

	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet 18 July 2022</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Assistant Chief Executive</p>
<p>2021/22 Quarter 4 (January – March) Performance Report</p>	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	One Appendix A: Corporate Performance Scorecard
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Lorna Hughes Head of Strategy and Partnerships 020 8937 5068 lorna.hughes@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report and the performance scorecard (**Appendix A**) set out the position on the Council's performance in the fourth quarter of 2021/22. The content and format of the report and scorecard have been constructed to focus primarily on the Council's Borough Plan: Building a Better Brent (2021-2022), and its priorities.
- 1.2 This report will provide Cabinet with a corporate overview of performance in key Borough Plan priority areas, to support informed decision-making and to manage performance effectively.
- 1.3 The Borough Plan: Building a Better Brent 2021-22 refresh was agreed by Full Council in February 2021. This refresh updated the Borough Plan 2019-23. It provides a strategic picture of where the Council would like to be by 2022 and how it intends to get there. The Borough Plan has five overarching strategic priorities, each with detailed desired outcomes. To assist in the delivery of

these outcomes, specific key activities have been identified - there are known as annual Delivery Plan Priorities.

1.4 The five priorities set out in the Borough Plan (2021-22) and their desired outcomes are as follows:

- Every opportunity to succeed:
 - Improvement in Key Stage results for boys of Black Caribbean heritage, looked-after children and care leavers
 - High-level skills achievement
 - Increase in average wage
 - Increased opportunities for children and young people to succeed

- A future built for everyone, an economy fit for all:
 - Increased levels of labour market participation and training support
 - Increase in inward investment achieved via the council
 - Adopt our new Local Plan, setting out our vision, priorities and areas for future development in the Borough.
 - Increase in housing supply
 - Reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation
 - Reduction in number of people who are homeless in the Borough and effective support for those who are homeless
 - Keep traffic moving and our roads and pavements in good repair

- A cleaner, more considerate Brent:
 - Considerable and measurable progress made in reaching net zero carbon emissions, improving air quality and reducing fuel poverty
 - A cleaner more attractive borough

- A borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy:
 - Reduction in anti-social behaviour, the risk of harm and re-offending
 - Reduction in violent crime, including gang and knife crime
 - Support our most vulnerable adults, enabling them to choose and control the services they receive, to remain independent and lead active lives
 - Improve the health of Brent residents and reduce health inequalities
 - Make Brent a place where culture is celebrated and vibrant

- Strong foundations:
 - Address digital exclusion and enable residents to get online
 - Making every pound count
 - Building services around residents and their needs
 - Increase in resident satisfaction
 - Increase in resident involvement

1.5 The Corporate Performance Scorecard (Appendix A) sets out the suite of key performance indicators (KPIs) being monitored corporately.

1.6 Where data is not provided, the following apply:

- The measure is annual
- The data is not yet available due to seasonal services and data collection

- The data has not yet been released by a partner organisation e.g. NHS, Met Police etc.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 Cabinet has been asked to:

- a. Note the performance information contained in the new format performance report.
- b. Consider the current and future strategic risks associated with the information provided and agree remedial actions on strategic risks as appropriate.
- c. Challenge progress with responsible officers as necessary.

3.0 Detail

The Policy and Performance Framework

- 3.1 A new performance framework has been developed for 2021/22 that sets out how the council will manage its performance from the start of the year. The new framework ensures focus on delivering improved outcomes by driving improvement throughout the organisation. The performance framework covers:
 - Tier 1 – the Borough Plan and delivery plan (refreshed)
 - Tier 2 – key corporate strategies and plans: Black Community Action Plan, Equality Strategy, Poverty Commission, Climate Emergency Strategy and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (in development).
- 3.2 The framework has been developed with a number of principles in mind:
 - There should be a clear golden thread from the Borough Plan to front line delivery
 - The Borough Plan and key strategies/plans are interlinked and cross-referenced
 - Performance measures must be proportionate and meaningful, and include the use of 'journey' indicators to demonstrate progression.
- 3.3 The new framework introduces a new performance-reporting tool (SPINE). SPINE has been developed in house and uses Power BI to store and generate reports. The new tool includes increased automation and reporting capabilities. The benefits of the new tool are:
 - Increased accuracy
 - Undemanding data collection process which eradicates multiple data requests
 - Customised reporting using Power BI to cater for all levels of reporting and detail.
 - All departments can use the data repository to build their own dashboards and reports.

