

Appendix A

Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee (RPRSC) Recommendations Tracker 2025/26

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

Subject	Scrutiny Recommendation	Cabinet Member, Lead Officer/s, and Department	Executive Response	Review date
28 Jan 2025 – Budget Scrutiny Task Group Findings (2025/26)	Review the current approach for allocating and spending Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) that ensures better alignment with borough needs, a more balanced distribution of funds across borough plan priorities, and that facilitates creative investment into budgetary high-priority areas (e.g. key departmental budgetary pressure/ risk areas) as far as legally permissible.	Cabinet Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources	<p>Response received on 10/02/25:</p> <p>Recommendation accepted.</p> <p>Updated response received on 08/10/25:</p> <p>The Council accepts this recommendation and has already begun work to strengthen the link between the SCIL programme, the Borough Plan, and Brent's wider capital strategy. As shown in the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy Funding for Public Realm Infrastructure (Cabinet, July 2025) and Neighbourhood CIL Allocations Report (Cabinet, September 2025), over £19 million is being invested in local priorities such as highways, parks, CCTV, and green spaces — ensuring visible improvements in every Brent Connects area.</p> <p>The Council will also continue to highlight the constraints imposed by current CIL</p>	04/11/2025

			regulations, which restrict spending to the mitigation of development impacts. Brent has made the case nationally — including through the Autumn Budget Representation 2025 and our joint correspondence to the Minister for Housing and Planning — for a more flexible framework that allows councils to deploy SCIL creatively in support of key pressures such as housing, community safety, and local environmental improvements.	
	Continue to advocate for local government finance reform that provides local authorities greater autonomy in generating, allocating, and spending their resources, including the flexible use of funds such as SCIL.	Cabinet Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources	<p>Response received on 10/02/25:</p> <p>Recommendation accepted.</p> <p>Updated response received on 08/10/25:</p> <p>The Council strongly supports this recommendation and has been leading national advocacy for reform. In August 2024, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration wrote to the Minister for Housing and Planning, supported by Georgia Gould MP, calling for greater local flexibility in the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy. The letter argued that councils are best placed to decide how to invest locally — including for urgent priorities such as waste enforcement, community safety, and neighbourhood improvement — and that broadening CIL's definition of infrastructure would unlock funds currently held in reserve.</p> <p>Brent will continue to work with London Councils and our local MPs to push for wider fiscal devolution. This includes the introduction of a visitor levy, reform of developer contributions, and multi-year settlements that provide long-term stability.</p>	04/11/2025

			The aim is to give local government the financial autonomy to deliver on national missions — from housing and transport to climate action and local pride in place.	
	Undertake an urgent review of the Council's procurement and commissioning processes to enhance its capacity to meet strategic objectives, maximise value for money, and, most importantly, ensure that the needs and perspectives of residents and service users are at the heart of service design. This should include a thorough exploration of 'participatory community wealth-building' practices, such as the use of community-led panels in defining commissioning and procurement priorities, determining service specifications, shaping community-led social value priorities, assessing tenders, and monitoring service performance, social value, economic and wider social impact.	Cabinet Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources	<p>Response received on 10/02/25:</p> <p>Recommendation accepted.</p> <p>Updated response received on 08/10/25:</p> <p>The Council accepts this recommendation. A comprehensive review of procurement and commissioning processes is already underway as part of Brent's Community Wealth Building and Social Value Transformation Programme, delivered in partnership with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) – the UK's leading organisation for community wealth-building.</p> <p>This work will assess how procurement, commissioning, land, assets, and employment strategies can collectively build wealth within Brent's communities, keeping more of the Council's £1 billion-plus annual spend circulating locally. It will identify how existing practices can go further to support local SMEs, social enterprises, and the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>A Procurement Improvement Programme has been established to address key recommendations from the review and ensure operational arrangement are optimised to support activities that deliver best value and outcomes for residents.</p> <p>The forthcoming Social Value Policy (2026) will embed a whole-council, place-based</p>	04/11/2025

