

## Leader – Councillor Muhammed Butt

### Top news since my last report:

#### Have you say on Brent's new Borough Plan

It has given me great pleasure to introduce Brent's Borough Plan, setting out Brent Council's roadmap for the next four years.

This plan is informed by your priorities, expressed through your vote for at the ballot box earlier this year and through insights from our Residents Attitudes Survey completed last year. The council's Cabinet has approved this initial draft Borough Plan so now we want to hear from you for your feedback.

Throughout this plan, my eyes remain on the same principle as always – to leave no resident behind. This will be more important than ever, as we stare down the cost of living emergency together.

In Brent, like every London borough – we face a constant balancing act between the many challenges that await us. We face unprecedented demand in housing services; many more residents requiring round the clock care in later life; an increase in interventions by children's social services; and the ever present need to keep our borough safe, secure and clean.

Over the last ten years, Brent Council has needed to cut close to £200m from its budgets. We have needed to be agile, cut back our workforce and reduce spend. We have innovated, using new technology and modern ways of working. But it is without doubt that cuts have consequences on what we dream to do.

Our ambitions for Brent are under attack by spiralling inflation and interest rates. The same rising cost of living that has affected us all individually has also cut our shrinking pot of funding even further. Increased inflation does not only drive up the price of everyday essentials, it stretches the cost of goods, services, supplies and running buildings too. This has obvious effects on what it is we can deliver for you.

However, despite the challenges, we will continue to protect the most vulnerable in our community through our Residents Support Fund and our Council Tax Support scheme and by getting services closer to you through our Brent Hubs.

We will continue to listen to residents on how best to weather the storm ahead; and support vital services like waste collection, libraries, education and public health.

Please visit our website to have your say in this consultation by 10 January 2023 and attend one the many engagement events we are holding across Brent.

Our priorities include:

1. **Prosperity, Pride and Belonging** in Brent by tackling inequality, easing the pressures of the rising cost of living and showing Brent is open for business.

2. **A Cleaner, Greener Future** by doubling down on anti-social behaviour, making cleaning services more responsive to local communities, working together to reduce our carbon footprint and giving local people more opportunities to help shape decision-making.
3. **Respect and Renewal** in Brent by creating more genuinely affordable housing and ensuring sustainability is central to the growth of our borough and local economy.
4. **The Best Start in Life** by giving young people opportunities to realise their aspirations, grow up in safe and secure environments and empower them to have their say.
5. **A Healthier Brent** by finding solutions to eliminate health inequalities with local communities and making it easier for everyone to live healthier lives.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Muhammed.Butt@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Muhammed.Butt@brent.gov.uk)

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

### Top news since my last report:

- 1. Draft Budget for 2023/24 now published** - as reported to Cabinet in July 2022, due to demographic and inflationary pressures, the budget gap between 2023/24 and 2024/25 is estimated at £28m, which is the central case based on current budget assumptions and scenario modelling.

The accuracy of this is probably at best +/- 20%, and wider variations are entirely plausible. The actual figure required will not be known until a longer term Spending Review for Local Government is announced. The budget gap is profiled £18m next year and £10m the year after.

- There remains significant uncertainty over local government funding in the medium term in the absence of a longer term Spending Review and the outcome of other significant reforms to Local Government funding, for example the Fair Funding review and reforms to the business rates regime. In addition, at the time of despatch of this report, it is expected that the autumn statement that will be delivered on 17 November 2022 will include both tax increases and public spending cuts. In other words, another period of austerity for the public sector. As a result, further savings could be required in future years.
- The new proposals for 2023/24 are designed to limit, as far as possible, service reductions and the impact on front line services particularly during these challenging times. This does not mean that delivering these planned savings, if approved, will be managerially straightforward, or that front-line services will be entirely unaffected, or that they can be achieved without staffing reductions.
- Given the high-level of uncertainty over the economic environment and the funding of local government, the Council has decided to restrict its budget proposals to a single year, rather than the two-year programme that was customary practice.
- The Council has therefore now brought forward a series of new proposals totalling £18m which, if approved following consultation and scrutiny, would be implemented in 2023/24. These new proposals, and the updates to budget assumptions set out in this report, will enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2023/24. Any material changes to circumstances, such as a worse than expected local government finance settlement, would need to be addressed via the use of reserves; conversely, favourable changes could mean that some of the savings proposals would not need to be implemented.
- It remains to be seen whether the government will pursue a pragmatic approach to bridging the budget gap, or take an ideological approach to

reducing the size of the public sector. If the latter is the case, far larger reductions in public expenditure may be in train.

