



**Full Council**  
22 November 2021

**Report from the Assistant Chief Executive**

**Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Chair's Report**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non Key Decision</b>	Council
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b>	Open
<b>Appendices:</b>	One Appendix A: Committee Work Programme 2021-2022
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
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## **1 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To present Full Council with a report providing an update on the meetings and activities of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee since Full Council on 20 September 2021.

## **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 To note the updates from the Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the Chair of the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **3 Detail**

- 3.1. Brent Council has two scrutiny committees; the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee and the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. The Council is also a member of the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NWLJHOSC), and Councillor Ketan Sheth is the Chair of the NWLJHOSC for the municipal year 2021-22.
- 3.2. A scrutiny committee can look at anything which affects the borough or its inhabitants, subject to its remit. The 2019 statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny recommends that a committee concentrates on fewer, significant topics which it reviews in-depth. The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has prioritised issues and work planning based on strategic thinking and focusing on high-value, high-impact areas of decision-making and policy development.
- 3.3. The remit of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee is set out in the Council Constitution under the Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Committees. The remit of the committee includes:

*Adult social care, public health and the statutory responsibility for scrutiny of local health services. It also scrutinises services for the children and young people, partnership work undertaken by the Children's Trust and safeguarding arrangements.*

- 3.4. As part of its remit set out in the constitution, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee can scrutinise, and make recommendations, to NHS organisations. It reviews the provision and operation of health services in the borough and can make reports or recommendations to NHS bodies or Full Council.

#### The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

- 3.5. The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee met on 21 September 2021. At this meeting members reviewed the services delivered for families in the borough who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. The report was presented by the Lead Member for Housing and Welfare Reform and included information on the performance of services, demand for services, delivery of support and improved outcomes for service users. Following the discussion, members recommended that a further update on community engagement for the service is provided at the committee meeting to be held on 14 March 2022.
- 3.6. Members also reviewed the operational performance of Brent Housing Management. The report was presented by the Lead Member for Housing and Welfare Reform and focussed on a number of key areas including customer contact and resident engagement, repairs, planning works and compliance, the maintenance of external areas, rent collection and complaints. Following the discussion, members recommended that officers provide the committee with an annual progress report on resident engagement, that the engagement framework is made available to all residents and that a report detailing the progress of fire safety work is provided at the committee meeting on 22 February 2022.

3.7. The minutes of the extraordinary Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 August 2021 were also discussed, including the draft recommendations made at the meeting. The meeting was organised as a response to the CQC inspection of Northwick Park Hospital maternity services and the subsequent inadequate rating received. The Committee agreed with the CQC inadequate judgement for maternity services and the following recommendations were approved:

- i) That London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust produce a SMART maternity improvement plan, including key activities, milestones and timescales, and responsible officers, to be published online and made available to members of the C&WSC.
- ii) That London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust provide an annual progress report on the maternity improvement plan, with the first update report to be received at the C&WSC meeting of 22 February 2022, with London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust requested to appear before the C&WSC again at that time. The report should include a progress update of the SMART improvement plan, in line with the above recommendation.
- iii) That London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust consider service user and other key stakeholder engagement in their maternity services improvement plan, specifically:
- iv) That the Trust include clear mechanisms for engaging with service users and the Maternity Voices Network.
- v) To consider ways to ensure better representation of service users from diverse cultural and language backgrounds in the Maternity Voices Network.
- vi) A greater focus and emphasis on strong mechanisms to capture pregnant people's experiences, opinions, and suggestions for improving the quality of service and care (e.g. Family and Friends Test data should be used on an ongoing basis to shape the improvement plan).
- vii) That there is active participation from frontline staff and clinicians in the development of the improvement plan, including attendance at the GP forum to ensure system working.
- viii) That the improvement plan is published in way that enables those affected by digital exclusion to engage.
- ix) That the maternity pathway is reviewed to ensure that it includes signposting to further support if required by service users e.g. domestic abuse, culturally specific issues, after care.
- x) That the Trust guarantees all women attending the antenatal clinics are assessed by a qualified midwife and that any breaches of the requirement is reported in the risk register.
- xi) That ACAS or the equalities commission is invited to review concerns about discriminatory practices especially in midwifery terms and conditions of employment, opportunity for advancement and susceptibility to bullying.
- xii) That the right and duty of staff to whistleblow in the interests of patient safety is written into their contract of employment.
- xiii) That the daily ratio of patients to midwives in the Labour ward is recorded and made available on request.