			<p>approach to social value – moving beyond procurement to ensure that every pound spent delivers wider social, economic, and environmental benefits. This includes co-designing priorities with residents and VCSE partners, expanding local supply chains, and using tools such as Match My Project and the Social Progress Index to target impact where it is most needed.</p> <p>This will strengthen alignment with the Borough Plan and the new Procurement Act 2023, ensuring that procurement and commissioning deliver maximum value for residents and tangible community impact across the five pillars of community wealth-building: employment, procurement spend, land and property, ownership, and finance.</p>	
	Strategically prioritise and enhance investment in debt recovery efforts to improve collection rates, specifically targeting those who are avoiding paying.	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p>	<p>Response received on 10/02/25:</p> <p>Recommendation accepted.</p> <p>Updated response received on 08/10/25:</p> <p>Work is underway to strengthen debt management capacity, with a focus on consistency, fairness, and digital innovation. Enhanced data analytics and new communication tools are being introduced to improve debt profiling, increase customer contacts and reduce arrears, while maintaining a clear commitment to supporting residents in financial hardship. The aim is to increase overall collection rates while ensuring that recovery processes are proportionate and sensitive to individual circumstances.</p>	04/11/2025

	<p>Prioritise rebuilding strong financial reserves, particularly the general reserves and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reserves, as a core component of its short and medium-term financial planning, while enhancing spending controls to reduce costs.</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p>	<p>Response received on 10/02/25:</p> <p>Recommendation accepted.</p> <p>Updated response received on 08/10/25:</p> <p>The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy includes a plan to rebuild reserves over the next three years, in line with CIPFA guidance and the external auditor's recommendations. Spending controls have been strengthened across all departments, and the ongoing corporate cost-reduction programme aims to protect reserves while maintaining essential frontline services.</p>	04/11/2025
	<p>Establish a robust monitoring process to ensure effective implementation of accepted Task Group recommendations.</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources</p>	<p>Response received on 10/02/25:</p> <p>Recommendation accepted.</p> <p>Updated response received on 08/10/25:</p> <p>Cabinet will maintain active oversight of all accepted Scrutiny recommendations through Lead Member Briefings and CMT ownership. Cabinet Members and senior officers will continue to engage directly with the R&PR Scrutiny Committee, providing progress updates and evidence of delivery when requested.</p>	04/11/2025

Suggestions for improvement from RPRSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Suggestion for improvement	Council Department/External Partner	Response / Status
25 Feb 2025 - Commissioning, Procurement, Community Wealth-Building, and Social Value	Revise the official council report template to include dedicated sections for Community Wealth Building and Social Value Considerations, ensuring these factors are assessed and reported in all council reports where relevant.	Amira Nassr – Deputy Director, Democratic & Corporate Governance, Finance & Resources	<p>Response received on 11/06/2025:</p> <p>This will be revisited in April 2026 once the procurement and social value policies have been formally adopted.</p>
23 April 2025 – Build Quality in Brent	Conduct a survey to identify which council-owned buildings may fall within the scope of the Building Safety Act 2022 and/or the Defective Premises Act 1972 in relation to relevant defects, and assess whether there is potential for legal recourse.	Tanveer Ghani – Director, Property & Assets, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 07/07/25:</p> <p>Officers have identified two projects (Housing and Education) that may fall within the scope of the Building Safety Act 2022 and/or the Defective Premises Act 1972. Work is being undertaken to assess if/where they may be potential for legal recourse.</p> <p>A further update will be provided by 9 January 2026.</p>
	Undertake a sampling review to assess design changes from the planning stage through to practical completion, and determine whether these changes have impacted build quality.	Tanveer Ghani – Director, Property & Assets, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 07/07/25:</p> <p>Officers propose to undertake a sampling of three projects, one from each the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Housing • Regeneration <p>A further update will be provided by 9 January 2026.</p>