- 2. Cost of living support** - since late 2021, the UK has experienced a rise in the costs of living for individuals and businesses. For many Brent residents, this means having to make difficult decisions on how they spend their income, which can have a negative impact on their standard of living.

In a recent attitudes survey by YouGov for the GLA, 90% of Londoners surveyed said their cost of living had increased to some extent in the last 6 months, while 65% said their energy bills had increased a lot, and 47% said they were struggling with mortgage or rent payments. Of those surveyed, the groups that were most likely to say their costs had risen a lot included Black and Asian Londoners, social renters (from housing association or Council), and those whose daily activities were considerably limited by health problems or disabilities.

The Council has a number of initiatives aimed at supporting residents who may be struggling and enabling Brent and partner organisations to best respond to local needs. These include:

**Financial support - the Brent Resident Support Fund (RSF)** has been in place since August 2020. In the period August 2020 to 15 August 2022, RSF has supported 4,045 households with a total of £8.46 million. The support provided is for help with the cost of living. This can include, but is not limited to, household bills, arrears in rent, mortgage, council tax, food, fuel, digital equipment and emergency funds. Urgent assistance is provided when residents are at risk of losing their home and when an application to the RSF is unsuccessful, the applicant is referred to a credit union for help with an interest-free loan. Further support is provided through signposting to other internal (e.g. Brent Hubs) and external (e.g. Citizens Advice) services.

During 2022/23 Brent has also supported 94,000 households with a £150 rebate on their Council Tax bill, funded from government grants, to help with the cost of energy bills.

**Council Tax Support (CTS):** 27,597 households are supported through CTS of which 18,999 are working age and 8598 are pension age. Pension age residents are entitled to full council tax support depending on their income, savings and household composition. The total support given to households is around £30m per annum.

**Food and energy support** - Brent Hubs work with residents who find it difficult to access the support they need through mainstream services. This includes issuing vouchers to residents in need of urgent food and fuel support, as well as making referrals to food aid agencies and support schemes for utility costs. Since January 2021, over 6,500 residents have accessed Hub services. Over the same period, the Hubs provided food and fuel vouchers.

The most common needs which residents present with at the Hubs are food and fuel support (23%), housing costs (17%), homelessness (13%), form filling –

such as RSF applications - (13%), debt and money (9%), welfare benefits (8%), and other, for example, employment, general support, immigration etc.(17%).

The Government's Household Support Fund (HSF) has been used to provide support to Brent households with the cost of food and fuel in the form of food and fuel vouchers, grants, and financial support to food aid organisations. The HSF is a follow-on fund from the previous COVID-19 Winter Support Fund and COVID-19 Local Support Funds, which had been in place since December 2020.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Mili.Patel@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Mili.Patel@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning – Councillor Shama Tatler**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- 1) Cabinet 12th September 2022: Draft Church End Masterplan Supplemental Planning Document (SPD) approved for publication and statutory consultation
- 2) Completion at Chippenham Gardens – 52 homes, 22 for residents of South Kilburn

EF, 42, moved into her newly built two-bedroom apartment in Wiggins House at Chippenham Gardens at the end of the summer with her teenage son. The mature student, who also has a grown-up daughter, said her new home was a great improvement on her previous flat.

“It’s a completely different environment.” said EJ, who is in her final year of studying politics and international relations at university. “There is more outside space, the balcony is bigger, it’s cleaner and it’s also more energy efficient. Your environment does have an impact on your general outlook on life. Now that we are living here, I feel more motivated with my studies and I’m a lot happier.”

