

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
<p>24 Jan 2024 – Budget Scrutiny Task Group Findings (2024/25 and 2025/26)</p>	<p>Improve budget communications:</p> <p>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</p> <p>Cllr Mili Patel - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> <p>Rob Mansfield – Head of Communications, Conference, & Events, Partnerships, Housing, & Resident Services</p>	<p>Response received on 09/07/24:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>It will also provide an opportunity for members of the Scrutiny Committee to present any suggestions for improvements on future campaigns.</p> <p>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>Updated response received on 28/10/24:</p>	<p>05/11/2024</p>

			<p>A full Communications and Engagement Plan is now in development for the Budget Consultation for 2025/2026.</p> <p>The purpose of this communications and engagement plan is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide context which explains the council's current budget situation and pressures in simple and accessible formats that are easy for people without a financial background to understand.• Inform key audiences regarding the savings proposals and generate feedback on the savings needed to set a balanced budget.• Gather insights from residents, partners and stakeholders to refine the final draft Budget report.• Set out the high-levels plans around how the council intends to change in future years given the ongoing financial situation. <p>Both Chairs of the respective Scrutiny committees have been invited to meet with the Leader and the Head of Communications to provide further feedback on the development of the Communications and Engagement Plan for the budget consultation.</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

	<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>Updated response received on 28/10/24:</p> <p>Engaging the Voluntary Community sector is a key part of the emerging Communications and Engagement Plan. As outlined below, an event is being planned to deliver an outline of the budget proposals and explore opportunities to further collaborate with the council.</p>	<p>05/11/2024</p>
--	---	--	---	-------------------

			<p>On the 25th of September Brent Council delivered a “Meet the Funders” event alongside Wembley Stadium and CVS Brent. This sold-out event was an opportunity for voluntary groups to explore funding opportunities and secure new income streams from a range of different enterprises.</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 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>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 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>Updated response received on 28/10/24:</p> <p>This works remains imperative and is ongoing considering the financial pressures that the council continues to face. An explicit aspect of the recently approved (at Cabinet in September) Property Strategy is to ensure that the council receives a sustainable rental income through its portfolio of assets in the years to come.</p> <p>As we continue to navigate through a period of scarce resources and environmental challenges, the strategic context in 2024</p>	<p>05/11/2024</p>

			highlights the need for a balanced approach that aligns community expectations and financial sustainability, and ensures our property portfolio is well maintained, accessible, inclusive, environmentally resilient, and compliant with all regulations.	
	<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>Updated response received on 28/10/24:</p> <p>This recommendation is still under development, but we will always explore any opportunities as they arise. We welcome any feedback from the committee on areas which should be considered for prospective shared service arrangements; when the respective procurement window is reached.</p>	05/11/2024

	<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> <p>Updated response received on 28/10/24:</p> <p>This recommendation will be raised with the senior leadership team at Wembley Stadium.</p> <p>Linked to this are the emerging campaigns for a Tourism Levy or Tax. At present, in England, neither the central government nor local councils have the power to introduce a tourist tax. Primary legislation would be required to permit this.</p>	<p>05/11/2024</p>
--	---	--	---	-------------------

			<p>Manchester and Liverpool city councils introduced a tourism-based Business Improvement District (BID) as of 1 April 2023. This is a legal workaround, using existing legal powers, to establishing a form of tourist tax.</p> <p>No council in London is yet to do this, but London Councils as the representative body continues to engage with London's business community to explore any further opportunities to replicate such a model.</p> <p>There is more information on the House of Commons Library here: https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/tourist-taxes-in-the-uk/#:~:text=A%20tourist%20tax%20normally%20takes,of%20the%20bed%20or%20room.</p>	
	<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>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p> <p>Rachel Crossley – Corporate Director, 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 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</p>	<p>05/11/2024</p>

			<p>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>Updated response received on 28/10/24:</p> <p>The Lead Member for Community Health and Wellbeing has been continuing these conversations with the NWL ICB and has represented this viewpoint at the highest level.</p>	
<p>17 July 2024 – Budget update: Medium Term Financial Strategy</p>	<p>Lobby central government to end the privatisation of Children’s social care services.</p>	<p>Cllr Gwen Grahl – Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools</p> <p>Nigel Chapman – Corporate Director, Children & Young People</p>	<p>Response received on 28/10/24:</p> <p>In the year to 31 March, 103 new council-run children’s homes opened in England, according to the data – a 31% increase on the number of council-run homes operating a year earlier.</p> <p>Overall, at the end of March 404 of 3,491 children’s homes of all types actively operating in England were run by local authorities and 32 homes were run by a voluntary organisation running services on behalf of a local authority.</p> <p>Private providers were running four in five children’s homes with the top 10 largest</p>	<p>05/11/2024</p>

