

Leader – Cllr Muhammed Butt

It is a great privilege to start a report once again to full Council with Leader next to my name; it's an honour that never gets old.

There are many people to thank from the last few months, firstly my wife and children for putting up with another long campaign and a car-boot full of leaflets for weeks on end.

Secondly, I would like to thank all my Labour colleagues in the Council Chamber; I am so excited to work with fresh faces and old to ensure that Labour values are at the heart of everything this Council does.

We cannot and will not stand still in this next administration. We can all feel that a general election is on the horizon and the pathway back to a Labour Government is through responsible custodianship of Councils like Brent.

Third, I want to thank the many thousands of residents that voted Labour at the ballot box this May. My colleagues would not be here without you, and we are indebted to you for your trust in us all.

I recognise that in my political lifetime even, Brent has not always been a Labour borough; and all politicians will tell you that political fortunes can rise and fall very quickly. So, to our residents I want to say: whether you voted Labour or not, we will not let you down

To my colleagues in opposition, some new and some returning; again, I wish you a warm congratulations on your election. We will need your commitment too, if we are to speak with one voice for Brent; in the challenging months ahead.

We know these are tough times for many people across Brent with the cost of living going through the roof. We will do everything in our power to support those who need our help and provide a springboard so that everyone has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.

Finally, I want to welcome my new Cabinet. I am proud to lead such a diverse Cabinet, drawn from many different walks of life. They will be my team to see our Labour Manifesto transform our borough and ensure no one is left behind.

I have provided below a full list of responsibilities for each Cabinet Member.

I am also delighted to have several backbenchers in a brand-new role as Cabinet Champions, supporting our work and continually pushing us to do more.

In our first few weeks in this administration, we have got straight to it; passing reports on bike hangers, purchasing new affordable homes, and working with the corporate management team to strengthen the structure of this council around our priorities.

In the meantime, until our next meeting in September, I want to take this opportunity to wish every colleague a restful summer holiday with friends and family when it gets to them.

Contact: Cllr.Muhammed.Butt@brent.gov.uk

1. Leader

Cllr Muhammed Butt

Communications

Brent representative on regional and national bodies

Strategies, priorities and plans

2. Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Cllr Mili Patel

Finance, Audit and Pensions

Procurement

HR

Legal

Capital projects

IT and Digital Strategy

Corporate Performance

Property and assets

Invest 4 Brent & First Wave Housing

Members Services

Brent Black Community Action Plan

3. Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning

Cllr Shama Tatler

Estate Regeneration

Inclusive Growth Strategy

Planning

Emergency Planning

Local Plan

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB)

4. Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection

Cllr Harbi Farah

Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour
Liaison with Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)
VAWG
Neighbourhood Security
Prevent
Building Control Enforcement
Planning Enforcement
Regulatory Services and Trading Standards
Noise Nuisance and Pest Control

5. Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care

Cllr Neil Nerva

Public Health
Mental Health
Brent Health Matters
Adult Social Care
Health and Wellbeing Board
Liaison with health partners

6. Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy and Citizen Experience

Cllr Eleanor Southwood

Council Tax and Business Rates
Customer Services and Accessibility
Food Poverty
Customer Promise
Citizenship and Registration
Community Wealth Building
Poverty Reduction
Community Hubs
High-streets and improvement
Living Wage Borough
Brent Start and Brent Works

Affordable Workplace Strategy

Inward Investment

7. Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action

Cllr Krupa Sheth

Transport Strategy and operations

Roads and pavements

Sustainable Travel

Waste Collection and street cleaning

West London Waste Authority

Clean Air and Environmental Health

Climate Emergency Strategy

Parking, Street Lighting

Trees and Ecology

Parks and green spaces

Mortuary and funeral services

8. Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security

Cllr Promise Knight

Homelessness and Rough-Sleeping Strategy

New Council Housing Programme (NCHP)

