

Appendix A

Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee (RPRSC) Recommendations Tracker 2024/25

The Recommendations Tracker is a standing item on committee agendas, and documents the progress of scrutiny recommendations, suggestions for improvement, and information requests made by the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee at its public meetings and as part of task and finish group reviews. Scrutiny recommendations, suggestions for improvement, and information requests will not be removed from the tracker until full responses have been provided to the Committee by either the Cabinet, Full Council, council departments, and/or external partners.

Recommendations to Cabinet from RPRSC

| Subject | Scrutiny Recommendation | Cabinet Member, Lead Officer/s, and Department | Executive Response | Review date |
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| <p>24 Jan 2024 – Budget Scrutiny Task Group Findings (2024/25 and 2025/26)</p> | <p>Improve budget communications: Include a concise, summary page in the Budget (and in future budgets), adopting more accessible language which makes it clear what its vision, aims, and priority protection areas are.</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council Cllr Mili Patel - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources Rob Mansfield – Head of Communications, Conference, & Events, Partnerships, Housing, & Resident Services</p> | <p>Response received on 09/07/24: This recommendation is agreed. The Chair of the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee will be invited to meet with the Head of Communications and the Leader of the Council, to provide feedback on the previous communications campaign to support the budget consultation. It will also provide an opportunity for members of the Scrutiny Committee to present any suggestions for improvements on future campaigns. The Cabinet Member foreword will summarise the budget proposals for 2025/2026 in a one-page format and additional materials such as an infographic will be produced to support Members.</p> | <p>05/11/2024</p> |

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| | <p>Shared Outcomes Framework:</p> <p>Explore a shared-outcomes framework with the voluntary sector for the benefit of residents/service users. As part of this work, the Council should urgently discuss and collaborate with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in relation to budget proposals that involve them and/or may have an impact on their service provision.</p> <p>This discussion could build on the Task Group's recommendation from the Budget Scrutiny Task Group Review 2023/24 which suggested a collaborative strategy with the VCS to enable these organisations to identify and secure new income streams.</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Mili Patel - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources</p> <p>Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson – Cabinet Member for Resident Support & Culture</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> <p>Peter Gadsdon – Corporate Director, Partnerships, Housing, & Resident Services</p> | <p>Response received on 09/07/24:</p> <p>We are in the early stages of reviewing the (independently) proposed Community Engagement Framework and related recommendations on how we can work more closely with the community, including the voluntary sector in co design, collaboration, and consultation.</p> <p>We will utilise existing quarterly VCS forums to ensure the Council has an opportunity to communicate current and near future initiatives to ensure engagement and feedback from the sector.</p> <p>To address the urgent request – it is proposed that an event, with the support of CVS is arranged, to deliver an outline of budget 2024/25 recommendations to support the sector better understand the impact the budget savings will have on them.</p> <p>It is suggested that a mandatory sharing of all planned consultations with the voluntary sector is introduced as part of the wider best practice Consultation at Brent to create a consistent model of engagement cross council with the VCS.</p> | <p>05/11/2024</p> |
| | <p>Establish a strategic approach to income generation:</p> <p>Develop a longer-term, strategic approach to income generation (accompanied with yearly action plans) rather than focusing on piecemeal proposals year to year.</p> <p>The strategy should include a robust monitoring process that enables holistic working across all</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Mili Patel - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> | <p>Response received on 09/07/24:</p> <p>The Council has an Income and Debt board that reviews all income and debt across the Council.</p> <p>It is proposed to amend the terms of reference of this board to ensure there is a consistent approach to income generation across the</p> | <p>05/11/2024</p> |

