



Full Council
17 September 2018

Report from the Leader of the Council

Update report from the Leader and Cabinet

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	1
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	N/A

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides an update on the work being undertaken by the Leader and Cabinet, in accordance with Standing Order 31. .

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 Council is asked to note this report.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Council on 9 July 2018 agreed series of revisions to the Constitution which changed a number of Standing Orders relating to the way that Full Council operated. Included as part of these, were changes to the way in which the update report from the Leader and other Cabinet Members would be considered.

3.2 Whilst the total time available to consider the update report remains at 15 minutes, this is now split with up to six minutes being provided for the Leader and other Cabinet Members to speak in order to highlight any significant issues within their portfolios and the requirement for these updates to be based on a written report from the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet. Following on from

these updated, the remainder of the time available is then opened up for any non-Cabinet members to question (without advance notice) Cabinet on matters relating to their portfolios.

- 3.3 Set out in Appendix One of the report are the written updates provided, which cover pertinent parts of the municipal year to date.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct financial implications.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct legal implications.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct equality implications.

APPENDIX 1 – UPDATES FROM LEADER AND CABINET

1. Leaders Introduction – Councillor Muhammed Butt

1.1 At the last meeting of Full Council it was agreed that written reports would be submitted, in advance, by the Leader, Deputy Leader, and Cabinet. This is the first of those reports and will cover pertinent parts of the municipal year to date. Over the course of this administration, as well as providing a general update across portfolios, these reports will also be used as a means of publically recording progress on delivering our manifesto commitments.

1.2 Brent at a glance

1.2.1 139,086 votes were cast in support of Brent Labour in this year's elections. 139,086 votes in recognition of this Labour-run council's record of achievement. 139,086 votes endorsing a manifesto that was both pragmatic and aspirational, built of a wealth of hard won experience at the helm of local government. A manifesto setting out:

- How, under Labour, this Administration will continue rising to the challenge of meeting higher volumes and complexities of demand in a time of ongoing austerity;
- How every resident will have every opportunity to succeed;
- How our future will be built for everyone and our economy fit for all;
- And, how we will redouble our efforts in pursuit of a cleaner, more considerate Brent, where we can all feel safe, secure, happy, and healthy;

1.2.2 In terms of demand, with government funding slashed, as is the case nationally, our ability to help is under enormous pressure. With regard to child protection, while recently rated by Ofsted as outstanding, we cannot be certain that present levels of care can be sustained. Indeed, that we have managed to attain such high service standards in the face of ongoing cuts is testament to the hard work and dedication of those tasked with safeguarding young lives in Brent. That so many councils are reporting heightened levels of risk to government arising from severe underfunding should hopefully compel an urgent and comprehensive rethink. Whether or not it will remain to be seen.

1.2.3 On opportunity, standards and levels of education and employment in this borough are on an upward trajectory. Nowhere is this more evident than with our schools going from strength to strength, such that GSCE, NVQ, and A-Level students continue to achieve excellent results.

1.2.4 On building a fairer future, in eight years, and in the absence of any central government leadership – perhaps a cause and consequence of there having been eight Housing Ministers over the same period – this borough has begun to regulate the private rental market, has taken action against rogue landlords, is

directly involved in providing good quality, genuinely affordable, and ethically managed homes with long term tenancies, and, has enabled the delivery of 49% more new build affordable housing than the London average.

1.2.5 On feeling safe and secure, regrettably, while certainly not unique to this city, huge cuts to police funding, and the cumulative socio-economic impact of wider austerity, are compounding causes and rates of crime. Nevertheless, we still have one of the best police forces in the world with whom we work proactively on a daily basis to ensure that Brent's streets are kept as safe as possible, and that the tiny minority of citizens who choose to break the law are captured and brought to justice.

2. Deputy Leader – Councillor Margaret McLennan

2.1 Budget

2.1.1 As set out in the table below, since 2010, government austerity has imposed £167m worth of cuts on the services that we as Brent Council provide (for more detail, please follow the hyperlinked dates to the relevant budget reports).

10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	Total
£10.9 m	£41.7 m	£11.7 m	£6.8 m	£17.8 m	£28.1 m	£21.4 m	£13.8 m	£13.9 m	£167 m

Table 1 – Austerity imposed cuts to Brent Council’s services since 2010

2.1.2 To my mind, the most effective way of explaining the net impact of those cuts is set out in the following chart. It shows how our annual spend on core services has fallen from about £920 per resident in 2010 down to roughly £550 per resident today, and which looks set to fall further to the equivalent of around £440 per resident by the end of this administration:

