Borough Plan

Achieving
Our Potential



Foreword

Brent is a borough characterised by change. It is a place where new communities have always settled, regularly adding to its distinctive diversity, and this continues today. Regeneration is also changing the face of the borough, in Wembley, South Kilburn, Alperton, Colindale, Church End, and elsewhere. And we are growing, with around 335,000 residents today and projected to increase to almost 350,000 by 2023, and over 375,000 by 2030.

Our residents are living longer too – the number of residents aged 65 and over will increase by 15% over the lifetime of this Plan, and by 41% by 2030. This is to be celebrated, as advances in medical care give people more years with their families. However, a growing and ageing population poses real challenges for the council in trying to ensure services for those that need them. For example, more people now require social care, and their needs are becoming more complex, and therefore more expensive to meet.

At the same time, our resources are also changing, and not for the better. Nationally, councils have lost 63% of their funding from the government since 2010, and in Brent we have had to save £164 million. We know this will continue, and we are required to make significant further savings over the next four years and beyond.

It is within this challenging context that the council and its partners have set out a vision for 2023. Achieving it will require us to focus tightly on the things that matter most and where we can make a real difference to the lives of our residents. We will need to continue to explore and innovate, finding new ways of working which use our resources in the most effective way, and secure the services that people need and expect. And it will mean working closely with partners, ensuring that the best use is made of all our means.

In particular, we are in the midst of a digital revolution, which continues to transform how people interact and their expectations for accessing information and services, and Brent is at the forefront of this. Over the next four years we will also continue to adapt our workforce and buildings to successfully deliver our priorities. And our community hub model is a prime example of how we want to address needs earlier, in joined-up ways and in the neighbourhoods where people live, upon which we will build further.

The Borough Plan is our roadmap for navigating these changes and harnessing them for the benefit of the borough. By doing this and working together, we can all ensure that Brent achieves its potential.

Cllr Muhammed Butt Leader of Brent Council

M. ARM



Carolyn Downs
Brent Council Chief Executive







Introduction

Our vision for 2023 is to make Brent a borough of culture, empathy, and shared prosperity.

People from different backgrounds will feel at ease with one another, sharing together in cultural opportunities and activities, and valuing the principles of fairness, equality, good citizenship and respect for people and place. They will feel that they and their children are safe, cared for and can achieve well, and that they receive excellent services when they need them. It will also be a great place to live and work, where business and enterprise can prosper and local people can find employment, feeling that they have opportunities to change their lives for the better.

While our vision remains largely similar to that set out in our previous Borough Plan, the context within which we are working continues to change drastically. Local government across the country is set to experience the most significant reform of its funding arrangements for over two decades, driven by central government. The Fair Funding review, and changes to the way business rates are charged and how much councils can retain locally, will all have critical implications for the distribution of funding across local authorities. At the same time, the results of the Spending Review 2019 will affect the total level of funding available to the sector from April 2020.

The council expects to need to make savings of around £40m over the course of this Borough Plan, and has already identified proposals in order to achieve a balanced budget up to 2021. Achieving our vision will therefore require innovation, continued and deeper partnership, and careful planning based on sound evidence.

However, we are well-placed to do this. Around two thirds of our residents feel that the council does a good job, and 56% also feel that people in their local area can contribute to making it better, which will continue to be important as we all work together to help Brent realise its potential. The council will lead this by focusing our energies on five strategic priorities.

Our strategic priorities

Working in partnership to support children and young people's educational attainment and training

Ensuring that the council and its partners are structured and equipped to secure the best possible outcomes for local people, within a context of diminishing resources