3.8. A verbal update regarding the progress of the GP Access Task Group was also received at the meeting. Members heard that the Task Group had met with a range of key stakeholders across the health service, and further meetings were planned to

explore the primary care vision and the accessibility of primary mental health care. Members also heard that the Task Group would be conducting a survey of Brent residents to hear about patients' experiences of accessing GP services since March 2021. The survey would be conducted by Task Group members, volunteer data collectors and Healthwatch England. An interim report on the Task Group's progress would be presented at the next meeting of the committee. Members were also advised that a Task Group to review transitional safeguarding arrangements in Brent would be set up, with a draft scope and terms of reference to be presented and agreed at the next meeting of the committee.

- 3.9. The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee also met on 7 October 2021. The extraordinary meeting was organised to review the implications for Brent Housing Management and the Housing Revenue Account of proposals for the ownership and refurbishment of Granville New Homes blocks prior to its consideration at Cabinet. The report was presented by the Lead Member for Housing and Welfare Reform and outlined the options analysis that First Wave Housing had carried out with Brent Council, as the company's guarantor, on finding a viable option to fund and deliver the required remediation works at Granville New Homes. A number of recommendations for the Executive were agreed by members, which were subsequently considered at the Cabinet meeting held on 11 October 2021. The recommendations are set out below:
- i) To recommend that officers provide written assurance to the Committee that the Council has undertaken due diligence reviews of its subsidiary bodies, including governance, fitness for purpose, financial soundness and reputational risk.
  - ii) To recommend that officers review arrangements for entering contracts of this kind, in particular to ensure adequate arrangements are made to ensure appropriate design and build quality, and that the Council has appropriate recourse where latent defects are later identified.
  - iii) To recommend that officers ensure all potential contractors are made aware of the standards expected by the Council and to ensure these are met before buildings are formally accepted by the Council.
  - iv) To recommend that the Council provide written assurance that it has taken, or will undertake, unconditional independent legal and financial advice (including tax) regarding the proposals and next steps for the Granville New Homes properties.
  - v) To recommend that all contracts procured by the Council and its subsidiaries include a review of past delivery of any potential contractors.
  - vi) To recommend that the Council ensures that where issues are evident in a particular project, all remaining projects by the same contractor are reviewed as a matter of urgency.
  - vii) To recommend that officers review the steps that make up the procurement, commissioning and contract monitoring system to identify any gaps, especially in relation to risk and review. Where risks are identified to recommend that immediate action is taken.
  - viii) To recommend that the Council puts in place arrangements to ensure learning about this case and any others raising issues of similar significance is shared across the Council as well as existing and potential future contractors.
  - ix) To recommend that officers establish and publish a comprehensive plan for ongoing engagement with residents.

3.11. The next meeting of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee will be held on 15 November 2021. At this meeting members will review the Brent Safeguarding Adults Annual Report 2020-21, consider the GP Access Task Group Interim Report and agree the scope and terms of reference for the upcoming Transitional Safeguarding Task Group.

The North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NWLJHOSC)

3.12. The North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee comprises representatives from the boroughs of Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea, Richmond, Wandsworth and Westminster. It meets with representatives of NHS North West London organisations to consider matters concerning health care subject to consultation.

3.13. Councillor Ketan Sheth is Brent's representative on the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its recently elected Chair. The next meeting of the committee, to be hosted by London Borough of Harrow, will be held on 14 December 2021.

#### **4 Financial Implications**

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **5 Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### **6 Equality Implications**

6.1 There are no equality implications.

#### **7 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

7.1 Non-executive members were involved in developing the work plan as part of their membership of the committee, as were health partners in the local NHS.

**Report sign off:**

Shazia Hussain  
Assistant Chief Executive