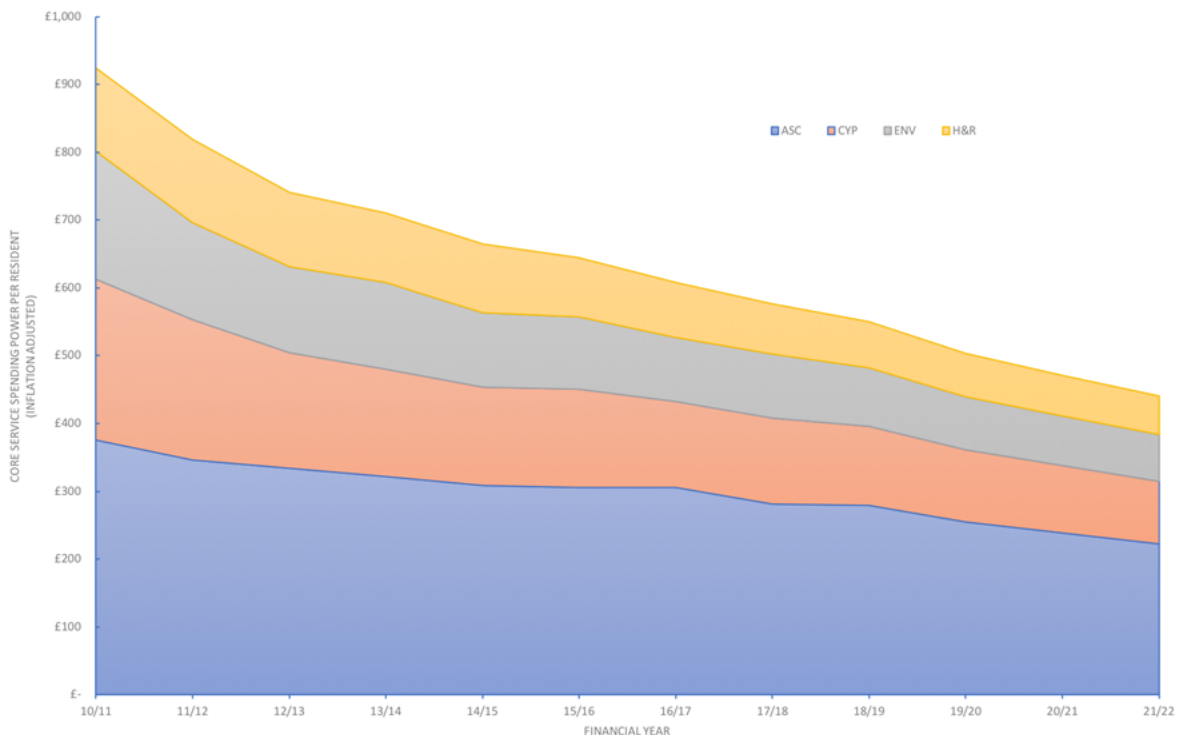


Chart 1 – Brent Council’s spending power per resident, 2010-2022

2.1.3 Over the next four years, as funding continues to decline, and volume, complexity and cost of demand continues to rise, at least another £40m of so-called savings will be needed to balance the books. While we’re projecting over four years, in reality we can only plot the next two with any degree of accuracy. So our immediate challenge has to be finding £20m for delivery in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

2.1.4 Obviously, having already implemented the above mentioned £167m, our remaining room for manoeuvre is extremely limited. Nevertheless, our primary concern as an administration has to be balancing the books. Not just because we have a legal and moral obligation to do so. But because if we don't, we'll be right behind the likes of [Northamptonshire](#) and [East Sussex](#) and quickly relieved of the responsibility we fought for and won back in May.

2.1.5 In closing, it should go without saying that each of us is determined to protect our residents and the services they value and depend upon. Unfortunately, we are now at a point where it is no longer possible to maintain current service levels while also balancing the budget. To complicate matters, if we waste time wringing our hands, or if we shy away – [as they did in Northamptonshire](#) – from what are extremely difficult decisions, we will put this borough at very real risk of insolvency, the costs of which, ultimately, will be borne by the very people we seek to protect.

3. Children's Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care – Councillor Mili Patel

3.1 Ofsted

3.1.1 In my last speech at Full Council I informed members how, despite the cuts, Brent has received its best-ever rating from Ofsted following a recent inspection. Now the report has been published I wanted to again highlight to council some of its key findings.

- In the report, Ofsted praised the “strong leadership at a political level and throughout the council (which) has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of social work practice for children since the last inspection.”
- Inspectors duly recognised the complex set of challenges that Brent faces in dealing with people of many differing backgrounds, nationalities, cultures and religions, in a borough where over 150 languages are spoken.
- The report notes how the council takes “great care to consider cultural sensitivity when undertaking assessments. They take into account the potential influence of religious beliefs and practices on parenting behaviour.”
- Inspectors also found evidence of effective and sensitive work around forced marriages, female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation, tackling gangs and, although numbers are low, found that Brent had robust processes in place to protect children and young people at risk of radicalisation.
- The report notes how “Communication with children and young people is a particular strength. It is at the heart of child and family social work. Inspectors are impressed by the skills, sensitivity and creativity of social workers and other practitioners.”
- Ofsted also noted how “Children benefit from the very high proportion of schools in Brent that have been judged to be good or outstanding...A high proportion of children and young people come into care with significant gaps in their learning and attendance, many with complex needs and substantial barriers to overcome. Despite this, they are making better progress in care than they were previously.”
- There was praise for the council in its role as a ‘corporate parent’ to those in care. “Corporate parenting is a real strength for the local authority. There is a strong focus on achieving positive outcomes for children in care and care leavers.”

3.1.2 We can achieve these things, despite the avalanche of cuts central government has pushed towards us, because we have taken tough decisions over several years to put the council on a secure financial footing. We also work well together

as a team and are lucky to have dedicated team of officers who are extremely professional.