2 September 2025 – Brent Local Plan Review	Include land value mapping in the evidence base supporting the upcoming Local Plan.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 27/10/25: Geographical variances in land value across the borough will be considered within any new viability assessment necessary to support the Local Plan's review.
	Set targets for Local Plan priorities that are realistic, achievable, and clearly deliverable to support effective implementation and buy-in.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 27/10/25: Chapter 7, p566 of The Local Plan contains monitoring metrics for policies, and we can explore these through the Local Plan review. The tests of soundness will ensure realism and deliverability of policies and test whether targets are achievable. The Local Plan review can raise the question of how effective current policies are, if they need to be changed or removed if new policies or monitoring metrics need to be developed to better understand how the plan is performing. We can also amend the monitoring section of the Local Plan if necessary. Delivery will also require buy-in and partnership working to ensure that Local Plan objectives are achieved.
	Strengthen consultation and engagement with local neighbourhood groups throughout the Local Plan development process, drawing on lessons from previous efforts to ensure their input meaningfully informs the revised plan and supports ongoing, transparent dialogue. Enhance outreach with underrepresented groups throughout the upcoming Local Plan development process, applying lessons learned from prior communications and engagement efforts.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 27/10/25: We work to strengthen consultation and engagement. Any such engagement will have to be proportionate, taking account of time and resources available. The Brent Local Plan won the Royal Town Planning Institute's (RTPI) Award for Excellence in Plan Making in 2024, which including for its level of engagement with hard-to-reach groups. The effectiveness of public engagement with the Local Plan process will also be assessed by the Planning Inspectorate against our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which we are also intending to review. We intend to produce a consultation strategy for the Local Plan Review, working with the communications team and those embedded in communities to reach as broad a spectrum of the community as possible. This will be shared with relevant councillors overseeing the Local Plan review in the Brent councillor Local Plan Working Group and Policy Coordination Group. All representations to the Local Plan will be considered and where justified, amendments made. We will balance respondent views with one another, the conclusions of the evidence base, relevant regulations, national policy, London Plan policy and guidance.

			We will demonstrate, through the Regulation 22 (Consultation) Statement how we have done this.
		Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 27/10/25:</p> <p>Please refer to answer above.</p> <p>One of the likely aims of the engagement strategy will be to seek to understand the level of success of previous consultations across the Council in reaching underrepresented groups, so we know which ones to put extra focus on. The engagement strategy will likely consider a wide range of methods and processes aimed at achieving a response rate that is at least proportional to different groups in the context of Brent's population. This may include digital outreach, flyers and posters to draw attention to the draft plan consultation. We will pay attention to what questions we are asking and how we are asking them so that consultations are accessible. Online and in person engagement events at appropriate times and locations will be considered carefully.</p> <p>In addition, Brent will apply its Equity Diversity and Inclusion policy in setting out a consultation and engagement strategy for the Local Plan, to ensure that hard to reach groups are identified and appropriate methods are used to engage with them. Officers will collaborate across Council departments and with partners to see that the Local Plan reaches all communities in the local population.</p>
	Ensure that the Committee is regularly updated on delegated decisions made by Cabinet members and corporate directors throughout the Local Plan development process.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 27/10/25:</p> <p>It is expected that the Local Plan Review will remain on the Action Plan for this committee and will be prompted for updates ahead of each meeting.</p>
	Ensure that councillors, via the Brent Local Plan Working Group, are actively involved in reviewing the findings of viability assessments, financial modelling, and policy options throughout the Local Plan review and the	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 27/10/25:</p> <p>The viability assessment is a technical document forming part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. Its findings will be shared with the members of the Local Plan Group, who will also be engaged in decisions about appropriate responses to the viability assessment findings through the development of policies.</p>

	development of the updated Local Plan.		Whilst the exact format of how we will discuss policy options has not been determined, these may well be in the form of thematic workshops for members, focusing on the more strategic areas of the Local Plan.
	Explore, through the Local Plan review, opportunities to strengthen policy mechanisms that ensure all parts of Brent, not only designated Growth Areas, benefit equitably from development.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 27/10/25:</p> <p>The Local Plan will provide a clear framework for the distribution of development in the borough and what development will need to achieve for it to be regarded as acceptable. Growth areas will be the focus of most change, albeit likely that suburban intensification in other areas will be required to assist in meeting housing need. We will seek views from councillors, other council departments, the wider community and representative groups on matters that development should better address. There are some policies in the Local Plan that do seek to provide social benefits to people not directly impacted by the development. These include, for example, policies that require construction apprenticeships for Brent residents or a requirement for proposals for commercial premises to prioritise apprenticeships and appointment of Brent residents, once they are completed.</p> <p>However, there are legal tests regarding what development can reasonably be required to deliver to make it acceptable. Similar restrictions also apply to funds that development may generate to address its infrastructure impacts. These must be related to the <i>additional</i> burden development may put on local infrastructure and cannot be used to address existing deficiencies for the population. There are cross cutting and borough wide policy areas, such and climate change and transport, where it will be important to take a strategic view.</p>
	Explore innovative approaches through the Local Plan review to further strengthen the delivery of genuine affordable housing, climate resilience, sustainability, social infrastructure (such as community facilities), and green spaces across Brent, while addressing issues such as gambling overconcentration and other uses associated with social harm.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 27/10/25:</p> <p>We will look at creative and innovative approaches where possible to tackle some of these challenging issues. Town centres, for instance, will need a boost to counteract some of the negative influences on them. Some of this may require linking in with other initiatives such as climate, heritage and funding opportunities, which the Local Plan Review will have an interface with as the spatial and land use framework.</p>

