

Leader of the Council - Councillor Muhammed Butt

On the following pages is a breakdown of portfolio responsibilities of our Cabinet Members.

I have listed below the key decisions that the Cabinet have taken since our last meeting of full Council in July 2023. As you will read, this is a Council that is delivering week in, week out on the Brent Labour Manifesto pledges that will transform the place we call home:

Financial Outturn Report 2022-23

This report set out the outturn for income and expenditure versus the revenue budget and capital programme for 2022/23 and other key financial data. The Council's General Fund outturned at break even. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) also broke even. In 2022/23 the Council's capital programme spent £165m which equates to 71% of the approved budget.

Whilst the General fund as a whole broke even, there was a service overspend of £3.7m in the Children and Young People's department as a result of increased placement and staffing costs. Adult Social Care and Health overspent by £0.9m while other General Fund services out turned with modest variations. The budgeted use of corporate contingencies of £4.2m has resulted in an overall breakeven position for the General Fund.

Medium Term Financial Outlook

This report set out the overall financial position facing the Council and highlighted the significant risks, issues and uncertainties with regards to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It also set out the proposed budget setting strategy for 2024/25, which is the Council's minimum legal duty in respect of local authority budget setting, in order to maximise the period of consultation with residents, businesses and other key stakeholders. The report also outlined how the MTFS will aim to provide a framework to invest in broader ambitions and long-term priorities such as the Borough Plan, the cost-of-living crisis and other future steps to ensure the Council continues to operate in a financially sustainable and resilient way as well as supporting residents in need.

The remainder of the report set out the medium-term risks and uncertainties with regards to the current budget assumptions contained within the MTFS. These primarily relate to exceptional factors such as high levels of inflation, rising interest rates, increased demand for key services and uncertainty in government funding. In doing so, it must be recognised that the situation remains uncertain and it is extremely difficult to make a full, definitive and comprehensive assessment of the ongoing financial impact of these issues. As such, the figures provided were based upon best estimates and forecasts and it was noted will therefore be subject to change. However, the significance of the financial challenge cannot be underestimated and over time, the Council will need to develop a response that continues to maintain a commitment to strong financial resilience and sustainability while ensuring the best for our residents.

Brent Local Implementation Plan (LIP) Two-Year Delivery Plan: 2023/24 – 2024/25

This report provided an update on Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding arrangements for the two-year period 2023/24 – 2024/25.

It provided details of the programme of transport schemes and measures approved by Transport for London (TfL) to be implemented by the Council up to 31 March 2025.

Brent / Harrow Council Inter-Authority Agreement for the Provision of a Special Needs Transport Shared Service

Brent Council agreed to enter an Inter Authority Agreement with Harrow Council for the continued provision of Special Needs Transport services for 3 years with an option to extend for a further 3 years.

Selective Licensing in the Private Rented Sector in Brent 2023 – Phase 2

As part of the Administration's commitment to "safe, secure and decent housing" and to protect the safety and wellbeing of renters through high standards, this report agreed approval of Designation 2/2023 for a new Private Rented Sector Selective Licensing scheme in Brent.

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

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform – Councillor Shama Tatler

Top news since my last report:

- **Council Accounts** – The external audit of the Council’s statement of accounts for 2022/23 has been taking place since July and is due to complete in September. After this, the Audit and Standards Committee will formally sign off the accounts in September or October. The statement of accounts for First Wave Housing and i4B were signed off by their relevant boards in August, as planned.
- **Budget 2024** – The budget setting is also underway in formulating the 2024/25 – 2025/26 budget setting process and updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy. It is currently planned to present the draft 2024/25 – 2025/26 budget to Cabinet in November.
- **Elections 2024** - The arrangements for the elections in May 2024 are fully in train. A project plan and a comms strategy are in place and the Elections Board is meeting on a monthly basis. We are also in close touch with our colleagues at Harrow to ensure that arrangements for the count go as smoothly as possible.

Much of the communications strategy is focussed on community engagement and ‘spreading the word’ about Voter ID. The Elections and Engagement Teams are working hard to meet with those members of Brent’s communities who are less likely to be aware of the need to bring ID to vote next year. Leaflets have also been printed and are being distributed at all events and have been included in Canvass letters.

The general feedback to date is that Brent’s communities have a good awareness of the need to bring Voter ID to the elections in 2024 but there are clearly pockets of the population who are unaware and the campaign is proving fruitful in reaching them.

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

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth - Councillor Shama Tatler

Top news since my last report:

- **Ealing Road and Alperton as new Creative Enterprise Zones** – The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has officially declared Ealing Road and Alperton (ERA) a Creative Enterprise Zone. The new designation will boost the area's creative industries and help nurture emerging talent from across the borough.

The new Creative Enterprise Zone stretches from Ealing Road (at the intersection with Wembley High Road) to the north side of the Grand Union Canal in Alperton. The accreditation recognises the area's rich culture and potential for creative growth.

The ambitious programme will encourage creative growth by creating a 2000 sqm of affordable, permanent workspaces for local talent, developing a creative network of over 300 people, investing in local sustainable projects and creating a local circular economy.