Borough Plan indicators

3.4 Overall, there are currently 57 Borough Plan key indicators in the Q4 performance scorecard. During this quarter, there has been reduction in the number of Red ratings from Q3. There are now 9 Red ratings across all services (Borough Plan measures only), reduced from 11 in Q3.

Department	Q3 2021-22	Q4 2021-22	Trajectory
Chief Executive	0	0	➡
Children & Young People	2	3	⬆
Community Wellbeing	8	5	⬇
Customer & Digital Services	0	0	➡
Regeneration & Environment	1	1	➡

3.5 KPIs are rated Red, Purple, Amber or Green depending on their performance:

- Green KPIs have met or exceeded their target
- Amber KPIs are between 0.01% and 5% outside of their target
- Red KPIs are 5% or greater outside of their target
- Purple KPIs show performance outside of target, but where this is directly attributable to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

Of the 57 Borough Plan indicators for Q4:

- 29 are on or above target (Green)
- 4 just off target (Amber)
- 9 off target (Red)
- 2 are off target due to Covid-19 (Purple)
- 11 provide contextual information
- Corporate performance did not receive data for 2 indicators from the Community Protection service.

Internal business performance indicators

3.6 An additional 14 internal business indicators are included in the corporate performance scorecard.

- 3 are on or above target (Green)
- 1 just off target (Amber)
- 6 off target (Red)
- 2 are off target due to Covid-19 (Purple)
- 2 indicators provide contextual information

Purple Covid related KPIs

3.7 The total number of Purple RAG measures (including internal business) has decreased from 18 at the end of 2020/21 to 4 at the end of 2021/22 indicating that the Council has shown good progress in recovering from the issues caused by the pandemic in the last two years.

3.8 A summary of performance is outlined in the following sections.

Every opportunity to succeed

Amber, green and contextual KPIs

- 3.9 The percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 in education, employment or training (EET) has fallen slightly below target in Q4, scoring 56% and rated Amber against a target of 57%. Performance has remained consistent and reflects targeted work between the Looked After Children and the Permanency Service and Prospects. The 2021/22 outturn is higher than last year reflecting the positive work the department continues to achieve.
- 3.10 The percentage of Looked After Children (LAC) in education, employment or training (EET) has ended Q4 at 81.5% (Contextual). Monthly meetings with Prospects and the Brent Virtual School Post-16 advisor are supporting earlier identification of young people who are NEET. Targeted support for NEET and those on the edge of being NEET has resulted in a 7% improvement since the last quarter.
- 3.11 17 local apprenticeships or work experience opportunities for disadvantaged groups and young people through SVEPP (Social Value and Ethical Procurement Policy) have been secured in 2021/22 giving this new measure a Green rating against an annual target of 15. 7 placements were confirmed in Q4. After a strong first year, the Procurement team continue to work with directorates and delivery partners to ensure placements or apprenticeship opportunities consider social value as an additional benefit when procuring.
- 3.12 There have been another 56 Employment and Apprenticeship outcomes secured through Brent Works in Q4, resulting in a year to date achievement of 273 against a target of 225. The service has performed exceptionally well once again this year and has built on the positive outcomes from last year with an 33 additional placements secured this year.
- 3.13 The number of students enrolled on Brent Start courses at the end of the year has also performed well with 4,813 positive outcomes against a target of 4,000. The final figure for the academic year will be available in October 2022.
- 3.14 Although this year there had been plans to report on Key Stage 4 attainment for Looked After Children and boys of Black Caribbean heritage, data on these two measures remains unavailable. National and local attainment data for the academic year 2020/21 has not been published following the Department for Education's cancellation of the summer 2021 examinations, which were replaced by Teacher Assessed Grades.