	Consider strategies within the Local Plan review to support a balanced mix of green spaces across all areas of the borough, meeting community needs equitably.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 27/10/25:</p> <p>The Local Plan review will be subject to an evidence base that considers the existing extent and quality of open spaces, comparing them to national and London standards. It will provide clarity on what sites need to provide within their development boundaries, and what additional provision and enhancements will need to take place across the borough. Climate resilience objectives may have an influence on matters such as shading, species and ground conditions.</p>
	Enhance developer requirements through the Local Plan review process by introducing higher standards for sustainability, climate adaptation and resilience, and build quality.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 27/10/25:</p> <p>Climate conditions have not improved in recent years and zero carbon (as referred to in the current Local Plan) / carbon neutrality targets are ever more challenging to meet. This means that adaptation and resilience measures are essential. Building design and planning of external space will require more attention to be able to deal with climate extremes and meet the objectives of the 2025 Climate Adaptation and Resilience plan in particular (e.g. relating to drought, floods and heat). We will work with all partners to enhance standards in the Local Plan Review.</p>
	Leverage the Local Plan review process to limit the use of the carbon offset fund to a last resort for developers.	Gerry Ansell – Director, Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	<p>Response received on 27/10/25:</p> <p>On principle, the Local Plan will prioritise on site or local carbon savings projects for proposals, asking for contributions to the offset fund only where on site or local solutions have been exhausted. A review of the extent to which Brent can introduce its own locally set carbon-offsetting price rather than the GLA London-wide £95 per tonne figure, has started. If it is viable to introduce a higher charging rate, this will be taken through the relevant Council decision making processes before being issued for consultation, either in late 2025 or early 2026. This is likely to be subject to reconsideration during the Local Plan review process, once an understanding of all the policy impacts on development viability is understood.</p>

Information requests from RPRSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Information request	Council Department/External Partner	Response / Status
4 Sept 2024 – Delivery of Affordable Housing by i4B Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd (FWH)	Provide Asset Management Strategy upon completion.	Sadie East – Director, Communications, Insight & Innovation, Service Reform & Strategy	<p>Response received on 07/10/24:</p> <p>This will be presented to the i4B/FWH Board meeting on Thursday 28th November and, dependent on any feedback from directors and further work required, will be available to share with the committee in December 2024.</p> <p>Updated response received on 14/02/25:</p> <p>The draft strategy was presented at the December i4B/FWH Board meeting. The Board have requested more detailed financial analysis which is to be implemented into the business plan. The strategy is expected to return to the Board in February/ March 2025 for approval.</p> <p>Updated response received on 15/04/25:</p> <p>The draft strategy was presented at the December i4B/FWH Board meeting. The Board has requested more detailed financial analysis. The strategy is expected to return to the Board in early summer 2025 for approval.</p> <p>Updated response received on 05/09/25:</p> <p>This item has had to be rescheduled on the Forward Plan and is now expected to be picked up in October 2025.</p>
	Provide a breakdown of the expected costs associated with enhancing energy performance and retrofitting the i4B/First Wave Housing stock.	Sadie East – Director, Communications, Insight & Innovation, Service Reform & Strategy	<p>Response received on 07/10/24:</p> <p>This information will be included in the asset management strategy, which will be presented to the i4B/FWH Board meeting on Thursday 28th November and, dependent on any feedback from directors and further work required, will be available to share with the committee in December 2024.</p> <p>Updated response received on 14/02/25:</p>