A FUTURE BUILT FOR EVERYONE, AN ECONOMY FIT FOR ALL

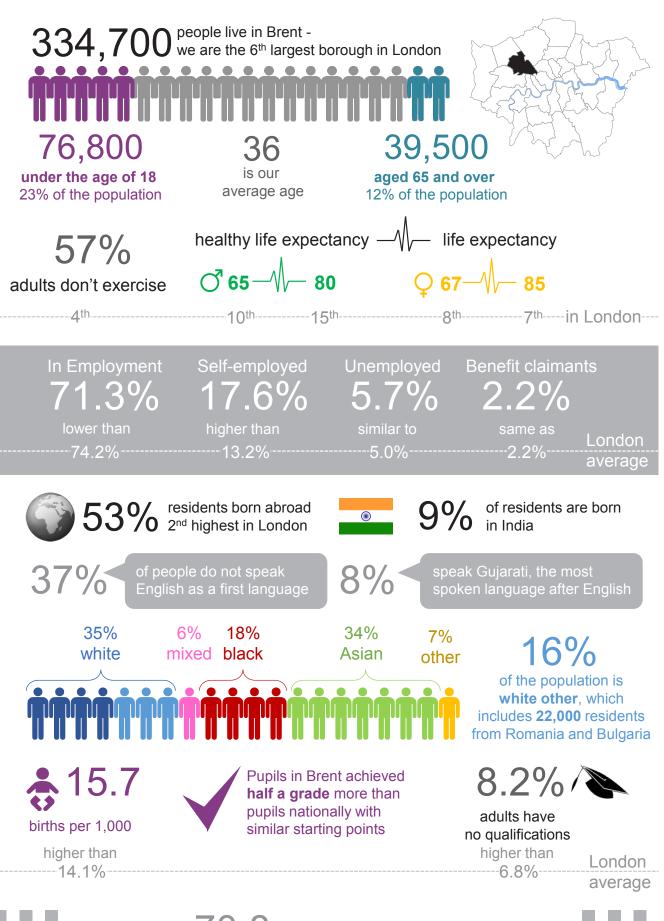
THE BOROUGH PLAN

Regenerating our borough to grow the local economy and provide the jobs, homes and transport that people need

Building stronger, safer and healthier communities, with opportunities to enjoy Brent's unique cultural heritage, and support for vulnerable children and adults to be as independent as possible ABOROUGH WHERE WE CAN ABOROUGH WHERE WE HAPPY ABOROUGH WHERE THY ABOROUGH WHERE HAPPY ABOROUGH WHERE HAPPY ABOROUGH WHERE WE CAN BE HAPPY In qualifi

Improving air quality and keeping our environment clean and pleasant

About Brent

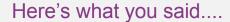








Every four years, we carry out a major survey to hear the views of residents on a range of issues. We held our most recent in the summer of 2018, and this is what you told us.



Are satisfied with their local area as a place to live

This is slightly below the national average of 79%. High earners, home owners and those aged between 55 and 64 recorded the higher levels of dissatisfaction with the local area.

surveyed felt that they could influence decisions affecting the local area

55%

42%

Top 3 things that residents value the most locally

A safe area, free from crime and bad behaviour

57%

Clean streets

36%

Health services

23%

Top 3 things that residents most want to see money spent on

A safe area, free from crime and bad behaviour

Clean streets

Health 23% services

Sports and leisure facilities, built environment: old and new buildings and road/pavement maintenance were all some of the least valued and least likely to be picked to spend money on among residents

This figure is in line with the 45% national average for councils (27% disagree, 28% indifferent also all in line with national average).

said local services provide good value for money

66%

of people are happy with the way in which Brent Council runs things, a figure higher than the 61% national average.

Brent Council satisfaction rates have risen from a low of 30% in 2006 and have remained at 66% since 2014.

Interestingly over the same 10 year period nationally rates reached a peak in 2014 of 68% but have dropped down to 61% in 2018.







45% 30% **25%** Agree

Neither

Disagree





said it was easy to carry out council transactions online. 21% said it wasn't easy.

said the council keeps residents either very well or fairly well to the **national** figure of 52%.

Rubbish and litter lying around

Using/dealing drugs

42%

People being drunk or rowdy in public places

41%

40%

57% **Biggest** neighbourhood problems for residents

said their local area had improved over the last four years

This figure is a 2% increase when compared to the 2014 data, when the survey was last run.



28%

of residents have in the last twelve months readfor pleasure.



51%

English is the first main language for half of residents.



Harlesden

25%

A quarter of Brent residents have no formal qualifications at all.