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| | <p>departments to create synergies for income generation.</p> <p>Specifically, allocating a dedicated, cross-departmental resource to work across the Council to investigate and identify additional opportunities for income generation e.g. compliance with mandatory HMO licensing, compliance with council tax on empty properties, and business rates evasion.</p> | | <p>Council, consider opportunities for new income generation and benchmarking.</p> <p>As always, if members have any areas where they wish Cabinet Members to explore alternative areas that could lead to additional income generation, please let us know.</p> | |
| | <p>Implement additional shared service arrangements:</p> <p>Explore further opportunities for shared service arrangements, learning lessons from current arrangements and from good practice of the shared service models that already exist across the country.</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Mili Patel - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> | <p>Response received on 09/07/24:</p> <p>A good example of a successful shared service arrangement in Brent is the Shared Technology Service.</p> <p>A report that sets out lessons learned from current arrangements and good practice will be organised so that it can be shared with senior management.</p> <p>Where appropriate, any opportunities for considering such arrangements can be considered as part of future budget challenge meeting.</p> | <p>05/11/2024</p> |
| | <p>Housing Subsidy Loss:</p> <p>Work with neighbouring local authorities, London Councils, and the Local Government Association (LGA) to lobby for positive change to the Housing Benefit subsidy rules which currently caps the amount the Council can claim back from the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) to 90% of the 2011 LHA rates per household for TA provided, and which places financially onerous restrictions on the types of TA the Council can provide to be eligible for housing benefit subsidy.</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> | <p>Response received on 09/07/24:</p> <p>This will continue to be a key part of the council’s public affairs approach, lobbying for changes at the highest level which address the historic disconnect between what the council is obliged to spend to house residents in Temporary Accommodation, versus what it can claim back in subsidy.</p> <p>Public Affairs work is underway at London Councils and the Local Government Association to continue to press this case</p> | <p>05/11/2024</p> |

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| | | | forward to the new government over the coming months ahead, as this continues to be a key contributor to financial pressures across a number of councils. | |
| | <p>Wembley Stadium: 'Community Impact' Ticket Levy:</p> <p>Explore options with the Stadium for a ticket levy, whereby the Council receives a proportion of each ticket sale in order to fully recover costs incurred or to provide for further enhancement of the Council's event day operations.</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Mili Patel - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources</p> <p>Kim Wright – Chief Executive</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> | <p>Response received on 09/07/24:</p> <p>As part of our partnership working with Wembley Stadium, the council does receive funding to ensure that our highways, enforcement, and clean-up costs are reimbursed. A proportion of the income derived from ticket sales is also awarded to Wembley National Stadium Trust, who in turn invest in and around Brent.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, Kim Wright will also raise this recommendation with the senior Leadership team at the Wembley Stadium/Football Association and Ovo Arena.</p> <p>We are reviewing the announcements of Cambridge City Council and Manchester City Council relating to a Tourism Levy to understand whether the initiative could be replicated, with our existing legal powers in Brent and more widely across London, as this might be better suited to a regional rather than local approach.</p> | 05/11/2024 |
| | <p>Delegation of budgets and decision making to Brent Integrated Care Partnership (ICP):</p> <p>Continue to advocate and make the case to North West London Integrated Care Board (NWL ICB) for both a better alignment of NHS resources to population need and for an increased delegation of budgets and decision making to Brent Integrated Care Partnership (ICP).</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Mili Patel - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources</p> <p>Cllr Neil Nerva – Cabinet Member for Community Health & Wellbeing</p> | <p>Response received on 09/07/24:</p> <p>NWL ICB are continuing to develop common-core specifications for all health services across NWL. Brent ICP are involved through various routes in developing these specifications. Whilst Brent is anticipated to be a net beneficiary in terms of investment resulting from this work, it is expected that only new funding will flow disproportionately to</p> | 05/11/2024 |

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| | | <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> <p>Rachel Crossley – Corporate Director, Community Health & Wellbeing</p> | <p>Brent, which is likely to mean that any significant improvement will be slow.</p> <p>Brent ICP has developed detailed business cases for investment into key gaps in provision. In particular for special school nursing, mental health access in NW2 and NW10 and childhood continence where there are significant immediate gaps in provision. NWL MH Exec have agreed to fund £850,000 new investment in MH (pending ICB Exec approval), and Brent ICP have agreed to use non-recurrent S256 funding to meet the gaps in provision pending decisions from NWL.</p> <p>Our focus for 2024/25 will be for additional investment into community health services, where there are significant gaps in provision, including district and community nursing, as well as securing existing additional investment through the Better Care Fund. We will also continue to work locally through ICP Executive around the additional NWL investment into health inequalities, and use of locally held S256 funding.</p> | |
| <p>17 July 2024</p> <p>Budget update: Medium Term Financial Strategy</p> | <p>Lobby central government to end the privatisation of Children’s social care services.</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Gwen Grahl – Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools</p> <p>Nigel Chapman – Corporate Director, Children & Young People</p> | <p><i>Awaiting response.</i></p> | |