- **Wembley Jobs Fair 2023** – The Wembley Jobs Fair in July was a huge success, with attendance reaching 7400. More than 200 companies including the Brent-based London Designer Outlet and global brands such as Amazon and BOXPARK took part, and it gave jobseekers a rare opportunity to meet with employers face-to-face and apply for roles directly.
- **New Planning Guidance to tackle climate change** – To protect the planet and improve the wellbeing of local people, the council has passed new planning guidelines for developers looking to build in the borough. These guidelines, set out in two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), build on the council's Local Plan policies and clarify the council's expectations for well-designed places that improve people's quality of life and create a greener and healthier environment for communities.

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

Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection - Councillor Harbi Farah

Top news since my last report:

- **Planning Enforcement** - The Financial Investigation Team at Brent have been undertaking a case for Lambeth Council Planning team as part of our income generation. The case has recently concluded at Inner London Crown Court where confiscation order of £116,835 was awarded against Bernard Construction UK LLP and fines of £20,000 for the limited liability partnership and £20,000 against one of the partners. The case concerned a property which had been converted into six flats without planning permission. The defendants have been in the property development business for over 30 years which further aggravated the situation.
- **Licensing** – The Licensing team prosecuted two regular repeat illegal street sellers caught at Wembley event days. Both were fined £100 and ordered to pay costs £200.
- **Working with our partners in Mental Health** – Representatives from Adult Social Care Mental Health are now attending the Integrated Offender Management Meeting (IOM) and this has made a positive difference to our IOM partnership.
- **Homes for Ukraine** – The Homes for Ukraine Team is almost fully staffed now with four community support officers, two Project Officers, one Project Assistant and a manager. Another Project Assistant will be joining the team in the next month. Currently, we have 387 Ukrainian guests (including 76 children) and 184 hosts.

Other news:

- As part of the cost-of-living project officers visited shops in Harlesden, Trading Standards tested 10 weighing scales, issuing 1 notice for a non-compliance. Further visits will be carried out throughout the year.
- Two businesses with mice have been closed by the Food Safety team, one has since re-opened having provided evidence the issue has been dealt with, the other remains closed.
- We have reinstated our Culturally Integrated Family Approach behaviour change provision and this will be delivered in partnership with colleagues from RISE.

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

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care - Councillor Neil Nerva

Top news since my last report:

- **Appointment of Rachel Crossley, Brent's new Corporate Director of Care, Health and Wellbeing** - In a career spanning more than 20 years, Rachel Crossley has led a diverse range of services from public health, strategy and democratic services to commissioning, health integration and key transformation programmes.

In her new role at Brent, Rachel will be responsible for leading the council directorate that provides adult social care and public health services. In addition, Rachel will also lead the work across the council and with health partners to improve health and well-being outcomes for all Brent residents.

- **Brent Health Matters (BHM) Community Events** – 136 events have now been held with over 7000 people attending. Key data collected from these events includes:
 - 5,986 people had health checks.
 - 2,972 people who did not have diabetes had their Diabetes risk score assessed and discussed with clinicians.
 - 1,634 people needed and were escalated to their GPs for further input.
 - 1,851 (31%) people were seen by mental health team.

A dashboard is being developed which will provide us with details of people attending our events including their age, ethnicity and where they live. We hope to be able to further link this with our clinical findings.

- **Children Oral Health Care** - The Public Health team have been out on the oral health bus again this year, providing screening for caries, fluoride varnish application and health promotion advice in locations that are accessible to families.

In 2022 the oral health bus project won the Nursing Times award for the Public Health Nursing category. This year the project was shortlisted for the NHS Parliamentary Health Equalities award.

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

Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action - Councillor Krupa Sheth

Top news since my last report:

- **Short Sections Carriageway Patching programme** – Following on from the completion of our Winter Resilience programme, consisting of 49 large patch repairs at multiple locations on high trafficked routes, a further £200k programme of large patch repairs on main roads has been issued to our new contractor O'Hara's.

Of 41 locations, 29 are completed and the rest were programmed for completion over the summer. Six patches are located along Chamberlayne Road and will require road closures and night working. One, on Tanfield Avenue, is on hold pending Thames Water investigation into a sinkhole.

- **Planned Footway Maintenance** – Six footway schemes, carried over from last year, have now all been completed by our new contractors:
 - **South Area** - Fernbank Avenue, Sandringham Road and Greenhill Road
 - **North Area** - Beverley Drive (Stag Lane to Roundabout), Winchester Avenue (Princes Avenue to Girton Avenue) and Sherborne Gardens
- A further strand of the Redefining Local Services (RLS) contract procurement programme has taken effect this month with the commencement on 4th July of the new Parking Services contracts with NSL for enforcement and RingGo for cashless parking and permits. NSLs opened their new bases in the borough, were fully opened, there is an all-new electric fleet and enforcement officers were on patrol with new uniforms and equipment.