49%

In Harlesden, half of residents thought their local area had improved over the last four years, almost double the 27% who thought this in 2014.



Our journey so far

Achieving our strategic priorities will be challenging. However, with our partners we have made great strides towards making our vision a reality over the past four years, while making the most of shrinking resources.

For example:

- 97.7% of Brent pupils attend schools which are rated good or outstanding, and 90% of our early years providers are good or outstanding as well.
- Achievement in our primary and secondary schools is higher than ever. In particular, Brent's secondary pupils outperformed London in 2017, and their progress was amongst the highest in the country.
- Our children's services have received their best-ever rating from Ofsted following inspection, recognised as "Good" and with the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers recognised as being "Outstanding".
- We have delivered more than 1000 job outcomes for residents, and support 3000 learners each year through Brent Start, who have given us a 97% satisfaction rating.
- We have appointed Town Centre Managers to rejuvenate nine priority town centres in the borough.
- 4400 net additional homes have been built in the last four years.
- We have received £50 million of Community Infrastructure Levy from new developments to pay for supporting infrastructure.
- We have built 120 new council homes in South Kilburn, and have won eight housing and architecture awards for our regeneration work across the borough since 2016.

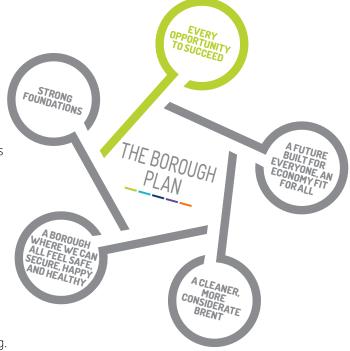
- We are using the latest technology to transform our Housing Management Service, enabling us to deal more quickly with findings from inspections.
- We prevented 599 families from becoming homeless in 2017/18, and have launched a new form to process new homelessness applications. The council's wholly-owned company i4B has also let 98 homes to homeless households, avoiding the need to place them in temporary accommodation and generating a saving of at least £600,000 so far.
- We have installed almost 20,000 lower-energy LED street lamps, which will save us £850,000 per year and reduce our carbon footprint.
- We have dramatically improved the numbers of people receiving mental health assessments on time, from less than 25% to over 90%, by taking a smarter and more flexible approach to appointment planning.
- Tudor Gardens, our residential care home for people with learning disabilities, has been rated "Good" by the Care Quality Commission, its best-ever rating.
- We have secured and implemented 12 council-funded police officers, who have responded to over 2000 ASB incidents and over 1000 gang-related incidents.
- Our libraries are amongst the most popular in the country, and saw more than a million items loaned in 2017/18, and more than 2.5 million visits. Over 4000 children also took part in the Summer Reading Challenge, and over 650 adults took part in the 2018 Reading Ahead scheme to improve low literacy.
- Finally, we have been chosen as the London Borough of Culture for 2020, beating 21 other boroughs with a proposal recognised by the Mayor of London as "visionary", and receiving £1.35 million to stage a year-long programme which will put culture at the heart of Brent's future.



Every opportunity to succeed

Education is crucial to helping people fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions. Here in Brent, we are rightly proud of our early years provision, the teaching and leadership in our schools and the further education opportunities available within the borough. The council has worked in close collaboration with local school-led partnerships to achieve continuous improvement in the quality of education for a number of years, and achievement in our primary and secondary schools is higher than ever. We will continue to make advances by drawing on their expertise and experience to drive school improvement, agreeing support and intervention where necessary.

Some groups of pupils are at risk of doing less well than others due to a variety of factors, and we owe them particular attention to offer life chances that are as good as those of their peers. We will do this by raising their attainment and providing them with support to stay in education, employment or training. Equally as important is ensuring there are sufficient places for children to learn, and by 2023 we will need additional specialist provision so that vulnerable children and young people do not need to travel outside of Brent for their education.