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| | <p>As part of work with London Councils, lobby for a greater co-ordinated approach between local authorities in the commissioning of services that curbs profiteering by private companies, creates new insourcing opportunities, enables mission-led procurement outcomes, and that delivers greater cost efficiencies overall.</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Jake Rubin – Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation & Climate Action</p> <p>Rachel Crossley – Corporate Director, Community Health & Wellbeing</p> | <p><i>Awaiting response.</i></p> | |
| | <p>Continue lobbying efforts for the urgent reform of local government finance that provides local authorities with greater options for how they raise and spend their resources (e.g. fiscal devolution options leading to more freedoms over local revenues such as 100% business rates retention and flexible use/spend of community infrastructure levy (CIL) monies).</p> | <p>Cllr Muhammed Butt – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Mili Patel - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> | <p><i>Awaiting response.</i></p> | |

Suggestions for improvement from RPRSC to Council departments/partners

| Meeting date and agenda item | Suggestion for improvement | Council Department/External Partner | Response / Status |
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| 6 Sept 2023 – Planning Enforcement | Undertake an audit to determine the wards with the highest amount of planning breach complaints, and the wards with the highest amount of enforcement activity. This intelligence should be used to develop a targeted strategy to prevent planning breaches e.g. targeted planning education and/or communications campaigns etc. The Audit should also categorise the types of breaches receiving enforcement notices. | Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Employment, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration | <p>Response received on 24/10/23:</p> <p>We will look to do this but are currently waiting for our new software to be introduced. Currently scheduled for April 2024.</p> <p>Updated response received on 11/04/24:</p> <p>There has been a delay on the implementation of the new software. Testing is now not going to take place until June 2024 and go live is unlikely to take place until Autum 2024. Therefore we will not be in a position to produce this information until February 2025.</p> |
| 27 Feb 2024 – Draft Property Strategy | Upon completion, sight the Committee on the draft Corporate Social Benefits Assessment Methodology for feedback. | Tanveer Ghani – Director, Property & Assets, Finance & Resources | <p>Response received on 12/04/2024:</p> <p>The Council is currently reviewing its social value approach at an organisational level and the property strategy will fit into the wider organisational approach to community wealth building and social value. This ensures consistency and enables the property strategy to align with broader council objectives. The development of the assessment methodology itself falls outside of the Property and Assets Team's direct remit, consequently, at this stage we do not have immediate access to the specific details of the methodology. However, once the approach becomes clearer, we will get back in contact with further information about who can consider the recommendation.</p> |
| | Upon completion, publish the final Corporate Social Benefits Assessment Methodology for the benefit of residents, businesses, and community organisations. | <i>To be confirmed.</i> | <p>Response received on 12/04/2024:</p> <p>Please see above response.</p> |
| 23 Apr 2024 – Regenerat | Provide a member briefing session on viability assessments, covering | Gerry Ansell – Director of Inclusive Regeneration & | <p>Response received on 19/06/24:</p> |