A future built for everyone, an economy fit for all

Red and purple KPIs

- 3.15 Performance for the voids indicators are both outside of target. A voids recovery plan was put in place at the start of the year. This has led to improvement on both major and minor voids. The average re-let times for

majors voids improved from 153 days to 112 days and for minor voids from 118 days to 107. However, progress has been slower than expected. Making further improvements in performance is a key priority for 22/23. A further review of the voids process has taken place, including workshops with all of the staff concerned, to ensure all issues and perspectives have been factored in and all staff are clear what is expected of them individually and collectively. The focus is now on refining the hand-offs between tenancy terminations and void works, void works and allocations and lettings. The effect of this should start impacting performance from Q2 of 2022/23.

- 3.16 52 affordable homes have been delivered by i4B this year against a year-end target of 60, 16 of which were delivered in Q4 giving this measure a Red rating. The primary reason for not meeting the target is an increase in market prices throughout the year. As a result, i4B's price caps are less competitive in the current market. i4B has revised its acquisition target to 48 in 22/23. The principal risk to this is increasing interest rates. This constrains i4B's ability to purchase properties that meet its viability criteria.
- 3.17 The performance of Category 2 highways defects repaired on time continues to perform outside of target levels but has shown improvement every quarter in 2021/22 with a Q4 outturn of 76% and a year to date outturn of 66.6%. Performance has continued to improve in Q4 due to the contractor addressing the backlog that had accumulated. There are still some repairs that are completed outside the permitted 7 & 28 day timescale that marks them down, although there are often mitigating circumstances for late 7 day repairs, such as obstruction from parked vehicles or sensitive streets requiring traffic management. The service continues to work with the contractor to identify these issues early so they can be taken into account when assessing performance. The significant improvement seen since a change of contractor are promising and improvements are still feeding their way through the process. As a result, it is intended to retain the 'stretch' target of 95% for 2022/23 and review the longer-term target for future years.

Amber, green and contextual KPIs

- 3.18 The number of households in temporary accommodation has reduced once again in 2021/22 with a year to date actual of 1,683 against a target of 1,850 continuing its positive trend giving it a Green rating. In 2012, Brent had 3,176 homeless households living in TA, which was the largest number in the country. By 2018, this number had reduced to 2,450, and has now reduced further to 1,683, a reduction of 31% since 2018. Only 9 London Councils have achieved any decrease in their TA portfolio since 2018, with the remaining Councils increasing their TA by an average of 30%.
- 3.19 3,875 Houses of Multiple Occupation are now licensed in Brent, against a target of 3,800 thus achieving a Green rating for Q4. The target of having 3,800 HMO's licenced by the end of year was just exceeded and we see another year on year increase in the number of licenced HMOs. Brent is still outperforming all other London Boroughs and according to the Local Authority Housing Statistics, Brent has successfully licenced more Mandatory HMOs than any other London

borough. Nationally the Council is ranked 6th and has licensed more HMOs than the whole of Greater Manchester. The licencing of HMOs is being complemented by a robust approach to enforcement as there is an increase in this activity too as we come out of the pandemic