EQUIPPED FOR THE FUTURE

- Support the continued improvement of early years provision and schools – particularly helping the very small number which are still to achieve a "good" rating from Ofsted.
- Raise the attainment of particular groups and narrow the gap with their peers for:
 - Black Caribbean boys
 - Somali boys and girls
 - Travellers of Irish heritage
 - Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Children and young people in the care of the council
 - Young people leaving our care and moving into becoming independent
 - Pupils at risk of being permanently excluded from school.
- Provide additional specialist places in mainstream schools.



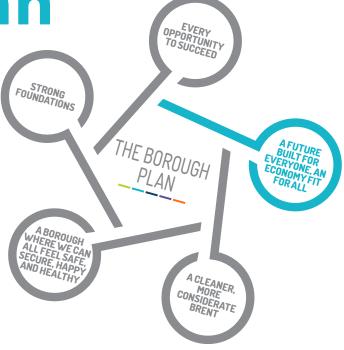
A future built for everyone, an economy fit for all

In Brent, although the situation has improved, household income is the third lowest in London. We need to raise the skills of the people living here, and below-average employment levels, by working in partnership with other agencies to promote the support available.

We have made huge strides in regenerating the borough, with thousands of new homes, hundreds of new jobs, and much-needed growth in our tax base, not to mention hundreds of millions of pounds spent in the local and regional economy. This is improving the lives of our residents - almost half of residents in Harlesden, one of our priority town centres, feel that their area has improved over the last four years, while 45% feel the same in Kilburn, which is seeing extensive regeneration. 53% in Harlesden and 50% in Kilburn also believe their areas will be better in the next four years, so we will invest further in the borough, through the contracts we agree with our suppliers, and through further transformation - including addressing the huge challenge of securing sufficient affordable high quality housing.

Having brought management of council housing back inhouse, we are already improving services to our tenants and leaseholders, and will offer opportunities for meaningful engagement with them. We will also encourage housing associations to do the same, and extend regulation to ensure private landlords offer decent standards for their tenants – rewarding the confidence of social and private tenants, many of whom have expressed the view that their local areas will improve over the next four years.

For those who do not have a home at all, Brent is well-placed to meet new legal duties to relieve and prevent homelessness. We have developed alternatives to temporary accommodation, which is often in short supply, expensive and inappropriate for long-term stays.





Brent has amongst the busiest streets in the country, and we also need to ensure we are able to keep our borough moving with well-maintained roads and pavements, effective parking controls, and improved public transport and cycling facilities.

A FAIRER, MORE RESILIENT BOROUGH

We will:

- Work with charitable organisations and local community initiatives, including food banks, to ensure that our residents in need get help as early as possible, particularly those in crisis; and understand and tackle the underlying causes of demand for these services, helping more people to live independent lives.
- Ensure that we treat residents fairly and with respect, supporting where we can those in hardship, and taking a tough stance on those who can afford to pay but refuse to do so.
- Promote employment support and skills provision, including significantly increasing the takeup of apprenticeships.
- Ensure that residents can access affordable training and learning opportunities, so they can secure and remain in employment and enhance their careers.



A GREAT PLACE TO DO GOOD WORK

We will:

- Invest in Brent's town centres to reverse decline and support diversification, employment and enterprise.
- Explore more in-house and Brent-based options for services we provide.
- Significantly increase the provision and active management of flexible and affordable workspace.

GETTING REGENERATION RIGHT

- Produce our new Local Plan, which will set out our vision, priorities and growth areas for future development in the borough.
- Ensure well-designed public spaces and buildings, through master planning, environmental improvements, active community engagement and place management standards.
- Ensure the right social, environmental and physical infrastructure is in place to support new development and growth.
- Proactively shape and influence development within Old Oak and Park Royal, ensuring that the council's regeneration objectives for Harlesden and Willesden Junction are prioritised.
- Be clear about the reasons, objectives and implementation for all future regeneration plans and hold binding ballots of residents.