Brent Housing Management

Liaison with Registered and Social Providers

Private Rented Sector regulation

9. Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools

Cllr Gwen Grahl

Early Years Learning

Family Wellbeing Centres

Children's Safeguarding and Social Care

Looked after Children and Corporate Parenting

Social Work

Youth offending
Brent Youth Strategy
Brent Youth Parliament
Pupil referral units
SEND provision and strategy
Brent Family of Schools
School Admissions and school place planning
Schools Forum and schools' improvement
Further Education and Skills Centres
Apprenticeships

10. Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture

Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson

Equality and Disability Strategy
Community Engagement
Consultation
Participatory Budgeting
Neighbourhood CIL (NCIL)
Metroland, Borough of Culture Legacy
Leisure and sports facilities
Brent Libraries
Heritage and Archives
Voluntary Sector and Social Enterprise

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform – Cllr Mili Patel

I am immensely pleased to table my first report of many more to come, as Deputy Leader.

It is such an exciting time to be serving Brent, it is the place I was born, raised and educated.

I have worked right here in this borough as a youth worker, and I know first-hand the effect that Labour-run local councils can have on residents that need help the most.

It is these experiences that I will be carrying into the office of Deputy Leader – and I will work on behalf of every member to ensure that this Council operates in the interests of all our residents.

I know the immense weight of responsibility on my shoulders; and I will make it my mission to listen to as many voices from around this borough as possible.

All of this has been thanks to former Councillor Margaret McLennan, a trailblazer in her own right – and whose steady hand and radical heart kept this authority in safe hands.

In my previous role I was Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. Working with the Corporate Management Team, I watched our Children and Young People's Department achieve the best results in the borough's history.

I want to pay tribute here to Gail Tolley in these final few months of her service to Brent. Although I only worked as Cabinet Member with Gail for a fraction of her 42 years of incredible public service: I cannot thank her enough for her leadership, stewardship and advocacy of every young person in this borough.

Although I am no pessimist, it would be remiss of me not to warn this council of the stormy horizons ahead.

We all know that the cost-of-living crisis follows some of the toughest years this borough has ever known. I feel this particularly in Kensal Green and Harlesden, with many of our residents still traumatised by the impact of the pandemic.

With inflation showing no signs of abating your council will also be unable to escape the increased costs of running the services you rely on. In fact, the LGA estimates that without adequate long-term funding to offset inflation, local government will be faced with pressures of up to £2.4bn in this year alone.

As Deputy Leader I will be working with our finance team and officers across this building to think creatively about, we can make every £1 count. Cuts from government have never stopped us fighting for our residents; and they will not this time either.

Creativity is at the heart of what comes next for this administration.

We will need to harness every ounce of creativity if we are to meet each of the many challenges that await Brent: from the climate emergency to the cost of living.

Let the hard work begin.

Contact: Cllr.Mili.Patel@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning – Cllr Shama Tatler

Top news since my last report:

Planning Committee

Our June Planning Committee was fully 'in person' with all participants present. Hybrid option remains for speakers if required. 2 residential schemes were approved:

- 66 Cavendish Road – 21 homes
- 30 Brondesbury Park – 9 homes

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

The bill is proposing changes to the planning system with a new infrastructure levy, mandatory design codes and tighter changes to local plans

Other news:

Alperton Housing Zone

Alperton Sports Ground NCIL playground and parks improvement works are due to complete by the end of 6/2022.

A more detailed report will be tabled for September, but if any constituent has any queries, please contact me on the below:

Contact: Cllr.Shama.Tatler@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection – Cllr Harbi Farah

Top news since my last report:

Violence against Women and Girls Project

Brent is taking part in a tri-borough culturally sensitive domestic violence programme called CIFA (Culturally Informed Functional Assessment). Barnet and Enfield are the other two boroughs engaged in the programme.

The programme is unique in that it addresses and challenges cultural practices that may cause domestic abuse to go unchallenged. The specialist provider offers direct support to the victim, as well as the perpetrator, to help unpick behaviours that might be rooted in unchallenged culturally based beliefs.

