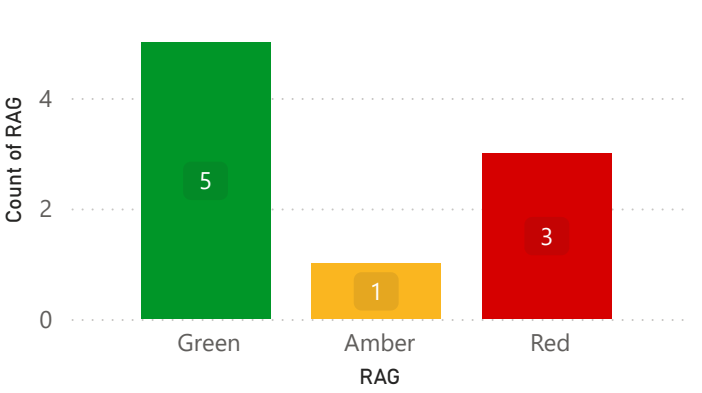
Thriving Communities



The Best Start in Life



A Healthier Brent

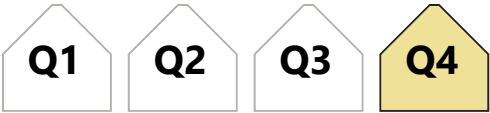


Key for Performance Rating
Unless otherwise defined, performance information is assessed using the following tolerances to give a RAG rating:

- **Green** – At target or exceeding target
- ◆ **Amber** – 0.01% - 5% outside target
- **Red** – Greater than 5% outside target,
- **Contextual** – No target set

— Performance
- - - Target

Borough Plan Performance Dashboard - March 2026



2025-26

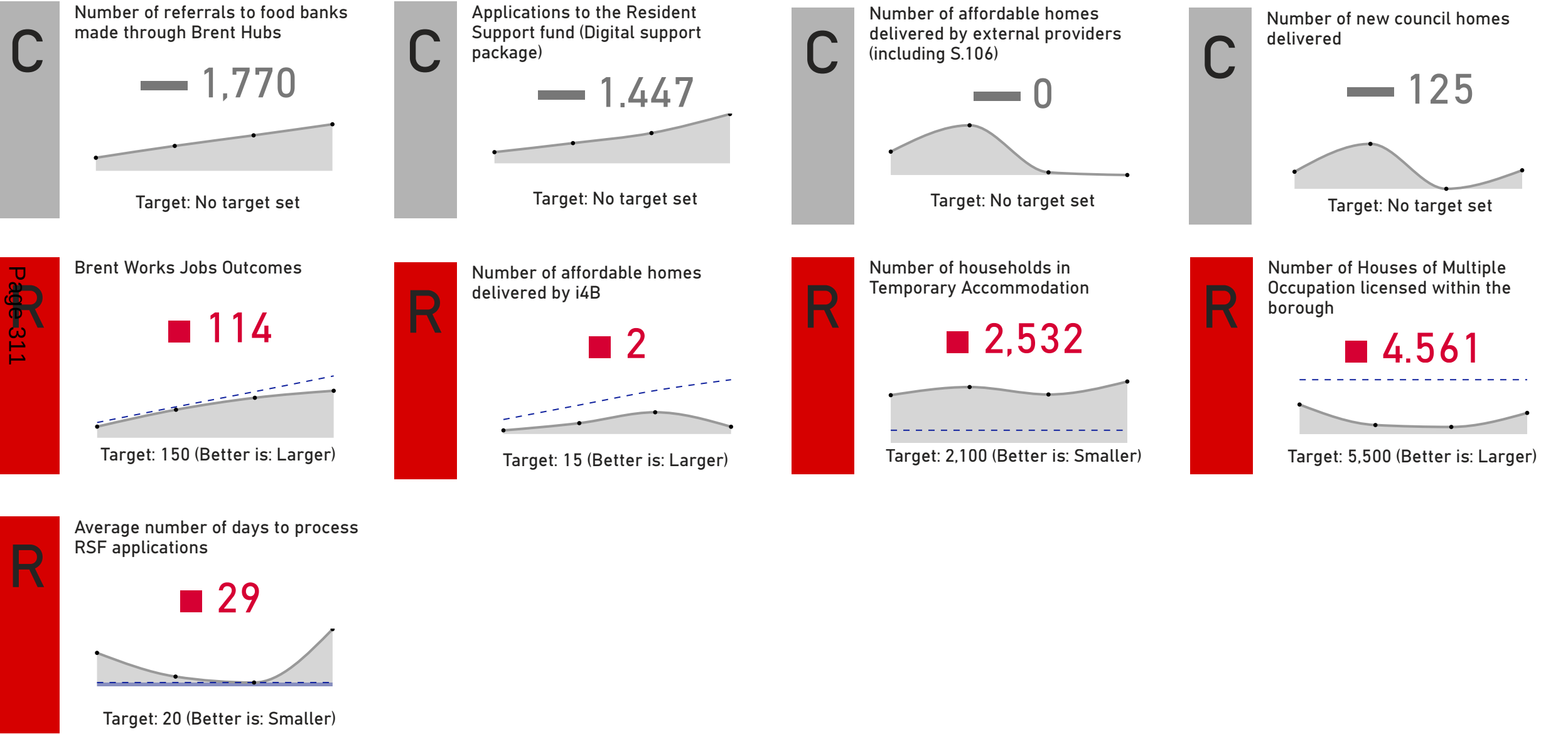
Prosperity and Stability in Brent



Key: Red; Amber; Green Contextual; — Performance; - - - Target

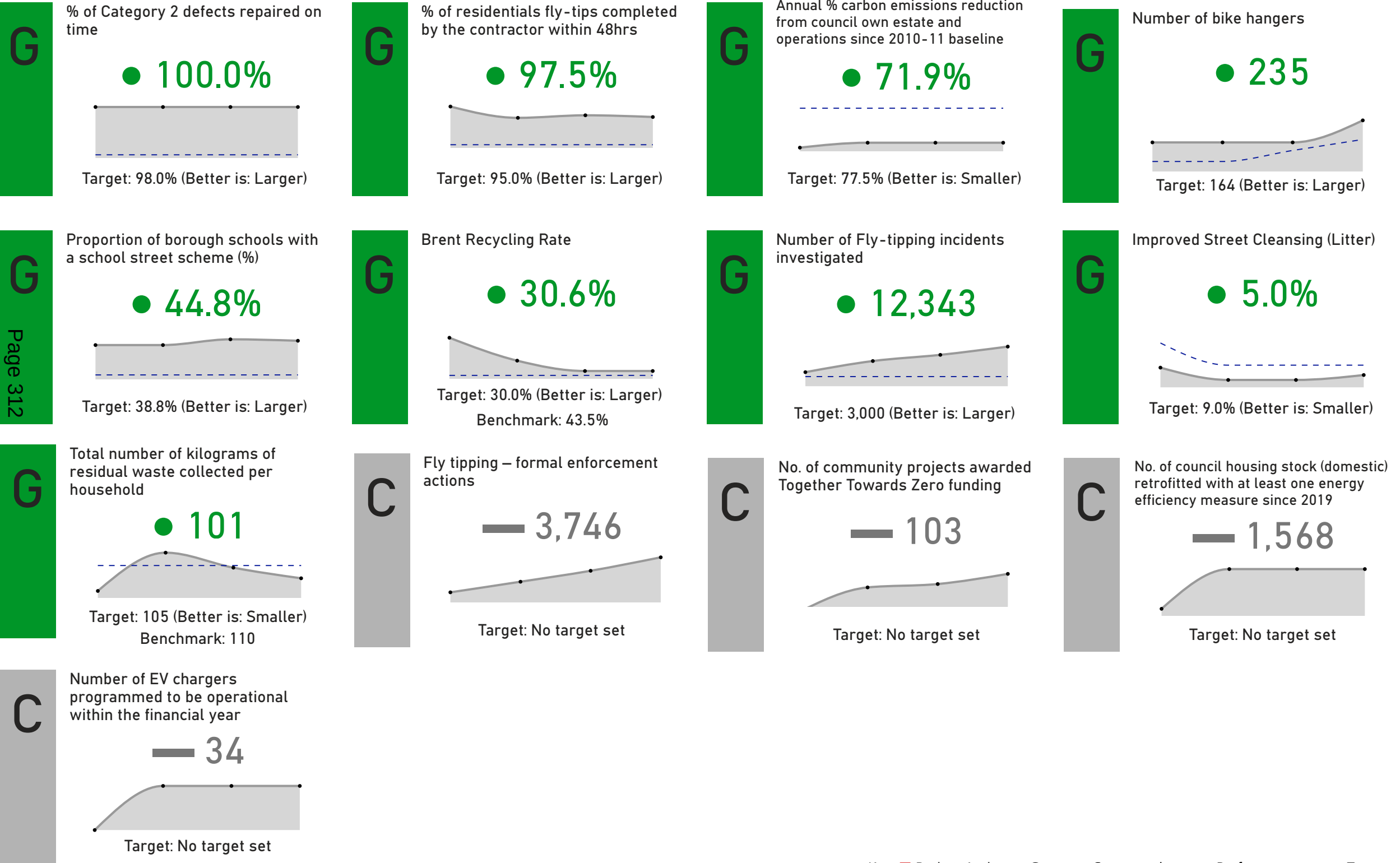
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Prosperity and Stability in Brent



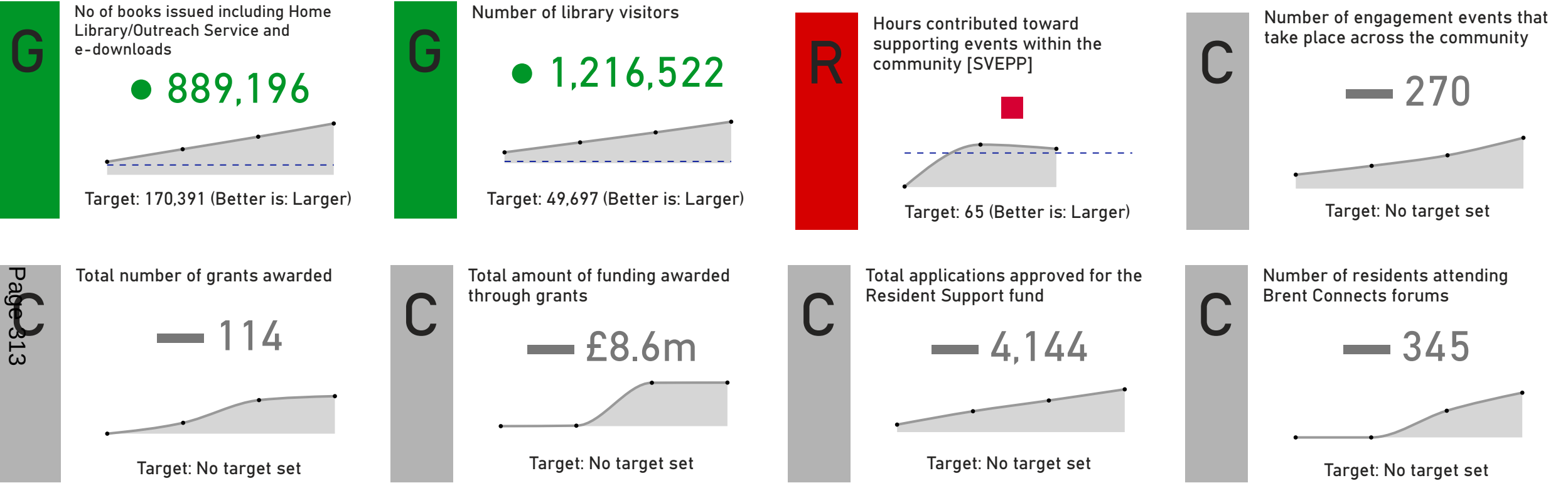
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A Cleaner Greener Future



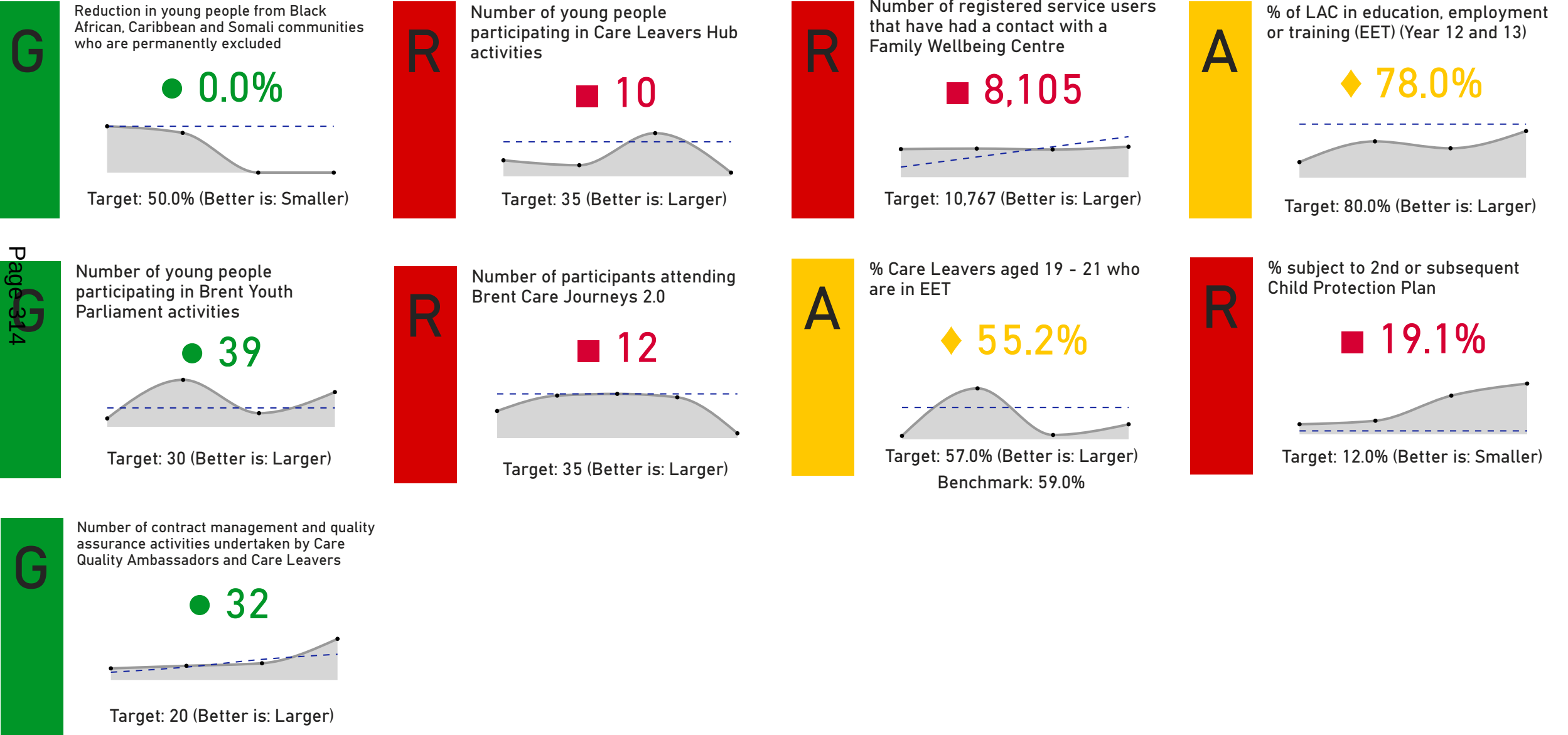
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Thriving Communities