Chippenham Gardens in part of the council’s redevelopment of South Kilburn: a 15-year programme to transform the area into a sustainable and vibrant neighbourhood. The plan aims to deliver around 2,400 new homes, half of which will be affordable homes for council tenants currently living in South Kilburn.

EJ, 68, moved into a ground floor apartment in Wiggins House with his wife, DJ, 81, who has mobility problems. “I am very happy with the property.” said EJ, a retired housekeeper. “We were living on the 16th floor in our previous home, and my wife was very scared about going in the lift because people would get stuck in there. Now we are in an apartment that is on the ground floor, which is wheelchair friendly if we ever needed one. It is a good size for a one bedroom apartment.”

The South Kilburn programme also aims to deliver a new and larger park alongside a new primary school, health facilities and retail outlets. To date, the programme has created 1,390 new high-quality homes, with a further 300 under construction.

The Chippenham Gardens redevelopment, managed by Octavia Housing Association, saw local council residents move into 22 homes in August this year, all of which received positive feedback from them.

Around the corner from Chippenham Gardens in the North West Quarter, the development of new community amenities, such as a gym, a health centre and affordable work spaces, is expected to be completed towards the end of 2023.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Shama.Tatler@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Shama.Tatler@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection – Councillor Harbi Farah**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- 1) Brent CCTV Team hosted a visit from Police Officers from Sweden on 4 October to share best practice on how CCTV is used in Brent to help detect and prevent crime.

The Swedish Police were keen to learn best practice from a leading organisation to help improve their own operations.

There are over 243 active CCTV cameras in Brent and 50 cameras that have a rapid deployment capabilities that can spot crime while it is happening, deter criminals and help residents feel safer.

Many may not know that they also have many other uses. Including to catch dangerous drivers and illegal rubbish dumpers and help emergency services respond to serious incidents and locate vulnerable missing people

Johan Dalen, Inspector from the Swedish Police, said: “The Metropolitan Police recommended Brent Council to us so we could see the facilities. The best thing is how the council cooperates with the police and the fast response the public can receive with the CCTV cameras. We have a lot of good examples that we can use that we can use back home.”

### **Other news:**

- 1) **Nuisance Shisha Venues in LB Ealing** - Nuisance Control Team are working with Ealing Council to secure short-term and long-term solutions to nuisance noise and anti-social behaviours associated with shisha venues on Acton Lane, NW10, affecting Brent residents. These venues are unlicensed and unpermitted; and attracting a large and largely lawless crowd at noise sensitive hours
- 2) **Brent Community Tensions Reassurance** – a meeting took place in September. It was arranged as a result of ‘Leicester Tensions’ playing out in Brent. The council put forward a commitment to arrange quarterly ‘Brent Community Leaders Meetings’ in an effort to engage and understand any local tensions and safety issues.
- 3) **National Hate Crime Awareness Week** - we promoted awareness of ‘Hate Crime’ through various social media channels. An Information Stall was held on Monday 10th October in Brent Civic Centre, in partnership with PCSO’s from Harlesden Metropolitan Police. Publicity specifically chosen for the stall originated from the NHCAW website to highlight hate crime across the five strands of Disability, Faith &/or Beliefs, Gender Identity, Race & Sexual Orientation.

- 4) **No smoke without fire for local shop owner** - A local business's cash has gone up in smoke as it was handed a £1,650 fine, with the owner having to serve a custodial sentence for possessing over 16,500 illegal cigarettes. This follows a huge seizure of illicit tobacco and smoking products by Brent Council's Trading Standard team. The shop's stock was made a lot lighter as officers also seized 255 packets of counterfeit cigarettes.

I would like to thank Brent's Trading Standards Team which has worked hard to seize thousands of illegal smoking products, making sure that businesses have a level playing field.

If you suspect a business is selling illegal tobacco, please report them to Trading Standards via Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Harbi.Farah@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Harbi.Farah@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care – Councillor Neil Nerva**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- 1) **Vaccination** - for latest info go to: <https://www.brent.gov.uk/adult-social-care/health-and-wellbeing/coronavirus/nhs-covid-19-vaccination-programme>
- 2) **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Healthy Places**

The Brent Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) agreed that the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy should focus not only on health and care services, as previous strategies had done, but should address the social determinants of health.