			<p>companies running 26% of all private children's homes, a fall from 30% in 2023. It is clear that we urgently need a national strategy to increase the supply of suitable residential and foster homes across the country, and to address the issues of profiteering which has no place in children's social care.</p> <p>The LGA has previously published reports outlining that the largest independent providers of children's social care brought in profits of more than £300 million last year.</p> <p>The Local Government Association has continued to make the case to both the previous government and today's administration for a better balance of provision to ensure that children are quickly found homes that best suits their needs.</p> <p>In Brent, we are investing £2.2m to create a council-ran residential home, to help children transition to independent living and reduce the cost of placements. This project has the potential to save Brent up to £461,000 a year as it will help cut the distance some children will be sent to find a place. Councils across London are also collaborating on further opportunities to create further council-ran children's residential homes.</p> <p>On the 5th October the Lead Member alongside counterparts from across London wrote to the government calling on them to provide: "urgent action to end profiteering in this market, and to ensure councils have the resources they need to protect the most vulnerable children."</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

	<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 Jake Rubin – Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation & Climate Action</p> <p>Cllr Neil Nerva – Cabinet Member for Community Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>Cllr Gwen Grahl – Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools</p> <p>Rachel Crossley – Corporate Director, Community Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>Nigel Chapman – Corporate Director, Children & Young People</p>	<p>Response received on 28/10/24:</p> <p>This recommendation is ongoing both at a political and officer level through London Councils and the Association of London, Directors of Children’s Services. The ALDCS also manage the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance and London Social Work for Children.</p> <p>One aspect of the work of the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance is to explore further opportunities in relation to commissioning.</p> <p>The Commissioning Priority Workstream is led by Barnet Council and is supported by the Pan-London Placements Commissioning Panel.</p> <p>The Pan-London Placement Commissioning Programme is taking forward a range of projects to improve placement sufficiency, quality and value for money for London local authorities in order to improve outcomes for London children.</p> <p>More information on this range of projects here: https://www.liia.london/priority-areas/resources-commissioning/</p> <p>Further work is also underway to address London Borough’s reliance on agency social workers. The London Pledge is a collective agreement between London’s borough’s and contains the following commitments in relation to workforce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pay rates: Commit to working within the London Pledge’s pay rates and 	<p>05/11/2024</p>
--	--	--	--	-------------------

			<p>protocols, which are reviewed annually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data collection: Provide accurate and complete data to the London Council's HR Metrics Service quarterly ▪ Headhunting: Avoid headhunting staff from other signatory boroughs, unless for a promotional role ▪ Agency supply chain: Work with the agency supply chain to support permanent recruitment ▪ Balanced workforce: Work together to establish a more balanced social worker workforce across London <p>More information on the London Pledge is available here: https://www.liia.london/london-pledge/</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 Shama Tatler - Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Growth</p> <p>Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration</p>	<p>Response received on 28/10/24:</p> <p>This work remains ongoing through London Councils as the body which represents London Boroughs on a national stage. The Lead Member has also written to the relevant Minister, calling for reform and flexibility of the use of Community Infrastructure Levy monies.</p> <p>The lobbying priorities for London and the reform of local government finance are set out below:</p> <p><i>The stabilisation of local government finances is London boroughs' top priority. Without stability, it will be near-impossible for boroughs to drive economic growth, invest in prevention or address the housing crisis facing London.</i></p>	<p>05/11/2024</p>

			<p>Our asks to government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Increase Core Spending Power by 7% in real terms in 2025-26—broadly in line with this year’s increase—to close the £700 million funding gap London boroughs face.</i>▪ <i>Extend the statutory override on the Dedicated Schools Grant beyond 2026 and commit to reforms to eliminate the high needs deficits.</i>▪ <i>Combine existing Social Care Grants into fewer grants.</i>▪ <i>Distribute the Social Care Grant using measures of relative need for adult and children’s social care.</i>▪ <i>Combine other non-ringfenced grants and distribute based on relative need (e.g. population and deprivation).</i>▪ <i>Implement three-year minimum Local Government Finance Settlements and publish them as early as possible.</i>▪ <i>Launch a Fair Funding Review of relative needs and resources as soon as possible.</i>	
--	--	--	---	--