SOMEWHERE TO CALL HOME

We will:

- Bring forward sites (including for estate wide regeneration) to meet significantly rising housing need in Brent.
- Deliver 5,000 new affordable, good quality homes with decent space provision to high safety standards in the next five years, including:
 - ☐ Improving relationships with local housing associations so that they can contribute to this target
 - □ Building 1,000 of these homes directly, and
 - Aiming to ensure that 50% of housing built in Brent is affordable.
- Invest in our properties to ensure our residents live in homes which are of a high standard.
- Increase satisfaction with management services amongst our tenants and leaseholders.
- Use our relationships with housing associations in Brent to ensure they meet high standards for their tenants.
- Extend selective landlord licensing across most of the borough, to drive up the quality of housing for all private sector rents.
- Ensure that all rented properties council, housing association or private are made fully compliant with fire safety requirements.
- Encourage and support the creation of as many tenants' and residents' associations as possible, enabling them to influence decisions.
- Encourage tenants and leaseholders to directly participate in key decisions about services through our new Customer Experience Panel.
- Contribute to better health and wellbeing outcomes for homeless households, and reduce our use of temporary accommodation, instead placing them in private sector tenancies and properties secured and built by i4B.

GOING PLACES

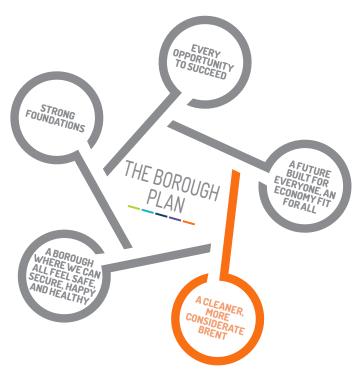
- Keep our roads in good repair.
- Provide responsive and well-targeted regulation of parking.
- Liaise with utility companies and developers to protect residents, businesses and visitors from unnecessary disruption due to works on our roads.
- Work with the Mayor to deliver the West London Orbital passenger line, with new stations in Neasden, Harlesden and Gladstone Park, providing better access to west and north London and Heathrow.
- Prioritise development in areas with good levels of public transport and access to jobs and facilities, to reduce future car use.
- Work with TfL to ensure step free access at all Overground and Underground stations in the borough.
- Promote the Healthy Streets Approach in street design.



A cleaner, more considerate Brent

The environment is a major factor in the quality of life for our residents, who have identified clean streets, parks and trees, and collection of waste and recycling, as three of the top five priorities that they value the most in Brent. However, in common with much of London, the quality of our air is not as good as it could or should be. Everyone in Brent has the ability to help do something about this, and the council can do its part through reducing its own emissions and encouraging others to do the same.

Despite the importance of the environment to everyone, a small number spoil our borough with littering and fly-tipping, and this is the top problem residents identify with their neighbourhoods. We collect dumped rubbish within a day of it being reported, and use every tool at our disposal to catch and prosecute those responsible – including a record one-off fine of over £36,000 for a business carrying out persistent illegal rubbish dumping. We will continue to pursue strong local enforcement actions to deter such behaviour – and positively improve our environment with a greater variety of habitats in our parks.



THE AIR WE BREATHE

We will:

- Prioritise a significant local improvement in air quality, creating a sustained reduction in air pollutants and respiratory diseases.
- Encourage people to use alternatives to cars for those journeys where it makes sense, by prioritising more walking and cycling routes, and promoting means of transport which are sustainable.
- Significantly reduce carbon emissions and electricity costs due to our investments in LED technology for lighting.

AN ENVIRONMENT TO BE PROUD OF

- Provide efficient and regular collection of household waste to ensure better recycling.
- Pursue strong local enforcement actions, to deter others from illegally dumping rubbish; and by working at a neighbourhood level, better target recognised hotspots for environmental nuisance.
- Promote biodiversity in our streets and parks, through tree-planting and the development of new and different habitats.



A borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy

STRONG FOUNDATIONS

One of the most important things the council and its partners does is to support our most vulnerable residents. For children and young people, this includes providing early help and integrated approaches with partners, and safeguarding them with appropriate interventions. For adults we have introduced high quality, affordable services, but we need to find ways to do this with potentially fewer resources, by helping people to be independent at home wherever possible, and pooling our resources with the NHS. We must also tackle health issues which affect the population more widely, and in particular inequalities. Health is the third highest priority amongst residents, and though a large majority feel there are enough opportunities to improve their health through exercise, and feel well-informed about these, nonetheless this is a top change they wish to make for their health – 57% do not exercise, with only three other London boroughs having higher proportions.