Other news:

- 40 x Fixed Penalty Notices for fly tipping issued in July 2023.
- Successful prosecution of a Brent resident for flytipping with a fine of £500 plus a criminal record.
- 141 x Fix My Streets reports actioned by Environmental Enforcement.

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

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

Top news since my last report:

- **Protecting tenants against rogue landlords** - A criminal businessman, Jaydipkumar Rameshchandra Valand, has been slapped with Brent's first ever rogue landlord banning order. The order prevents Valand from letting out houses in England and engaging in any sort of property management work in the country for the next five years.

A judge issued the ban after the council proved that Valand had been responsible for multiple housing-related offences in Brent. Brent Council takes a zero-tolerance policy against rogue landlords such as this, and we will use everything in our powers to hold them to account to safeguard our vulnerable residents.

The new selective licensing scheme that we introduced on 1 August is part of our commitment to protecting renters' rights and securing a decent standard of living for all residents. Landlords who rent out properties in Dollis Hill, Harlesden & Kensal Green and Willesden Green are now legally required to have a property licence.

- **Single People's Homelessness service** - Brent's service for single people facing homelessness is moving to a new venue in Harlesden from 07 August 2023. Anyone who is single and at risk of homelessness can drop into The Turning Point located in the Design Works, Park Parade, Harlesden, NW10 4HT, for support with their housing needs.

The Turning Point is within five minutes' walk of the Crisis Skylight building, and the Job Centre Plus Harlesden, both of which are key partners in tackling homelessness. If needed, people will be linked up with other services within the same building. The new service will mean that people's housing needs will be addressed more quickly.

Other news:

- Brent's new Council Homes Programme has been shortlisted for the Inside Housing Development Awards for Best Affordable Housing Development for the Stonebridge Hillside and Milton Avenue Scheme.
- Roadshows were held across 11 estates in Brent to kick start tenant and leaseholders' involvement in developing a new strategy and framework for delivery.

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

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

Top news since my last report:

- **Brent’s young people show excellent attainment in A Level results despite challenges** – Initial A Level results so far in Brent show an excellent set of results from our young people, with early indications suggesting results well above the national average.

This has been a particularly challenging time for young people, who have been adversely affected by both the pandemic and the cost of living crisis, as well as the government’s insistence on returning to pre-pandemic grading methods against the advice of teaching unions. The NEU has claimed that this decision has ‘damaged the future of students from disadvantaged backgrounds’.

- **Holiday, Activities and Food Programme** - Brent’s Holiday, Activities and Food Programme HAF programmes took place between 21 July – 3 September 2023, with eligible children able to access 16 days of HAF funded activities between these dates. We have provided a range of activities, working closely with youth organisations across the borough, and including provision for those with SEND. A more detailed breakdown of this year’s programme will follow in September.
- **Preparations on track to deliver Universal Free School Meals in Primary Schools** – Officers are working closely with local schools ahead of the roll out of Sadiq Khan’s policy to deliver free school meals to every primary school in London for one year from September. Brent Council have sent out a questionnaire to all primary schools to ensure that the policy can be implemented on time. It will happen in addition to Marcus Rashford’s flagship Holiday Activities and Food Programme, which will be supplemented in Brent by an additional £1 million of local funding via our Family Food Programme.

Pressure will continue on the government to commit to free school meals nationally with the Scottish and Welsh governments also introducing universal provision.

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

Cabinet member for Customers, Communities and Culture - Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson

Top news since my last report:

- **Huge Pension Credit cashback for Brent pensioners** - Brent has successfully supported 148 pensioners in the Borough to receive an additional £3,837 a year in unclaimed Pension Credit payments.

This came after the council reached out to 754 eligible households to tell them how much Pension Credit they were entitled to which was going unclaimed.

The amount of Pension Credit claimed because of this campaign equates to nearly £7million over an average lifetime, helping ease the burden of the cost-of-living crisis for nearly 150 pensioners.

- **Neighbourhood Priorities Consultation (NCIL)** - Every three years under the Community Grant (formerly NCIL), a public consultation is conducted to update the neighbourhood priorities in each CIL neighbourhood area; Wembley, Harlesden, Willesden, Kilburn, and Kingsbury & Kenton.

The consultation was open from the 26 June and closed 23 July. To ensure the survey was accessible there were multiple options for residents to take part. In addition to the survey portal, we had an online workshop in each Brent Connect area, drop-in sessions in each library, attended multiple youth groups, community events and festivals across the borough, including the Wembley Job Fair with over 7000 people in attendance. We received approximately 500 responses to the consultation with around 50% completed online and the rest on paper at the various events listed above. The results are currently being analysed and evaluated and will inform the priorities for how the Community Grant is to be allocated over the next three years.

- **Household Support Fund – Voucher Stream** - Tesco vouchers were sent to eligible families to cover the school summer break. We have been given the go ahead to order a bar code scanner which will enable us to accurately record the voucher numbers sent to families. We will then be able to check the balance and cancel and that are reported missing or lost.

A payment was been made to Edenred to enable schools to purchase vouchers prior to schools closing for the summer.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact via the following email address. Contact: Cllr.Fleur.Donnelly-Jackson@brent.gov.uk