Suggestions for improvement from RPRSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Suggestion for improvement	Council Department/External Partner	Response / Status
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.	<p>Tanveer Ghani – Director, Property & Assets, Finance & Resources</p> <p>Rhodri Rowlands – Director of Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building, Community Health & Wellbeing</p>	<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> <p>Updated response received on 01/11/2024:</p> <p>A review of the council's social value approach is now in progression and linked into the strategic change programme. This includes a review of the council's current Social Value Policy and a refresh of the council's priorities for social value contributions to ensure they maximise the opportunity to align supplier contributions to areas of most impact. Additional enabling areas of work are</p>

			also being developed including a social value charter and redesign of the council's social value method statement. This will include specific consideration of property and assets with link to this strategy. Opportunities are also being identified through which pilot activity can be implemented to test application of social value in respect of property and assets. For example, this maybe through consideration of rent incentivisation schemes. A working group linked to the Change Programme will provide ongoing oversight.
	Upon completion, publish the final Corporate Social Benefits Assessment Methodology for the benefit of residents, businesses, and community organisations.	To be confirmed. Rhodri Rowlands – Director of Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building, Community Health & Wellbeing	Awaiting response.
23 Apr 2024 – Regeneration in Brent	Provide a member briefing session on viability assessments, covering key topics such as affordable housing and social value.	Gerry Ansell – Director of Inclusive Regeneration & Employment, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 19/06/24: 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. Updated response received on 28/10/24: The member training session has been booked to take place on the evening of Monday 4 November 2024.
4 Sept 2024 – Review of Year 1 of the Grounds Maintenance Contract with	Publish a user-friendly summary of the annual report for residents highlighting expected standards, performance, key achievements, challenges, and priorities of the Grounds Maintenance contract.	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 29/10/24: A full annual report has been published internally. Parks Service will work with the web team to publish a user-friendly summary that can be published online by the beginning of December.
	Improve coordination and scheduling between Continental Landscapes and Veolia for verge	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 29/10/24: A discussion has already taken place between Continental, Parks and the Head of Service for the Waste Contract to understand which areas of the borough are

Continental Landscapes	cutting and street cleansing operations across the borough.		perceived to be an issue with regards litter clearance from highways verges. This is an ongoing fluid process to ensure that both contractors are clear as to the responsibilities of the other.
	Work more closely with probation and community payback teams to create a focused work programme for offenders, exploring opportunities for relevant training and skills development.	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 29/10/24: The Parks Service is working with Community Payback (CP) currently with them about to commence work in Monks Park. The Service is also working with CP mobile teams to understand the options for allotment plot clearance work in 2025.
	Enhance communication and collaboration with volunteer groups (e.g., 'Friends Of' groups, Thames 21, etc.)	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 29/10/24: Following Scrutiny, Continental reached out to the Gladstone Copse Group to resolve the situation that was mentioned. Continental continue to work with Friends of Groups and improve that relationship. They immediately delivered the London in Bloom certificates to each volunteer group following the awards this year. Partnership working is reviewed monthly.
	Consider introducing larger and more varied bins in problem areas in parks/open spaces to reduce littering and fly-tipping.	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 29/10/24: The Parks Service have had a meeting with Big Belly Bins on the 17 th October and there is now an opportunity to rent a bin for 6 months. Costs are in the process of being assessed to see if they are viable for a trial. Big Belly Bins are large, sealed bins that allow for monitoring of fill levels. The cost for one bin is over £4000, which is cost prohibitive. However, they can be rented for £85 a month for a minimum of 6 months. The first step is to arrange a demonstration with Continental in their depot by January 2025 to understand whether their crews can empty the bins with current vehicles before considering any trial.
4 Sept 2024 – Delivery of Affordable Housing by i4B	Explore further opportunities for i4B/First Wave Housing Ltd to reduce temporary accommodation costs and expand the supply of affordable housing in a sound yet non-risk adverse manner.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 07/10/24: Discussions have taken place with the council as Shareholder of i4B/Guarantor of First Wave Housing (FWH) regarding future loan funding to finance further i4B acquisitions. The Shareholder/Guarantor and companies remain committed to exploring all viable and suitable opportunities to increase affordable housing supply.

Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd			<p>The council has recently received grant funding through the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) for the council to purchase properties from the market to be used as Temporary Accommodation. Due to potential overlap in the properties being considered under the LAHF and by i4B, there may be a reduction in the opportunities available to i4B over the next 1-2 years. That said, i4B – and FWH where appropriate – are expected to be able to continue to acquire properties, subject to interest rates and market conditions remaining favourable, and bring further new supply and benefits in reducing the use of Temporary Accommodation.</p>
	<p>Consider revising the viability assessment criteria to account for factors like temporary accommodation cost avoidance in order to support the delivery of more affordable housing via i4B/First Wave Housing Ltd.</p>	<p>Amanda Healy – Deputy Director, Investment & Infrastructure, Finance & Resources</p>	<p>Response received on 07/10/24:</p> <p>While housing households via i4B properties does reduce the council's spend on Temporary Accommodation (classed as cost avoidance), this is not a direct benefit to i4B and the company can therefore not factor this into its financial assessments for determining whether acquisitions are viable. As i4B is not benefiting from any actual cost savings, and the company is a separate legal entity with its own accounts and financial statements, it would be inappropriate for any savings achieved by the council to impact i4B's financial modelling. However, the council and i4B will continue to report on the savings achieved to the council group through cost avoidance to demonstrate the ongoing benefits of the work of the company.</p>

	Explore carrying out targeted work to source/purchase specific properties for households wishing to downsize and relocate outside of the borough.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 07/10/24:</p> <p>As the majority of families have been housed in recent years, their properties will generally still meet their specific needs and they are therefore unlikely to wish to downsize. However, the Strategic Housing team does work with a small number of families wishing to downsize.</p> <p>As part of this, i4B has carried out pilot projects in the past to explore purchasing accommodation to meet the requirements of specific clients. This has proven difficult and is generally challenging to make work due to i4B being unable to match price expectations from sellers. However, i4B has recently sourced and acquired a property to meet the specific needs of a resident in South Kilburn, and going forward will make efforts to carry out similar work in exceptional circumstances, including out-of-borough acquisitions. However, any acquisitions would need to take place in areas where i4B and FWH already have a housing management service in place. Specifically, this is in Brent and neighbouring London boroughs via Brent’s Housing Service and in certain of the Home Counties and other London boroughs to the north and west of Brent via i4B’s contract with Mears. Any acquisitions outside of this area would be unfeasible for reasons of cost, administration and service delivery oversight.</p>
	i4B/First Wave Housing directors to strengthen their oversight of policies and procedures to prevent a recurrence of the issues identified in the internal audit	Minesh Patel - Corporate Director, Finance & Resources Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 07/10/24:</p> <p>Company directors will be asked to review and approve all policies and procedures being carried out by or on behalf of the companies at Board meetings going forward, and this will be documented via standard governance procedures including Board minutes.</p>

Information requests from RPRSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and	Information requests	Council Department/External Partner	Responses / Status
------------------	----------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------

agenda item			
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 Autum 2024. Therefore we will not be in a position to produce this information until February 2025.</p>
24 Jan 2024 – Safer Brent Partnership Annual report 2022/23	The timeframe for implementing the response at Wembley Stadium and Wembley Arena to support the victims of sexual violence.	Kibibi Octave – Director, Communities & Partnerships, Partnerships, Housing, & Residents Services	<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>Updated response received on 18/10/24:</p> <p>Our Interim Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Lead has met with Abbey Smith from the FA regarding their VAWG campaign. Abbey has informed us that the stewards in her team have now received VAWG training that will assist them in supporting victims and equip them in being able to tackle VAWG incidents that occur at the stadium. The FA are now part of a wider VAWG campaign steering group that has been established in Wembley Park. The steering group has members from Quintain, Wembley Arena, the local police</p>

			team, hotels in Wembley Park and the Community Safety team. We are currently in the pre planning phase of the campaign and decisions are being made on which partner will lead the initiative.
17 July 2024 – Budget update: Medium Term Financial Strategy	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.	Rachel Crossley – Corporate Director, Community Health & Wellbeing	Response received on 11/10/24: In November 2023, the General Purposes Committee approved the introduction of recruitment and retention payments for social workers, occupational therapists and visual impairment rehabilitation officers in Adult Social Care (ASC), bringing the service in line with the scheme adopted by Children and Young People. To ensure the effectiveness of these measures could be measured, formal recording of agency conversions in ASC was then introduced. Between January and September 2024, 15 agency workers have converted to permanent members of staff – covering a number of roles including one Head of Service, Team Manager, Advanced Practitioners, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers and Community Support Workers. This has contributed to a reduction overall in agency workers within the Community Health and Wellbeing Directorate when comparing September 2024 (86) to September 2023 (104). Managers continue to speak to agency workers regularly to encourage further conversions.
4 Sept 2024 – Review of Year 1 of the Grounds Maintenance Contract with Continental Landscapes	Provide a high-level overview of the differences between the current and previous contract specifications, focusing on significant changes, new features, enhancements, and any potential shortcomings.	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 29/10/24: The contract specification was re-written for the new contract. Whilst general maintenance requirements were maintained; the main changes were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All bank holidays were considered to be normal days reducing the cost that was previously incurred for bin emptying in parks on bank holidays. • An IT system was expected from the Contractor, which would allow staff and Housing Residents to be able to clearly see schedules of works and log issues. • The specification for managing ponds and watercourses was tightened up ensuring litter picking and maintenance of weeds at the edges was included • The requirement to enter Green Flag submissions was added as well as a requirement to increase the number of London in Bloom Submissions year on year