The October 2022 HWB received a report Healthy Places work stream illustrates this focus and demonstrates the partnership working across different Council teams, the NHS and the local third sector.

An update is set out below on each of the areas:

#### **We will ensure accessible, affordable physical activities for all Brent residents**

The council has partnered with Our Parks to deliver free physical activity in Brent communities to those less physically active. In 2022 to date, 288 Brent funded sessions were delivered, with 4059 attendances. 478 Brent Parkers took part. Ninety four percent (94%) were female, 63% came from an ethnically diverse background and 7% were classified as having a disability. Before signing up, 75% did fewer than 30 minutes of exercise. Five percent (5%) classified with having a mental health condition.

In 2022, physical activity classes at Silver Jubilee Park and Ashford Place have been started with the goal of improving people's mental health and wellbeing. Since April of this year, 138 clients have been attending weekly sessions (Yoga, Ladies fitness, Stretch, Chair aerobics, Dance) with a roughly 50:50 split between males and females (Female 68; Male 70).

The volunteer led walks programme in the parks is particularly popular with older residents. Feedback from walkers includes "They are retired and want to have good health, connecting with others and the social aspects of it all" and "Walkers are happier when they come out for a walk, fresh air combined with exercise gets the blood flowing and its healthy".

#### **We will increase usable green spaces in Brent**

Public Health and the Parks Service worked in partnership with the community to put in two planters in One Tree Hill for the local community to use, with WACARA being the lead community organisation. The planters were installed

in March 2022 and about 15 residents have been busy growing tomatoes and sunflowers. Further community growing projects are planned in response to residents' identifying the benefits to them of participation in communal green activities.

### **We will improve access for people with a disability to places, parks and events**

The Environmental Improvement team have visited four Brent Playgrounds with parents and carers to understand their needs in more detail. A new playground for Roundwood Park is about to be finalised with more inclusive designs and options. A bid has been submitted to add a specific swing that is accessible for wheelchair users in King Edward VII, Wembley. The team is currently awaiting the results.

### **We will ensure access to creative experiences for children and young people**

The Young Peoples' Advisory Board has been meeting regularly. The group has helped to develop a number of projects for the Brent Cultural Educational Partnership (BCEP) including logo design and branding and developing a project with Chalkhill Radio for young people, including Brent Youth Parliament, to talk about issues that are important to them. A BCEP newsletter is being disseminated to schools and partners organisations.

### **We will expand the use of our Family Wellbeing Centres**

The pilot for CAMHS under five in Family Wellbeing Centres has commenced in the Willow Centre. The aims of the service are to provide a de-stigmatising, culturally sensitive child mental health perspective through training/consultation and partnership working, develop a high profile of Under 5's mental health across existing services, and offer specialist assessment and evidence-based treatment when indicated.

The model adopts an early intervention approach and offers diagnosis and intervention for a range of emotional/mental health needs in young children:

- SEND
- Domestic Abuse
- Parental Mental Health
- Perinatal Mental Health
- Early Intervention for significant attachment/relationship difficulties.
- Working in Family Wellbeing Centres aligns with the CAMHS model for several reasons:
  - Joint specialist assessment to offer Under 5's mental health perspective
  - Specialist observation in children centres & nurseries
  - Specialist state of mind assessment of child to inform network Clinical assessment.

There have been 17 referrals for the CAMHS under five offer with 16 consultations from professionals. The CAMHS team worked with 14 families directly.

The Council is working in Partnership to expand the service offer to young people registered with FWCs. This now includes 1:1 therapy to young people registered to FWCs and creative arts therapy delivered both in group settings and in 1:1 for young people aged 10 or above. In addition, over 12 different activities are provided to young people by VCS organisations including arts, video, cartoon, script writing, drama, girls' only sessions, and drama therapy. These activities link to Youth Strategy themes of "access and awareness", "opportunity" and "places & facilities".