Recently, I attended a briefing on this project on the 23rd June. The meeting was called by Sophie Linden, Deputy Head of MOPAC who wanted to hear more about the programme.

Other news:

Residents' views sought to shape new rules to tackle anti-social behaviour

Please share far and wide with your constituents that Brent residents are being asked to tell the council if there are any problems causing a nuisance in their area.

Feedback will help shape the renewal of the borough's Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) that give council key workers and the police the powers to crack down on anti-social behaviour

There are three PSPOs currently in place in Brent. Each has varying rules and applies to different areas but includes bans on things like street drinking, littering, irresponsible dog owners, public urination and much more.

While we hope officers rarely need to use these powers, it is vital they exist so residents and visitors can feel safe and enjoy the borough.

We know all areas are different, so please have your say to make sure the new PSPOs reflect what is going on in your neighbourhood

To take part in the survey please visit the council's website.

Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board (TSJAB):

I attended the first meeting of TSJAB between Brent and Harrow where three papers on the Annual Report, New legislation and Tackling Illicit tobacco were presented and agreed. This was the first meeting attended by the new administration in Harrow.

Safer Neighbourhood Board

I attended a SNB meeting on 8 June 2022 where we were updated on local investigations such as reducing the sanctioned reports from SNB subgroups and representatives.

Date for your diary: the next SNB meeting will take place on Wednesday 28 September 2022.

St Raphael's Murder Update

An important Community Safety Meeting took place on St Raphael's Estate on the 13th June. This action was part of a community listening and reassurance exercise after the tragic murder of Devon Jenson-Wallace. A plea date has been set for two men charged with murder.

The community were concerned about on-going safety issues in the area.

Given the variety of concerns raised – an action plan was created. Partners will trouble shoot and provide updates on the action plan at the next community meeting in 6 weeks' time.

If anyone wish to discuss any matters relating to my Cabinet portfolio, then please get in touch.

Contact: Cllr.Harbi.Farah@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care – Cllr Neil Nerva

Top news since my last report:

Brent Health Matters (BHM)

BHM is making a significant impact on challenging entrenched inequalities – please visit the council's website for more details:

- 11 large scale Diabetes events completed at various venues. 1,318 people attended 1,079 health checks done. Commitment to deliver at least 2 Diabetes events a month.
- £250,000 awarded this year to community organisations to carry out health and wellbeing projects using You decide process.
- Built network of Community Champions (43 currently), building and strengthening engagement with 284 community groups and organisations.
- In the last year, team provided support for patients in 10 GP practices from areas most affected by COVID. 2,300 patients seen by the team, which led to 323 flu vaccinations, 1,865 health assessments, 685 patient care plans updated and 560 patients receiving bespoke health education.

NHS Funding

The creation of the North West London Integrated Care System (ICS) provides an opportunity for services across NHS Brent to be levelled up and make use of local knowledge from our Brent Health Matters programme.

Social Care Reforms

There is continued uncertainty about government funding to ensure successful implementation of social care reforms.

Other news:

Covid-19

With the scaling back of testing, it is difficult to know accurately the level of infection. However there are clear indications that infections are rising. So while new variants remain a concern, the vaccination programme continues to break the link between infection and severe illness.

Vaccination continues at the Civic centre for adults and children. Numbers have fallen but are steady at 30 to 50 a day.

Monkey Pox

Monkeypox cases continue to rise. The overwhelming majority of these are in men who identify as GBMSM. The risk to the general population remains very low, transmission requires close contact. Targeted communications remain key so as to

not alarm those who are at low risk but appropriately inform higher risk populations at the same time as avoiding stigma.

Brent Health Bus

The bus will be offering oral health promotion, nutritional advice after school at sites around the borough during June and July. Publicity is via our schools network.