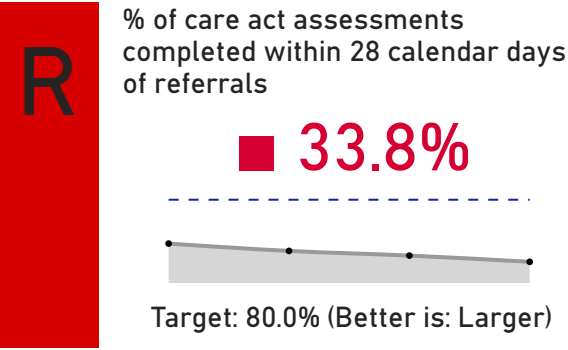
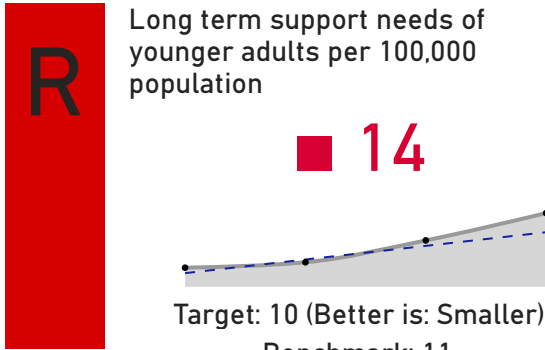
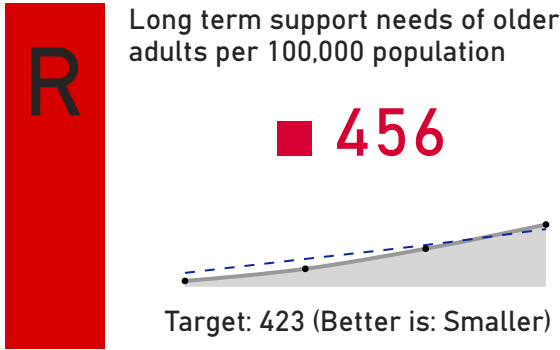
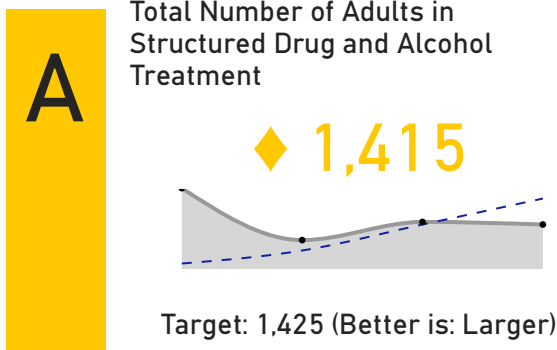
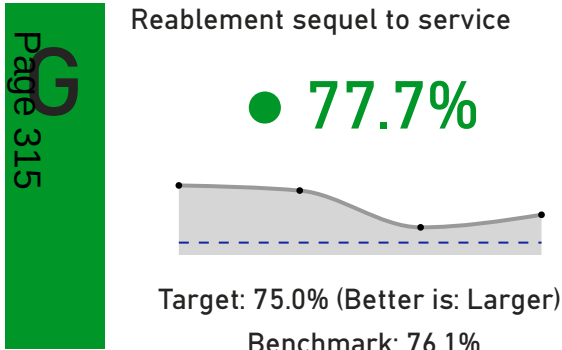
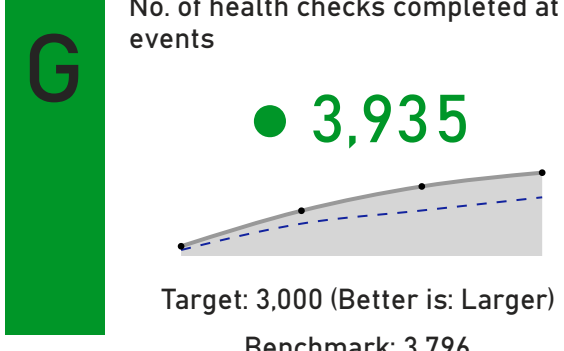
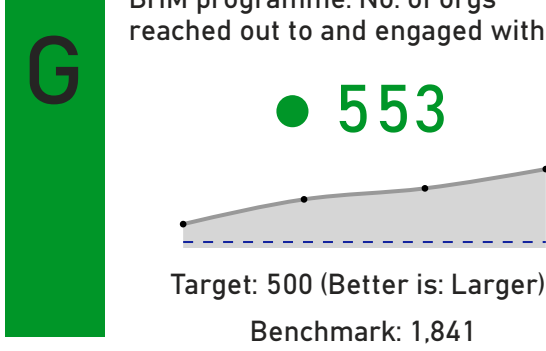
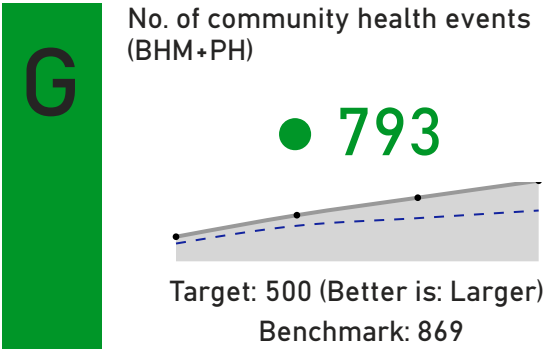
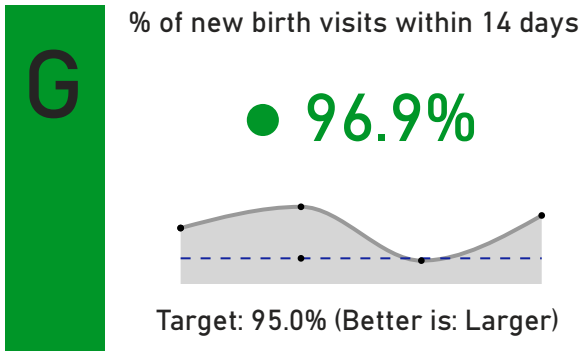
Borough Plan Performance Dashboard - March 2026

The Best Start in Life



Borough Plan Performance Dashboard - March 2026

A Healthier Brent



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	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Service Reform and Strategy Rachel Crossley
	Lead Member – Leader of Council & Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Councillor Muhammed Butt)
S75 Shared Funding Agreement between West and North London Integrated Care Board and Brent Council primarily related to the Better Care Fund	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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:	Seven Appendix 1: Schedule 1 - S75 - Funding 26-27 - Appendix 2: Schedule 2 - Brent Structure and Governance - 26-27 Appendix 3: Schedule 3 - Risk Share and Overspend - 26-27 Appendix 4: Schedule 4 - Joint Working Obligations - 26-27 Appendix 5: Schedule 5 - Performance Arrangements - 26-27 Appendix 6: Schedule 6 - Brent BCF Numerical Plan 2026-27 - awaiting final NHSE Approval Appendix 7: Schedule 7 - Brent BCF Narrative Plan 2026-27 - awaiting final NHSE Approval
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Eleanor Maxwell, Senior Programme Officer – BCF Lead 020 8937 2195 Eleanor.Maxwell@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Better Care Fund (BCF) 2026/27 is a key delivery mechanism for achieving Brent's strategic ambitions for health, care and wellbeing. It supports the priorities set out in the Brent Borough Plan, the Brent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the North West London Integrated Care Strategy by promoting prevention, reducing health inequalities, supporting people to live independently for longer and improving outcomes through integrated, person-centred care. BCF investment enables health, social care and voluntary and community sector partners to work collaboratively to reduce avoidable hospital admissions, support timely discharge, strengthen community-based services and improve the experience and independence of residents. During 2026/27, the BCF will also support the borough's transition towards integrated neighbourhood working, ensuring services are coordinated around the needs of local communities while delivering the national priorities and objectives set out within the Better Care Fund Policy Framework.
- 1.2. This report informs Cabinet of the proposal to enter a partnership arrangement, under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006, in respect of the delivery of the approved Better Care Fund Plan with West and North London Integrated Commissioning Board (W&NL ICB) for 2026/27. The report summarises the reasons for entering into a new Section 75 Agreement for the delivery of the Better Care Fund Plan for 2026/27.
- 1.3. A new Section 75 Agreement is required following the amalgamation of North West London ICB and North Central London ICB, resulting in the establishment of the West and North London ICB as the Council's new statutory partner for the Better Care Fund. The proposed agreement covers the period 2026/27 and has a total pooled budget value of £57,025,104.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the proposal to enter a new partnership arrangement under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 with the West and North London Integrated Care Board for the delivery of the approved Better Care Fund Plan for 2026/27, with a total pooled budget value of £57,025,104, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.
- 2.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Service Reform and Strategy in consultation with the Lead Member for Adult Social Care to extend the Agreement referred to in 2.1 above by such period or periods as are considered appropriate up to a maximum of 4 years, such extensions shall conclude by the 31 March 2031.
- 2.3 Delegate authority to Corporate Director Service Reform and Strategy in consultation with the Corporate Director Finance and Resources to make annual financial contributions to the Better Care Fund budget for subsequent financial years provided there is no substantial change to the Agreement.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1.1 The Better Care Fund is about making health and care services work better together for Brent residents. By bringing together funding from the Council and the NHS, we can plan services around the person rather than around organisational boundaries.
- 3.1.2 For 2026/27, this agreement will support a Brent budget of nearly £60 million. That funding will help people remain independent in their own homes, avoid unnecessary hospital admissions and help them safely return home when they no longer need care in a hospital setting. It will also support earlier intervention, stronger community services and closer working with the voluntary sector.
- 3.1.3 A new agreement is needed because the West and North London Integrated Care Board has been established as our new statutory health partner. While the organisational governance may have changed, our aim has not: we want residents to receive joined-up, compassionate care that responds to their circumstances and helps them live healthier and more independent lives.
- 3.1.4 I am pleased to support this agreement and welcome the continued partnership between Brent Council, the NHS, care providers and our voluntary and community organisations. By working together and making the best use of our shared resources, we can deliver better outcomes for people right across Brent.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 On 17 April 2023, following Cabinet approval, the Council entered a Partnership Arrangement under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006, in respect of the delivery of the approved Better Care Fund (“BCF”) Plan with North West London Integrated Commissioning Board (NWL ICB) for 2023/24 (the “s75 Agreement”). The s75 Agreement was for an initial period of one year for the financial year 2023/24 with the option to extend for a further four years. Officers exercised the option to extend for 2024/25 and then a further extension to cover 2025/26.
- 3.2.2 Officers are not exercising the option to extend the existing Section 75 Agreement until 2028. Whilst the previous Agreement contained provisions permitting extension, the establishment of the West and North London Integrated Care Board as a new legal entity, together with changes to the Better Care Fund arrangements and the incorporation of amendments made over previous years, make it appropriate to replace the existing Agreement with a single consolidated document. This Agreement is intended to provide a clear and up-to-date contractual framework for the Parties.
- 3.2.3 The principles and context of the new s75 matches previous years, but it has been updated to reflect the operational plan for 2026/27. It uses a template provided nationally to facilitate the process.

This Agreement includes provisions allowing it to be extended for further period(s) of up to four years, subject to agreement between the Parties. This approach supports the annual Better Care Fund planning and assurance process while reducing the need for annual replacement agreements.

- 3.2.4 Officers considered that the s75 Agreement has assisted with close working between Adult Social Care (ASC) and Health and therefore propose to continue the partnership arrangements as provided for in the s75 Agreement.
- 3.2.5 The aims and benefits of entering into a s75 Agreement are to:
- a) improve the quality and efficiency of services.
 - b) meet the National Conditions and local objectives.
 - c) make more effective use of resources through the establishment and maintenance of a pooled fund for revenue expenditure of the Services.
- 3.2.6 Given the change in the legal entity of W&NL ICB, that BCF funding varies year on year and priorities change, Officers consider that a new s75 Agreement should be entered into. The s75 agreement reflects the approved 2026/27 BCF Plan as formally reviewed and agreed by Brent Council, W&NL ICB, together with formal approval from Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB). The BCF Plan is in the final stages of approval by NHS England and approval will be confirmed prior to execution of the Agreement.
- 32..7 The BCF plan for 2026-27 has been updated to reflect all budget funding arrangements and updated guidance from NHS England. This includes new schemes commissioned by the Local Authority or the NHS, updated funding allocations for existing schemes and the removal of schemes that are no longer funded. These changes ensure that funding arrangements reflect current priorities, commissioning intentions and national BCF requirements.
- 3.2.8 The BCF is integral to delivering Brent's health and wellbeing priorities for both the Council and its health partners, including W&NL ICB. The effectiveness and value for money of BCF-funded services are monitored through a combination of scheme-specific performance indicators, national BCF metrics, financial monitoring, benchmarking against peer organisations and formal governance arrangements through the BCF Board and wider system governance structures. Formal quarterly reporting to Council, W&NL ICB and NHS England also takes place.
- 3.2.9 Within the Local Authority the BCF Board provides oversight of financial performance, delivery against agreed outcomes, risk management and compliance with national BCF requirements.
- 3.2.10 The BCF remains a key mechanism through which Brent Council and the W&NL ICB deliver integrated health and social care services and national BCF Fund objectives

- 3.2.11 Approval of the Section 75 Agreement will enable Brent Council and the W&NL ICB to establish the BCF pooled budget arrangements for 2026/27 and continue delivery of integrated health and social care services in line with the approved BCF Plan.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 The BCF Plan has been developed jointly with Brent Council, W&NL ICB, NHS providers including Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL), Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) and voluntary sector partners through established governance arrangements, including oversight through the Health and Wellbeing Board.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The value of the Contract, S75 Agreement in 2026/27 is £57,025,104. The value is an increase of £924,876.64 compared to the previous year, 2025/26. This increase is a result of the annual increase of 4.4% to the Minimum Contribution from the NHS which is shared between the Council and the ICB. This S75 agreement reflects the 2026/27 Plan.
- 5.2 The cost of this Contract is funded from the confirmed BCF funding sources – see Schedule 1 - S75 - Funding 26-27
- 5.3 The financial contributions from each partner are reflected within the approved Better Care Fund Plan and can be contained within existing approved budgets.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 Section 75 Agreements is an arrangement specifically provided for under the National Health Service Act 2006 and therefore falls outside Procurement Legislation. The Section 75 Agreement provides the legal basis under which Local Authorities and health bodies can work together to improve health and social care provisions. This includes making arrangements for the pooling of funds and the delegation of responsibility for the commissioning of services.
- 6.2 Officers are proposing to enter into a Section 75 agreement with the North and West London Integrated Care Board for the Better Care Fund for 2026/27. This will include the option to extend the agreement by such period or periods are considered appropriate up to a further 4 years, such extensions to conclude by 31 March 2031. The Section 75 agreement will include proposed commissioning schemes and the funding arrangements for year 2026/27. Funding for 2027/28 onwards will be agreed in line with the NHS England Guidance and process on an annual basis.
- 6.3 In accordance with Part 3 of the Council's Constitution as the value of the section 75 Agreement will be classed as High Value, officers are seeking Cabinet approval to enter into the Agreement.

- 6.4 Contract Standing Order 85(a), provides that no Partnership Arrangements may be entered into unless they are approved by the Corporate Director Finance and Resources and a formal agreement covering the arrangements is signed by both parties

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 Many BCF schemes are specifically designed to support older people, disabled people and residents experiencing health inequalities.
- 7.2 Pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010 (the “Public Sector Equality Duty”), the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act.
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.3 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.
- 7.6 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 The proposals set out in this report relate to the continuation of partnership arrangements between Brent Council and the W&NL ICB through the BCF Section 75 Agreement for 2026/27. The report primarily concerns governance, financial arrangements and the commissioning of health and social care services.