### **We will strengthen our community hubs**

The hub at the Civic Centre has been successfully established operating from Mon-Fri 10am-2pm alongside Customer Services colleagues and voluntary sector partners.

The number of Hub partners has now grown to over 50 and the team have developed strong links with Brent Health Matters and Family Wellbeing Centres.

Brent Hubs worked with Age UK and delivers digital cafes in Kilburn, Harlesden and Wembley on a weekly basis for older residents of Brent. The support offer in the cafes included:

- Registering and using the Council Portal
- Using the Housing Portal
- Completing online forms
- Using your phone or tablet
- Booking Medical appointments
- Setting up email addresses

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Neil.Nerva@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Neil.Nerva@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy and Citizen Experience – Councillor Eleanor Southwood**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- 1) A couple of great initiatives have launched this month. Our working group bringing businesses and local stakeholders together to promote the Mayors Good Work Standard has had its first meeting. Our Green Skills Centre collaboration with CNWL – now open.
- 2) Online cost of living hub up and running and regularly updated. Please continue to send through links or sources of support that we haven't captured, see: <https://www.brent.gov.uk/costofliving>
- 3) High Street improvement works continues; joint commission with Camden for mural on Brondesbury Railway Bridge has commenced, with opportunities for residents to get involved.
- 4) Our outcome-based review on cost of living is progressing well, with a useful stakeholder session last month. Great ideas for improving the ways residents access support and for helping residents with costs of fuel and food were generated and will be tested out in the coming months.

### **Other news:**

- 1) **Customer access** - 2797 customers contacted the council in September 2022 (2846 in previous month). At the hubs, there was a 23% increase in enquires regarding food and fuel and housing/benefits advice is most commonly asked for. We'll soon have energy advisors in the hubs too.
- 2) **Resident Support Fund** - We are receiving an average of 180 applications per week. The team has increased resources to reduce backlog. Front line staff in Housing and Hubs can now make decisions on cases and award RSF to resident straight away, especially in emergency cases.
- 3) **Revenues and debt** - we continue to see very clear pressure on household and business budgets given the cost of living crisis, so the outlook remains difficult for residents and businesses alike. Across all lines of debt, the service continues its efforts to improve financial inclusion for residents and to recover debt in line with the ethical debt recovery policy.
- 4) **Wembley jobs fair** - 32 confirmed job outcomes so far: with 18 currently unemployed residents joining digital training run by Ultra Education. Bigger event planned for next summer.
- 5) **HGV Employment Programmes** - Recovery fund programme started strongly with engagement and opportunities from Veolia, a key employer locally. 11 residents enrolled on the programme and have begun the process. The programme is doing a second round of recruitment for 9 more residents.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Eleanor.Southwood@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Eleanor.Southwood@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action – Councillor Krupa Sheth**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- 1) **Injection Patching Programme** – The programme ran from 10th January to the end of September. During this period over 9600 defects have been repaired in around 275 roads. The contractor will be returning in January 2023.
- 2) **Highways Maintenance Contract** – Tender documents were issued on 29th August for the new contract that will commence from April 2023. A report will be presented to January's Cabinet seeking approval to award contract.
- 3) **Environmental Enforcement** – Resident in Chapter Road, NW10 caught dumping rubbish and issued a £200 FPN which has been paid.
- 4) **Environmental Enforcement** – Damage to the Highway by a resident in Barnhill paid over £800 to have the highway reinstated
- 5) **Environmental Enforcement** - Street Drinker in Wembley prosecuted and fined £344 at Wembley magistrates
- 6) **The Parks Service and Veolia** - won 8 London in Bloom Awards for our parks this year, and a further Best in Category Award went to Barn Hill Conservation Group for the Roe Green Walled Garden.
- 7) **TfL funding for 2022/23** - As expected, there has been a significant reduction in TfL funding overall following their negotiations with the government. Our normal LIP allocation is circa £2.25m. The total funding available for this year is circa £1.22m which represents a decrease of around £1m. The programme for this year is currently being agreed with TfL.