Relaunch of Cobbold Road

In the light of the new National Drug Strategy, additional funding has been made available from Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) for:

- Action to tackle drug related deaths.
- Strengthen links for the criminal justice system into treatment.
- Dual diagnosis.
- Increase service user involvement.

OHID have approved our plan for 22/23, 23/24 and 24/25 which means that just under £2.2 million pounds will be coming into the local treatment and recovery system over the next 3 years. In turn we are expected to increase the numbers in treatment by 20%.

WDP New Beginnings will be relaunching the newly refurbished Cobbold Road Treatment and Recovery Centre in Willesden.

Note in addition to these direct Public Health and Adult Social Care related activity I will be liaising with Cabinet colleagues to create opportunities for health gain to be woven into work plans to implement other borough national policy initiatives.

Contact: Cllr.Neil.Nerva@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy and Citizen Experience – Cllr Eleanor Southwood

Top news since my last report:

Cost of living crisis – how are we helping residents

Last week, Cabinet agreed to invest a further £3m into our Resident Support Fund (RSF) for 22/23.

Since August 2020, the RSF supported 2,658 applicants with a total of £5.2m. In 2021/22, the average RSF grant was £1,380 and 55% of grants were to help with household expenditure and utility costs.

More detail, including breakdown by ward is available in our most recent Cabinet report.

Brent Council has:

- Distributed £2,490 worth of food vouchers and £5,507 worth of fuel vouchers issued via the hubs (Oct 21 - Mar 22): over 5,000 residents approached us for food support (Apr 19 - Jan 22).
- Provided financial inclusion training for up to 340 residents and community leaders.
- Provided digital Inclusion support for over 900 households, including access to digital devices for 400 pupils: supporting 100 businesses with digital skills training: and 3 hubs host digital cafes.
- Distributed £5.5m of government grants, including holiday supermarket vouchers for families of approximately 12,000 children: a one-off payment of £50 (Feb 21) to eligible families to help with utilities: £125k funding to Brent food banks.

Supporting our residents is about being there when families are in crisis and also finding ways to help longer-term, not least because economic recovery in Brent is slow: we have the 6th highest number of unemployment claimant rates in the country, compared to 77th highest back in March 2020.

We'll be conducting a review of how we assist with the cost of living, including looking at systems (council and more widely), what support is needed and how we have the most impact. I look forward to your engagement in this work over the summer. More information is in the Cabinet report from earlier this month.

Other news:

Date for your diary – Brent Works jobs fair confirmed for 21st July at Wembley Stadium with over 100 employers, including HS2, Ikea, and Heathrow. We're expecting over 2,500 residents: please do come along.

Contact: Cllr.Eleanor.Southwood@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action – Cllr Krupa Sheth

Top news since my last report:

Jubilee Street Parties

We've been successfully processing applications, arranging the necessary road closures and drop-off and pick up of signs and cones. Our Highways team were involved in the arrangements for the Jubilee Beacon lighting ceremony in Wembley Park too.

Injection Patching Programme

Since 10th January, around 5000 defects have been repaired to date in over 200 roads. The programme is due to continue to the end of August.

CCTV Camera Enforcement for School Streets

Policy agreed by Cabinet June 2022 with new CCTV cameras for 26 permanent school streets to be introduced from September 2022. The team will work closely with the schools and develop a communications plan for engagement with residents, parents and carers.

Public Realm Recovery

Provision of enhanced cleansing services including hotpot cleansing, clear as you go fly tip removal, mechanical pavement sweeping, enhanced pavement and street furniture cleansing and additional graffiti and fly poster removal – we are now in month 5 of active operation with significant visible differences in evidence.

Phase 1 ends on 30th June with Phase 2 to commence on 1st September to 31st March 2023.

We are also replacing all old litter bins in town centres with a move to newer duo bins – phase 1 (damaged and missing) complete, phase 2 (old single aperture bins) currently in the planning stage.

Other news:

Climate Emergency - Two year delivery plan

A two year delivery plan was recently passed at Cabinet which will look at delivering sustainable neighbourhoods.