- 3.20 A further 51 affordable homes have been delivered by external partners (including S106) in Q4 raising the year to date figure to 550 against a target of 211 also giving this measure a Green rating. Work on site has resumed since the COVID-19 pandemic and all Registered Providers are building again. Rising cost and shortage of construction supplies has been causing some issues and there has been some slippage around expected completion dates for most schemes. In Quarter 4, the service were expecting Clarion Housing to deliver 121 homes at Neasden Lane, this date lapsed and were delivered in April.
- 3.21 At the end of Q4, 1,600 new council homes have now been delivered giving the measure a Green rating. The Council continue to deliver homes as part of the New Council Homes Programme (NCHP). The service currently has 381 on site and a further 515 either with planning permission or submitted for planning. Furthermore, 1,336 homes are in the feasibility stage i.e. in early viability assessment and preparation for planning submission.
- 3.22 The number of empty properties refurbished and brought back in to use within the borough at the end of Q4 is 102, against a target of 100 giving it a Green rating and showing good progress throughout the year. The department's target has been reached as a consequence of the Empty Property Team's interventions. This is a challenging target and very much relies on the carrot and stick approach, this being the carrot of our Empty Property Grant scheme, working with landlords and developers and our stick being enforcement. In particular, it is worth noting that the team finally succeeded in completing a compulsory purchase of a long-term empty property that had caused a blight in its neighbourhood.
- 3.23 The percentage of homelessness prevented and relieved has performed well this year and finishes Q4 above target (69.1% as against a target of 50%). The main reason for homelessness is eviction from the private rented sector, often connected to affordability issues. In anticipation of a spike in evictions following the lifting of the Private Rented eviction ban in May 2021, the team set up a proactive prevention service. Officers were seconded from the Housing Options team to make contact with households who had applied for financial assistance through the Resident Support Fund (RSF) and Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), and offered advice and assistance before the household made a homelessness application. This proactive approach has meant that the service has been able to engage with residents and prevent homelessness before a Landlord has undertaken eviction proceedings. This early intervention with families who may not have approached the Council for assistance until they were at the crisis stage of being evicted, has resulted in families avoiding the stress and disruption of being made homeless, and avoided the use of emergency bed and breakfast accommodation.

- 3.24 Employment & Skills 1,908 students have so far participated in a Brent ESOL course during this academic year (2021-22), against a target of 1,500 which was also last year's outturn. The figure shows continued improvement in this area and highlights the willingness of residents to take part in such services. A final figure for the academic year will be confirmed in October 2022.
- 3.25 The number of employment outcomes in growth sectors through Brent employment services also performed extremely well throughout 2021/22 with an actual of 113; 10 of which were confirmed in Q4. These outcomes continue to be achieved in digital tech, pharmaceutical, construction, creative and health and social care.
- 3.26 The number of local suppliers we use in Brent is also performing above target levels, with an outcome of 35% against a year-end target of 35%. The Council's work in engaging with the local supplier base is beginning to realise benefits with more suppliers who bid having a successful outcome and being awarded a contract.
- 3.27 The amount of CIL collected in Q4 was £4,406,248 resulting in a total of £18,389,248 collected for the year (contextual).

A cleaner, more considerate Brent

Red and purple KPIs

- 3.28 An average of 130 kilograms of residual household waste was collected per household in Q4, bringing the YTD average to 518kg against a target of 480kg. Although this is 8% above target and rated Purple, there has been a decrease from 136.8kg in Q3. Although this reduction was predicted due to more people going back in to office environments, a more noticeable reduction was anticipated. The small reduction could be attributed to more residents adopting a hybrid approach to working with fewer days in the office and more working from home, thus generating more residual waste but a reduction on full lockdown levels. Multiple lockdowns across 2021-2022 meant resident behaviour has been inconsistent and it is difficult to predict any trends by comparing to previous years.

Amber, green and contextual KPIs

- 3.29 234 electric vehicle-charging points have now been installed across and are functioning in the borough against a planned YTD target of 200, rating this indicator Green. The delay reported earlier in the year due to technical issues with equipment has now been resolved.
- 3.30 630 trees were planted in Q4 bringing the total for the year to 661. This is against a target of 551 and is rated Green. Over 100 extra trees were planted in 2021/22 in comparison to the previous year.
- 3.31 3,703 waste cases were investigated that have led to enforcement actions during the year with 1,300 of these completed in Q4. This is a very positive

outturn to the year and clearly highlights the extraordinary work carried out by the department. In comparison, the outturn at the end of last year was 506.

A borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy

Red and purple KPIs

- 3.32 The percentage of children becoming subject to a Child Protection plan for a second or subsequent time has risen to 15.3% in Q4 against a target of 12%, making this KPI Red. There have been increased escalations in risk and need following multiple vulnerability factors for families, including parental mental health and drug and alcohol misuse. All repeat child protection plans are closely monitored by Child Protection Advisors to ensure action is appropriate.
- 3.33 The rate of referrals per 10,000 children has a Red rating with an actual YTD figure of 610 against a target of 540. The rate of referrals is higher than at the same time last year, when year-end performance was 518 referrals per 10,000 children. The figure has been increasing steadily throughout the year, and there has also been an increase in the complexity of cases.
- 3.34 The stability of placements of Looked After Children has reached a high of 16.7% compared to the 12% target. Placement moves have a range of causes, including a step down from residential to fostering, changes of foster carers to reduce risks, moves from IFA placements to connected person placements and young people presenting with complex needs that placements are not able to meet. Brent's care population is older than the England average; older children often present with greater challenges which put pressure on care placements. Placement stability meetings take place to track children with two or more moves, and staff are working to identify trends within cases with three or more placement moves to consider policy responses.
- 3.35 The percentage of new birth visits within 14 days is rated Red following a decline in performance for Q3 onwards. The impact of lower staffing levels from Q2 means the year-end performance is 60.8% against a 95% target. However, 98.2% of new births receive a visit within 30 days. All cases not seen before 30 days have been investigated. Risk mitigation has been put in place with the health visiting service contacting all women. Following a risk assessment, a decision is made: low risk women on their second or subsequent pregnancy can be assigned to a staff nurse for the new birth visit, whereas higher risk women are seen by health visitors. The recruitment issues have been escalated through meetings with Central London Community Healthcare Trust (CLCH) management and is now on the risk register for the Brent Council and CLCH. A health and care recruitment and retention working group, which reports to the Brent ICP Executive, is supporting recruitment; and the barriers to recruitment, which cannot be solved locally, have been escalated to the North West London Integrated Care System board.

Amber, green and contextual KPIs

- 3.36 The number of new admissions to residential and nursing care homes for people aged 65+ is rated Amber after being rated Red in previous quarters during the year with an actual YTD figure of 154 against a target of 149. The number of new admissions to residential and nursing care homes for people aged 18-64 is rated Green with an actual YTD figure of 15 against a target of 28. The expectation is that both indicators' performance will continue to reduce as the department have reinstated home first from a hospital bed rather than an admission to a residential placement. The service is also working toward promoting extra care as a less restricted option to residential care. With the implementation of these activities there is an anticipation for further improvement.
- 3.37 The Child Protection rate per 10,000 children measure has been rated Amber in Q4 with an actual year to date figure of 45.5 against a target of 45. The number of children subject of a child protection plan has continued to increase, reflecting the increase in referrals and case complexity.
- 3.38 The rate of Early Help Assessments and reviews completed per 10,000 children is just above the target rate of 265 with an actual of 269 and is rated Green. New workers are now embedded in the Early Help Service and EHA completion has increased in line with this additional resource.
- 3.39 The reoffending rate by young offenders per cohort has an YTD actual of 39.6% with the target set at 50% meaning the measure earns a Green rating. Reoffending rates in YOS remained stable in Q4. Reoffending has been an area of focus for the YOS Board since January 2021, which has led to a number of targeted initiatives, such as training practitioners in speech and language issues and offering those children on Referral Orders voluntary appointments / support prior to their Order. The YOS is using a trauma informed approach with children, which assists the Courts to have a deeper understanding of the impact of adverse childhood experiences and interventions to support. As well as working with services across the CYP Department to manage high-risk children in the community, the YOS has developed multi-agency partnerships with core partners including the CAMHS, the police and the Probation Service to reduce reoffending.
- 3.40 The percentage of successful completions as a proportion of all opiate drug users in treatment was 6.2% against a target of 4.8%. Brent services for opiate users continued to exceed the target in Q4, with the data consistent throughout the year. Clinical interventions, including secondary prescribing, are operating effectively to ensure that services remain accessible and clinically safe. A new culture indicator measuring the increase in the number of people participating in heritage activity has ended Q4 with an actual of 44,911 against a target of 30,000 for the year. With the further announcements of relaxation of Covid rules, physical participation continued to increase throughout the year. Wrap Up and the final delivery of Being Brent projects supported this change in mentality for the public and increased participation.
- 3.41 Increase in loans of physical and electronic stock from the libraries also achieved a Green rating performing well above target levels (actual YTD –

893,555, target – 500,000). Library loans have recovered quicker than anticipated post Covid, and a faster rate than visits. There has also been less service disruption in 2021/22 as a result of Covid than anticipated in April 2021. The in person events programme has taken slightly longer to return to pre Covid levels and the service anticipate this will support ongoing growth into 2022/23 as they further extend the children and families programme.