3.1.3 However, members should not get complacent and think that things in my department will always from now on be easy.

- The government has cut spending on children and young people's services by nearly £1bn in real terms over the past six years
- The LGA is warning that councils in England will face a bigger gap of £2bn by 2020
- Three leading children's charities stated earlier this year that "crippling" cuts will soon force council children's services departments to move to a "crisis firefighting" model

3.1.4 If these trends continue the excellent progress we have made will become more and more difficult to sustain. Members can read the full report here:

https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/local_authority_reports/brent/070_%20Brent_Inspection%20of%20local%20authority%20childrens%20services.pdf

3.1.5 I am also pleased to report that word of this achievement has spread far beyond Brent's borders and been reported widely within the profession. For example, you can read the report in the journal "Children and young people now" here:

<https://www.cypnow.co.uk/cyp/news/2005508/ofsted-praises-councils-outstanding-support-for-children-in-care>

3.2 Corporate Parenting Committee

3.2.1 The new Corporate Parenting Committee met for the first time since the election on Wednesday 25 July. Members received a presentation on the role and responsibilities of the committee. Local young people in care helped to deliver this training which really helped members to see the issues from their point of view.

3.2.2 The committee received the annual Corporate Parenting Report and the Fostering Service Quarterly Report.

3.2.3 As ever we welcomed the opportunity for members of Care In Action (CIA) to speak to us about their recent activities.

3.3 Area based working

3.3.1 I am continuing to work with my team to develop our new hub approach to delivering services. This will mean that more services are delivered in communities at designated hubs throughout Brent. In the long term I believe this will ensure a better experience for our residents.

3.3.2 It's great that scrutiny are taking an interest in this transformative project with the Community and Wellbeing Committee investigating the change and the Resources and Public Realm Committee recently carrying out a site visit to the pilot Hub in Brent's most awesome ward – Harlesden - to learn about the experience of residents as part of their investigation into channel shift.

3.4 Family Front Door

3.4.1 It is everyone's responsibility to protect young people. So, thank you to all members who keep me informed of their concerns for children in their wards.

3.4.2 Remember these three important numbers:

- If you have concerns about a child being harmed or at risk of harm you can call the Brent Family Front Door on 0208 937 4300 and hit option one
- If you are calling outside normal office hours please call our emergency duty team on 0208 863 5250
- If a child is in imminent danger always call 999.

3.5 Community Day

3.5.1 On Monday 6 August I attended the "Together Community Day – Empowering Communities" at Roundwood Youth Club in Kensal Green. The theme of the event was to educate local young people on issues including gang violence and knife crime. But it also celebrated young people's talent and their contribution to the community.

3.5.2 It was well attended by local families who interacted with a range of agencies including; Brent Council, the Fire Brigade, Brent Police, the Terrance Higgins Trust and Connexions.

3.6 Care in Action

3.6.1 On Friday 3 August I attended the "Care in Action – Activity Day" in Chalkhill. This has become an annual summer event where children in care come together with their foster carers to celebrate the end of term. Activities included face-painting, animal petting, graffiti artists, sports and music.

3.6.2 I attended, along with officers from the team, as this was a valuable opportunity for us to interact with foster carers (and for them to network amongst each other) and hear their concerns first hand in an informal setting.

4. Adults Social Care – Councillor Harbi Farah

- 4.1 I very much look forward to working with all our partners to fulfil our local Labour manifesto commitments. As the new cabinet member for adult social care, I am committed to listening and taking forward collective actions to improve services. In particular, I would like to see that our services are embedded with Labour values. I am proud that Brent has achieved so much in the past four years despite devastating central government cuts since 2010. As a cabinet member, my main priorities will focus on how to bring our services closer to our residents, while making sure our residents feel our system is ready to help, is respectful, and fair.
- 4.2 There is significant demographic pressure on adult social care because of the good news that people continue to live longer with more complex conditions. This is recognised at a national level which is why the LGA is trying to work with local government nationally ahead of the expected green paper in the autumn from the government to make the case for adult social care.
- 4.3 It is crucial that through this process and the government's green paper, the changes consulted upon are about more than principles, and that we focus on the core issue of how we meet the greater needs of the population and deliver on the aspirations of the Care Act to provide much needed certainty for the council in terms of planning (not more short term financial sticking plasters such as Improved Better Care Fund) and for Brent residents, which means nationally we need to recognise pressures such as:
- Demographic pressure - over the last 2 years there has been a 3.2% growth in the number of people adult social care supports, but this number hides the true impact. Over the same period there has been a 9% increase in the amount of homecare we have purchased and an 18% increase in 'double handed' homecare packages (these are the packages for the people with the most complex needs, where the person needs two carers for every homecare visit to avoid moving to a residential or nursing care home).
 - Providing more support to our health partners - nationally ASC has saved Health £60m by reducing delayed transfers of care. Brent Council has put more money into hospital discharge services (more social workers, more homecare so people can be assessed at home through the Discharge to Assess service HomeFirst) and this has saved the Brent health economy over £350k.
 - Inflationary pressures - there are specific price pressures on care homes particularly in relation to the shortage of nurses. This is driven by the increased demand in hospitals for nurses (where terms and conditions are often better) and by other factors such as Brexit.
- 4.4 There is also the fact that although Brent Council have been able to secure contracts that pay the London Living Wage in extra care schemes over the last year, homecare workers are not yet paid the London Living Wage.