Contact: Cllr.Krupa.Sheth@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security – Cllr Promise Knight

Top news since my last report:

Affordable homes

125 local families will benefit from new Council homes at Watling Gardens, Mapesbury Ward, after construction was given the go ahead by Cabinet on Monday 20 June 2022. Following close on the heels, is the much needed investment in 155 new homes at the Alperton Bus Garage Development. This marks a leap forward towards the aim to create 1,700 new council homes by 2028.

The Poverty Commission clearly set out that a safe, secure home is the foundation for every family to build upon. We are on track to deliver the target of 1,700 homes (broken down into 1,000 homes to be delivered by the Council and a further 700 by other providers) earlier than the proposed 2028.

Other news:

Stock Maximisation

This initiative was set up in September 2021 to work with tenants in large properties, who are no longer in need of such large properties. We are currently offering incentives to these tenants to down size and release the larger family housing:

- There have been 9 completed downsizing cases.
- Currently dealing with 61 downsizing cases.
- Currently dealing with 4 cases where tenants are terminating their tenancy to buy their own property.
- There are currently 19 cases yet to downsize.

Proactive Damp and Condensation Approach

Over the last year, issues with damp and mould in social housing have been highlighted in the national press.

BHM have taken a proactive approach by reviewing all historical data to identify which residents had reported damp and mould issues over the last seven years. We have written to:

- 880 households to ask if they are still experiencing issues.
- Gone through a triage process so inspections can be prioritised for the worst cases.
- Prepared a standard specification, which will cover most properties still suffering from damp and mould.
- Specification includes the installation of data logging humidistat extractor fans to both the kitchen and bathroom, mould washes using proprietary fungicidal mould wash and full room redecoration.

Private Housing Services

For the past 6 months, the team have been collaborating with Camden and Westminster Councils with regards to a criminal landlord who has a property network that spans all three boroughs and the three Councils. Last week the accused was sentenced to two years in prison for contempt of court in that he had misled the court with regards to the ownership of his properties.

Increase in demand

Over the past 4 weeks, there has been a 20% increase in applications from homeless households, compared to the same period last year. The service is forecasting an increase in demand during 2022/23, following the lifting of the private sector eviction ban and the impact of the cost of living crisis.

Contact: Cllr.Promise.Knight@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools – Cllr Gwen Grahl

Top news since my last report:

Recruitment of a new Director of Children's Services

Nigel Chapman, one of the current Operational Directors, has been appointed as the new DCS following the announcement of Gail Tolley's retirement after 42 years of public service, including eight years in Brent. Under Gail's leadership the department has been transformed, achieving positive inspection results including a 'good' rating by Ofsted with outstanding features. Nigel has over 20 years' experience as a social worker and a complex understanding of the challenges facing Brent.

Update on the Skills and Holiday Activities (HAF) Programme

The summer HAF programme has 43 providers approved to deliver activities across more than 50 locations in 16 wards. Providers have been informed if they have been successful or unsuccessful in their bid to deliver activities for summer 2022.

It is anticipated that the programmes will offer approximately 2100 places across the summer holidays with most programmes running between 25th July and 31st August. Grant agreements have gone out to all approved providers and bookings will be live either w/c 4th or 11th July for families to register for a programme place.

The HAF co-ordinator is working closely with Family Wellbeing Centres (FWC) to develop additional offers alongside the core HAF programme, for example, work with The Felix Project to make available food for families to take home with them – I visited Preston Park FWC recently to see work in this area.

Consultation on SEND Green Paper under way

The government's Green Paper outlining proposed changes in SEND provision has now been published. It includes some positive proposals, including streamlining the provision of SEND via councils, improving focus on mainstream inclusion, and providing additional funding for Council High Needs budgets. Discussions are ongoing with officers about these changes, and how we can continue to provide high quality support for our SEND young people. The consultation is currently open for those interested in SEND provision to contribute.