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| ion in Brent | key topics such as affordable housing and social value. | Employment, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration | This is currently offered to members of the planning committee as part of their training and can be extended to all members. David Glover Head of Planning and Victoria McDonagh Development Management Manager have been tasked with bringing this action into effect and this is targeted for Sept 2024. |
| 17 July 2024 – Budget update: Medium Term Financial Strategy | To address low collection rates, review relevant strategies for debt collection to ensure robust interventions are in place to target those evading Council Tax/Business Rates. This should also include a review of the protocol in place to engage local councillors and to utilise their local knowledge in identifying those avoiding the payment of council tax or business rates. | Tom Cattermole – Director, Resident Services, Partnerships, Housing, & Residents Services | <p>Response received on 23/08/24:</p> <p>Overall, the Service follows the Council's Ethical Debt Recovery Policy that also includes specific policies relating to council tax, business rates and overpaid housing benefit. The service also collects sundry debt and adult social care contributions.</p> <p>There are existing robust interventions in place through the existing primary and secondary legislation. These rules allow the Council to follow a legal route to pursue non-payment for council tax and business rates. The Council obtains LOs (liability orders) in the magistrates' court. It is the LO that permits the Council to take steps to enforce payment from the resident or business. This enforcement takes several forms, i.e.:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Attachment of earnings (AOE) ii. Attachment of benefits (AOB) iii. Distress referral to enforcement agent (bailiff) iv. Insolvency v. Charging orders vi. Imprisonment <p>Historically, the most common route to enforcement is via enforcement agents (bailiffs). The Council uses 4 separate bailiff service providers. During 2023/24 over 19,000 cases were sent to bailiffs worth a total of £26.072m. The income from bailiffs totalled £4.256m.</p> <p>Over the last few years with improved technology that helps the Council match debtors with benefit and employment records the numbers on Attachment of Earning (AOE) and Attachment of Benefits (AOB) has increased. During 2023/24 the numbers on AOE and AOB was 283 and 738 respectively up from 18 and 298 in 2022/23. Increasing AOE and AOB means a method of enforcement better suited to the circumstances of the resident in accordance with Council policy.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Insolvency and charging orders are used less often, although they are effective when dealing with debtors who have property assets, such debtors are in a minority. Although the realisation of funds from charging orders can be significant, there is usually a time lag with a charge in place most often until the property is sold. The Council currently has 345 cases of secure debt to a value of £2,183,917.</p> <p>Committal to prison is not something that has been used by the Council for several years. Nevertheless, commencing the process is a tool that the Council may use against those refusing to pay. The prospects for starting this process are currently being reviewed.</p> <p>Service improvements now being implemented to improve collection include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustained Direct Debt payment is the most reliable payment method and is promoted on an ongoing basis with publicity and incentives, it is currently 61% (71,959) up from 59,656 in March 2022, an increase of over 17%. DD take-up is an indicator too of deprivation, top collection in London is achieved by Richmond and Kingston with DD levels at around 80% and collection at over 98%2. As stated above the most common form of enforcement is by referral to bailiffs. Typically, around 80% of this remains uncollected, and with low prospects of recovery given the lack of means and assets of the residents. To seek to maximise collection of these static arrears the service is procuring the services of debt collection agencies to review and seek payment on old debt that has already been through all processes. For this work the agencies will retain a percentage of the debt they collect. If this final attempt is not successful, the debt will be written off. In reviewing this the team are also working with credit reference agencies to better understand the data and the propensity to pay of debtors.3. In a significant change this year the existing Dynamics portal is being replaced by the one that comes from the supplier of the main business system (NEC) and so works in sync with that system allowing residents improved access to their accounts, increasing the self-service and reducing phone calls. This will allow the team to focus more on debt collection. |
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| | | | <p>4 Other service improvements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Providing access to Open Banking which enables secure sharing of customers banking data with third-party financial service providers, enhancing transparency and security. Within debt recovery, it is used to understand residents' financial situations better, allowing for personalised and affordable repayment plans.ii Utilising automated outbound telephone, RCS (Rich Communication Services) and email campaigns aimed at prompting engagement with residents. This is targeted at residents who have debt outstanding from previous years, directing residents to recovery officers or Hub advisors for assistance, the Council's "Pay it" webpage or open banking platform.iii 2023 saw a new service organisation put in place designed to focus on resident needs above that of internal Council issues, which expanded the number of staff trained in council tax, with all colleagues understanding council tax plus one other line of debt, previously the teams were simply focused on a single line of debt. There is now a dedicated team focused on providing support to individuals who demonstrate that they can't pay across all lines of debt. The aim is to intervene at an early stage to prevent debt accumulating, supporting customers with financial hardship and the rising cost of living.iv Regular reviews of entitlement to exemptions, discounts and premium charges are in place. These focus of single person discounts, empty homes, and those in receipt of a reduction while probate is awaited. These are successful in maintaining accuracy of data, increasing revenue, and ensuring that owners are incentivised not to leave property empty. <p>Regarding input from councillors using their local knowledge in providing information to the service is always very welcome. These are already received on a regular basis, most commonly, identifying properties that are recorded as occupied but are in fact empty. One recent case identified this month by a councillor has led to the identification of a property that is empty, leading to a large amount of council tax to be backdated. However, there is no council system that can be made available to members. The systems used for</p> |
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| | | | <p>business rates and council tax cannot be made available outside the approved council staff due to the wide-ranging information contained. Similarly, the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) is not available as it contains data used by Ordnance Survey on a commercial basis. The LLPG, business rates system and council tax system all have their information matched against government information from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) on a regular basis. Within Brent it is the LLPG system that creates the UPRN (Unique Property Reference Number) used by both systems. On a pilot basis we have been carrying out a detailed check of the property details held in Kilburn between the 3 systems, some naming differences have been identified and some properties are on the LLPG that are not on the council tax nor the business rates system. This happens when the VOA have removed a property from their list so no charges apply, normally in advance of redevelopment. The most effective system for members to use for checking business or domestic properties is to use the service available here Find a business rates valuation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) for a commercial property and here Check your Council Tax band - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) for a domestic property. Where more information is required, the local member should of course raise their enquiry by emailing members.enquiries@brent.gov.uk in the usual way.</p> |
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Information requests from RPRSC to Council departments/partners