- 8.2 There are no direct environmental or climate change implications arising from the approval of the Section 75 Agreement. However, the BCF supports the delivery of integrated, community-based services that can reduce the need for avoidable hospital admissions, support timely discharge from hospital and enable residents to receive care closer to home. These approaches may contribute indirectly to reducing travel requirements for residents and professionals and support more efficient use of health and care resources.
- 8.3 Key services delivered by health Partners including CNWL and CLCH or through Council commissioned services are expected to have due regard to either the host organisation or the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy and environmental objectives, with specific impacts considered through relevant decision-making processes.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 9.1 Services are provided by a combination of external agencies and contractors, and Brent Council employed staff. There are no implications for permanently employed Council staff arising from this agreement.
- 9.2 There are no implications for property or accommodation as a result of this agreement.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 The approval of the Better Care Fund Section 75 Agreement does not require a specific public communications campaign. The agreement formalises existing partnership arrangements between Brent Council and the W&NL ICB and supports the continued delivery of integrated health and social care services.
- 10.2 Relevant stakeholders, including Council services, NHS partners and commissioned providers, will be informed of the approval and any associated changes to funding arrangements or service delivery through established governance and operational channels. Where service changes arise from Better Care Fund programmes, appropriate communication and engagement plans will be developed and implemented in line with Council and NHS communication requirements.
- 10.3 Ongoing communication between partners will continue through the Better Care Fund governance arrangements to ensure shared understanding of priorities, performance, delivery and outcomes.

Report sign off:

Rachel Crossley

Corporate Director of Service, Reform and Strategy

Legal considerations provided by:

Ann Osbourne

Finance considerations provided by:

Christine Fasunloye

SCHEDULE 1 – SCHEME SPECIFICATION

Part 1 – Better Care Fund (BCF) Services Schedule 2026/27

TEMPLATE SERVICE SCHEDULE

Unless the context otherwise requires, the defined terms used in this Scheme Specification shall have the meanings set out in the Agreement.

1 OVERVIEW OF INDIVIDUAL SERVICE

1.1 Name of the Individual Scheme:

Better Care Fund – please refer to the tables for the individual schemes at section 5 – Services

1.2 Relevant context and background information

The Local Authority (LA) has responsibility for commissioning and/or providing social care services on behalf of the population of the borough of Brent.

The ICB has the responsibility for commissioning health services pursuant to the 2006 Act in the borough of Brent.

The Better Care Fund has been established by the Government to provide funds to local areas to support the integration of health and social care and to seek to achieve the National Conditions and Local Objectives. It is a requirement of the Better Care Fund that the ICB and the LA establish a partnership for this purpose.

Section 75 of the 2006 Act gives powers to local authorities and clinical commissioning groups to establish and maintain pooled funds out of which payment may be made towards expenditure incurred in the exercise of prescribed local authority functions and prescribed NHS functions.

Since 2015, the Government's aims around integrating health, social care and housing, through the Better Care Fund (BCF), have played a key role in the journey towards person-centred integrated care. This is because these aims have provided a context in which the NHS and local authorities work together, as equal partners, with shared objectives. The plans produced are presented and agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and represent a single, local plan for the integration of health and social care.

In every year of its operation, most local areas have agreed that the BCF has improved joint working and had a positive impact on integration.

There are no pooled funds.

2 AIMS AND OUTCOMES

The aims and benefits of the Partners in entering into this Agreement are to:

- (1) Improve the quality and efficiency of the health and social care to improve outcomes for residents.
- (2) Meet the National Conditions and Local Objectives for BCF;
- (3) Make more effective use of resources to support the integration of Health and Social Care.

3 THE ARRANGEMENTS

The ICB and LA are the lead commissioners for their respective projects. Each project is funded as a non-pooled fund.

4 FUNCTIONS

Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities are under a duty to carry out their care and support responsibilities with the aim of joining-up the services provided or other actions taken with those provided by the NHS and other health-related services (for example, housing or leisure services). This general requirement applies to all the local authority's care and support functions for adults with needs for care and support and for carers. The duty applies where the local authority considers that the integration of services will:

- promote the wellbeing of adults with care and support needs or carers in its area
- contribute to the prevention or delay of the development of additional support and care needs of citizens
- improve the quality of care and support in the local authority's area, including the outcomes that are achieved for local citizens

The BCF contributes to the LA fulfilling its Duty in accordance with the Care Act 2014.

5 SERVICES

A 1-year plan 2026/27 was signed off on TBC by NHS England. The plan for the year as it relates to Brent ICB and Brent LA schemes is outlined in the tables below. These are defined by funding streams.

(the final sign off from NHSE not yet received as at 25th June, but due imminently and date will be updated into this schedule once received.)

Total Funds £57,025,106

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)					£6,597,406			
Scheme ID	Scheme Name	Brief Description of Scheme	Expenditure 26/27	BCF Scheme Type	Source of Funding	Area of Spend	Commissioner	Provider
43	DFG funding for home adaptations and independent living	Provision of an integrated universal access service to support home adaptations. Budget is pooled with other grants to provide this service.	£6,597,406.00	Housing related schemes	Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority

Local Authority Better Care Grant					£16,462,867			
Scheme ID	Scheme Name	Brief Description of Scheme	Expenditure 26/27	BCF Scheme Type	Source of Funding	Area of Spend	Commissioner	Provider
1	Residential and Nursing Care placements	Spot provision of residential and nursing care placements	£5,567,931.00	Long-term residential/nursing home care	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
3	Supported Living placements for adults with MH or LD to maintain independence	Supporting a working age population, with mental health conditions or learning disabilities, to retain maximum independence whilst living in a supported living unit.	£3,417,698.00	Wider local support to promote prevention and independence	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
8	Social Worker supporting step-down beds	1 x SW to support patient throughput across all step down bed provision	£77,598.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
11	Home-care packages (line 1 of 2)	Provision of home care packages	£5,135,067.05	Long-term home-based social care services	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
20	Mental Health Hospital Discharge Team	Supporting discharge from acute hospitals, MH units and complex patients with LD and autism.	£700,398.95	Discharge support and infrastructure	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
25	Community Equipment	Services supporting safe discharges and enabling residents to live at home independently	£290,000.00	Assistive technologies and equipment	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
26	Technology Assistive Care Pilot	Pilot scheme to introduce tele assistive care equipment to support care and independence for residents in their own home, including older adults, LD and MH cohorts.	£200,000.00	Assistive technologies and equipment	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
28	Practice Development Lead for OT - standards and innovation	To drive improvements in professional practice across all OTs including training, and service delivery and flow across the system, monitoring standards and driving innovation.	£89,636.00	Wider local support to promote prevention and independence	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
31	Night Time Floating Support Service	Providing overnight packages in addition to day time calls, to support recovery at home, admission avoidance and reduce care home admissions. Focus on discharge from acute, but expanded service also able to accommodate a cohort of longer term patients.	£786,240.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
34	Clinical Specialist Support Nurse - to facilitate discharge from acute settings to care homes	Supporting discharge from acute hospitals to care homes by completing assessment process on behalf of homes to speed up discharge and encourage home to accept patients	£68,000.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
37	Admiral Nurses to support Carers of residents with dementia in the community	2 x Admiral Nurses based in community to support Carers of residents with dementia. Aligned to Neighbourhood / PCNs with highest needs.	£130,298.00	Support to carers, including unpaid carers	Local Authority Better Care Grant	Community Health	Local Authority	NHS Community Provider

NWL ICB Discharge Funding					£3,190,160			
Scheme ID	Scheme Name	Brief Description of Scheme	Expenditure 26/27	BCF Scheme Type	Source of Funding	Area of Spend	Commissioner	Provider
2	P3 Beds to support discharge from acute hospitals	6 weeks funding to support discharge into residential care	£1,076,690.00	Bed-based intermediate care (short-term bed-based rehabilitation, reablement and recovery services)	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
23	Ashford Place - Dementia / Mental Health Early Discharge Support Team	Reducing hospital stays by facilitating community discharges, enhancing the independence, well-being, and health of local residents, inc. low-severity mental health concerns, learning disabilities, and dementia.	£140,000.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	Other (Ashford Place Dementia / Mental Health Hub)	NHS	Charity / Voluntary Sector
32	Complex patient short-term discharge support for assessment, Health funding	Health funding for complex care patients in P3 beds and other settings. For conditions including delirium, dementia and challenging behaviour. Funding covers additional staff required to facilitate, plus placements and 1 to 1 hours until baseline assessments inc. DSTs where appropriate can be completed.	£1,378,832.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	Community Health	Local Authority	Local Authority
33	Gap patient short-term discharge support, Health funding	Health funding for 'gap' patients where there are identified health needs e.g. NWB requiring POC at home to facilitate discharge, but no health pathway exists and being managed through the LA.	£139,834.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
35	Dementia Behaviour Specialist - to provide transitional support for patients and carers after discharge - Line 1 of 2	Supporting both community and care home settings. Encouraging care homes to accept challenging placements, and supporting carers to reduce carer stress and support patients to remain at home for longer.	£194,744.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	Social Care	Local Authority	NHS Community Provider
113	Gap commissioning: Mildmay HIV and Homeless 1:1 (by ICB)	New scheme, title and funding confirmed NWL ICB	£59,000.00	Long-term home-based community health services	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	Continuing Care	NHS	NHS
114	Personal Health Budget Cards	New scheme, title and funding confirmed NWL ICB	£10,000.00	Personalised budgeting and commissioning	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	Other (NWL ICB)	NHS	NHS
115	Homeless Health NWL enhanced model.	Supporting vulnerable population with targeted services ensures consistent support across Borough boundaries.	£191,060.00	Long-term home-based community health services	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	Community Health	NHS	NHS

NHS Minimum Contribution to LA					£10,978,509			
Scheme ID	Scheme Name	Brief Description of Scheme	Expenditure 26/27	BCF Scheme Type	Source of Funding	Area of Spend	Commissioner	Provider
4	Reablement Service - Line 1 of 2	Costs for packages of care to residents and staff delivering reablement services at home.	£3,076,462.09	Home-based intermediate care (short-term home-based rehabilitation, reablement and recovery services)	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
6	Step-down beds co-located in extra care - Line 1 of 2	Block contract beds for step down patients co-located in extra care	£320,796.49	Home-based intermediate care (short-term home-based rehabilitation, reablement and recovery services)	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
9	Physiotherapy assessment and support to ASC reablement program	Providing review and support to patients for Physiotherapy goals supporting ASC Reablement Care Planning and on-going needs.	£80,000.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Community Health	Local Authority	NHS Community Provider
10	Training for Reablement providers	Support for training, staff development, governance inc. dementia	£20,000.00	Home-based intermediate care (short-term home-based rehabilitation, reablement and recovery services)	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
12	Home-care packages (line 2 of 2)	Provision of home care packages	£1,101,566.89	Long-term home-based social care services	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
13	Short-term 1 to 1 complex care in the community	Providing short-term 1 to 1 in the community, whilst placement sought, to facilitate hospital discharge or due to unpaid carer absence (e.g. their hospitalisation).	£400,000.00	Short-term home-based social care (excluding rehabilitation, reablement or recovery services)	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
14	Integrated Neighbourhood Team	Supporting neighbourhood development including teams aligned within PCN and community services	£621,773.12	Evaluation and enabling integration	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
15	BCF Lead	To own operational delivery for BCF planning, assurance and reporting for Brent.	£84,454.13	Evaluation and enabling integration	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
16	BCF Data / Systems Analyst	To provide BI capacity for all required discharge and other BCF related reporting, providing expertise and capacity to develop system led reporting functionality across all schemes, improving KPI tracking and analysis and supporting deep dives.	£72,305.29	Evaluation and enabling integration	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
17	Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) Team	Providing integrated care support with care coordinators	£326,085.29	Evaluation and enabling integration	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
18	Bridging Service supporting patients on discharge home from acute hospitals	Deliver up to 5 days of care, to enable any patient ready to be discharged home on the same day. Patients are then assessed at home, for either reablement, or longer term needs.	£1,034,414.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Community Health	NHS	Local Authority
19	Acute Hospital Discharge Team	Funding entire HDT team including safeguarding function.	£2,411,996.87	Discharge support and infrastructure	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
21	Autism Community Co-ordinator to prevent admissions and aid independence	Co-ordinating and supporting residents with an autism diagnosis in the community to thrive, avoiding hospital admission, supporting carers and maintain maximum possible independence.	£59,378.55	Wider local support to promote prevention and independence	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
22	Housing Officers supporting discharge from acute and MH hospitals.	Supporting assessment, facilitating discharge and ongoing care planning for all patients with any housing need inc. Care Act, Human Rights or Housing criteria.	£212,168.36	Housing related schemes	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
24	Community Equipment OT supporting hospital discharges (equipment needs)	Ensuring swift provision of community equipment, aids and adaptations, prevention in health decline and mobility admission avoidance and carer support	£84,454.00	Assistive technologies and equipment	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
27	Social Care Community-based Trusted Assessment Team	Maximising independence and prevention through strength based practice in community via Trusted Assessments inc. OT, part of wider multi disciplinary team reducing risk of loss of independence by early intervention, inc. swift provision of community equipment, aids and adaptations, SW assessments and carer support.	£216,915.00	Wider local support to promote prevention and independence	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
29	Complex Care Training for Care Homes / Community Carers	Support for training, staff development, governance inc. dementia	£45,000.00	Support to carers, including unpaid carers	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
30	Community based Handyman service	Providing urgent care to individuals at home, helping prevent hospital admissions and supporting recovery after falls	£75,522.58	Wider local support to promote prevention and independence	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
36	Dementia Behaviour Specialist - to provide transitional support for patients and carers after discharge - Line 2 of 2	Supporting both community and care home settings. Encouraging care homes to accept challenging placements, and supporting carers to reduce carer stress and support patients to remain at home for longer.	£5,256.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	NHS Community Provider
38	Access team supporting safeguarding and admission avoidance	Delivering additional capacity into support timely community review and intervention related to safeguarding referrals.	£203,919.00	Wider local support to promote prevention and independence	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
39	Brent Carers service - Supporting unpaid carers, advice and wellbeing services	Supporting assessment, facilitating discharge and ongoing care planning for all patients with any housing need inc. Care Act, Human Rights or Housing criteria.	£229,415.34	Support to carers, including unpaid carers	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
40	Carer Engagement Officer providing information and support	Providing information, advice and support for carers	£62,380.00	Support to carers, including unpaid carers	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
41	NEW SCHEME - Hospital admission avoidance staff pilot placing OT and SW in A&E	Pilot to deploy 1 Occupational Therapist (OT) and 1 Social Worker (SW) from the Access Team into hospital A&E department to support admission avoidance and maintain patient safety while patients await a full needs assessment.	£144,610.00	Evaluation and enabling integration	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
42	NEW SCHEME - Additional Market Oversight Manager in Commissioning to increase capacity and oversight for MH and complex providers	To add capacity to review existing provision across MH and Complex providers, identify gaps and source additional to add capacity to the system, enabling discharge and right sizing community placements.	£89,636.00	Discharge support and infrastructure	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority

NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend					£19,175,092			
Scheme ID	Scheme Name	Brief Description of Scheme	Expenditure 26/27	BCF Scheme Type	Source of Funding	Area of Spend	Commissioner	Provider
44	Contribution to Child Safeguarding Board	The Child Safeguarding Board, coordinates multi-agency efforts to protect children from harm, ensuring compliance with the Children Act 2004, and promoting best practices in safeguarding and child welfare.	£49,555.86	Other	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	Local Authority
45	Contribution to Adult Safeguarding Board	The Adult Safeguarding Board, coordinates multi-agency efforts to protect vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect, ensuring compliance with the Care Act 2014, and promoting best practices in safeguarding.	£26,991.09	Other	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	Local Authority
101	Community Rapid Response and Falls Service	Providing urgent care to individuals at home, helping prevent hospital admissions and supporting recovery after falls	£3,296,824.75	Urgent community response	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
102	Enhanced Care Home Support Team	Supporting care home patients with preventative measures to avoid hospital admissions	£1,037,860.26	Wider local support to promote prevention and independence	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
103	Community Based Schemes - Rehab beds in Furness Ward, Willesden.	Shared scheme to improve access to and outcomes for pathway 2 rehab for all ages, all NW London patients	£1,093,974.09	Bed-based intermediate care (short-term bed-based rehabilitation, reablement and recovery services)	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
104	ICCS - Integrated Care Co-ordinators Service	Providing integrated care support with care coordinators	£235,405.60	Evaluation and enabling integration	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
105	Frailty and Integrated complex patient management service	Supporting patients with frailty and complex care needs	£1,368,420.40	Long-term home-based community health services	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
106	Community and Neuro Rehab	Supporting recovery after neurological conditions or injuries, improving independence and quality of life.	£1,516,560.83	Long-term home-based community health services	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
107	Tissue Viability	Supporting patients with tissue viability conditions in the community.	£516,212.80	Long-term home-based community health services	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
108	Community Equipment	Services supporting safe discharges and enabling residents live at home independently	£2,056,425.74	Assistive technologies and equipment	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	Local Authority
109	NHS Community Service - Ageing Well Anticipatory Care	NHS Community Service - Ageing Well Anticipatory Care	£199,349.79	Long-term home-based community health services	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
110	NHS Community Service - Ageing Well Diabetes	NHS Community Service - Ageing Well Diabetes	£491,926.53	Long-term home-based community health services	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
111	NHS Community Service - Ageing Well Fair shares of remainder / tackling inequalities	NHS Community Service - Ageing Well Fair shares of remainder/tackling inequalities	£289,785.91	Long-term home-based community health services	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider
112	NHS Community Services - Community Nursing	Providing specialized healthcare at home, supporting patients with chronic illnesses, disabilities, or post-hospital recovery needs.	£6,995,798.55	Long-term home-based community health services	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	Community Health	NHS	NHS Community Provider

Additional North West London (NWL) ICB Contribution				£621,072				
Scheme ID	Scheme Name	Brief Description of Scheme	Expenditure 26/27	BCF Scheme Type	Source of Funding	Area of Spend	Commissioner	Provider
5	Reablement Service (Staffing) Line 2 of 2	Staff delivering reablement services at home	£411,990.49	Home-based intermediate care (short-term home-based rehabilitation, reablement and recovery services)	Additional North West London (NWL) ICB Contribution	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority
7	Step-down beds co-located in extra care - Line 2 of 2	Block contract beds for step down patients co-located in extra care	£209,081.51	Home-based intermediate care (short-term home-based rehabilitation, reablement and recovery services)	Additional North West London (NWL) ICB Contribution	Social Care	Local Authority	Local Authority

6 COMMISSIONING, CONTRACTING, ACCESS

Commissioning Arrangements:

Brent Local Authority is the Lead Commissioner for the LA Schemes, and these schemes are directly provided.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) – these scheme costs are facilitated by the Council's Housing Directorate, following Occupational Therapy assessment.

Brent ICB is the Lead Commissioner for the ICB Schemes

Contracting Arrangements

- (a) All Brent LA Schemes are commissioned using established commissioning protocols.
- (b) All ICB services are commissioned using NHS Standard Contracts.
- (c) The Lead Partners for the contracted service is responsible for the contract and commissioning of the individual service.
- (d) The Lead Partner for the contracted service has authority to terminate a contract in line with stipulated terms. They also maintain responsibility for delivering the service as agreed in the BCF plan and in line with statutory duties if applicable. This will include identifying a nominated replacement partner which could include but is not limited to the alternative partner. Financial arrangements would form part of the new contract agreed.
- (e) Eligibility for access to each service is in line with the published criteria by service.

7 FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS – 2026/27

The financial contribution of the ICB and the LA to any Non-Pooled Funds are set out below and fund the agreed schemes noted in paragraph 5 above. Any variations to these contributions must be agreed by the Partners in writing.

	All Funds are Non-Pooled	NHS Contribution		LA contribution		Uplift	Notes
		2025/2026	2026/2027	2025/2026	2026/2027		
1	Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)			£6,597,406	£6,597,406	£0	
2	Local Authority Better Care Grant			£16,462,867	£16,462,867	£0	
3	NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	£10,511,117	£10,978,509			£467,392	
4	NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	£18,782,861	£19,175,090			£392,229	
5	NWL ICB Discharge Funding	£3,124,905	£3,190,160			£65,255	Since 25/26 Discharge funding formally falls under the NHS Minimum for NHSE reporting, but is operationally tracked separately.
6	Additional North West London (NWL) ICB Contribution	£621,072	£621,072			£0	
	Total Funds	£33,039,955	£33,964,831	£23,060,273	£23,060,273	£924,876	

8 FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

(2) Management of the Non-Pooled Fund

Contributions to Non-Pooled Funds are prescribed by the BCF Policy Framework and Annual Planning Requirements.

(3) Audit Arrangements

All partners shall promote a culture of probity and sound financial discipline and control. Annual scheme expenditure will be audited in accordance with the annual audit process of the relevant organisation.

All internal and external auditors and any other persons authorised by the partners will be given the right of access to any document, information, or explanation they require from any employee, or member of the Partnership, in order to carry out their duties. This right is not limited to financial information or accounting records and applies equally to premises or equipment used in connection with this Agreement. Access may be at any time without notice, provided there is good cause for access without notice.

(4) Financial Management

Each Partner will be responsible for establishing the financial and administrative support necessary to enable the effective and efficient management of the Non-Pooled Funds, meeting all required accounting and auditing obligations.

Where appropriate, contributions will be paid to Partners, invoices shall be paid for the agreed level of funding and shall be paid within 30 days of the invoice date.

Monitoring and reporting arrangements are in line with standard business protocols, managed jointly between the BCF Programme Team and Finance function.

9 VAT

Each partner will be responsible for the treatment of VAT in accordance with relevant guidance from HM Customs and Excise.

10 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PARTNERS

In accordance with the Department of Health and Social Care, Ministry for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Local Government, and NHS England - the Better Care Fund Planning Requirements for 2026-27 plans will be approved by NHS England following a joint NHS and local government assurance process at regional level.

The BCF plans for spending will be jointly agreed by the Local Authority and West and North London ICB.

A report will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) outlining the plans before the commencement of the services, or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter should there be delays from a government department or agency, or joint process impacting this requirement.

BCF Performance and Finance Reports will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on an annual basis.

The North West London ICB and Brent Council will plan and develop the Better Care Plan and monitor and review performance.

Each Lead partner is responsible for;

- monitoring and managing contract performance in accordance with the service contracts including any contractual requirement in relation to creating efficiencies and savings where possible.

The nominated program manager is responsible for preparing and submitting to the ICB the;

- Quarterly reports for the Borough based partnership
- Completing the annual return on income and expenditure together
- Providing any other information as may be required by partners or the ICP to monitor the effectiveness of the non-pooled funds
- Providing any other information as required to enable the partners to complete their own report and returns within statutory timescales

11 NON FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The LA will provide the officer resources to plan, monitor and implement the BCF schemes and governance and funding conditions of reporting.

The ICB will provide the officer resources to plan, monitor and implement the BCF schemes and governance and funding conditions of reporting.

12 STAFF

Staff are employed directly by the Local Authority, ICB or Providers.

13 ASSURANCE AND MONITORING

Annual reports will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

14 LEAD OFFICERS

Partner	Name of Lead Officer	Title	Address	Email Address
Brent Council	Rachel Crossley	Corporate Director Service Reform and Strategy	Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley Park, Wembley, HA9 0FJ	rachel.crossley@brent.gov.uk
West & North London ICB	Sarah McDonnell-Davies	Chief Transformation Officer	W&NL ICB HQ, 15 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5JD	sarah.mcdonnell1@nhs.net

15 INTERNAL APPROVALS

Internal approvals via governance process of the individual Partner. For the Council this is through the BCF Board.

16 RISK AND BENEFIT SHARE ARRANGEMENTS

For operational requirements in relation to the non-pooled funds the lead partner shall inform the BCF Lead and ICB Borough based team on a minimum of a quarterly basis and report any risks to effective delivery. This will trigger a co-ordinated assessment to be completed and formal action plan to be drawn up. The assessment is to cover any and all linked risks to partners, services or patients including financial.

For quarterly budget and financial monitoring / reporting of the non-pooled funds if a lead partner has recognised that there is a risk of an underspend or an overspend the lead partner shall inform the programme manager and report any risks to effective delivery. This will trigger a co-ordinated assessment to be completed and formal action plan to be drawn up. The assessment is to cover any and all linked risks to partners, services or patients including operational.

All assessments of risk and benefit are to be reviewed jointly by the BCF Programme team comprising representatives of both Local Authority and the Brent ICB team to ensure solutions, risk and benefits are effectively addressed.

17 REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The Partners shall cooperate with any investigation undertaken by the Care Quality Commission, the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman and/or the Local Government Commissioner for England or any regulatory authority/body.

The Partners shall cooperate with any audit undertaken by the Audit Commission (or any successor body), the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and/or any local government audits.

The Partners will co-operate with any investigation undertaken by the Health Service Commissioner for England or the Local Government Commissioner for England (or both of them) in connection with this Agreement.

18 INFORMATION SHARING AND COMMUNICATION

The Partners must comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Laws and any other relevant data protection law in force so far as applicable to this Agreement and the Services and must indemnify each other against all actions, costs, expenses, claims, proceedings and demands which may be brought against the other Party for breach of statutory duty under these statutes which arises from the use, disclosure or transfer of Personal Data by the other Party or its servants or agents.

For the purposes of this Clause 18, the terms “Data Controller”, “Data Processor”, “Data Subject”, “Data” and “Processing” will have the meaning prescribed under the Data Protection Laws.

Each Partner and provider of the scheme must also comply with the published standards of their organisation, noting best practice and patient care at the core of operational policy.

19 DURATION AND EXIT STRATEGY

The ICB and Council BCF schemes are agreed on the updated plan for Financial Year 2026-27.

Each Partner is responsible for the detailed contract, budget, duration and delivery, planning service and design and continuance for the scheme they lead. Any termination of individual schemes would be in line with contracts agreed. A partner can only terminate contracts for which they are responsible and must raise all possible risk scenarios in a timely manner to the BCF Programme Team, who will escalate as required in line with their respective governance process. The process must assess risks to patient care and the wider program, including any actions required to mitigate.

Partners are responsible for ensuring that statutory duties for all services which form part of the Local Authority or ICBs are maintained.

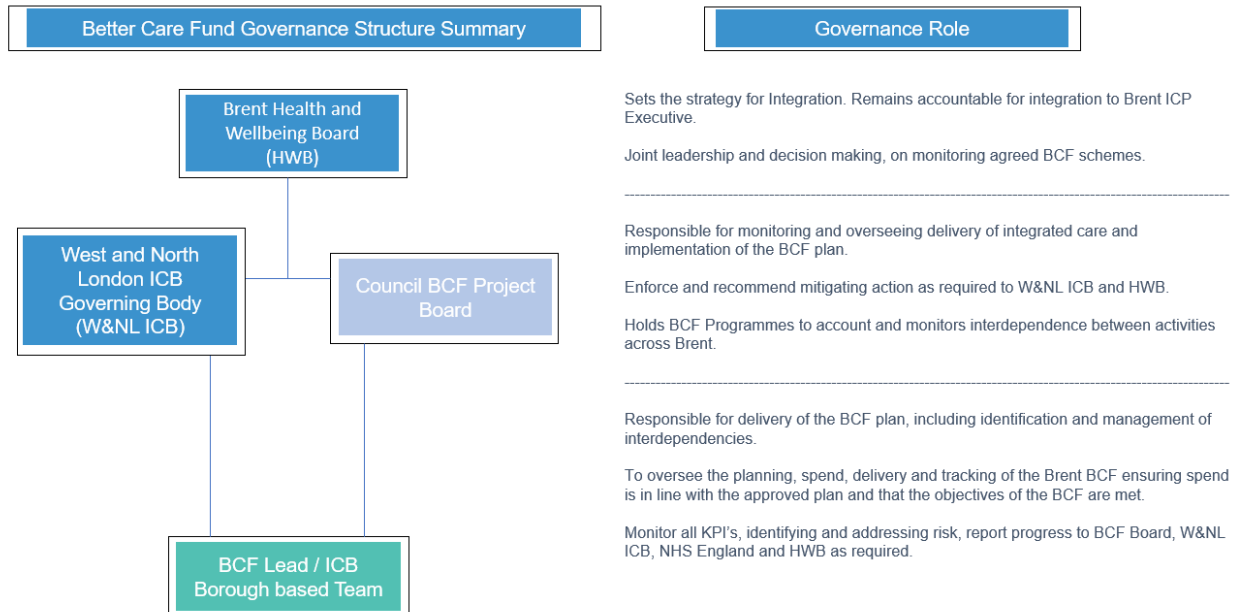
The ownership of equipment or other assets belong to the schemes are considered the property of the Lead Partner. When a scheme closes, any assets must be assessed for appropriate re-distribution within related schemes delivered by the partner to support residents and patient care.

The Lead Partner holds responsibility and liability for all on going contracts including payments and debts related to the schemes they contract. This includes schemes solely funded through the BCF Programme or schemes for which BCF provides a portion of the funding.

SCHEDULE 2 – GOVERNANCE

1 Governance Structure

All membership and responsibilities will be in line with the existing terms of reference for each Group.



2 Role of West and North London ICB

- 2.1.1 provide strategic direction on the Individual Schemes
- 2.1.2 receive the financial and activity information against agreed schemes;
- 2.1.3 review and agree risk assessment and actions required;
- 2.1.4 consider the recommendations made by the BCF Project Board in respect of risk inc. agreeing escalations as required
- 2.1.5 receive quarterly update from BCF Lead / ICB Borough based team;

3 Role of BCF Project Board

- 3.1.1 review the operation of individual BCF schemes to ensure effective performance management;
- 3.1.2 agree any variations to agreed schemes as required;
- 3.1.3 review including schemes at risk – against delivery, KPI's and spend;
- 3.1.4 review and propose annually revised plans as necessary and in line with national guidance issued
- 3.1.5 report to West and North London ICB and NHS England on a quarterly basis in accordance with relevant National reporting requirements.

4 Meetings

- 4.1 The BCF Project Board will meet no less than quarterly at a time to be agreed.
- 4.2 Minutes of all meetings shall be kept and copied to the Authorised Officers after every meeting.

5 Information and Reports

- 5.1 The BCF Programme Lead shall supply to the BCF Project Board, W&NL ICB and NHS England on a Quarterly basis the financial and activity information as required under the Terms of Reference / Agreement.