Other news:

Schools White Paper

The White Paper includes the option of setting up a council-established multi-academy trust. I am currently in discussion with officers about whether we can deliver this for Brent, and the wider implications of the White Paper for our schools.

Everyone Active Memberships

Together with Public Health we have ensured Cared for Children and Care Experienced Young People can access free swimming and sport membership across the borough, in addition to providing this for Ukrainian refugees.

Contact: Cllr.Gwen.Grahl@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture – Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson

Top news since my last report:

Community Engagement & Equalities

Significant Community Engagement Programme to deliver the NCIL Participatory Budgeting You Decide Programme. The aim of the programme is to engage residents in local decision making with the added attraction of allocating resources. We received 142 applications for funding totalling £5m – with £2m to spend in this round shared across the five Brent Connects areas (Willesden, Harlesden, Wembley, Kingsbury and Kenton, and Kilburn).

Metroland Cultures Brent Biennial

We will be delivering the first Brent Biennial 'In the House of my Love' between the 8 July – 11 September in three cluster locations in the south of the borough; Kilburn, Willesden and Harlesden.

The Biennial will present a series of artworks and will feature work from Brent based and international artists as well as four new community led commissions in collaboration with Asian Womens Resource Centre, SUFRA Foodbank and Kitchen, Young Roots and Mosaic LGBT+ Young Persons Trust. The opening reception for the biennial is on Friday 8 July at civic centre and everyone is welcome to attend.

Women's Euros

Wembley Stadium will host the UEFA Women's EURO final on Sunday 31 July 2022. To tie in with this we have a range of activities to celebrate women in football.

- 'Women of the Match' exhibition celebrating local women and girls involved in football at the Civic Centre.
- The Heritage Service will also be delivering the installation One Two, One Two: Inspirational Stories from Brent's Women of Football - Sit on historic seats from Wembley Stadium and listen to local football stars speak about their experiences in the sport. Taking a seat on Olympic Way, you can absorb the iconic view of Wembley Stadium, home of English football. These will be installed in Wembley Park on 4th July 2022.
- Key stage 1 and 2 resource pack for teachers with information on local Brent legends and women's football related activities covering history, maths, nutrition, mental wellbeing and team work.
- Local clubs and players have opportunity to be part of Fan zone programme.
- Holiday Activity Fund Girls football camps.
- Football coaching course.
- Saturday 30 July will see Brent host the final day of the national arts and heritage programme in Wembley Park which will feature the Emma Smith installation and up to 100 Brent dancers and up to 20 local musicians performing the Brent Host City Anthem with musicians from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The plan is for there to be audio description of the art work and the anthem will have a BSL interpreter.

Other news:

Library Services

- We have a home library service, supported by 6 volunteers. In 2021/22 the service delivered 5,460 items. Anyone unable to visit a library can self-refer. Volunteers always welcomed.
- The Pandemic sparked an increase in e-borrowing: compared to 2019/20, in 2021/22 we saw 77% increase in active users.
- For Ukrainian arrivals, the service is promoting **Odilo** – a free app available across Europe, includes 3000 e-books and audiobooks in a variety of genres, including 1,700 Ukrainian titles and 500 in English.
- In the last quarter, 300 people attended ESOL classes in the libraries, run in conjunction with Brent Start.

Leisure

- The 3 sports centres are recovering well, Vale Farm and Willesden are back to 70% of pre-pandemic, which LGA benchmarking suggests is very good. Bridge Park, however, is slower to recover.
- 1Life's Willesden Sports Centre offered free swimming and lifeguard courses to Brent residents. Sessions ran every day throughout May half term with each course taking five days to complete.
- Everyone Active who run the Vale Farm Leisure Centre are offering free memberships to "Cared for Children and Care Experienced Young People" referred by Council LAC team.

Contact: Cllr.Fleur.Donnely-Jackson@brent.gov.uk