| Meeting date and agenda item | Information requests | Council Department/External Partner | Responses / Status |
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| 6 Sept 2023– Planning Enforcement | Provide a breakdown of: 1. Planning breach complaints by ward and; 2. Types of breaches that have received enforcement notices by ward | Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Employment, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration | <p>Response received on 24/10/23:</p> <p>Need to await for new software to be installed. This is scheduled for April 2024.</p> <p>Updated response received on 11/04/24:</p> <p>There has been a delay on the implementation of the new software. Testing is now not going to take place until June 2024 and go live is unlikely to take place until Autumn 2024. Therefore we will not be in a position to produce this information until February 2025.</p> |

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| <p>24 Jan 2024 – Safer Brent Partnerships Annual report 2022/23</p> | <p>The timeframe for implementing the response at Wembley Stadium and Wembley Arena to support the victims of sexual violence.</p> | <p>Kibibi Octave – Director, Communities & Partnerships, Partnerships, Housing, & Residents Services</p> | <p>Response received on 15/02/24:</p> <p>A meeting was held with the Football Association (FA), the Police and the Community Safety Team in November 23 to discuss better supporting victims of sexual violence. One of the key initiatives was to train Wembley Stadium stewards to better understand the behaviours associated with sexual violence.</p> <p>The department is awaiting a follow up meeting from the FA to develop the initiatives and timeline for completion (likely to be June 2024).</p> <p>Updated response received on 08/07/24:</p> <p>The project completion date has been revised due to staffing changes within the FA. Brent Council and the Police have requested a meeting with FA, to be held in July 2024 to agree a timeline for all Wembley Stadium Stewards, to be trained by October 2024.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>23 Apr 2024 – Regeneration in Brent</p> | <p>Provide a breakdown of the amount of affordable housing units (by housing product type) delivered since 2020/21.</p> | <p>Gerry Ansell – Director of Inclusive Regeneration & Employment, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration</p> | <p>Response received on 07/07/24:</p> <p>Data and details have been requested and are presently being verified. These will be available in time for September’s committee meeting.</p> <p>Updated response received on 29/07/24:</p> <p>The affordable breakdown since 2020/21 is as follows:</p> <table data-bbox="1115 981 2031 1361"> <tr> <td>Discount Market Rent</td> <td>136</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Discount Market Sale</td> <td>47</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Intermediate Other</td> <td>1209</td> </tr> <tr> <td>London Affordable Rent</td> <td>212</td> </tr> <tr> <td>London Living Rent</td> <td>47</td> </tr> <tr> <td>London Shared Ownership</td> <td>81</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Self-Build and Custom Build</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social Rent</td> <td>215</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Affordable Rent (not at LAR benchmark rents)</td> <td>476</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>2429</td> </tr> </table> | Discount Market Rent | 136 | Discount Market Sale | 47 | Intermediate Other | 1209 | London Affordable Rent | 212 | London Living Rent | 47 | London Shared Ownership | 81 | Self-Build and Custom Build | 6 | Social Rent | 215 | Affordable Rent (not at LAR benchmark rents) | 476 | TOTAL | 2429 |
| Discount Market Rent | 136 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Discount Market Sale | 47 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Intermediate Other | 1209 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| London Affordable Rent | 212 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| London Living Rent | 47 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| London Shared Ownership | 81 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Build and Custom Build | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Social Rent | 215 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Affordable Rent (not at LAR benchmark rents) | 476 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 2429 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>Provide further detail on the Council's affordable housing targets (broken down by affordable housing product type).</p> | <p>Gerry Ansell – Director of Inclusive Regeneration & Employment, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration</p> | <p>Response received on 07/07/24:</p> <p>Please see above.</p> <p>Updated response received on 29/07/24:</p> <p>The affordable Housing Targets are set out in the Brent Local Plan 2022 as follows:</p> <p>POLICY: BH5 AFFORDABLE HOUSING</p> <p>In Brent the strategic affordable housing target that will apply is 50% of new homes in the period to 2041. London Plan Policy H5 Threshold Approach to Applications will be applied. The affordable housing tenure split required to comply with London Plan Policy H5 is for:</p> <p>Non-Build to Rent developments of 10 dwellings or more is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 70 per cent Social Rent/ London Affordable Rent and; b) 30 per cent intermediate products which meet the definition of genuinely affordable housing, including London Living Rent, affordable rent within Local Housing Allowance limits and London Shared ownership. These must be for households within the most up to date income caps identified in the London Housing Strategy or London Plan Annual Monitoring Report. <p>Build to Rent developments: 100 per cent at London Living Rent equivalent rents or lower.</p> <p>Developments of between 5-9 dwellings will be required to make a financial contribution for the provision of affordable housing off-site.</p> <p>Housing Mix BH6 is as follows:</p> <p>POLICY: BH6 HOUSING SIZE MIX</p> <p>The council will seek to deliver a target of 25% of new homes as family sized (3 bedrooms or more) dwellings. For every four dwellings included within developments at least one must be 3 bedrooms or more. Exceptions to the</p> |