SCHEDULE 3

RISK SHARE AND OVERSPENDS

Unless the context otherwise requires, the defined terms used in this Schedule shall have the same meanings as set out in Clause 1 of the main body of Agreement.

Subject to any contrary provision in the relevant Scheme Specification, the Parties agree that Overspends or Underspends shall be managed in accordance with this Schedule 3.

Financial Contributions

Financial contributions are paid into the nominated bank account accounts in line with standing instruction.

There are no pooled funds requiring financial management.

Risk Share

1. The Partners have agreed the financial risk share arrangements set out in this Schedule with regard to overspends and underspends.
2. By its nature a pooled budget provides an appropriate vehicle for sharing risk between the Partners. The general principles for risk-sharing are:
 - (i) The financial impact of unpredictable incidences on system wide deliverables should be shared proportionality, dependent on the scheme and service, amongst the parties to the agreement. This supports a general principle that all Partners equally contribute effort to the effective delivery of the schemes; and
 - (ii) Where the impact is so financially significant that individual bodies could be at financial risk, the Partners need to work together to mitigate the impact.
3. Each Partner has the responsibility for the management of their respective BCF Schemes as per Schedule 1.

Overspends

4. The Partner listed as the Lead Commissioner of a Service Contract in accordance with Schedule 1 shall be responsible for any Overspends for such Service Contract and shall be responsible for managing any projected Overspends for such Service Contract that may occur during its Term.
5. The Partners shall inform the BCF Lead and ICP Managing Director in accordance with Clauses 9 and 10 where the remedial actions to address any projected Overspend may impact on one or more of the Individual Schemes set out in Schedule 1.
6. All Partners shall use their best endeavours to preserve the integrity of Individual Schemes.
7. Where remedial action is proposed to address a projected Overspend that may jeopardise the integrity of an Individual Scheme, a report shall be provided to the BCF Lead, ICP Managing Director and the governance process of the Lead Partner. This should be before

such action is implemented unless operational requirements mean that sooner decision must be taken, in which case appropriate consultation must have taken place with Senior Leaders in the lead Partner.

Underspends

8. Any underspends in relation to a particular Service Contract shall be used to offset any Overspends of the same Lead Partner in the first instance (as identified in Schedule 1).
9. In the event one Partner has an overspend with no underspends and the other Partner has an underspend with no overspends, or there are any underspends and no overspends the Partners shall be required to meet to discuss and agree how to address the problem and determine how the overspends and underspends should be applied, within the requirements of the law.

SCHEME 4 – JOINT WORKING OBLIGATION

Part 1 – LEAD PARTNER OBLIGATIONS

Terminology used in this Schedule shall have the meaning attributed to it in the NHS Standard Form Contract save where this Agreement or the context requires otherwise.

- 1 *The Lead Partner shall notify the other Partners if it receives or serves:*
 - 1.1 *a Change in Control Notice;*
 - 1.2 *a Notice of an Event of Force Majeure;*
 - 1.3 *a Contract Query;*
 - 1.4 *Exception Reports*
and provide copies of the same.
- 2 *The Lead Partner shall provide the other Partners with copies of any and all:*
 - 2.1 *Monthly Activity Reports;*
 - 2.2 *Review Records; and*
 - 2.3 *Remedial Action Plans;*
 - 2.4 *Service Quality Performance Report;*
- 3 *The Lead Partner shall consult with the other Partners before attending:*
 - 3.1 *An Activity Management Meeting;*
 - 3.2 *Contract Management Meeting;*
 - 3.3 *Review Meeting;*
and, to the extent the Service Contract permits, raise issues reasonably requested by a Partner at those meetings.
- 4 *The Lead Partner shall not:*
 - 4.1 *permanently or temporarily withhold or retain monies pursuant to the Withholding and Retaining of Payment Provisions;*
 - 4.2 *vary any Provider Plans (excluding Remedial Action Plans);*
 - 4.3 *agree (or vary) the terms of a Joint Investigation or a Joint Action Plan;*
 - 4.4 *give any approvals under the Service Contract;*
 - 4.5 *agree to or propose any variation to the Service Contract (including any Schedule or Appendices);*
 - 4.6 *suspend all or part of the Services;*
 - 4.7 *serve any notice to terminate the Service Contract (in whole or in part) pursuant to the terms of the relevant service contract;*

- 4.8 *serve any notice;*
- 4.9 *agree (or vary) the terms of a Succession Plan;*
- without the prior approval of the other Partners such approval not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed.*
- 5 *The Lead Partner shall advise the other Partners of any matter which has been referred for dispute and agree what (if any) matters will require the prior approval of one or more of the other Partners as part of that process.*
- 6 *The Lead Partner shall notify the other Partners of the outcome of any Dispute that is agreed or determined by Dispute Resolution*
- 7 *The Lead Partner shall share copies of any reports submitted by the Service Provider to the Lead Partner pursuant to the Service Contract (including audit reports)*

Part 2 - OBLIGATIONS OF THE OTHER PARTNER

Terminology used in this Schedule shall have the meaning attributed to it in the NHS Standard Form Contract save where this Agreement or the context requires otherwise.

- 8 *Each Partner shall (at its own cost) provide such cooperation, assistance and support to the Lead Partner (including the provision of data and other information) as is reasonably necessary to enable the Lead Partner to:*
- 8.1 *resolve disputes pursuant to a Service Contract;*
- 8.2 *comply with its obligations pursuant to a Service Contract and this Agreement;*
- 8.3 *ensure continuity and a smooth transfer of any Services that have been suspended, expired or terminated pursuant to the terms of the relevant Service Contract;*
- 9 *No Partner shall unreasonably withhold or delay consent requested by the Lead Partner.*
- 10 *Each Partner (other than the Lead Partner) shall:*
- 10.1 *comply with the requirements imposed on the Lead Partner pursuant to the relevant Service Contract in relation to any information disclosed to the other Partners;*
- 10.2 *notify the Lead Partner of any matters that might prevent the Lead Partner from giving any of the warranties set out in a Services Contract or which might cause the Lead Partner to be in breach of warranty.*

SCHEME 5 – PERFORMANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Performance Management and Information Sharing

1. General Principles

- 1.1 Each Partner shall remain responsible and accountable for the performance, quality, governance and statutory compliance of the services and functions for which it is responsible under this agreement.
- 1.2 Each Partner shall ensure that services commissioned, provided or funded by it are delivered in accordance with:
 - a. applicable legislation;
 - b. statutory guidance;
 - c. relevant guidance and requirements issued by NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care and any other relevant national body; and
 - d. recognised good practice.

2. Monitoring and Review

- 2.1 The Partners shall work collaboratively to monitor the effectiveness of the arrangements established under this Agreement.
- 2.2 The Partners shall review performance through the governance arrangements established under this Agreement and shall seek to identify and address any issues which may adversely affect the achievement of the Better Care Fund objectives.
- 2.3 Nothing in this Agreement shall transfer responsibility for the performance of a Partner's statutory functions to the other Partner.

3. Information Sharing

- 3.1 Each Partner shall provide to the other such information as may reasonably be required for:
 - a. the monitoring and management of this Agreement;
 - b. Better Care Fund planning, reporting and assurance requirements;
 - c. financial monitoring and audit requirements; and
 - d. compliance with applicable law and guidance.
- 3.2 Information shared under this Agreement shall be provided in a timely manner and in accordance with:
 - a. data protection legislation;
 - b. confidentiality obligations;
 - c. information governance requirements; and
 - d. any applicable information sharing protocols agreed between the Partners.

4. Cooperation

- 4.1 The Partners shall cooperate in good faith and use reasonable endeavours to support the successful delivery of the Better Care Fund.
- 4.2 Where either Partner becomes aware of any matter which may materially affect delivery of the Better Care Fund or compliance with this Agreement, it shall notify the other Partner as soon as reasonably practicable.

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Better Care Fund 2026-27 Numerical Template

2. Cover

Version 1.0

Please Note:

- The BCF numerical template is categorised as 'Management Information' and data from them will be published in an aggregated form on the NHS England website and gov.uk. This will include any narrative section. Some data may also be published in non-aggregated form on gov.uk. Also a reminder that as is usually the case with public body information, all BCF information collected here is subject to Freedom of Information requests.
- At a local level it is for the HWB to decide what information it needs to publish as part of wider local government reporting and transparency requirements. Until BCF information is published, recipients of BCF reporting information (including recipients who access any information placed on the Better Care Exchange) are prohibited from making this information available on any public domain or providing this information for the purposes of journalism or research without prior consent from the HWB (where it concerns a single HWB) or the BCF national partners for the aggregated information.
- All information will be supplied to BCF partners (MHCLG, DHSC, NHS England) to inform policy development.
- This template is password protected to ensure data integrity and accurate aggregation of collected information. A resubmission may be required if this is breached.

Governance and Sign off

Health and Wellbeing Board:	Brent
Confirmation that the plan has been signed off by Health and Wellbeing Board ahead of submission - Plans should be signed off ahead of submission.	Yes
If no indicate the reasons for the delay.	
If no please indicate when the HWB is expected to sign off the plan:	

Submitted by:	Eleanor Maxwell
Role and organisation:	BCF Lead - Brent
E-mail:	Eleanor.Maxwell@brent.gov.uk
Contact number:	020 8937 2195
Documents submitted (please select from drop down)	
In addition to this template the HWB are submitting the following:	Narrative

	Role:	Professional title (e.g. Dr, Cllr, Prof)	First-name:	Surname:	E-mail:	Organisation
Health and wellbeing board chair(s) sign off	Health and wellbeing board chair	Cllr	Gwen	Grahl	cllr.gwen.grahl@brent.gov.uk	
	Health and wellbeing board chair	N/A				
Named accountable person	Local authority chief executive	.	Kim	Wright	kim.wright@brent.gov.uk	
	ICB chief executive 1	.	Katie	Fisher	katie.fisher20@nhs.net	West and North London ICB
	ICB chief executive 2 (where required)	N/A				

	ICB chief executive 3 (where required)	N/A				

Finance sign off	LA section 151 officer	.	Minesh	Patel	minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk	
	ICB finance director 1	.	Stephen	Bloomer	Stephen.Bloomer@NHS.net	West and North London ICB
	ICB finance director 2 (where required)	N/A				
	ICB finance director 3 (where required)	N/A				

Area assurance contacts	Local authority director of adult social services	.	Claudia	Brown	claudia.brown@brent.gov.uk	
	DFG lead	.	Triza	Handa	triza.handa@brent.gov.uk	
	ICB place lead 1	.	Steve	Vo	stevetruong.vo@nhs.net	West and North London ICB
	ICB place lead 2 (where required)	N/A				
	ICB place lead 3 (where required)	N/A				
	Better Care Fund Lead		Eleanor	Maxwell	eleanor.maxwell@brent.gov.uk	Brent Intergrated Care Partnership

Please add any additional key contacts who have been responsible for completing the plan

Question Completion - When all questions have been answered and the validation boxes below have turned green, please send the template to the Better Care Fund Team england.bettercarefundteam@nhs.net saving the file as 'Name HWB' for example 'County Durham HWB'. Please also copy in your better care manager(s).

	Complete:
2. Cover	Yes
3. Income	Yes
4. Expenditure	Yes
5. Metrics	Yes
6. National Conditions	Yes

[^^ Link back to top](#)

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Better Care Fund 2026-27

Narrative return

Introduction and guidance

This return has been designed to enable ICBs and local authorities, working with Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs), to submit information which demonstrates how their plans for the Better Care Fund (BCF) meet the national conditions and planning requirements for 2026-27. Completing and submitting the BCF narrative return is a required part of the overall BCF submission process. Planning leads should ensure that all questions within this narrative return are fully addressed.

This year, the length of the narrative return has been reduced. This reflects feedback on the benefits of a more focused BCF assurance process. In completing the return, HWBs, ICBs and local authorities may wish to develop more detailed joint plans for BCF expenditure for their own use and/or draw on other joint plans.

Each question in the return has a suggested length of around a page (around 500 words) and we would generally expect the overall submission to be around 2500 words. These act as a guide to support a more focused assurance process rather than strict limits.

The narrative provided in this return should align with the expenditure plans and the ambitions for the national metrics set out in your BCF excel numerical return.

When completing the narrative return, please use the following documents for guidance and support, these can be found on the [BCF Exchange](#):

- **Planning Principles:** outlines what good practice looks like in relation to each narrative question and aligns with the relevant national conditions.
- **Metrics Handbook:** provides the formal technical specifications for the national metrics within the framework, including the rationale, methodology, required data inputs and worked examples.

Submission Requirements:

- Each HWB area must have its own BCF excel numerical return, but a single narrative BCF return covering multiple HWBs may be submitted where this reflects local integrated working arrangements.
- Each HWB area included in a combined narrative return should provide clarity and state any specific details relevant to the separate HWBs within the narrative questions (and more words may be required for this than a single HWB return). Local authorities, ICBs and HWBs for each area should formally sign off the shared narrative return and their individual numerical excel BCF return.

- The deadline for completing this narrative return is **19 May 2026**.
- Please submit this return to both: england.bettercarefundteam@nhs.net and your regional better care manager(s).

Submission details

Mandatory to complete, please do not submit a return without completing the details below:

<i>Adapt as necessary</i>	HWB area 1	HWB area 2
HWB	Brent	
ICB	West & North London (W&NL)	
ICB	N/A	
ICB	N/A	

1. Please provide a short statement setting out the rationale for using BCF funding to maximise delivery of integrated and preventative care linked to the relevant areas of neighbourhood health and social care services.

Please provide a concise statement of around one page (e.g. around 500 words). Please provide your response below:

Our plan for 2026/27 positions the Better Care Fund (BCF) as a key enabler of integrated, preventative care delivered through a neighbourhood-based model. Funding is used to bring together multidisciplinary partners across health, social care and the voluntary sector to deliver coordinated, person-centred support aligned to the needs of local populations. This approach enables earlier intervention, prevents escalation of need, and supports seamless transitions between services, underpinning a sustainable shift from hospital-based care to community resilience and independence.

As a transition year, the focus in Brent is on maintaining service stability and high-quality operational delivery, while strengthening the foundations required for further integration and reform. As a result the majority of schemes roll over from the 2025/26 plan including all schemes commissioned by W&NL ICB. Schemes 41 and 42 are new (highlighted in naming convention on the plan).

This includes continued investment in core community, social care, and intermediate care services that are critical to supporting people at home and enabling timely discharge from hospital. These services are under increasing pressure due to rising demand, increasing complexity of residents needs, and wider system challenges, making it essential to sustain capacity and effectiveness across all pathway.

Capacity and demand are managed through a predominantly spot-purchasing model, which provides the Local Authority with flexibility to respond to fluctuations in demand. This ensures access to a diverse provider market and sourcing of care packages and placements that meet assessed need. Pro-active monitoring of providers, market wide capacity and demand confirms that there is sufficient capacity within the local system to meet current and anticipated demand. Where fixed capacity exists in both health and ASC step down beds a focus on appropriate referrals and throughput is designed to ensure capacity and demand are balanced.

Alongside this, a detailed review of local authority-commissioned services has been undertaken to ensure funding reflects current demand, inflationary pressures and value for money. Funding and activity assumptions for 2025/26 were refreshed using scheme-level performance data including service utilisation, delivery against key performance indicators, assessed levels of need and analysis of growth or change patterns over the previous years. Plans were also adjusted to reflect growth or reductions in demand across different cohorts and pathways. This has informed revised investment

priorities, ensured that funding matches need and supported the adaptation of existing service models to respond to changing pressures across health and adult social care.