Strong foundations

Amber, green and contextual KPIs

- 3.42 Revenue income secured from our commercial portfolio is rated Amber with an actual YTD income of £3,005,370, falling slightly shy of the target – £3,040,164 target. The slight shortfall is due to rent abatement at Bridge Park because of the need to renew expired leases and avoid security of tenure being created. The new leases will ensure that the leases can be terminated when development is required to proceed. So the suspension of invoicing is a necessary strategy that Brent needs to take to ensure tenants do not acquire secure tenancy status.
- 3.43 Current rent collected as a percentage of rent due finished Q4 at 107.1% giving it a Green rating. Following the Council's decision to refund water charges in full, tenants who were in arrears have had refunds applied to their accounts directly which has led to an increase in collections. Additionally, the service has continued to work closely with colleagues to ensure Council tenants are utilising the Resident Support Fund and this year have been successful in applying £280K to Council Tenant's rent accounts.
- 3.44 Community Hubs continue to perform very well, with a further 11,823 residents accessing a hub in 2021/22 against a target of 3,900. There has been the expected increase in demand after the Christmas and new year period, with a particular increase in debt and fuel support.
- 3.45 Performance has been above target level in increasing online service uptake as shown in the measure "25% increase in the number of transactions undertaken online across the website (non-logged in state) compared to 2020/21" with 453,413 transactions against a target of 390,433. Online transactions increased significantly in Q4 but this was expected with Garden Waste renewals and Council Tax bills being issued this quarter. In February, the new website went live and has been well received. Early indications show that residents are finding it easier to find things and that information is clearer. However, overall the number of transactions has increased steadily throughout the year and has exceeded the target set for the year. Residents are using My Account more regularly to access and request services, and we are now able to report on this to show a more representative picture.
- 3.46 The new social value Procurement indicator – hours contributed toward supporting/financial commitment for sponsorship of community-led initiatives [SVEPP] introduced for this year performed well all year and its YTD performance is above target levels with an actual of 59 against a target of 20).

- 3.47 The number of referrals to food banks made through Brent Hubs in Q4 was 940 taking the year-end outturn to 3,423. There was a significant increase at the end of the quarter in request for support with Food aid that could be attributed to cost of living challenges caused by the increase in fuel bills as well as increase in National Insurances contributions.
- 3.48 The number of residents engaging with the participatory budgeting pilot has performed very well with 1,904 interactions recorded throughout the year. These include presentations to groups, one to ones by email and phone and in person contacts. This is a positive start for the service and it is anticipated that engagement levels will continue to rise and meet projected expectations throughout Q1 2022/23 whilst the You Decide scheme is running until the Decision Day Events taking place in June.

Internal Business

Red and purple KPIs

- 3.49 The Council Tax collection rate has ended Q4 just outside of target; with a rate of 92.3% falling slightly short against a target of 93.5% giving it a Purple rating. The collection fell short of expectations in another year severely affected by the pandemic and further affected by the cost of living crisis at the end of the financial year. In light of this, the small improvement to 92.3% was welcome. In addition, arrears collection was £6.6m up over £5m on 2020/21. The target for 2022/23 is set for a further improvement to 92.5%.
- 3.50 Collection Non-Domestic Business Rates (NNDR) is also rated Purple at the end of Q4 achieving a rate of 91.3% falling short of its 98.8% target. The outturn represents a good improvement from 2020/21, especially so as 2021/22 was another year in which businesses were severely affected by the ongoing pandemic. In addition, as well as supporting businesses and collecting business rates, the team worked to ensure all government grants to support business were paid accurately and in a timely manner. Continued improvement is expected for 2022/23 with a target of 92.5%.