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| | | | <p>provision of family sized dwellings will only be allowed where the applicant can show that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the location or characteristics of the development are such that it would not provide a high quality environment for families, or b) its inclusion would fundamentally undermine the development's delivery of other Local Plan policies. |
| <p>23 Apr 2024 – Redefining Local Services (RLS) Contracts - Year 1</p> | <p>Provide a 'Fix My Street' heatmap visualising report locations with breakdowns by issue type, user type (e.g. resident, councillor, neighbourhood manager etc), and ward.</p> | <p>Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm Neighbourhoods & Regeneration</p> | <p>Response received on 13/06/24:</p> <p>We will provide a summary report to the Committee on Fix My Street for the period April 2023 - March 2024 with a breakdown as requested by the end of July 2024.</p> <p>Fix My Street also have a heatmap functionality available for members & relevant council officers to use. At present ward members and neighbourhood managers can access raw data reports broken down by issue / user type to gather insight on their own wards. Residents do not have access to this level of functionality. They only have access to Aerial and Road map views. They can, however, view reports by wards, category and status. The attached link Brent Council - Summary reports :: FixMyStreet provides access to reports by wards which could be further broken down by status and categories.</p> <p>Additional response received on 26/07/24:</p> <p>Fix My Street summary report (for the period April 2023 - March 2024) circulated to the Committee by email.</p> |
| <p>17 July 2024 – Budget update: Medium Term Financial Strategy</p> | <p>Provide further detail on the effectiveness and impact of the "Growing the In-house Fostering Service and "Promoting Care Leavers Independence" workstreams in alleviating the financial pressures faced by the Council.</p> | <p>Palvinder Kudhail – Director, Early Help & Social Care, Children & Young People</p> | <p>Response received on 23/08/24:</p> <p>Growing inhouse Fostering Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West London Fostering Hub live from 13/5/2024. There has been a total of 73 initial contacts and 9 initial enquiries to date. • New, improved Brent Fostering Offer live from April 2024 • We became a "Fostering Friendly" borough on the 13/6/2024 and there is a marketing campaign being designed currently • 1 new foster carer approved since April 2024 • 7 applicants in Stage 1 (fostering assessment process) • 2 applicants at Stage 2 and booked into Sept and Oct Fostering Panels for approval |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children placed with Brent FC-60.5% fostering setting and 50% of this cohort are with BFCs <p>Promoting Care Leavers Independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Housing Allowance (LHA) – for approximately 90-100 young people we are taking the equivalent of Housing Benefit at source from the placement fee. This reduces weekly supported accommodation costs for 18+ young people. Brent Shared House model test and learn pilot is going live in Sept 2024 which has a lower weekly average cost per young person and will support young people into independence whilst waiting for their own tenancy. 60 young people are approved, registered with Brent Housing via LOCATA and have active bidding numbers. This is an increase of 15 young people since April 2024 demonstrating evidence of successful independence development for young people |
| | Provide information on the number of agency staff (social workers) in Children & Young People's Services who have transitioned to permanent employment contracts over the past two years. | Palvinder Kudhail – Director, Early Help & Social Care, Children & Young People | <p>Response received on 23/08/24:</p> <p>In 2022/23 there were 6 social qualified staff that converted to permanent contracts.</p> <p>In 2023/24 there were 13 social work qualified staff that converted to permanent contracts.</p> |
| | Provide information on the number of agency staff (social workers) in Adult Social Care who have transitioned to permanent employment contracts over the past two years. | Claudia Brown – Director, Adult Social Care, Community Health & Wellbeing | <i>Awaiting response.</i> |
| | Provide the percentage of those struggling to pay Council Tax and Business Rates due to financial hardship and the percentage evading or refusing payment. | Tom Cattermole – Director, Resident Services, Partnerships, Housing, & Residents Services | <p>Response received on 28/08/2024:</p> <p>The number struggling to pay council tax and business rates remains a significant issue. However, there is no easy way to separate non-payers into those that are trying and those that are not paying through wilful neglect. Only through dealing with debtors case by case could a view be taken and the service would not make a note to that effect, because there very few if any debtors would actually state that. Nevertheless, the arrears of debt remains a issue and debtors are pursued rigorously in line with Council policy to recover all monies</p> |