Key schemes such as Bridging to Home (P1), Reablement, and Complex Care (P3) remain central to delivery. These services provide targeted, short-term support to residents with higher levels of need, enabling safe and timely discharge from hospital, reducing readmissions, and supporting recovery and independence. Their continuation reflects the importance of maintaining effective, trusted pathways while the wider system evolves.

During 2026/27, BCF funding will also support the further development of neighbourhood working in Brent. This includes strengthening multidisciplinary teams aligned to Primary Care Networks and improving coordination across services to ensure care is organised around the individual. There will be a particular focus on proactive and preventative care, including for groups experiencing poorer outcomes, such as people experiencing homelessness.

Brent has a diverse and growing population, with a high overall population density and a high proportion of residents from ethnic minority backgrounds, significant levels of deprivation and a younger population profile. This is now existing alongside a rising number of older people with complex needs. These characteristics align with the priorities set out in Core20PLUS5, with particular relevance to communities experiencing poorer health outcomes, multimorbidity, and barriers to accessing services.

The development of neighbourhood working supported by neighbourhood-level coordination functions, including Integrators enabling improved local alignment, responsiveness to emerging need, and more joined-up delivery across partners. BCF-funded services therefore play a critical role in addressing health and socioeconomic inequalities through targeted, preventative, and community-based interventions that reduce demand on acute services and improve outcomes for Brent's most vulnerable residents.

A key priority remains reducing avoidable hospital admissions through early intervention and rapid response. Schemes delivering timely, multidisciplinary support in community settings include the Integrated First Response Service, Community Rapid Response and Falls Service, and Enhanced Care Home Support. These are complemented by targeted initiatives such as the deployment of occupational therapy and social work capacity within A&E to support admission avoidance, the use of assistive technology to proactively manage risk and maintain independence at home and the establishment of the Brent Admiral Nurse program supporting Carers for, and residents with Dementia.

A key priority remains reducing avoidable hospital admissions through early intervention and rapid response services, particularly in response to Brent's growing population of older residents and rising levels of frailty, dementia, long-term conditions, and complex care needs. High levels of deprivation,

housing pressures, and persistent health inequalities across the borough further contribute to increased demand for urgent and acute care services. The complexity of healthcare need in Brent is driven by the interaction of chronic illness, socioeconomic disadvantage, language barriers, and unequal access to primary care, all of which can delay treatment and increase the likelihood of hospital admission.

Schemes delivering timely, multidisciplinary support in community settings include;

- Integrated First Response Service - The service helps residents receive coordinated support earlier and in community, reducing urgent care usage. This is particularly where issues relate to frailty, mental health, social isolation or difficulty coping at home. Ultimately supporting and integrating with services to support both complex health and social care needs.
- Community Rapid Response and Falls Service - Falls and frailty are major drivers of hospital admission for older residents. Brent's growing older population and increasing prevalence of long-term conditions mean demand for rapid community intervention is increasing. The service supports residents to recover safely at home and reduces pressure on acute hospitals.
- Enhanced Care Home Support - Care home residents are among the most clinically vulnerable residents, with high levels of frailty, dementia and multiple long-term conditions. Enhanced support helps avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, improves continuity of care, supports more coordinated management of complex residents within care home settings and supports Care Home providers effectively so they accept the more complex placements.

These are complemented by targeted initiatives such as;

- A new scheme to place a ASC occupational therapist and social worker within A&E to support admission avoidance - an identified gap in the existing provision of services.
- Developing the use of assistive technology to proactively manage risk and maintain independence at home - supporting the home first agenda, reducing reliance on paid and unpaid carers, and delaying or preventing the need for placements.
- The Brent Admiral Nurse programme supporting residents with dementia and their carers - meeting an identified need in community, to reduce carer burden, ensure appropriate wrap around services in place, reduce the need for paid care and keep residents at home for longer.

Collectively, these schemes enable a shift from reactive to preventative care, reducing system pressure while improving outcomes for residents. This approach reflects a shared commitment across Brent and the wider system to balance immediate operational pressures with longer-term

transformation, supporting the delivery of more integrated, preventative, and locally coordinated care, and ensuring the best use of available resources.

2. Please provide a brief explanation of the rationale for how you have set out goals for the metrics of non-elective admissions (for those 65 years old and over) and delayed discharges. Please also set out how you will monitor and drive progress in preventing avoidable long-term care home admissions and improving outcomes from reablement, including through any locally agreed goals for long term admissions to residential care and nursing homes.

Please provide a concise statement of around one page (e.g. around 500 words). Please provide your response below:

Goals for non-elective admissions (65+) and delayed discharges have been developed using the national Better Care Fund dataset, ensuring alignment with national definitions, reporting requirements and the methodology set out in the BCF Metrics Handbook. A localised version of this dataset has been used to support modelling and trajectory setting, enabling the incorporation of local intelligence on demand (increasing population, operational pressures and service capacity. This approach ensures that targets are both evidence-based and realistic, while maintaining appropriate levels of ambition in the context of system pressures. Financial constraints across budgets exacerbated by budgets not rising in line with cost inflation, make balancing need and service capacity difficult. BCF funded schemes, and the wider allocation of resources have been designed to provide best value aligned to key metrics.

Emergency Admission Targets

In setting targets for non-elective admissions for those aged 65 and over, analysis has considered multi-year trends, demographic growth and service impact. Brent has experienced significant population increases, with predicted 14.35% growth in the 65+ population and 6.05% growth in the 80+ population between 2022 and 2027. Despite this, growth in emergency admissions has remained comparatively modest, indicating a positive trajectory when adjusted for population change.

Based on this analysis, the 2026/27 target aims to maintain admission rates at 2025/26 levels. In the context of continued demographic pressure, this represents a continued improvement in performance and reflects the impact of system-wide interventions to manage demand more effectively and support care closer to home.

Delivery against this metric will be supported by both BCF and wider system initiatives. BCF-funded schemes, including rapid response services, reablement, and integrated neighbourhood working, play a key role in preventing escalation of need and avoiding admission. These are complemented by

wider system developments such as urgent community response, virtual wards, and integrated care coordination, which collectively support a reduction in avoidable admissions.

Key to delivery is Brent's Community Frailty Service which will be the first to implement the NWL Community Frailty Specification, developed collaboratively with key partners across the sector. The service will be delivered at neighbourhood level and act as a key pillar to development of the neighbourhood health model.

The service will introduce a Single Point of Access, with streamlined referrals and improving equity by ensuring consistent access and provision across Brent. The model is underpinned by a core multidisciplinary team (MDT), which will manage patients initially and coordinate input from a wider network of professionals including GPs, mental health specialists, pharmacists, geriatricians and social workers based on individual needs.

Discharge Delay Days Target

The delayed discharge target has been set using 22 months of detailed performance data from the DHSC Better Care Fund & Discharge Dashboard, reflecting the position across all Health Trusts, alongside analysis of key drivers of delays. The plan reflects the challenges experienced in 2025/26 while incorporating the expected impact of service improvements being put in place. These include;

- Reduced capacity in Acute (HDT) and Mental Health (MH) Hospital Discharge Teams

HDT - add additional capacity, re-structure of roles, new recruitment practices and improved capacity for supervision. Combined changes will address difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified personnel, reduce staff turnover and effectively support the Hospital Discharge team at all levels.

MH Team is also being re-structured to create a focused Hospital Discharge team to match physical health, and once team fully recruited allocating staff to key locations to increase integration and relationships.

- Expanded bridging services - to accept non-complex double handed care packages, reducing time from referral to discharge.
- Strengthened pathways for patients with 'Gap' and complex needs who sat between existing ASC criteria, but not sufficiently complex to meet CC criteria.

This includes more targeted support and pathways for patients with dementia and behavioural needs and reduces time identifying pathways and negotiating between health and social care partners.

- Equipment delays and additional costs after supplier collapse August '25, new network of suppliers now in place.

Progress against both metrics will be monitored through Discharge Ready Date data (with quality improvements in data collected as system wide consistency of reporting has improved), established system governance arrangements, including regular performance reporting at scheme level, data review and operational oversight across health and social care partners. Combined this enables early identification and resolution of delays, as well as the use of system-wide data and analytics to track trends, undertake deep dives and inform service improvement.

The 2026/27 plan has been developed jointly with Brent ASC and ICB borough colleagues, informed by data to January 2026 and wider system intelligence.

Q1 is expected to show a higher position than the equivalent period in 2025/26, reflecting continued system pressures from the end of 2025/26, including ASC capacity constraints and the challenges in setting up the 'Gap' pathways for patients with health needs who do not meet CHC criteria.. From Q2 onwards, performance is expected to improve progressively over the remainder of the year, reversing the 2025/26 trend of a strong start followed by deterioration.

This table shows DRD data and changes since 2024/25. However acknowledged data quality issues - particularly in earlier periods - mean these should be interpreted as indicative of trends rather than directly comparable measures.

Value	Average days from Discharge Ready Date to date of discharge (exc 0 day delays)	Proportion of adult Patients Discharged on their Discharge Ready Date
Average for 2024/25	5.47	89.91%
Average for 2025/26	6.20	87.58%
Average for 2026/27	5.95	88.29%
	Lower = better performance	Higher = better performance
Change from 24/25 to 25/26	0.73	-2.33%
Change from 25/26 to 26/27	-0.25	0.71%
	Minus = Improvement	Positive = Improvement

Residential Admissions Target

For 2026/27, the care home admission metric has been set in line with 2025/26 actual performance. While this represents a flat trajectory, it should be viewed in the context of a projected 2.8% increase in the population aged 65 and over, meaning the target constitutes a positive and proportionate

stretch. Maintaining current admission levels despite demographic growth reflects the anticipated rise in complex health needs and the borough's comparatively high levels of health deprivation. As such, the target is considered both realistic and appropriately ambitious within the local context

Brent has historically maintained one of the lowest rates across London, reflecting a strong strategic focus on prevention and independence. Services to prevent admission include reablement services, extra care housing (additional capacity launching in Summer '26) and flexible support such as one-to-one care and night-time provision. These services enable residents to remain at home for longer, reduce reliance on residential care, and improve outcomes following discharge.

Overall, this approach ensures that targets are grounded in robust analysis while being supported by a clear delivery plan and strong system oversight, enabling Brent to continue improving outcomes despite increasing demand and complexity.

Monitoring and goals set are completed in line with the process and principles defined in the ASCOF measures.

3. Please provide a short explanation of the planned impact of BCF funding on achievement of goals.

Please provide a concise statement of around one page (e.g. around 500 words). Please provide your response below:

BCF-funded services will deliver improved outcomes by addressing increasing demand, supporting an ageing population, and responding to rising complexity of need as outlined on page 4-5. A key priority remains reducing avoidable hospital admissions through early intervention and rapid response services, particularly in response to Brent's growing population of older residents and rising levels of frailty, dementia, long-term conditions, and complex care needs. High levels of deprivation, housing pressures, and persistent health inequalities across the borough further contribute to increased demand for urgent and acute care services. The complexity of healthcare need in London Borough of Brent is driven by the interaction of chronic illness, socioeconomic disadvantage, language barriers, and unequal access to primary care, all of which can delay treatment and increase the likelihood of hospital admission.

. Funding is strategically deployed to strengthen community-based, preventative services that reduce avoidable hospital admissions, improve discharge performance, and support residents to remain independent for longer.

The planned impact of this investment is a continued shift from reactive, hospital-based care to proactive, community-led support. This includes enhancing early intervention, reducing escalation of need, and improving recovery following illness or hospital stay. As a result, BCF-funded schemes are

expected to contribute directly to stabilising non-elective admissions, reducing delayed discharges, and avoiding residential placements where care in the community can be provided.

2026-27 will see the role of Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) as the system integrator in Brent developing significantly alongside the wider ICB and NHS England structural changes. Their role as a coordination and leadership function brings together all members of the borough integrator partnership including NHS providers, Local Authority, and voluntary and community sector partners to co-ordinate the delivery of services to residents. The role of CNWL as integrator operationalises the BCF ambitions by aligning organisations around shared outcomes, accelerating the shift to neighbourhood and preventative care and support maximising BCF funding to deliver co-ordinated services. This is achieved through ensuring services are joined-up, proactive, and person-centred and supports the removal of barriers between organisations (e.g. pathways, funding silos).

For 2026–27, funding is prioritised to support the development of an integrated neighbourhood model, with a focus on delivering measurable improvements across key pathways. Services specification ensure coverage across the borough so delivery based on need and not geography, with multi agency working seeking to close the gaps in provision which can disproportionately affect populations who find access to services harder for example due to language barriers. Funding includes:

- Enhancing intermediate care capacity (step-up and step-down), which will improve patient flow, reduce length of stay, and support timely discharge – schemes 6, 7, 8, 103 and technology from scheme 26.
- Strengthening admission avoidance pathways through rapid response and multidisciplinary community teams, reducing unnecessary hospital attendance and admissions – scheme 13, 27, 38, 41, 101, 102, 105, 109, 110, 111
- Expanding community rehabilitation and recovery services, improving functional outcomes and increasing the proportion of residents remaining at home following reablement - scheme 4, 5, 6
- Improving discharge processes, including for mental health pathways, to reduce delays and ensure smoother transitions of care – scheme 20, 23, 42
- Maintaining and optimising core discharge schemes such as Bridging to Home (P1) and Complex Support (P3), enabling safe discharge for higher-need patients and reducing readmissions – schemes 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 18, 22, 24, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35

A key area of impact for 2026/27 is the introduction of the Homeless Health NWL Enhanced Model - scheme 115, delivered through reprioritisation of existing BCF resources. This model targets a high-risk and underserved population by providing dedicated support within emergency departments to

prevent unnecessary admissions and improve access to appropriate community-based care. This will contribute to reducing health inequalities while supporting admission avoidance and improved system flow. The new integrated model addresses previously unmet needs in Brent within service provision, which reduced options for early intervention, driving up need and costs which put pressure on other parts of system in particular acute services. It has been designed to ensure care is delivered across borough boundaries, recognising the transient nature of this population.

Overall, BCF investment will strengthen integrated neighbourhood services, enabling more coordinated, proactive care delivery. This is expected to reduce pressure on acute services, improve independence and recovery outcomes, and support a continued reduction in long-term care needs. Progress will be monitored through established performance frameworks, ensuring that funding delivers measurable impact against key BCF metrics and local priorities.

4. Please outline how ICBs and local authorities have confidence that the services funded through the BCF represent value for money, and how they will seek to raise the productivity of services.

Please provide a concise statement of around one page (e.g. around 500 words) please provide your response below:

The joint approach between Brent Council and the West & North London Integrated Care Board (ICB) ensures that BCF-funded services deliver value for money through robust governance, shared decision-making, and ongoing performance review. The 2026–27 financial plan maintains delivery within the existing funding envelope, with all changes jointly agreed and subject to system-wide oversight and challenge.

Confidence in value for money is achieved through regular monitoring of service performance, activity, and outcomes, alongside financial oversight. Schemes are reviewed to ensure that investment is aligned to demand, delivers measurable impact against BCF metrics, and supports system priorities such as reducing admissions, improving discharge, and increasing independence. Where services are not delivering expected outcomes, these are subject to review and redesign.

In addition to routine performance and financial monitoring, Brent Council and the ICB undertake benchmarking and comparative analysis to assess value for money.