Brent has a truly rich cultural history and heritage, and we were delighted to be awarded the title of London's 2020 Borough of Culture. We have ambitious plans to ensure that 2020 will bring Brent even closer together, with the benefits felt long afterwards, especially by young people.

Brent is a safe borough, and residents are clear that this is what they value most. Indeed, our council-funded police officers focus on community safety concerns raised by residents. However, we still have work to do to lower crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the fear of crime - a quarter of residents do not feel safe after dark, with the most common reason being crime levels.

It is also among the most diverse local authority areas in the country - well over half our residents feel proud to live here, and 69% agree that people from different backgrounds and cultures feel they get on well together. The council has a role to play in maintaining and strengthening those bonds by, for example, engaging effectively with our communities. Such engagement will also help us better understand the views and needs of local people – only 37% believe the council listens to the views of local people, while 47% would like to be more involved in decisions made in their area. We can also work with voluntary sector organisations, help residents find opportunities to volunteer, and ensure our suppliers of goods and services contribute to this as well.



THE BOROUGH PLAN

SAFE FROM HARM

We will:

- Ensure children with additional needs receive early help and support when they need it, with integrated and coordinated services so that families only need to tell their story once to access the help they need, no matter who is providing it.
- Safeguard vulnerable children and young people, providing the right interventions at the right time, including identifying those at particular risk and intervening early to protect them.
- Take an integrated and coordinated approach to supporting children and young people with mental health issues, including working with schools and colleges, and achieving shorter waiting times for treatment.
- Secure foster carers for more of our vulnerable teenagers, and better equip them to fulfil that role.
- Provide young people in our care with targeted support to help them lead fulfilling lives on their journey to independence.
- Target gangs, domestic abuse and serious youth violence, and make full and effective use of our modernised CCTV infrastructure to help neighbourhoods identified as experiencing the highest levels of crime.
- Tackle anti-social behaviour on a targeted neighbourhood basis.



- Provide personal and practical support to our most vulnerable adults, enabling them to choose and control the services they receive, to remain independent and to lead active and fulfilling lives.
- Support the families and carers of vulnerable adults to help meet their needs.
- Help people to be independent at home where possible by offering alternatives to residential care, through New Accommodation for Independent Living (NAIL), Community Mental Health Teams and exploring the opportunities offered by developing technology.
- Enable residents to return home earlier from hospital stays through redesigned services and support, and ensure providers of homecare and day care services focus on this too.
- Continue to integrate our services with those of the NHS where this benefits our residents, and ensure that providers of home care and day care, as well as residential care homes, are able to meet health and social care needs as well.





ACTIVE AND HEALTHIER

We will:

- Continue with plans to get children and young people to be more active and reduce their sugar intake, in partnership with schools, the NHS, and in particular parents and the community.
- Encourage adults to take up physical activity where they do not currently do so, making use of improved facilities on offer in the borough, including the new Bridge Park leisure centre and the tennis courts in Gladstone Park.
- Offer support for breastfeeding, additional home visits for vulnerable families, and help for overweight and obese children and families to manage their weight, through our new children's public health service.
- Refresh our approach to mental wellbeing, raising aspirations and tackling challenges as part of the Thrive LDN initiative.
- Maintain our success rates for treatment of drug and alcohol users, enabling more of them to abstain with our revised Substance Misuse Service.



CULTURE TO TREASURE

- Work to improve awareness of what our libraries have to offer and increase active borrowers.
- Deliver our ambitious London Borough of Culture 2020 programme, including:
 - ☐ Thoroughfair, a summertime street party celebrating Brent's historic transience with pop-up visual arts, dance, theatre and music commissions
 - No Bass Like Home, an affordable music festival and exhibition celebrating the musical legacy of the Windrush Generation and the musical ties between Brent and the Caribbean
 - □ Work with schools to enable every pupil to take part in a cultural experience during 2020, and
 - Ensuring a legacy which benefits generations to come, with a greater number of cultural enterprises, more pathways into cultural industries, and mentoring and work placement opportunities.
- Ensure all new development preserves and enhances our heritage, such as listed buildings, conservation areas and protected trees.