| | | | <p>owed. A small minority of residents believe they are right in refusing to pay, some adopting the falsehood that ancient laws mean they should not pay, this fallacy is addressed on the Council's website: What happens if you don't pay your Council Tax Brent Council</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----|-----|-----|---|-------------|----|-----|-----|---|-------------|----|-----|-----|---|----------|----|-----|-----|---|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|---|----------------|-----|-----|-----|---|--------------------|------------|-------------|------------|--|
| | <p>Provide insights on whether additional investment in planned repairs could reduce the costs associated with reactive repairs, saving the Council more money long term.</p> | <p>Spencer Randolph – Director, Housing Services, Partnerships, Housing, & Residents Services</p> | <p>Response received on 30/08/2024:</p> <p>Investing in planned repairs has the potential to significantly reduce the costs associated with reactive repairs, which could save the Council money in the long term. In fact this is a strategy that has been taken in South Kilburn with the refurbishment of the high rise blocks. That capital investment in our high-rise blocks will reduce the number of responsive repairs raised. Previous investment at Watling Gardens has generated a significant reduction in responsive repairs compared to other high-rise blocks as can be seen in the table below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Block name</th> <th>Number of dwellings</th> <th>Number of repairs raised between April 2019 and September 2021</th> <th>Average Repairs Per Block</th> <th>Ranking (Highest to Lowest)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>KILBURN SQUARE</td> <td>75</td> <td>564</td> <td>7.5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LODGE COURT</td> <td>32</td> <td>240</td> <td>7.5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MANOR COURT</td> <td>33</td> <td>328</td> <td>9.9</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>THE OAKS</td> <td>38</td> <td>358</td> <td>9.4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WATLING GARDENS (3 BLOCKS)</td> <td>105</td> <td>441</td> <td>4.2</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WINDMILL COURT</td> <td>110</td> <td>881</td> <td>8.0</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total</td> <td>393</td> <td>2812</td> <td>7.2</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Block name | Number of dwellings | Number of repairs raised between April 2019 and September 2021 | Average Repairs Per Block | Ranking (Highest to Lowest) | KILBURN SQUARE | 75 | 564 | 7.5 | 4 | LODGE COURT | 32 | 240 | 7.5 | 4 | MANOR COURT | 33 | 328 | 9.9 | 1 | THE OAKS | 38 | 358 | 9.4 | 5 | WATLING GARDENS (3 BLOCKS) | 105 | 441 | 4.2 | 6 | WINDMILL COURT | 110 | 881 | 8.0 | 3 | Grand Total | 393 | 2812 | 7.2 | |
| Block name | Number of dwellings | Number of repairs raised between April 2019 and September 2021 | Average Repairs Per Block | Ranking (Highest to Lowest) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KILBURN SQUARE | 75 | 564 | 7.5 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LODGE COURT | 32 | 240 | 7.5 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MANOR COURT | 33 | 328 | 9.9 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| THE OAKS | 38 | 358 | 9.4 | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WATLING GARDENS (3 BLOCKS) | 105 | 441 | 4.2 | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Grand Total | 393 | 2812 | 7.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <p>Provide benchmark figures for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reserves, along with a comparison of costs related to servicing HRA debt and interest payments to tenants across other London authorities.</p> | <p>Spencer Randolph – Director, Housing Services, Partnerships, Housing, & Residents Services</p> | <p><i>Response circulated to the Committee by email on 03/09/2024.