

## Appendix 6

### Work stream 6: Accountability & engagement

<b>Officer lead(s) and contributors</b>
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<b>Timeframe for delivery (including any milestones)</b>
Each action in the following section is marked with individual timeframes.
<b>Plans for delivery (detail on how the action will be delivered and partners who need to be involved)</b>
<p>1) <u>Enabling communities to get involved in the work of the council and partner organisations through existing mechanisms such as through participating in scrutiny committee task and finish groups and the co-opting of community leaders/representatives on to Boards where possible.</u></p> <p>A Community Action Plan Co-ordinator has been appointed on internal secondment to Strategy and Partnerships to co-ordinate delivery of the whole action plan. The Co-ordinator will also be responsible for working closely with the community to ensure they are involved in and kept updated on the delivery of work streams.</p> <p>Strategy and Partnerships and Governance will explore with chairs how best community members can be involved in the work of appropriate Council Board and Committees and in reference to the Brent Council Constitution. Consideration will be given to co-opting black community members onto scrutiny committee for example.</p> <p>Currently, statutory meetings are held virtually and experience has shown that this facilitates the engagement of the community in the meetings via public questions, and results in higher viewing figures of the webcast.</p> <p>There are slots at meetings of full council for the public and 15 minutes are set aside at alternate ordinary meetings of full council for questions from the Brent Youth parliament (a full list of how citizens can engage is set out at para 11 of Part I of the constitution). Black community members may take advantage of this opportunity.</p> <p>This action can be delivered within the next year.</p> <p>2) <u>Knowledgeable and experienced community members should be commissioned as paid consultants and peer reviewers to provide local insights, help shape the council's agenda and hold it to account.</u></p>

The LGA has been commissioned by the Chief Executive to undertake a peer review this Autumn and has requested for the review team to include local community members as paid reviewers for their expertise and local knowledge.

The council will continue to explore other such opportunities as well as build and support the capacity of community members to undertake such work through the mentoring scheme with CMT (see work stream 2 for more details).

This action can be delivered and the approach mainstreamed in council business within the next year.

- 3) Clearly demonstrating and reporting back impact to communities in a 'you said, we did' format including engaging in face to face (or virtual) meetings and on digital platforms to involve as many people as possible.

The council has already started to embed a co-production approach with a borough wide summit and by convening a steering group of community members who will hold the council to account on action plan progress and contribute to the work streams in partnership with departments.

The Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring that tangible results are demonstrated and communicated to the wider community in ways that are convenient to them.

This action will be achieved in the short term and be embedded for the long term.

- 4) Review of council corporate strategies (such as physical activity, health and wellbeing, stronger communities, equalities) and ensuring they include in-depth consultation with community leaders and groups. This entails working with local influencers (but being mindful of the 'usual suspects' and gatekeepers who are usually consulted with at the exclusion of others in the community) to understand the communities and their needs, and keeping a close connection between the council and community alive. The shaping of policy frameworks need to happen in partnership with the community and must be authentic.

The council is developing an approach to community engagement (Civil Society Strategy) which will include a consideration of how best to involve communities and enable them to have influence over the development of council policies, services and strategies. The peer review will also feed into this element and a more detailed equality impact will be carried out for the Borough Plan Outcome refresh taking place this year.

This action will be delivered within one year.

- 5) Putting in place long term mechanisms to engage with young black people in the borough in settings and ways that are convenient for them. Treating young people as stakeholders with a voice.

The council will work with organisations such as Young Roots, Young Brent Foundation and Brent Youth Parliament to ensure regular dialogue between the

organisation and young people in the borough so they can air their views and get involved in addressing local issues. We will also work with young people to identify their preferred communication methods. This will be reflected in the Civil Society strategy.

This action will be delivered within a year.

- 6) Creating a consolidated central preventative engagement function. This would include dedicated work with communities in localities.

The council's refreshed engagement approach (please refer to point 4 above) will address the need for the organisation to ensure localised involvement and engagement work is embedded in our day to day business. This includes ensuring that engagement activities are taking place in local areas of convenience for communities and enabling people to influence the development of council policies.

The council is also working with the voluntary sector to ensure that smaller community and voluntary groups are able to influence Council decision makers. This will build on the successful engagement work carried out during the first months of the COVID-19 crisis.

This action will be delivered within a year.

- 7) Draw on existing communication platforms in the community such as the Beat London radio station to convey messages and engage people.

The council has been engaging with Beat London for nearly three years and will continue to supplement by using a range of other communication platforms to engage with as much of the community as possible. We are currently mapping out all forms of stakeholder contact as part of the future Civil Society engagement strategy.

This action will be delivered within a year.

- 8) Convene a temporary community reference group to assist with the production and peer review of this action plan. The following people have expressed their interest in participating in follow-up discussions

This reference group was convened in July 2020 and had already started to meet. The council welcomes other members of the community who would like to be involved.

- 9) Holding a summer or autumn summit to convene a broader network of community leaders to review actions by the Council and continue the conversation.

The council will convene a summit in the autumn with a wide range of community leaders and representatives. We will work with the community reference group to design the event and will deliver in partnership with the Young Brent Foundation. Whether this will be a physical or virtual event is yet to be determined.

This action will be delivered by November 2020.

10) Using Brent Connects forums to engage with communities directly across all wards.

This action is already in train with planning for the October and January meetings underway. Brent Connects will also be used for Participatory Budgeting events where the community will have a say on how available funding is spent on local priorities.

This action will be delivered over the next year.

**Resource implications (e.g. budgets, officer time, departmental capacity)**

There are likely to be resource implications as we increase engagement activities. A more accurate estimate of costs will be provided to Cabinet in a future update following the design of a programme of activities.

Activities and approach set out by the future Civil Society strategy will require resourcing in order to make step changes. A future update to Cabinet can include a fuller estimate of costs once this strategy has been developed.

The financial resources required for the summit will depend on the format of the event (virtual or physical) which is yet to be decided. Either option will require the time of officers to prepare and deliver the event.

**Risks to delivery**

It will be important to ensure that both formal and informal opportunities for people to get involved in the work of the council are accessible to all parts of the community.

Without adequate resources the refreshed community engagement approach may not be effective.

**Impact on service area/department to consider (e.g. delivering action may mean stopping or scaling back on other departmental priorities)**

The majority of actions can be incorporated into the Strategy and Partnership existing work programme now that there will be a Co-ordinator in post.

**Public engagement and involvement (community stakeholders or groups with interest in the action and suggestions on how to engage them)**

This work stream's focus on public involvement will need to include the involvement of a wide range of community members, organisations and representatives who are enabled to influence the delivery of actions by providing feedback on effectiveness.