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entire contract; including Housing sites I snow mapped on GIS, for both the council and the contractor • There is a clear process for contract variations and ad-hoc works • There is a clear contract monitoring and reporting process in place, ensuring monthly meetings and Operational Meetings as and when required <p>There is a requirement for exception reports to be provided by the contractor to the council for any issues experienced that severely impact service delivery; such as adverse weather conditions or loss of IT system.</p>
Provide annual report of the Grounds Maintenance contract's first year performance, highlighting key performance metrics, successes, challenges, and priorities for year 2.	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration		<p>Response received on 29/10/24:</p> <p>This has been produced and has been presented at Lead Members Briefing on the 30th September. The priorities for year two of the contract have been agreed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A focus on working together to create a clear dashboard for the reporting of the contract key performance indicators (KPI's). • Working with the client to provide a published verge cutting schedule for 2025 • Reviewing bin emptying schedules in areas where there are high numbers of reports of overflow • Working to keep housing estates well maintained and engaging residents • Ensuring that all areas that have been picked up during the first year as not being on contract are added to schedules and regularly maintained • Strengthen the relationships with Friends of Groups • Working on a plan to gain our first Green Flag and develop opportunities for further submissions in additional contract years <p>A copy of the annual report was circulated to the committee by email.</p>
Provide biodiversity key performance indicators.	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration		<p>Response received on 29/10/24:</p> <p>The existing KPI's include the following overarching provision: "Implement Biodiversity Commitments in accordance with Specification and Contractor</p>

			Method Statements". The contract specification requires a reduction in pesticide use, recycle all green waste, as well as ensure the selection of plants that are good for pollinators when devising planting schemes and working with the Parks Service to consider improvements to biodiversity, for example on Housing Land throughout the contract.
	Provide strategic plan and roadmap to restore Brent parks to green flag standards.	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 29/10/24: A meeting has been held this week and two locations (Bramshill Open Space and King Edward VII, Wembley) have been confirmed as our selected parks to submit for a Green Flag Award in 2025. Submissions need to be made by the end of January 2025. An additional park will be added to the submission every year following.
	Provide action plan for the ongoing maintenance and improvement of sports pitches throughout the borough.	Chris Whyte – Director, Public Realm, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 29/10/24: The pitches in general are being maintained well, but the issue is the sunken drainage lines across a few locations. A conversation has been had with Continental about the mix of material being used and costs are being provided for any remedial works that are necessary for seasonal repairs. In addition, Continental are trialling a new process whereby they rake out larger areas around drainage lines to get new soil to blend in more and not just sink in the drainage lines.
4 Sept 2024 – Delivery of Affordable Housing by i4B Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd	Provide details of any Section 106 properties acquired through i4B Holdings Ltd.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 07/10/24: i4B's key worker housing block, the Lexington Building, was purchased as a Section 106 opportunity. In compliance with the s106, the 153 flats at this block in Wembley Park are let exclusively to public sector key workers at a rent + service level of below 65% of market levels. This is to date the only Section 106 opportunity that has been pursued through i4B.
	Provide details of any potential Section 106 acquisitions that were not pursued due to viability issues, including the specific reasons for each case.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 07/10/24: N/A - there have been no other Section 106 acquisition opportunities considered in detail by i4B (or FWH) and therefore none rejected due to viability issues. In general, it is challenging to make such opportunities work through the companies due to the required rent levels (such as social rent and London Living Rent) not matching up to price expectations from developers.

	Provide asset management strategy upon completion.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 07/10/24: This will be presented to the i4B/FWH Board meeting on Thursday 28 th November and, dependent on any feedback from directors and further work required, will be available to share with the committee in December 2024.
	Provide a breakdown of the expected costs associated with enhancing energy performance and retrofitting the i4B/First Wave Housing stock.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 07/10/24: This information will be included in the asset management strategy, which will be presented to the i4B/FWH Board meeting on Thursday 28 th November and, dependent on any feedback from directors and further work required, will be available to share with the committee in December 2024.