</i></p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <p>Provide detail on the metrics used to assess the effectiveness and impact of the Council's budget communications campaigns, along with the performance scorecard/evaluation from the last</p> | <p>Rob Mansfield – Head of Communications, Conference, & Events, Partnerships, Housing, & Resident Services</p> | <p>Response received on 27/08/2024:</p> <p>The most important metric used to determine the effectiveness and impact of the council's budget communication and engagement campaign is the number of consultation responses received. This is because the main objective of these campaigns is to encourage residents to review and feedback on the draft budget and ensure it reflects their priorities. After this, there are secondary</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>communications campaign for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Budget.</p> | | <p>metrics which are also scored such as attendance at Brent Connects meetings and engagement with social media posts.</p> <p>The performance for the last communications and engagement campaign for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 budget proposals can be found below. Anecdotally, it is felt that due to the complexity and length of the draft budget, this can hinder or prevent some residents and stakeholders from engaging with the consultation process. That's why last year, the council developed a short animated video and several infographics to explain the budget in a short and concise way. This was then shared across the council's corporate communication channels and received good engagement, however ultimately did not lead to a significant uptake in consultation responses compared to previous years. Often, more specific topic-based consultations on individual changes perform much better so we will be looking for ways to incorporate this model into the budget consultation moving forward.</p> <p><u>Budget Consultation 2023: Communications and Engagement Performance Analysis</u></p> <p>The success of the 2023 consultation was measured by:</p> <p>Consultation responses</p> <p>210 people completed the budget consultation.</p> <p>Participation level of across all events and sessions</p> <p>Participation in the Brent Connects Winter sessions was average overall, with varying levels of engagement across the different connect areas. Some attendees were more active in their participation than others.</p> <p>Participants had the option to ask questions either through the chat or directly to the representatives. Participants received information on the budget consultation and were signposted to take the survey. Organisers then sent the survey and the whole presentation to all the 212 registered attendees.</p> <p>Attendance at public events across the five Brent Connects areas</p> |
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| | | | <p>While there were 212 registrations recorded on Eventbrite, the actual number of residents who attended the Brent Connects Winter sessions was 106. This figure is based on data extracted from Zoom and is detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harlesden – 19• Kilburn – 23• Kingsbury and Kenton – 21• Wembley – 17• Willesden – 26 <p>Response from identified targeted groups</p> <p>Overall, the target groups responded fairly well, with many attending the Brent Connects rounds before completing the survey. This is demonstrated by the widespread response received from residents throughout the borough.</p> <p>Other metrics</p> <p>The following metrics were also tracked to monitor engagement with the overall campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boosted post one (animation): video played 9,247 times for at least 15 seconds, reached 6,591 people and picked up 10,288 post engagements• Boosted post two (graphic two): 873 link clicks (consultation page), reached 8,084 people and picked up 890 post engagements• Organic social media stats: posts have reached 3,561 people, picked up 11,097 impressions and the link has been clicked on 311 times (budget news story) |
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