5. Public Health, Culture and Leisure – Councillor Krupesh Hirani

- 5.1 We promoted the Borough of Culture with Headteachers in Brent. As you know, young people were at the heart of our Bid and getting schools involved and engaged in the year of culture is a key objective for us. I promoted the Borough of Culture at Parliament where Hampstead and Kilburn MP Tulip Siddiq held a community reception.
- 5.2 I have met with the Anne Frank Trusts who are interested in running an anti-discrimination arts programme in Brent in partnership with schools. We had a key stakeholders meeting to update key organisations on the Borough of Culture.
- 5.3 We hosted a delegation from the young people's media channel Vice and toured the Borough with them. At the time of writing this update, preparations are under way for our London Borough of Culture Summit which will guide residents and local groups on how they can be involved in our Year of Culture.
- 5.4 I launched the Brent summer reading challenge with Michael De Souza, better known as Rastamouse! He held an interactive reading session with children at Ealing Road Library. The Challenge encouraged children to take out six books to read over the summer. 25 teenage volunteers engaged and helped during the summer period for the Challenge.
- 5.5 The Reading Ahead scheme for emerging readers achieved a Gold standard. There were 700 joiners and over 230 finishers. Harlesden Library awarded 10k of CIL funds to enhance the Harlesden cultural offer which includes the hub. Two community projects underway to develop murals to go in the cultural space. I have now visited all Brent Libraries and spoken to staff about the challenges at their workplaces and sought to resolve issues and concerns through the Directors.
- 5.6 I hosted a briefing for Preston Ward Councillors alongside the Community library representatives regarding next steps for developing their new library building.
- 5.7 I attended summer vegan cooking workshop. A Brent based company has been holding plant based cooking workshops for children over the summer holidays. The aim has been to give them something positive to do over the holidays and also make fruit and vegetables more exciting for young people.
- 5.8 We screened the Word Cup Final at King Edwards Park in Wembley. It was well attended and the Leader and I personally handed water bottles to spectators!
- 5.9 I attended Notting Hill Carnival. One of the sets was organised and hosted by a Brent based company and I have subsequently included them on our list of key cultural organisations to work with on the Borough of Culture
- 5.10 I attended the launch of the mural at the Brent Indian Association on Ealing Road I attended the Willesden Temple's anniversary celebrations. I also attended the Queensbury Mela. Flag raising took place for Independence Days. I attended the

50th Anniversary event for the Kutch Madhapur Community who at their AGM appointed their first ever female President.

- 5.11 I met with the Friends of Assam Group who hold an annual cultural event to promote their community. They are hoping to hold their national event in 2020 in Brent and open it up to all to learn more about Assam and their community. Their Chair is a Brent resident.
- 5.12 I met with CVS Brent who wanted to know more about our upcoming budget process. I met with the new Chief Executive of the Brent Law Centre and sent details to all Councillors about their services and how they could signpost residents to their services. They are supported through our Grants programme along with Citizens Advice Brent to provide much needed assistance to our residents.
- 5.13 I hosted a briefing for ward Councillors (Dollis Hill, Mapesbury and Dudden Hill) on the tennis courts at Gladstone Park. We have teamed up with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) to improve the facilities and the LTA at the same time are hoping to increase the take up of the sport at a grassroots level. A consultation will formally launch in September where our plans in partnership with the LTA will be out in the public domain.
- 5.14 Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre received £1500 from the London Mayor's office to feed children during the summer holidays. We fed about 15 to 20 children twice a week and this summer we also provided snacks and drinks to the children on the other 3 days through food donated by another sponsor. This year we had two chefs from Heston's restaurant who came in to cook for the children. A fun packed open day event at Willesden Sports Centre which was attended by 550 people
- 5.15 We are mapping indoor sports facilities across the Borough and at the end hope to develop a platform where we can make the information more accessible to communities.
- 5.16 Brent had its first ever Plogging event. The Be Smart Get Fit group organised the day based on a Scandinavian concept where participants organise a run or jog, pick up rubbish, and at the end, enjoy a lunch / meal to cap the day. It is a great way to keep fit, improve the environment and a good social experience too.
- 5.17 Sustain have developed a Local Government Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food. The Council have now signed up to this, committing to take action in 6 key areas;
- Tackle advertising and sponsorship
 - Improve the food controlled or influenced by the Council and support the public and voluntary sectors to improve their food offer
 - Reduce prominence of sugary drinks and actively promote free drinking water

- Support businesses and organisations to improve their food offer
- Public events
- Raise public awareness.

5.18 Brent Council has been given £195k from the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund, which was generated by the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (sugar levy). Schools have been invited to bid for funding to carry out a capital project which increases facilities in schools for physical activity, healthy eating, mental health and wellbeing and medical conditions.

5.19 Healthier Catering Commitment 44 premises have achieved the HCC award. There is a dedicated page on Brent website, explaining the award, benefits of the award, how to sign up, and listing companies who have achieved the award.

5.20 We have carried out targeted Shisha and Tobacco Control work with the Iraqi Community and are working with Caso do Brasil to develop a Community Lead Smoking cessation service for the Brazilian community.

5.21 National Diabetes Prevention Programme funded by NHS England, coordinated and implemented by Public Health and CCG has now started taking referrals from Brent residents in August 2018.

5.22 Worked with CCG to obtain £267k funding to continue the successful Latent TB Infection Testing and Treatment Programme. Brent was the highest performing CCG for the Latent TB Programme in London.

5.23 The diabetes prevention programme and childhood immunisation were topics discussed at the Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

6. Community Safety – Councillor Tom Miller

6.1 It has been a busy few months coming back into the Council following the countermanded poll in Willesden Green. It is my first Full Council back in this seat, and I look forward to working with you. My brief has been reduced since I have come back onto the council, with culture moving over to Councillor Hirani. It now covers:

- All areas of community safety (crime, ASB, specialised issues of violence and vulnerability such as domestic violence)
- Many of the council's regulatory and enforcement services (such as licensing and trading standards)
- Community cohesion work (including the Prevent duty)
- Registration and nationality services

6.2 I am looking forward to working with you all. I am very happy to answer questions from members whenever suits, or to meet whenever practical.