Amber, green and contextual KPIs

- 3.51 The average days taken to process new benefit claims and change events has ended the year with an actual of 12.6 days against a revised target of 14 days. The Housing Benefit caseload has not decreased as anticipated meaning the workload has remained high. As Covid restrictions have relaxed and people have returned to work, the service are seeing an increase in related changes in circumstances. The extension of the SIP scheme to 31/03 and extension of the HSF scheme led to a diversion of resources away from HB processing for the majority of the year. The service have implemented a new process for assessing HB New Claims and have since have consistently picked up New Claims on the working day after they were submitted.

- 3.52 The value of Housing Benefits Overpayments recovered as a percentage of debt created in year has also ended Q4 on a positive note with an actual YTD of 88.1% against a target of 85%. Following a review and subsequent process changes, collection has improved despite the impact of the pandemic and the ongoing reduction in new debt from the steady reduction in HB cases. A target of 95% will be in place for 2022/23.

Complaints, FOI and Member enquiries

- 3.53 Performance for the corporate categories of complaints improved over 2021-22. Performance for the proportion of Stage 1 corporate complaints completed on time rose from 85% in quarter 1 to 89% in quarter 4. Stage 2 corporate complaints performance increased significantly in the last quarter with the percentage of those complaints responded to on time increasing by 35 percentage points between Q3 (52%) and Q4 (87%). The dip in performance mid-year coincided with a team restructure and team sickness.
- 3.54 However, responding to statutory complaints has been particularly difficult for the Council as a result of the legislative requirements governing those processes¹ and a shortage of external investigators available to undertake the investigations. As a result, performance has been poor. Looking at data for the whole year, 71% of the 138 Stage 1 statutory complaints we received, and 25% of the 21 Stage 2 statutory complaints, were responded to on time.
- 3.55 Statutory complaints continue to be very complex and independent investigators have high caseloads. This reflects the experience across London where councils have difficulty in improving performance on these type of complaints. At Brent, we now have a dedicated statutory complaints manager in post to closely monitor performance, and we are investigating alternative external providers and new investigators within the North West London pool. It should also be noted that in terms of ASC statutory cases, the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 requires responses within 6 months to complete the whole complaint process, but Brent's performance is measured on the standard 30 day target for consistency with other types of complaints. For 2021-22, this would have applied to 9 out of the 21 stage 2 statutory cases.
- 3.56 Member Enquiry response performance has remained consistent with 92.6% of enquiries responded in time against a target of 90% giving it a Red rating. 1,537 member enquiries were received in Q4, 135 more than the previous quarter with 93% responded to within ten days. The measure has performed consistently throughout the year despite an increase in the volume of enquiries received. The team continue to carry out monthly quality checks, highlighting any issues to managers.

¹ The Children's Act 1989 Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, Adoption and Children Act 2002, Health and Social Care (Community Health Standards) Act 2003 The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009

3.57 The percentage of FOI requests responded to within 20 working days is rated Amber with an actual year-end of 89.9% marginally missing the target of 90%. Performance increased from 89.4% in Q3 to 93.1% in Q4 following a combination of increased monitoring to ensure cases are completed by deadline, and by providing additional training to the Housing Department to improve their performance rates. Further training is being planned to ensure officers are better prepared to manage information requests.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 In Table 3 of Part 3 of the council's constitution, it states that the Cabinet is responsible for formulating and preparing a sustainable community strategy and then submitting the same to Full Council for consideration and adoption or approval. The Sustainable Community Strategy constitutes part of the council's Policy Framework. The Council's Borough Plan, which is its current sustainable community strategy, was agreed by Full Council in 2019.

6.0 Equality Implications

6.1 There are no direct diversity implications. However, the report includes performance measures related to the council's diversity objectives and is part of the framework for ensuring delivery of these key outcomes. Service areas have the responsibility for managing the delivery and performance of their services. Therefore, the service area would also need to consider if a variation in performance could lead to equality implications at a service level.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 None.

Report sign off:

Shazia Hussain

Assistant Chief Executive