### **Other news:**

- 1) **Climate Action: Green Neighbourhoods Pilot** - The team's main focus at the moment is focusing on the process of developing the action plans for the Church End & Roundwood and Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood pilots. The team are focusing simultaneously on public engagement, and gathering ideas from the community, plus assessing projects for inclusion alongside relevant internal services.

The public engagement period ends on 31 October and Members are welcome to have their say on either the online survey or interactive map should they know the two areas well: <https://haveyoursay.brent.gov.uk/en-GB/folders/brent-green-neighbourhoods>

- 2) **Climate Action: Brent for Business: Energy Savings Grant** - we have recently launched a new grants scheme to support Brent businesses in dealing with the cost of business from the current energy crisis, particularly going into the

expected pressures this winter. <https://www.brent.gov.uk/business/support-for-businesses-and-employers/energy-saving-scheme-grant>.

- 3) **Climate Action: Together towards Zero Small Grants Scheme** - A report to Cabinet on 17 October sought approval for the next phase of the scheme, which would allow communities to apply for grants of £5k for greening or climate action projects.
- 4) **Climate Action: Other external grant bids** - We have submitted a £4.87m bid to the next phase of the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. The bid is to fund energy efficiency improvement works for community schools as part of the council's schools estate.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Krupa.Sheth@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Krupa.Sheth@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security – Councillor Promise Knight**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- 1) Ground breaking of two affordable homes scheme and improved community provisions with £12.5 million invested in the Learie Constantine Community Centre project and 26 apartments built above it.
- 2) Brent Indian project will mean £15.64 million invested in a new community centre alongside 29 affordable homes. Brent Indian Community Centre will include a large multi-purpose hall, commercial kitchen, offices and an IT training room.

The Secretary of the Brent Indian Community Centre, said: “This new centre will be a huge help. Currently we have use of a building for just three hours a week, but when this new centre is built, we will be able to use it seven days a week. It will be a place for people to socialise and to keep warm in the cost of living crisis. We will also be able to let it out, which will help us to maintain and run the building.”

Residents and councillors also celebrated work beginning on a second community centre and 26 new affordable homes further down Dudden Hill Lane. The £12.5 million Learie Constantine Community Centre project will also see the construction of a new building with a community centre on the ground floor with 26 one to three bedroom apartments above it.

The Chair of the Learie Constantine Centre, said: “The Constantine Centre dates back to 1971. It is a place where people from the Black community have been able to come and organise themselves for the benefit of all. After 25 years, I feel very glad that this new building is finally happening. It has been a long story. We hope that when we are no longer here, this will be a lasting legacy for the Black community.”

- 3) Cabinet has formally approved the acquisition of approximately 10 properties for general needs as part of the GLA buy back scheme. The affordable housing units will be owned within the HRA and rents will be set at social rents.

### **Other news:**

- 1) **Have your say on licencing for private rented properties in Brent** - A borough-wide consultation on landlord licensing for privately rented properties in Brent has launched today (31 October 2022) for twelve weeks. The consultation is now live.

The online consultation is open to anyone to have their say on landlord licensing in the borough.

Three types of licensing schemes operate in the borough: mandatory, additional and selective licensing. Selective licensing applies to a single household renting a property, be that a family or just one or two tenants.

This consultation asks people whether they are in favour of selective licensing schemes in Brent.

Licensing has helped keep renters safe. Since we introduced our first selective licensing scheme in 2015, we've driven up housing standards, reduced overcrowding and tackled anti-social behaviour. Where landlords have fallen short, we have been relentless in taking action and will not hesitate to throw the full-force of the law at rogue landlords.