6.3. Upcoming policy and reports

6.3.1 We have some major areas of policy to be updated, which have been in process since before the local elections.

“Safer Brent” – our community safety strategy. This is a detailed document which has been included on the agenda for the Council meeting.

6.3.2 It will outline our analysis of the key problems facing us around crime and disorder in Brent, and what Labour aims to put forward as solutions – a plan of action. We recognise that the council's resources are now very depleted and that partner services, not least the police, are under enormous strain. We still think that we can make a positive difference to crime and disorder by intervening earlier in the journey people make towards criminalisation, recognising the relationships and overlaps between victims and offenders, using data and predictive modelling, and giving our work a more local focus. We will give even more elevated priority to issues which we believe drive crime and disorder locally, namely gangs and the serious violence and drug markets which accompany them. As part of this we will also be further elevating the priority of our work on knife crime.

“Stronger Together” – our community cohesion strategy. This document will shortly be going out to consultation.

6.3.3 I am planning to do this in a fairly non-traditional way, including an interview with The Beats FM to discuss ideas around this with some young people. We will also be doing a mini road-show to some of the libraries and shopping centres across

the borough, and I have asked the team to make sure ward councillors are invited.

6.3.4 In the plan we aim to carry out a programme of work to encourage the community to come together to fight some of our most difficult social issues – from gang crime through to FGM and political radicalisation.

6.3.5 This time we will be meeting the Government's call for areas to adopt and encourage 'British values' with our own local alternative – Brent values. As the consultation goes forward we will be asking residents from all of Brent's diverse communities what they most value and how they can help us to stick together. After all, we have more in common with each other than which divides us.

Statement of licensing policy

6.3.6 In line with our manifesto commitments we are consulting on this update with the hope of providing new tools to our licensing committee, for example tackling the cumulative impact of off licenses within particular High Streets. I would be really happy to pass on details to members.

6.4 Forward Programme

6.4.1 In future months I will be meeting with officers to ensure delivery of our manifesto pledges over the next four years: working with licensees to deliver safer premises. Designing tools to improve neighbourhood watch, and introduce predictive modelling identifying those at risk of harm or offending. We will move to protect all people from domestic abuse, and to guarantee the rights of women in the borough in the face of gendered violence or exploitation. I look forward to working with local campaigners and volunteers as well as our staff to make this happen.

6.5 Updates

- I am in dialogue with Police about some of the serious incidents that have taken place in recent weeks, not least a multiple shooting in Kingsbury and a horrifying attack on a pregnant woman. In addition I am working with some members who are dealing with burglaries and localised ASB problems.
- We recently brought our new £2.3M CCTV system online and officially opened the new control room. Thanks to those of you who came along! The digital system will allow better pictures, make it far cheaper and easier to place and move mobile cameras, and will provide a year-on-year saving by eliminating the need for line rental and cutting down on custom ad hoc repairs. We should also be able to bring partners such as Housing Associations into our system, and Police will have direct access as crime is recorded.
- Along with Councillors Mili Patel, the Leader and the Borough Commander I have recently visited Harlesden High Street, where there are a range of compounded problems. I'm working with Police, residents and some of our

officers in Regeneration and Environment to unlock some of the long term issues.

- The Council ran a 'Summer Nights' visibility campaign, adding visible council staff to the Police presence in some of our more volatile areas during the summer
- We are keeping a close eye on Police as Brent's command merges with Barnet and Harrow, and will continue to keep up dialogue and monitor performance.

7. Regeneration, Highways and Planning – Councillor Shama Tatler

- 7.1 This is a difficult time for Brent Council and we are having to make some unprecedented decisions about budgets and services at a time when need is high. The regeneration department has a crucial role in supporting the council by helping bring in revenue through increasing the council tax base, supporting business and our town centres as well as shaping the built environment in Brent, transforming the borough and making it a place where residents want to live, work and play. A borough that is ready for the demands for the 21st century.
- 7.2 Despite limitations placed on local government on how we build homes, this council is committed to help support the building of truly affordable and quality homes. We value transparency in the planning process and holding developers to account. As such, as part of the public planning applications, viability assessments are being published.
- 7.3 The government policy on ‘permitted development’ has been a blight to councils and areas like Brent, where the planning authority has been removed from making decisions for the area and obligated to give ‘prior approvals’ to office to residential conversions. Not only do these applications not have to adhere to space standards, these conversions often only provide accommodation of studio/one bed dwellings and not the family sized units that Brent needs. In addition, in Brent, these permitted developments have displaced valued local businesses and employers. As a result, Brent Council have issued an Article 4 directive for the Wembley Growth Area and it came into effect in August 2018. Consequently, Brent Council have been able to refuse some prior approval applications already. The council needs to be involved in place-making through planning decisions to ensure that all residential, business/employer and infrastructure needs are met. This Article 4 Directive will help Brent to that.
- 7.4 Regeneration also means ensuring the infrastructure to development is secured and we are pleased to say the long awaited improvements to the road network in the Wembley area were approved by Cabinet earlier this summer and help alleviate some of the issues residents face.
- 7.5 Other important regeneration news includes the appointment of the developers of the Peel Precinct in South Kilburn. In what will be the civic heart of the South Kilburn, we are excited by the progress of this phase of works which will not only include social housing but a brand new medical centre, gym and retail spaces.
- 7.6 Finally, we welcome public participation in planning consultations and we praise the work by the community in Harlesden who have put forward a Harlesden Neighbourhood Plan which is currently out to consultation.

