

Full Council – 15 September 2025

1st Labour Group Motion

Backing healthy, sustainable high streets in Brent

This council notes:

- That our high streets and local town centres are the heart of our communities, providing essential services, employment, and social spaces for Brent residents.
- That a diverse and vibrant mix of businesses, from independent shops to established retailers, is crucial for the economic and social well-being of the borough.
- That the proliferation of fast-food outlets and the rise of cash-intensive businesses, alongside high concentrations of Adult Gaming Centres, can impact the character of our high streets, create unfair competition for legitimate traders, and pose risks to public health, safety, and consumer welfare.
- That Brent Council has a responsibility to protect its residents and support the growth of a sustainable and prosperous local economy.
- That Brent Council is already taking a leading role in this fight, having partnered with over 40 local and combined authorities to lobby central government for urgent gambling reform, and working with the Social Market Foundation to research the true impact of these businesses on our communities.

This council believes:

- That a proactive approach is needed to foster a supportive environment for legitimate businesses to flourish.
- That clamping down on illegal and illicit trading activities is essential to creating a level playing field for all businesses and to safeguard our communities.
- That strong collaboration between the Council, local businesses, residents, and the police is key to tackling these issues effectively.

This council resolves:

- (1) To develop and implement a Brent High Streets Charter in consultation with local business groups and residents, outlining a shared vision for safe, clean, and vibrant high streets and our ambition to declutter inaccessible spaces.
- (2) To establish a dedicated multi-agency task force, including officers from Trading Standards, Licensing, the police and other law enforcement agencies, to actively identify and take action against businesses that operate illegally, sell counterfeit goods, or engage in other illicit activities.
- (3) To review and, if necessary, amend Brent's Local Plan to ensure a more balanced and diverse mix of businesses on our high streets, with a particular focus on addressing the over-concentration of certain types of businesses, such as takeaways and adult gaming centres.
- (4) To explore local measures to deal with high-risk cash businesses, to address any risk of financial crime and/or community harm.
- (5) To explore new and innovative ways to support and promote our borough's legitimate businesses, including targeted business grants, skills training, and marketing campaigns.
- (6) To launch a public awareness campaign to inform residents about the dangers of using illicit services and purchasing illegal products such as disposable vapes and snus, and to encourage them to report suspicious business activities.
- (7) To contribute to the Mayor of London's Plan for London consultation, feeding Brent's voice into the future of the capital's high streets.

Councillor Amar Agha
Welsh Harp Ward