STRONGER COMMUNITIES

- Develop a new Stronger Communities strategy based on new values and priorities for community cohesion, in consultation with local people.
- Engage with our communities more effectively, maximising online channels such as social media to increasing the number of residents involved, and ensuring two-way dialogue to enable them to shape services.
- Support local voluntary sector organisations and obtain best value from grant funding provided to them.
- Use our spending power to help support our local communities, setting out clear expectations and with even more of a focus on volunteering and community support as benefits from our contracts.
- Promote and encourage community involvement through neighbourhood-level environment services.





Strong foundations

About two thirds of our residents are satisfied with how the council runs things, and in order to achieve our goals for the borough, the council must ensure that it is fully equipped to meet the challenges of the future, including rising demand and decreasing funding. The digital revolution has transformed the way we live, work and do business, and 45% of residents agree that it is easy to carry out transactions with us online, most commonly using this channel to make payments, look for information about services, and apply for them. We will build on this, taking advantage of the increasing pace of change and continuing our journey to become a digital council and make Brent a digital place.

We have focused on achieving greater value for money in the goods and services we buy from third parties, and will continue to think carefully and creatively about the best ways to obtain value for money in service delivery from our suppliers. To do so we must continue to develop the skills and culture that this requires, particularly around managing commercial relationships, designing services, and large scale changes. Likewise, we will ensure that we make the best use of our buildings and property portfolio to support our priorities.

More efficient services which are coordinated and tailored to people's needs at an earlier stage to prevent them from escalating are another key factor in making the most of our resources. This is already informing our community hub model, which we will continue to roll out, as well as organising all council services on the basis of localities.



We will:

Implement our Digital Strategy to ensure local residents, partners and businesses are able to thrive in the digital future, and help shape Brent into a place where technology is used to improve the lives and life chances of everyone.

This includes:

- Continuing to embrace new technologies such as artificial intelligence, and using these to create better quality, more accessible services at a lower cost, and
- Making further improvements to our online facilities, creating a consistent look and feel when residents access all Brent services.





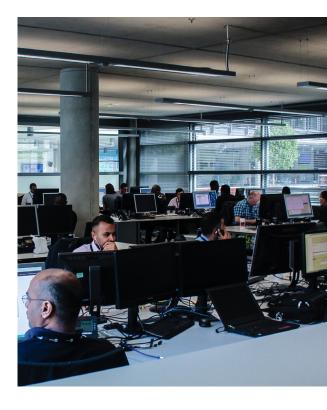
EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT

We will:

- Ensure quality services are delivered for our residents within our means and manage contracts consistently, while recognising the diversity of suppliers the council deals with.
- Continue to develop the skills and culture required for new ways of working, particularly around commissioning and procurement, managing commercial relationships, designing services, and creating and implementing large scale changes.
- Make the best use of our buildings and property portfolio to support our priorities, focusing on making the best use of available space, supporting local areas and community groups, reducing our costs and increasing income, and delivering development opportunities.

MEETING LOCAL NEEDS

- Roll out community hubs to other Brent locations, supporting early intervention to help the most vulnerable residents with issues such as housing, debt, employment, and the transition to Universal Credit.
- Develop and embed place-based working across all departments to achieve more joined up working across council services and partners, earlier intervention and more tailored responses.







Moving forward

Implementation and monitoring will be crucial to achieve our strategic priorities and make our vision for 2023 a reality. We will develop a delivery plan which will set out how we will practically achieve the commitments and outcomes set out in the Borough Plan.

We will also identify key outcomes that we plan to achieve for each of our five strategic priorities, and will record our progress against these. This will be through tracking the completion of actions in our delivery plan, as well as monitoring a select number of key performance indicators. These will be reported to the council's Cabinet on a regular basis. Partners for Brent, our local strategic partnership, will also review progress at its annual meeting.

In this way, local people will be able to see for themselves that our ambitions for Brent, and their own, are realised.