8. Schools, Employment and Skills – Councillor Amer Agha

8.1 **The Employment and Skills** team helps residents develop skills for life and employment (Brent Start), careers advice and guidance (The Living Room and partners), support for those with greater barriers to work (Work and Health Programme and bespoke projects), and access to the labour market (Brent Works).

- **Brent Start** is a now a high performing service, with achievement for students above the national comparator averages at nearly 87%, rated Good by Ofsted in 2017, and supporting circa 2,500 residents each year with valuable qualifications to fulfil their goals. Customer satisfaction is at 97% above the national average of 88% (external survey). A new prospectus for 2018-19 has been published.
- **Brent Work's** performance has improved year on year, supporting over 420 residents into work and apprenticeship since April 2015 to date, with nearly 40 residents placed in apprenticeships already this year. They are nominated for their partnership with Quintain for the Wembley Park employment skills work, in both the national 'British Construction Awards 2018' and 'Place West London Awards 2018'.
- **The Living Room** has had a new team in place since April and is delivering above its targets, supporting over 150 people into work since its launch in 2016. It will provide more flexible support across priority neighbourhoods of Brent including Harlesden and Kilburn (through Community Hubs subject to sign off by Cabinet in September).
- **The Work and Health Programme** is a West London programme commissioned by Brent and partner boroughs, providing support since its launch in March 2018. It is a more intensive programme, through which residents can receive upto 18 months of support, particularly for those with common mental health issues (e.g. stress, anxiety and depression) or physical health barriers to work. Also available to support residents with learning disabilities, care leavers, carers, and ex-offenders. Since its launch over 320 Brent residents have been referred to the programme, 25% of the total across West London.
- **Moving on Up**; The London Borough of Brent has been invited to become one of two pilot areas to test a new approach to improve employment outcomes for groups which are underrepresented in quality jobs in London's labour market. This is part of Moving on Up (MoU) an initiative developed and funded by the Trust for London and City Bridge Trust working in partnership with Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG) and the Greater London Authority. MoU aims to improve employment outcomes for young black men in London by developing new models which can be used to support under-represented ethnic groups. Brent E&S department is organising a Moving on UP workshop to create an Employment Impact Group, on 21st September 2018 to explore how Brent can develop and test

MoU model over next two years. The workshop will be facilitated by BTEG and Trust for London

- Brent has submitted an application for DWP - **Community Budget Funding** – for prevention of offending and reoffending. The DWP community budget provides an opportunity to deliver innovative interventions to young people of Brent. It's important the council and its partners work together to develop meaningful training and employment opportunities for those that are at greatest risk of involvement in criminal activity.

8.2 GSCE results

8.2.1 This year has been another strong year for GCSE results in Brent. Pupils in the borough continue to achieve well and are once again performing well above the national average. I'd like to say massive congratulations to all the pupils who received their results this summer. It was great to meet some students as they were getting their results

8.2.2 This is the second year that students have taken the new style more challenging GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics, and the first year in a further 20 subjects.

8.2.3 The revised GCSEs are graded 9 to 1. Grade 9 is the highest grade, Grade 5 is a strong pass and Grade 4 is a standard pass. In 2019 nearly all of the subjects examined will be new style GCSEs.

8.2.4 In 2018, 2,831 Year 11 Brent students sat their GCSEs. The provisional results show that the Brent averages for all of the measures have increased compared to 2017 and that Brent is well above the 2017 national averages for all of the measures.

8.2.5 The provisional Brent average Attainment 8 score of 50.5 is an increase of 1.5 compared to 2017 and well above last year's national average of 44.6. In effect the 2018 score means that the average grade for Brent students in their eight main GCSE subjects is 5 i.e. a strong GCSE pass. The highest attainment is at Wembley High Technology College (66.5) and JFS (65.0) with students on average attaining grade 6 (equivalent to the former GCSE grade B).

8.2.6 The provisional proportion of Brent students attaining the Basics is 70 per cent which is 2.5 percentage points above last year and 6.1 percentage points above last year's national average.

8.3. A Level and Level 3 Vocational results

8.3.1 The changes to all A Level subjects will have been introduced by September 2018, with the first set of linear examinations for all subjects reported in 2020.

8.3.2 Brent's overall pass rate (A*-E) has fallen this year and is marginally (0.9 percentage point) below the national average which also fell. This is being

attributed nationally to the “tougher” A Levels. However, over a quarter (26.3 per cent) of Brent’s results are the higher A*/A grades, marginally (0.1 percentage point) above the national average. Brent’s proportion of A*-C grades is also above the national average and by a wider margin (2.7 percentage points). Overall attainment is highest at JFS, with St Gregory’s Catholic Science College second and Wembley High Technology College third.

8.3.3 Despite the more challenging A Levels, the results at Ark Academy, Preston Manor School, Queens Park Community School and St Gregory’s have increased compared to 2017.

8.4. Level 3 Vocational

8.4.1 The overall pass rate for Brent is 98.5 per cent, and the highest grades (Distinction*, Distinction) account for 62.1 per cent of all of the grades awarded. Of the schools with over 50 entries, attainment was highest at Kingsbury High School with 93.1 per cent of all grades awarded Distinction*/ Distinction.