			<p>The draft strategy was presented at the December i4B/FWH Board meeting. The Board have requested more detailed financial analysis which is to be implemented into the business plan. The strategy is expected to return to the Board in February/ March 2025 for approval.</p> <p>Updated response received on 15/04/25:</p> <p>The draft strategy was presented at the December i4B/FWH Board meeting. The Board has requested more detailed financial analysis. The strategy is expected to return to the Board in early summer 2025 for approval.</p> <p>Updated response received on 05/09/25:</p> <p>This item has had to be rescheduled on the Forward Plan and is now expected to be picked up in October 2025.</p>
25 Feb 2025 - Commissioning, Procurement, Community Wealth-Building, and Social Value	Provide a detailed breakdown of commissioned services income received over the last three years, categorised by organisation type.	Rhodri Rowlands – Director, Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building & Engagement, Service Reform & Strategy	<i>Awaiting response.</i>
	Provide a detailed breakdown of funding allocated to externally commissioned services, distinguishing between organisation types—private companies (small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large enterprises/corporations), VCS organisations, and social enterprises—while also indicating whether each organisation is local or non-local.	Rhodri Rowlands – Director, Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building & Engagement, Service Reform & Strategy	<i>Awaiting response.</i>
25 Feb 2025 – Emerging Employment	Provide an update on the Roy Smith House initiative after its reopening, measuring its effectiveness in addressing the challenges outlined in the	Sadie East – Director, Communications, Insight & Innovation, Service Reform & Strategy	<p>Response received on 14/04/25:</p> <p>The commercial unit at Roy Smith House is part of the test of the council's new Market Rent Reduction Framework, which is designed to allow local voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to have a reduced rent for council</p>

<p>Strategy 2025-2030</p>	<p>Stonebridge Outcome Based Review (OBR) and reviewing the outcomes of the council's Market Rent Reduction Framework.</p>		<p>assets where they can demonstrate delivery of significant community value from their proposed use of the asset.</p> <p>Three bids were received for Roy Smith House from VCS organisations and were evaluated in March 2025. All bidders have been notified of the outcome of their bids and the comparative merits of their bid in comparison to the highest scoring bid.</p> <p>Officers are due to meet with the highest scoring bidder later this month to understand their proposal in more detail and discuss/agree heads of terms for a new lease.</p> <p>The organisation with the highest scoring bid demonstrated a proven track record of delivering community value and positive outcomes for residents, including opportunities to build confidence, skills and become more employable.</p> <p>Pending the outcome of negotiations, agreed deliverables will be included as a Schedule in the lease to be monitored by the lead service.</p> <p>The commercial unit at Roy Smith House is currently empty and in need of fit-out works. A procurement exercise to appoint a provider to complete the fit-out works is currently live. The works are anticipated to complete in Summer 2025, which is the earliest the highest scoring bidder would be able to move in to the unit and begin delivering their proposed service.</p> <p>Updated response received on 13/08/25:</p> <p>Discussions with the highest scoring bidder are ongoing with a view to agree heads of terms by the end of September 2025. A Procurement exercise for a contractor for fit-out works to the space was carried out between February and March 2025. During this process officers identified a pre-existing engineering issue on site, which delayed progress in the contract award until satisfactory resolution of this issue. Officers are now in a position to award the works contract, which once commenced is expected to last a minimum of 12-weeks.</p> <p>A further update to be provided.</p>
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	Share data on the number and types of roles secured through training at the Green Skills Centre, facilitated by the partnership between the Council and the College of North West London.	Kibibi Octave – Director, Community Development, Children, Young People & Resident Community Development	Response received on 14/04/25: We have asked the college for a response and await a return on this data.
23 April 2025 – Build Quality in Brent	Share examples that demonstrate how feedback on build quality issues has led to tangible improvements in design and processes, helping to enhance build quality in subsequent projects or schemes.	Tanveer Ghani – Director, Property & Assets, Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	Response received on 07/07/25: Officers will collate examples from different schemes where we have either self-delivered or acquired from the open market and share with RPRSC to demonstrate how feedback / lessons learned have been incorporated into future projects/schemes. A further update will be provided by 9 January 2026.