All wards, with the exception of Wembley Park, are being considered for selective licensing in Brent. Selective licensing previously applied to Harlesden, Wembley Central and Willesden Green, and presently applies to the old wards of Queens Park, Kensal Green, Kilburn, Dudden Hill and Mapesbury. But this current scheme ends on 30 April 2023.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Promise.Knight@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Promise.Knight@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools – Councillor Gwen Grahl**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- 1) **Brent's new SEND school** – recommendation made to DfE following interviews in September, we have made a recommendation to the DfE of a Multi-Academy Trust to run our proposed flagship new SEND school in Wembley and are awaiting their approval. The SEND Green Paper published this year outlines considerable pressures on SEND provision nationally, with over 2,000 children in Brent currently on an Education, Health and Care Plan. The new school will enable us to provide much needed support in this area.
- 2) **Consultation under way for the relocation of Islamia Primary School to Strathcona** - following the Yusuf Islam centre issuing the school with eviction notes from its current site in Queens Park, officers have been working on a proposal to relocate the school to Preston and a full consultation is now underway. We are working hard to ensure the consultation process is thorough and transparent and have been meeting with ward councillors to deal with any concerns they have.
- 3) **Kinship Care Week Family Fun Day held in Brent** - Brent held a commemorative event at the Civic Centre on Saturday 8th October to acknowledge the important role that Kinship carers provide. The event was well-attended and appreciated by families, whose role often goes overlooked and who play an essential role for some of our Looked After Children.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Gwen.Grahl@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Gwen.Grahl@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture – Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- 1) **The Anchor, The Drum, The Ship** - A new public artwork for Gladstone Park commissioned by Brent Council in partnership with Lin Kam Art was unveiled this October to coincide with Black History Month.

The artwork breaks new ground in the conversation over public spaces with links to the transatlantic slave trade.

The Anchor, The Drum, The Ship installation brings together a variety of plant species, native to Britain, the Mediterranean and Africa planted across three shapes: the Akan symbol for a Double Drum, a ship, and an anchor to evoke themes of Black migration, belonging, communication, music and collective renewal.

This is the first time in the UK's history that a public artwork of this kind has been used to acknowledge the contested history of a green space.

Gladstone Park was named after former British Prime Minister William Gladstone whose family owned plantations in the Caribbean and received the largest compensation payments made by the Slave Compensation Commission.

The Gladstone family name was identified for review as part of the Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm, launched in 2020 to review statues, streets names and landmarks to help people have a better understanding of London's diverse histories.

- 2) We have received the evaluation of our **Reading Friends library events programme** for 21/22 which included 48 sessions and 545 participants. Overall 82% rated the events good or very good, 70% reported feeling more connected through attending and 60% felt more confident to try new things as a result.
- 3) **Autumn Libraries, Arts & Heritage programme** has launched with over 70 events and exhibitions happening across the service before Christmas. Brochures are available in all Brent Libraries and online here: [https://issuu.com/brentcouncil/docs/what\\_s\\_on\\_guide\\_autumn2022](https://issuu.com/brentcouncil/docs/what_s_on_guide_autumn2022)

### **Other News**

- 1) Six creative and cultural organisations in Brent will get a £5million boost over the next three years, ensuring more local people can enjoy fantastic, fulfilling art and culture on their doorstep. The funding from Arts Council England is part of their investment programme for 2023-2026. Congratulations to the successful organisations!

£5,061,423 is being split between the following organisations:

- Deafinitely Theatre, £795,249
- Fresh Arts C.I.C, £300,000
- Kiln Theatre, £2,837,703
- Magic Sound Ltd, £450,000
- Mahogany Community Ventures Limited, £473,532
- The Children's Bookshow, £204,939

- 2) Brent Council has organised an in-person event, 'Stand against Islamophobia' taking place at the Civic Centre on 23 November from 6-8.30pm. The event will include talks from experts and Muslim history makers, including Mariah Idrissi, H&M's first ever hijab-wearing model, about the impact of discrimination.

Other events, which aim to show that discrimination and hate crime will not be tolerated, include a peace walk and tree planting organised by the Brent Multi-Faith Forum on 20 November to symbolise peace, unity and solidarity between all communities. The walk will begin at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (44 Wembley Park Drive, HA9 8HN) at 2pm and will end at Mount Pleasant Open Space at around 4.30pm with around 47 minutes walking in total.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me via the following email address. Contact: [Cllr.Fleur.Donnely-Jackson@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Fleur.Donnely-Jackson@brent.gov.uk)