8.4.2 At Wembley High all of the small number of entries (six) have been awarded Distinction*. The lowest Level 3 vocational pass rate is at ARK Elvin Academy. This is the first year since the Department for Education separated the reporting of A Level and Level 3 Vocational qualifications that Brent Council has collected the vocational results from schools. Comparisons with previous years are therefore not possible, and unlike A Level, the provisional national results have not been published.

9. Housing & Welfare Reform - Councillor Eleanor Southwood

9.1 Brent Housing Management

9.1.1 It's almost a year since management of Brent's housing came back in-house. Our focus is on accelerating the speed of improvement, particularly in terms of:

- A better experience for residents: The staff restructure is now complete. From now on, residents will experience a more responsive and customer focused service than they used to get. For example, Housing Officer activities will be by demand rather than patches, there is now contract management ensuring contractors deliver what they are paid to deliver and to the quality expected, leaseholders get a more dedicated service, responding to their specific needs as homeowners. I'd like to thank the team for their support during this transition
- More timely repairs service: This has been a major focus and there's still some way to go. We're dealing with a high level of legacy complaints and, from 1 October a service improvement plan will be implemented that will focus on improving the quality of the service and increasing customer satisfaction with the service. We're taking a holistic approach with Wates, Property and Neighborhood services working together to deliver a much better service
- Voids: As at the end of August, we had let 79 properties this financial year, 19 more than the same period last year. This means that More homes are let more quickly, getting people off temporary accommodation and increasing rental income, which means more money to invest in the stock.

9.2 Fire Safety

9.2.1 It's over a year since the dreadful tragedy at Grenfell Tower. Keeping our residents safe is a number one priority. All high-rise (6+ storey) blocks of flats have a valid Fire Risk Assessment in place and 100% of the remedial actions and recommendations identified in the 2017 Fire Risk Assessments have been completed. We're undertaking a high-rise fire safety improvement programme, as part of a £28m HRA capital investment programme. We'll also undertake fire safety improvement works for all low and medium rise blocks, starting this month.

9.3 More flexible approach to home adaptations

9.3.1 Historically, major adaptations have been delivered through a traditional mandatory Disabled Facility Grant (DFG). I'm pleased that Cabinet have agreed to amend the Council's Private Housing Assistance Policy so that we can take a much more flexible approach, which is built around the needs of the resident and draws on expertise from teams across the council. Residents can now access:

- A Small Works Grants (SWG) of £7,000.00 – A discretionary grants to cover the cost of works that will deliver significant health gains. They are generally

available for vulnerable people on qualifying benefits or irrespective to any entitlement to benefits when used to install or maintain disabled facilities or assist hospital discharges.

- A Spend to Save Grant (SSG) – A discretionary tool, to be utilised where a case can be made for the upper limit of a Small Works Grant to be exceeded in very special circumstances where this provides an overall financial advantage in relation to the combined care and health budgets of the council and its NHS partners.
- Acute Handyperson Assistance service (AHAS) – Available free of charge to remove risks within the home for vulnerable residents when referred by Care or Health Professionals. This is intended to directly support the work done by the HDAS, preventing hospital readmissions
- Hospital Discharge Assistance service (HDAS) – A fast-track, prioritised route to housing services in circumstances where a vulnerable person is unable to be discharged from hospital due to housing safety risks within their home.
- Discretionary Disability Adaptations Grant (DDAG) – This is an alternative to the DFG, identical in every respect but without a requirement for means-testing.
- Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) – A grant to provide major adaptations so that people can access essential facilities within their home such as a bedroom, bathroom & toilet, kitchen and lounge. The grant also funds access around the home and in an out of the home too. These grants are means tested.

9.4 Supporting people who are sleeping rough

9.4.1 The number of people sleeping rough is increasing alarmingly, thanks to huge cuts and service reductions resulting from the Government's policy of austerity. The Housing Needs service was successful in securing £348,204 from the Government's Rough Sleeper Initiative grant for the remaining 2018-19 period, and a similar provisional allocation for next financial year. This means we're better able to provide support to some of the most vulnerable rough sleepers – people experiencing mental health issues and people with no recourse to public funds. The Government's [strategy](#) published during recess contains a belated acknowledgement of the seriousness of the issue but goes nowhere towards addressing the fundamental problems – lack of housing available at social rent levels, insecure work and private rental arrangements and a benefit system that punishes people for their situations.

9.5 More affordable homes in Brent

9.5.1 This administration is determined to do all we can to tackle the fundamental reason for the housing crisis – too few affordable homes. Our objective is still to deliver 1000 affordable units a year, working with private sector developers,

housing associations and through our own direct funding/ delivery. This will be made up (approximately) of a third Shared Ownership, a third affordable rents (focusing on the Council's ambition of 60-65% of market rent) and a third which is London Affordable rent and Social rented units. We have revitalised our own building programme, which is beginning to come to fruition. Despite warm words in the [Government's recent Social Housing Green Paper](#) the restrictions we face to building our own homes are significant. So I'll be asking Cabinet to agree a bid for an additional £54m in HRA borrowing headroom, which is crucial to us delivering more affordable homes.

9.6 Extension of selective licensing

9.6.1 Our objective is to improve the standard and safety of all private rented housing in the borough to make Brent better for tenants, landlords, other residents and businesses. On 1st June 2018 it became a legal requirement for landlords of all privately rented properties in the wards of Dudden Hill, Kensal Green, Kilburn, Queens Park and Mapesbury to have a licence. So far we have received 3,187 applications, approximately 10% of these are HMO applications. We have granted 957 selective licenses in these 5 wards and estimate that there are about 4,300 selective licensable properties in the 5 wards all together.