Benchmarking is used not only to compare performance but also to inform commissioning decisions, service redesign and the reallocation of resources towards interventions demonstrating the greatest impact and value.

Benchmarking considers service costs, activity levels, throughput and outcomes to ensure that investment is delivering both improved resident outcomes and efficient use of public resources. Comparative review includes performance against national BCF metrics, discharge performance, admission avoidance measures and Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) indicators. Findings are used to identify areas of variation, challenge existing models of delivery, and in-year inform service redesign where flexibility exists. Benchmarking is used not only to compare performance but also to inform commissioning decisions, service redesign and the reallocation of resources towards interventions demonstrating the greatest impact and value. This approach provides assurance that BCF investment remains proportionate, delivers measurable benefits for residents, and reflects best practice across health and care systems.

Benchmarking capability continues to mature through the development of whole-system intelligence and shared performance dashboards, supporting a shift from periodic review towards more continuous and real-time assessment of value, outcomes and productivity. This approach provides assurance that BCF investment remains proportionate, delivers measurable benefits for residents, and reflects best practice across health and care systems.

The following range of established governance, performance management and benchmarking arrangements provide regular challenge, comparative insight and evidence-based decision making.

- *System oversight and assurance:*
Value for Money (VFM) is monitored through the System Flow Board, which reviews key performance areas (e.g. discharge delay days) and associated programmes to ensure resources are delivering impact. In 25/26 this compared Brent to the other 7 Boroughs in NWL ICB. In 26/27 that will widen to the W&NL ICB footprint.
- *Benchmarking and comparative insight:*
Development of whole-system dashboards (e.g. WSIC / HIU dashboards) enables comparison across boroughs, trusts and PCNs, helping identify variation and target improvement
- *Formal scrutiny:*
Quarterly borough reports are signed off by the ICB Executive Management Team, providing structured challenge, benchmarking and financial oversight.
- *Benchmarking Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) data related to 65+ long term care home admission benchmarks across all 33 London Boroughs allowing in year and year on year trend analysis and comparison*

Evidence of active value optimisation

- *Scheme review and rationalisation:*
A line-by-line review of schemes has already been completed to assess whether schemes remain effective and represent value for money, with changes made where they do not.
- *Flexible use of funding:*
Funding (e.g. pathway resources) is being repurposed flexibly to address local gaps, rather than being rigidly tied to specific service types.
- *Standardisation and productivity focus:*
The system is moving towards a “common core offer” across core health schemes and key schemes within the LA such as bridging, using benchmarking to reduce variation and optimise use of existing resources across community services.

Wider system value narrative focus on outcomes (e.g. discharge performance) rather than just inputs

- *Alignment of system-wide programmes (e.g. bridging, homeless health) to shared priorities*
- *Continued development of data-driven decision making and comparative analytics*

Productivity improvements are a key focus for 2026–27, delivered through a combination of service optimisation and system integration. This includes prioritising high-impact schemes that support admission avoidance and rehabilitation, ensuring resources are focused where they deliver the greatest benefit.

Further improvements are being achieved through strengthened joint working between the Local Authority and ICB, including the continued delivery of agreed efficiencies from 2025–26 and addressing gaps in pathways or funding responsibility that can create delays or duplication. The development of integrated neighbourhood models will also support productivity by reducing fragmentation, improving coordination, and ensuring residents receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

The programme of ongoing service review and benchmarking supports continuous improvement and re-design. This includes evaluating existing schemes, identifying opportunities to streamline provision, and reallocating resources where needed. For example, changes to centrally commissioned schemes and the introduction of the Homeless Health model demonstrate a shift towards targeted, high-impact interventions that better meet local need while improving system flow and moving towards a more consistent common core offer.

Governance arrangements within the Council have been strengthened through the establishment of a BCF Board, which provides oversight of financial performance, delivery, and outcomes. This forum supports joint accountability across partners, drives consistency in operational standards, and enables data-driven decision-making to improve service effectiveness and efficiency.

Overall, this approach ensures that BCF funding is used effectively to deliver maximum public value, supporting improved outcomes for residents while making best use of limited resources across the health and social care system.

5. Please outline your robust joint governance for managing the expenditure of BCF funding, including assessing impact of funding, value for money and continuous improvement.

Please provide a concise statement of around one page (e.g. around 500 words). Please provide your response below:

The Better Care Fund (BCF) in Brent is governed through robust, jointly agreed arrangements between Brent Council and the West & North London Integrated Care Board (ICB), ensuring strong accountability, effective financial oversight, and a consistent approach to monitoring impact and value for money. As 2026–27 represents the first year of the newly formed ICB, governance arrangements will be aligned across legacy organisations to provide a coherent and streamlined framework for decision-making and assurance.

Statutory oversight is provided by the Brent Health and Wellbeing Board, which is responsible for approving the BCF plan and ensuring alignment with local strategic priorities. This is supported by borough-level partnership forums, which provide assurance on local delivery, monitor performance, and ensure that schemes are responsive to local need. Strategic leadership is jointly held by senior Local Authority and ICB leaders, including the Brent Council Chief Executive, Corporate Director for Service Reform and Strategy, Director of Adult Social Services, and ICB executive leads. This group provides overall accountability for delivery of BCF priorities, ensuring that resource allocation, performance, and outcomes are aligned with wider system objectives.

At an operational level, a joint BCF management group brings together ICB leads, Local Authority officers, and finance representatives to oversee delivery of the programme. This group monitors performance against BCF metrics, including non-elective admissions, delayed discharges, and reablement outcomes, alongside financial performance and activity data. Regular reporting and operational reviews enable early identification of risks, pressures, or underperformance.

Financial governance is supported through joint oversight by Local Authority and ICB finance teams, ensuring that expenditure remains within the agreed funding envelope and is aligned to Section 75

agreements. All proposed changes to schemes are subject to formal review and approval processes, with a clear focus on ensuring that funding is directed towards high-impact, cost-effective interventions.

A continuous improvement approach underpins governance arrangements, with schemes subject to regular review to assess their impact, productivity, and value for money. This includes evaluating outcomes, identifying opportunities to improve efficiency or reduce duplication, and making changes where required to optimise delivery. Learning from performance data, service evaluation, and operational insight is used to inform ongoing service development and resource allocation.

The establishment of a dedicated BCF Board within Brent Council has further strengthened governance by providing a focused forum for oversight of delivery, performance, and financial management. This supports greater coordination across all teams, enhances transparency, and ensures that decisions are informed by robust data and shared system priorities.

Wider local organisational governance processes provide further financial scrutiny, ensuring that funding and investment decisions are robust, demonstrate value and clearly align with the responsibilities of budget holders, including adherence to the scheme of delegation and relevant financial standing orders.

Overall, these arrangements provide a comprehensive and integrated governance framework, ensuring that BCF funding is effectively managed, delivers measurable impact, and supports continuous improvement in outcomes for residents.

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 Brent	Cabinet 27 July 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Community Development
	Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Employment and Climate Action (Councillor Jake Rubin)
West London Fostering Recruitment and Retention Programme	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
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:	Renewing fostering: homes for 10,000 more children - GOV.UK
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Kelli Eboji, Head of Looked After Children and Permanency 020 8937 4444 Email: kelli.eboji@brent.gov.uk Tom Donovan, Service Manager, Looked After Children and Permanency 020 8937 3417 Email: tom.donovan@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the Council to enter into a new, updated Collaboration Agreement in respect of the West London Regional Fostering Recruitment Hub along with Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster Councils. The updated Collaboration Agreement will have a wider remit and requires Cabinet approval.
- 1.2 The report sets out the intention to expand the work, started in 2024, with the West London Fostering Recruitment and Retention Programme (Foster with West London – FwWL). Initially this programme focused on the fostering “front door” to increase the numbers of fostering enquiries and applications and to work together in respect of a shared identity and marketing approach. This new updated collaboration agreement will enable Brent to continue to work

with West London partners to expand this regional model towards an end-to-end recruitment of foster carer service. This will include assessments of new fostering families as well as training all new foster carers.

- 1.3 The DfE have been clear in recent policy of their expectation that every local authority should move towards joining a regional fostering hub to achieve the long-term policy objectives set out in 'Renewing fostering: homes for 10,000 more children', February 2026.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council enters into a new and updated Collaboration Agreement.
- 2.2 That the Council approve to delegate authority to the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources, to finalise the terms of the Collaboration Agreement.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Forward

- 3.1.1 This proposal reflects Brent's commitment to ensuring that more children and young people can benefit from safe, stable and loving foster homes within their local community. By entering into an updated Collaboration Agreement with neighbouring local authorities, Brent will strengthen its ability to recruit, assess and support foster carers, helping to increase the number of fostering households available for children who need care.
- 3.1.2 Like many councils across the country, Brent faces growing challenges in recruiting sufficient foster carers to meet increasing demand. Working collaboratively with other local authorities will enable us to reach a wider audience, attract more prospective carers and provide a more streamlined and consistent journey for those interested in fostering. The development of a regional approach to foster carer assessments and training will help make the best use of resources and expertise, whilst maintaining Brent's responsibility supporting and retaining foster carers.
- 3.1.3 By increasing the number of local foster carers, we can reduce reliance on costly external placements and enable more children to remain connected to their schools, families and communities. Ultimately, this proposal supports Brent's ambition to give every child the opportunity to thrive, by ensuring that more children in care can grow up in stable, nurturing homes provided by foster carers who are supported to deliver the highest standards of care.

3.2 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities and Strategic Context

- 3.2.1 This work contributes to the following borough priorities:
- The Best Start in Life
 - Prosperity and Stability
 - A Healthier Brent

- Thriving Communities

- 3.2.2 For Brent children in care to have the best start in life, prosperity and stability, safety, and good health, they need safe, stable homes with primary carers who love them and who can meet their holistic needs. The Brent fostering service, and the West London Fostering Hub, contribute to these priorities by recruiting, assessing, and supporting foster carers and connected person carers for Brent children and young people. There are currently not enough in-house Brent fostering places to support all our Brent children in care.
- 3.2.3 Children in care benefit from living with in-house foster carers because placements are typically closer to their families, schools, friends, and local communities. This helps maintain important relationships and provides greater stability, which can improve outcomes for children in care. In-house placements are also significantly more cost-effective than independent fostering agency placements, helping the local authority make best use of its resources. Whilst the cost of FwWL is a significant upfront cost to the Local Authority, obtaining more in-house foster carers will enable significant cost avoidance.
- 3.2.4 Despite sustained efforts to increase the number of foster carers through existing local approaches, progress has been insufficient to meet current and projected needs for Brent's children in care. A regional approach offers an opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of recruitment activity through greater collaboration, shared resources and a wider market presence. While there is some uncertainty associated with this change, it is considered a necessary step in responding to the current challenge.

3.3 Background

- 3.3.1 The Council entered into a collaboration agreement for a regional fostering support hub with West London authorities in October 2023. Approval will be sought for this arrangement to be extended to 31 March 2027.
- 3.3.2 On 04 February 2026 the Department for Education (DfE) published fostering reform policy for local authorities titled 'Renewing fostering: homes for 10,000 more children'. Highlights of this policy include the following:
- The reforms aim to avoid delays in assessment of foster carers, reduce the reliance on residential care and avoid children living further away from their home Local Authority.
 - Local Authorities that do not have a Fostering Hub **should create/enter into a Regional Fostering Hub as soon as possible**. Brent are already in an established Regional Fostering Hub.
 - Local Authorities with Fostering Hubs (such as Brent) should expand to an 'end to end' model. This means Fostering Hubs include processing potential fostering enquiries, completing fostering assessments and training of new foster carers. Presently Foster with West London (FwWL) is supporting with marketing and the 'front door' element only.

- 3.3.3 England's Minister for Children and Families, Josh MacAlister, has written to every local authority asking all to embrace the fostering reforms. According to the DfE, by participating in the expansion of FwWL, Brent will be well positioned to align with the DfE's direction of travel and contribute to the development of a more collaborative and sustainable fostering recruitment system. This initiative presents an opportunity to embrace innovation, build on existing strengths, and adopt new approaches that can enhance our ability to meet the needs of children, families and foster carers in Brent. Ultimately, it reflects our commitment to continuously improve outcomes and ensure that local provision is responsive to current and future demand for care placements.
- 3.3.4 The DfE undertook consultation on the impact on fostering panels with some minor amendments agreed as a result. The DfE also intend to update statutory guidance, Fostering National Minimum Standards and the Fostering Regulations to remove some potential barriers and reforming the approach taken when allegations are made in respect of foster carers.
- 3.3.5 Separate to this agreement, but awarded under the same grant stream, all authorities agree to sustain delivery of the Mockingbird programme, supported by match funding from DfE. The Mockingbird model is an offer for approved foster carers which is proven to assist in the retention and support of foster carers. Brent's Mockingbird project went live in May 2025 and continues to support Brent's fostering families.
- 3.3.6 Since the DfE policy publication Brent has participated in a series of design workshops and planning meetings to explore Brent's involvement in the proposed expanded arrangement. The FwWL programme team, at Hammersmith and Fulham, have in parallel been working through the up-to-date minimum requirements and design expectations of the programme, which must be met to remain in the programme and access continued grant funding. This has informed the final design and associated cost plan set out below.
- 3.3.7 The below slide establishes what responsibilities will remain with Brent under the proposed arrangements and what will lie with FwWL.

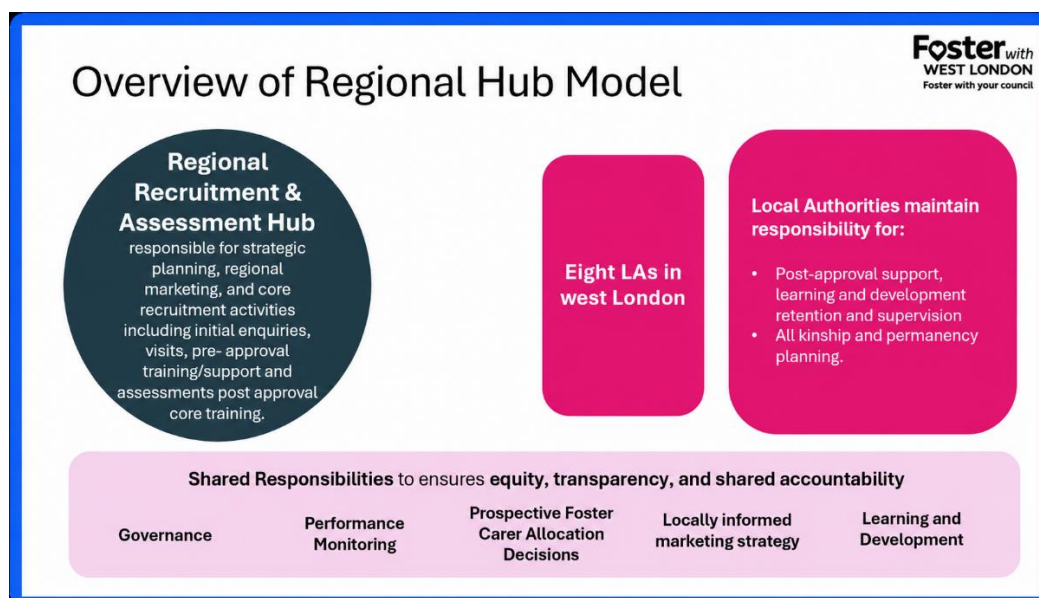
Under the existing arrangement FwWL undertake a number of activities to support Brent's fostering activity including:

- Marketing
- Screening and processing all enquiries to support potential fostering households to start their fostering application
- Undertaking initial home visits to potential fostering households

Under the proposed new arrangement, as well as the 3 activities above, FwWL will undertake the following:

- Undertaking the whole fostering assessment process, up to approval at a new regional fostering panel

- Providing initial training to foster carers



3.3.8 FwWL launched in May 2024, achieving 41 approvals to date across the region, representing a 37% increase in approved foster carers across the region compared to pre-Hub figures, representing 124% of the DfE programme target. It is important to highlight that FwWL included foster carers who were already in assessment (before the launch of FwWL) in these figures as well as 15 'weekender only' respite carers recruited by Ealing as part of a pilot scheme. In Brent we have not yet seen a significant increase in fostering households since joining FwWL; please see table below outlining new mainstream fostering household approvals for Brent.

