



Full Council
6 July 2026

**Report from the Corporate Director
of Finance and Resources**

Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Chair's Update

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Council
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	<p>Chatan Popat, Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Democratic and Corporate Governance 020 8937 5068 chatan.popat@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>James Kinsella, Governance and Scrutiny Manager, Democratic and Corporate Governance 020 8937 2063 james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Amira Nassr, Deputy Director, Democratic and Corporate Governance 020 8937 5436 amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk</p>

1.0 Executive Summary

1.0. To update Full Council on the meetings and activities of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee since the last update to Full Council on 10 November 2025.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Full Council

2.1 Note the report and the updates provided for the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

2.2 Note that the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the 2026/27 municipal year will be provided as part of the next update report to Full Council.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1.1 The work of the committee contributes to the delivery of all of the strategic priorities within the Borough Plan as it seeks to support, advise and enhance the Council's activity. The recent activity outlined in this report contributes most specifically to the "A Healthier Brent," "The Best Start in Life," "Prosperity and Stability in Brent" strategic priorities within the plan.

3.2 Background

3.2.1 In advance of approval to the formal establishment of the Homes Scrutiny Committee, Brent Council currently has two scrutiny committees: the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee. The council also participates as a full voting member in the North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC). Councillor Sai Madabhushi was appointed as chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee at the Annual Council Meeting on 20 May 2026. Councillor Sapna Chadha has been appointed to serve as Brent's representative at the North West London Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC).

3.2.2 A scrutiny committee can review anything which affects the borough or its inhabitants, subject to its remit. The current remit of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee (subject to establishment of the Homes Scrutiny Committee) is set out in the Council's Constitution under the Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Committees which includes:
Adult social care; Safeguarding; Children's services; Cultural services; Education; Health; Housing; Public Health and Wellbeing.

3.2.3 As part of its remit set out in the constitution, and its role to review the provision and operation of health services within the borough, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee can scrutinise, and make recommendations to NHS organisations or relevant health service providers.

3.2.4 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's 2026/27 work programme will be finalised during the month of July 2026. Once agreed, it will outline the policy areas and council decisions the committee plan to review during the 2026/27 municipal year. Statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny recommends that for scrutiny to be effective, scrutiny committees focus on conducting fewer in-depth reviews of highly significant topics¹.

¹ *Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities* (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government), p21

- 3.2.5 Below is an update of the work undertaken by the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee under the previous Chair and membership. The Committee met for its third meeting of the 2025/26 municipal year on 19 November 2025 where it considered major changes to local health services and housing performance. The Committee reviewed proposals by London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust to transfer the Medical Day Care Unit from Central Middlesex Hospital to Ealing Hospital, alongside an expansion of local sickle cell services. The Trust advised the move would align day care with emergency pathways and improve patient flow, while enhancing specialist sickle cell provision at Central Middlesex Hospital. Members raised concerns about travel impacts, particularly for vulnerable patients and the risk of reduced accessibility, stressing the need for robust engagement, monitoring of patient outcomes, and clear mitigation measures. The Committee requested further detail on the future strategy for Central Middlesex Hospital and emphasised the importance of maintaining local access to services.
- 3.2.6 The Committee also scrutinised Brent Council's response to a C3 grading from the Regulator of Social Housing, which identified serious failings in housing management, particularly around compliance data and safety reporting. The department outlined significant progress, including completing high-risk fire safety actions, rebuilding compliance systems, strengthening governance, and engaging residents, though full data assurance is not expected until 2026. Members highlighted concerns about data reliability, organisational culture, tenant confidence, and the pace of improvement, calling for clearer communication with residents and accelerated survey and compliance programmes. In addition, the Housing Management Advisory Board reported on its early work to embed tenant voice and improve accountability, noting ongoing issues with estate conditions but also evidence of more responsive action by officers. The Committee made a series of recommendations focused on strengthening oversight, improving transparency, rebuilding trust with tenants, and ensuring sustained cultural and service improvement.
- 3.2.7 The Committee met for its fourth meeting on 19 January 2026 and considered a petition opposing proposed reductions to opening hours at Central Middlesex Hospital's Urgent Treatment Centre. Petitioners expressed strong concern that earlier closures would reduce access to urgent care, increase pressure on neighbouring services, and disproportionately affect a growing and ageing local population. The Committee acknowledged these concerns and confirmed it had previously scrutinised the proposals and would continue to monitor their impact.
- 3.2.8 The Committee also reviewed progress made following the Casey Review into disorder at Wembley Stadium, hearing from Council officers, the FA and partners on wide-ranging improvements to safety, security, transport coordination and crowd management. While recognising significant progress and stronger partnership working, members emphasised the need for clearer impact data, improved engagement with residents and young people, and continued focus on issues such as traffic management and communication ahead of events.
- 3.2.9 The Committee further examined Brent's approach to tackling poverty, with a particular focus on child poverty, housing pressures and support for vulnerable

families. Members noted the scale of the challenge, including high rates of child poverty and the impact of temporary accommodation, and welcomed initiatives such as Family Wellbeing Centres, free school meals, employment support and targeted financial assistance. However, concerns were raised about the long-term impact of temporary accommodation on young people, the need for more local skills and employment opportunities, and gaps in support for older teenagers. The Committee stressed the importance of using data to better target interventions and called for stronger engagement with young people in shaping policy responses. Recommendations focused on improving opportunities for employment and skills development, prioritising housing stability for families with children in key exam years and ensuring that young people's voices are embedded in the Council's ongoing work to reduce poverty.

3.2.10 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee met for its final meeting on 4 March 2026 where it focused further on recent changes to health services and key housing performance issues. The Committee considered the reduction in operating hours of the Urgent Treatment Centre at Central Middlesex Hospital, with residents raising concerns about poor communication, limited consultation and reduced access to evening care. The NHS Trust advised that the change was based on low late-evening demand and had improved efficiency and patient flow, with performance targets now being met. However, members expressed concern regarding engagement levels and the wider impact on access to services and recommended that the decision be reconsidered following more comprehensive public engagement and supported by clearer analysis of population growth and service demand. The Committee also received updates on improvements to sickle cell services, including a dedicated day service at Central Middlesex Hospital and enhanced specialist provision across hospital sites.

3.2.11 The Committee also undertook extensive scrutiny of housing management, focusing on tenant satisfaction, service performance and the rollout of the Area Tenancy Management model. Members noted ongoing improvements in repairs, compliance and void reduction, supported by new governance arrangements and increased contractor capacity, but highlighted continued issues with data quality, complaints handling and tenant satisfaction. The Committee emphasised the need for stronger system integration, proactive repairs strategies and clearer performance benchmarking. Detailed case studies demonstrated the benefits of the new tenancy model in providing more consistent, resident-focused support, although concerns remained about communication and accountability in some schemes.

3.2.12 Finally, the Committee reviewed rising pressures in homelessness and temporary accommodation, noting a significant increase in demand and the financial and social challenges involved. Members stressed the importance of providing suitable accommodation, particularly for families and young people, improving data on impacts, and expanding longer-term housing supply, while continuing to strengthen support for residents placed both within and outside the borough.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 Members continue to be fully engaged in the development and delivery of the scrutiny work programme, which is intended to be a flexible, living document that can adapt and change throughout the municipal year in response to the Committee's needs.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 There are no equity, diversity or inclusion implications arising from this report.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 There are no climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 There are no communication implications arising from this report.

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director, Finance and Resources