10. Environment – Councillor Krupa Sheth

10.1 Parking Consultation

10.1.1 The parking team commenced an informal supplementary consultation exercise on Friday 24th August 2018. The consultation is for residents in Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs). This focuses on a proposal to levy a surcharge for resident parking permits held for diesel vehicles, of £50 perhaps possibly rising in time to £100. The purpose of this proposal is to encourage diesel owners to consider switching to less polluting vehicles, given the increased health risks caused by air pollution from vehicles with diesel engines.

10.1.2 We are also consulting Wembley parking account holders on a series of changes to the Wembley Event Day Zone, and associated CPZs. This proposes moving from a one-off £10 permit to a £15 virtual permit covering three years. The objective is to cover the cost of future management and enforcement of the Event Day scheme, and to prevent residents who move out of the area from holding a permit indefinitely.

10.1.3 A consultation was initially held in May and June 2018. All responses made during that period are valid and residents need not respond to the consultation if they have already done so. The online consultation will be open for 28 days, closing on 21st September 2018. All responses will be considered before making a final decision later this year.

10.2. Annual Parking Report

10.2.1 The 2017-2018 Annual Parking Report will be coming to cabinet in September. This is a statutory report which provides an overview of parking management, and parking and traffic enforcement in Brent. It draws together the year on year improvements in our services. We aim to make Brent a safer borough to drive in, improve motoring standards, reduce traffic congestion and help improve our air quality. This report highlights a marked decline in PCNs issues for moving traffic contraventions captured by CCTV demonstrating that compliance with traffic rules has greatly improved at many key locations that were previously hot spots.

10.2.2 The parking account made a net surplus of £12,572m. The entire amount has been allocated to assist in meeting the cost of concessionary fares. The concessionary fares budget is used to pay for the cost of the freedom pass which provides users free travel on most public transport in London. The freedom is available to those who meet the disability or age criteria.

10.3. Recruitment of Parking Civil Enforcement Officers

10.3.1 The recruitment of additional Civil Enforcement Officers is under way to enhance the protection of parking spaces for our residents and businesses.

10.4 LED Street Lights

10.4.1 Over 12,000 LED lanterns have been installed with the programme on target to be completed by January. This will mean brighter and safer streets.

10.5 Electric Charge Points

10.5.1 Phase one of our plan to install electric charge points is progressing well. The charge points have been installed and we are currently waiting for them to be connected. This should be completed in the next 6 weeks. Once operational, there will be 25 charging points at 16 locations across the borough. They will have designated bays which Source London will rent from us. These electric charge points are vital in our plans to promote electric cars and help improve our air quality.

10.6 Meadow Cutting

10.6.1 The new meadow policy involves a yearly cut. We have started cutting the meadows to try and make a head start before the weather turns. This operation will take 2-3 months and commencement is intended to be triggered by seasonal change.

10.6.2 The main parks will be prioritised for their cut first, as they have the largest meadow areas and to allow Veolia to take advantage of what it looking to be a further dry spell over the coming weeks. The first area to be cut will be Neasden Recreation Ground. Then the following parks will have their meadow areas cut (but not necessarily in this order). Barham Park, Roundwood Park, Gladstone Park, King Edwards Park, Roe Green Park, One Tree Hill, Woodcock Park

10.6.3 The process will involve each meadow being cut and all grass removed. To ensure the proper cultivation of a meadow area, 10% of each meadow area will be left in each location over winter. This will allow for insect habitation and for the establishment of a true meadow going forward. Whilst weather dependant, it is envisaged that all meadow areas will be cut by the end of November. I have asked for regular updates, alongside pictures where possible, and we will be keeping residents informed via our website and social media channels. I will keep you updated as the meadow cutting process takes place. If you have any questions in the meantime, please let me know.

10.6.4 We are working to ensure we have a plan in place for the coming Spring to ensure we do more in our meadow area such as sowing seeds for wildflowers. I will keep you updated with our plans. We are also in the process of designing a biodiversity portal to sit on our Brent Council website, which will promote our parks, biodiversity and our wildlife.

10.7 Wildlife Competition Update

10.7.1 In July, we launched the wildlife competition, we have had a lot of interest from residents and some amazing pictures of wildlife in Brent has been sent in. The winners will be announced in September.

10.8 London in Bloom Competition

10.8.1 Judges from London in Bloom were in the Borough in July inspecting some of our parks. Veolia and our parks team worked together to present our parks to the judges and demonstrated a close working partnership. The judges made some favourable comments about our parks when they left us. We will find out in September if we have won any awards.

10.9 Neighbourhood Managers

10.9.1 Our neighbourhood managers have been trialling our several different projects in different wards to help tackle rubbish dumping. These locations have seen a noticeable reduction in rubbish dumping and these methods will be evaluated to see which ones were most beneficial and how they can be used elsewhere.

10.9.2 One of our neighbourhood managers led on a multi-agency project on Hassop Road, Mapesbury ward. There were several issues including untaxed vehicles, uncooperative businesses, unclean streets and illegal parking. Sustained effort by our officers and the police has ensured that the area is currently free of problem vehicles and businesses are for the first time engaging with us to find a way to ensure improvements are maintained. This has been a great success.