Financial Year	Number of new fostering households
2022-2023	8
2023-2024	3
2024-2025	6
2025-2026	5

3.3.9 Equity of arrangements under the new model will be key. FwWL have confirmed the current partnership operates under a jointly agreed regional allocations policy. This sets out a clear expectation that prospective carers are encouraged to foster for the local authority in which they reside and pay council tax to. All local authorities are aware that foster carers cannot be forced to become foster carers for a local authority, the choice remains theirs. Carers can decide to foster for another borough if they wish. At present if a potential new foster carer lives in Brent but states they would like to foster for Harrow, their referral/allocation will be passed to Harrow. If the foster carer does not have a preference, the referral/allocation will be passed to the local authority where they reside. Brent have made clear to FwWL that Brent will request a clause in the agreement to review the allocations policy to ensure there is equity across the region.

3.4 Funding Arrangements

3.4.1 The DfE provided grant funding for operational running costs of FwWL as well as set-up transformation costs during 2025/26 of £600k:

- 50% was allocated to contribute towards the operational costs of the existing service, representing approximately 25% of the total cost of running the current model.
- The remaining 50% supported the transition to an end-to-end service model, covering approximately 30% of the associated transition costs.

As a result of delays in establishing the model across 8 boroughs, in financial year 2026/27, FwWL forecast an underspend of approximately £400,000, with costs reduced as the end-to-end service will not be operational until 1st October 2026). After applying the underspend and the DfE grant contribution, the remaining local authority contribution based on an even split for this financial year 2026/27 is c£56k.

For financial year 2027/28, the DfE has indicated that no further grant funding will be available for regional hubs. This will be the first full year of operating the end-to-end service, with a projected total service cost of £1,780k. If this cost is shared evenly across 8 participating local authorities, the estimated contribution per LA will be approximately £222,562.

The cost plan reflects the 'end-to-end' model co-designed and agreed regionally. However, some costs have had to be estimated based on the information available at this time with amendments possible as DfE requirements become clearer in the coming months and as the model embeds.

3.4.2 Additional Grant Funding Opportunities. In addition to the core DfE grant, participation in the programme provides access to several supplementary funding streams this Financial Year:

- Mockingbird Grant – £80,000. Available to extend the network of support around foster carers.
- Room Makers Funding – £50,000 to £120,000. Designed to support the creation of high-quality additional child places by extending existing experienced foster carers homes. Due to the limited funding for this it is likely this funding will be used for room dividers and garden rooms.
- Innovation Fund – Total Bid Submitted: £1.5 million (across two years)
The regional hub has submitted a bid totalling £1.5 million to support large-scale innovation and transformation, with the development of regional specialist carers aligned with the end-to-end programme. The outcome of this bid will be known in summer 2026.

3.4.3 The expanded FwWL end-to-end model is expected to go live on 01 October 2026. FwWL asked all 8 Local Authorities to confirm their indicative commitment to FwWL by 01 June 2026, in advance of seeking formal Cabinet approval. As outlined above, the previous Lead Member for Children and

Young People and Schools, provided indicative approval for Brent's participation in the continuation and expansion of FwWL on the 18 May 2026.

- 3.4.4 The costs of the FwWL expansion are required to be met by the participating local authorities, as outlined below.

Cost Plan Summary

Table 1: FwWL current 'as is' costs

As Is - Original Model (Supporting Potential Enquiries Only)		
Area of spend	FTE	£
<i>Staffing inc. management & finance support</i>	8.5	£574,254
<i>Communications</i>		£122,000
<i>Staff DBS, Memberships, Staff L&D, HR, IT, Admin & Legal fees, Travel, etc</i>		£66,567
<i>Website support, maintenance & development</i>		£12,200
Total		£775,021

Table 2: FwWL End-to-End Ops

End to End Structure - Ops		
Area of spend	FTE	£
<i>Staffing inc. management & finance support</i>	18	£1,398,946
<i>Communications</i>		£140,000
<i>Memberships, Staff L&D, HR, IT, Foster Carer L&D core training 1st year, Admin & Legal fees, Travel etc</i>		£241,552
<i>Website support, maintenance & development</i>		£12,200
Total		£1,780,498

Table 3: Transformation and 2026/27 Costs

26/27 Forecast Cost - Assumption: 6 months As Is (Recruitment Only) Model, 6 months End-to-End Ops Structure, 1 Year Transformation Costs		
<i>As Is (Enquiries Only)</i>	<i>6 months</i>	£387,510
<i>End-to-End Ops</i>	<i>6 months</i>	£890,249
<i>Transformation</i>	<i>1 Year</i>	£176,562
Total FY 26/27		£1,454,322
<i>Underspend 25/26</i>		<i>£401,914</i>
<i>DFE Funding - Inc. £50k transformation funding</i>		<i>£602,157</i>
Grand Total		£450,251
Split by 8 - Split evenly per LA		£56,281

3.5 Anticipated Benefits

The anticipated benefits of entering into the expanded FwWL model are:

- Brent's involvement in the expansion of FwWL positions the Council at the forefront of this agenda, enabling it to contribute to and benefit from a more collaborative, sustainable and effective regional fostering recruitment system.
- FwWL has been operating for 26 months, and this extension will allow the joint fostering hub to continue to develop and strengthen.
- Increased enquiries, which we are seeing in performance data, should mean increased fostering approvals in the coming 12 months.
- More children will be able to live locally.
- The expansion of a regional approach will reduce competition between local authorities. Authorities will work more closely together to increase the number of fostering households.
- With more available fostering households for Brent children, this will reduce the use of Independent Fostering Agency placements, and potentially the use of residential placements.
- With marketing, outreach, assessments of new foster carers, training of new foster carers and initial fostering panels all moving to FwWL, the remaining Brent fostering social workers can focus attention and resources on fostering support and the retention of approved foster carers.
- To ensure the new foster carers coming through from FwWL are of a high standard, Brent will have access to FwWL's recording system to closely monitor new carers. The decision to register a foster carer with Brent, after they have been to FwWL's fostering panel, ultimately lies with the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) in Brent. The ADM will review the fostering assessment, supplementary checks and the fostering panel minutes before registering the foster carer with Brent. Brent's fostering ADM is the Head of Looked After Children and Permanency.

3.6 Potential Risks

The potential risks of entering into the new agreement to expand FwWL include:

- The significant cost investment with no guarantee of a minimum number of foster carers.
- The national approach by DfE is to support and encourage foster carers to 'foster with your local council'. Due to Brent's housing demographic, FwWL may struggle to identify new fostering households within Brent and may not benefit from obtaining carers who live in other nearby local authorities.
- The guidance from DfE asks fostering hubs to ensure there is a consistent regional approach to marketing and branding. As a result the

Brent fostering service cannot continue to use 'Brent Fostering' marketing materials or branding. This may be confusing for those considering fostering with Brent.

- FwWL have made clear they do not have capacity to undertake all the outreach activities in Brent that the Brent Fostering service undertake. FwWL will also not have the local Brent knowledge and connections currently held by the Brent fostering service. Brent will need to continue to promote some awareness of fostering within the borough.
- There is a risk that the regional programme may not achieve the anticipated increase in fostering places. Should this occur, local authorities may be left without sufficiently robust local fostering services to revert to, potentially reducing their ability to meet statutory responsibilities and creating additional pressure on placement sufficiency. Although the requirement to be a hub is not mandatory, there is a clear policy shift towards regional working. If Brent do not participate in the FwWL expansion there is a risk we will not benefit from the new, creative, funded activity moving forward to address local and national placement sufficiency concerns.

3.7 Due to the size and demography of our area, recruitment of suitable foster carers is challenging, resulting in low approval rates across West London (with approvals per year ranging from an average of 0-10 per LA). This very small, LA based approach reinforces the need for a consistent, expanded and ambitious regional approach that can generate sufficient volume to achieve meaningful efficiencies.

3.8 In July 2026 FwWL will release secondments for social workers, which will be open to current social workers based in the fostering services of each of the 8 local authorities. Should a Brent social worker apply and accept one of these secondments, their post will not be recruited to which will provide a saving to Brent. Should any of the Brent social workers not be successful in applying for secondments based at FwWL, redeployment of social workers to other teams and services will be carefully considered as part of a managing change exercise in order to support the funding required.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 There have been a number of stakeholder consultation activities in relation to the DfE reforms for fostering. These have and will include national surveys, workshops and meetings to discuss the reforms and develop a proposal for West London. The previous and current Lead Members for Children have been updated on progress of regional developments. Existing foster carers and Brent children in care will also continue to be updated and consulted upon future developments.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 The cost of the FwWL programme is outlined in Section 3.4 of this report.

- 5.2 The current budget allocated to the Brent Fostering Assessment and Support teams is insufficient to meet the full costs associated with the expansion of the FwWL programme. It is estimated that the programme will create budget pressures of approximately £31k in the current financial year and £203k in 2027/28, should there be no changes to the existing structure.
- 5.3 These pressures are expected to be offset through the use of central government transformation grants awarded to the directorate, covering the period up to March 2029. In addition, a service redesign that can streamline current processes to reduce internal resource requirements will reduce associated costs, thereby helping to mitigate the financial impact of the FwWL programme. However, it is worth noting that if the programme is successful, additional resources may be required for the on-going support to new foster carers.
- 5.4 In a broader context, the average weekly cost of an in-house foster carer is approximately £433, compared with significantly higher costs for placements through independent agencies. As a result, each additional in-house foster carer generates a saving of around £600 per week (approximately £31,000 per year) that would otherwise be spent on independent placements. To ensure value for money, FwWL would need to recruit at least eight new foster carers in 2027/28, when all boroughs are expected to meet the full cost of the programme.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 The Agreement for the West London Regional Recruitment Hub Collaboration Agreement was entered into on 1 October 2023 for a period of 1 year and 5 months and was subsequently extended to allow for further extensions. Officers recommend that the Council enter into a new and updated Collaboration Agreement subject to Cabinet approval; with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham as the Lead Authority. The Council may rely on the general power of competence set out in the Localism Act 2011 to enter into such Collaboration Agreement
- 6.2 The assessment of foster carers is governed by the following pieces of legislation: Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013, statutory guidance to the Children Act 1989. Part 4 and statutory guidance on Fostering services: national minimum standards. These statutory responsibilities should be set out in the Collaboration Agreement.
- 6.3 Contract Standing Order 85 sets out certain requirements for the entry into a partnership agreement and for collaborative procurements with other public bodies. CSO 85 provides that:
- a) No Partnership Arrangements may be entered into unless they are approved by the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources and a formal agreement covering the arrangements is signed by the parties. - Officers have confirmed in Paragraph 5.5 that the Corporate Director,

Finance and Resources has approved entry into an inter-authority co-operation agreement.

- b) Any Partnership Arrangement or Collaborative Procurement which includes delegation of powers shall be approved by the Cabinet (or, where relevant, Full Council)
- c) Any Collaborative Procurement shall comply with these Standing Orders and Financial Regulations unless: (i) agreed otherwise in consultation with the Head of Procurement and in writing by the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources and the Monitoring Officer; or (ii) in the case of a High Value Contract, the agreement of the Cabinet is obtained under Standing Order 84(a). For the purposes of this Standing Order the Contract Value shall be calculated on the estimated value of the Council's part of the contract only.
- d) Any agreement between the Council and one or more other body which includes any payment by the Council in respect of the costs of carrying out a Collaborative Procurement shall comply with these Standing Orders unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources and the Monitoring Officer – The proposed Collaboration Agreement does not require payment by Brent Council to the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

6.4 Legal Services have not had sight of the new Collaboration Agreement for the new proposed service as this agreement is still being drafted by H&F Legal service.

6.5 It is likely that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment Regulations 2006) TUPE may apply in the event that employees who are assigned to the service are transferred from the Council.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

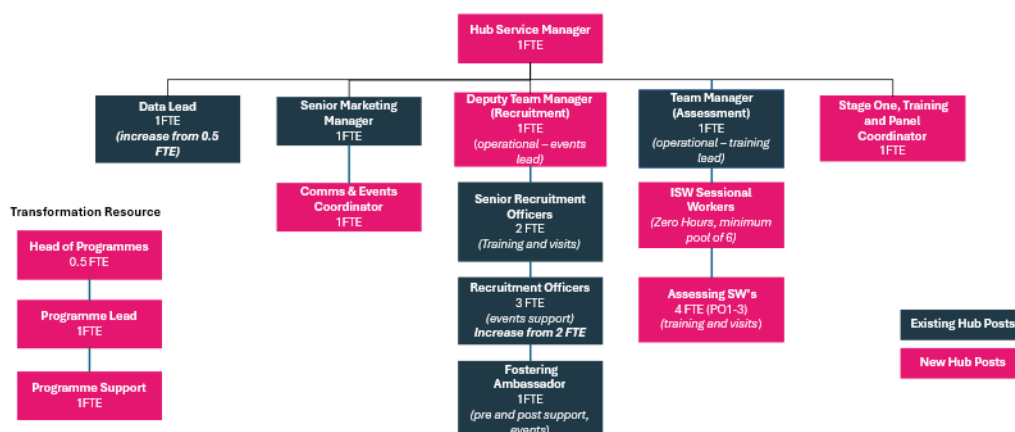
7.1 Pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010 (the "Public Sector Equality Duty"), the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,

7.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.
- 7.5 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications.
- 8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**
- 8.1 There are no specific climate change or environmental considerations.
- 9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations**
- 9.1 As outlined above, Brent staff based in Brent's fostering and kinship teams are able to apply for the secondment opportunities that will be advertised within FWWL (staff would be based with Hammersmith and Fulham local authority). At this stage there are no TUPE arrangements; as outlined above TUPE may apply in the event that employees who are assigned to the service are transferred from the Council. Staff based within Brent's fostering assessment and support team have been made aware that their work will focus on fostering support instead of fostering assessment and support when the expansion of FWWL takes place.
- 9.2 Any future staffing considerations will be subject to the Council's Managing Change process.
- 9.3 The below slide outlines the proposed structure for FWWL from 01 Oct 2026.

End-to-end hub Staffing Structure



Additional resource amount for the Hub operation **9.5 FTE** to extend delivery to support end-to-end. Plus **2.5 FTE** temporary resource to facilitate transformation to an end-to-end model.

This represents the minimum staffing requirement. This should be considered scalable and subject to ongoing review once baseline delivery is implemented.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 Information relating to the DfE Fostering Reforms is available in the public domain. Communication in respect of Brent's involvement with FwWL is an ongoing process. We are updating our current fostering community using our fostering newsletter and WhatsApp community/channel. Brent staff are updated via email, internal team meetings, service meetings and supervision.

Report sign off:

Nigel Chapman

Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development

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Elizabeth Benjamin

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Folake Olufeko

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