	Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 28 November 2018
	Report from the Strategic Director of Children and Young People
Brent Council's Youth Offer	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt:	Open
No. of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	Approval to Tender for a Targeted Service to Promote Education, Employment and Training for Young People (Connexions) – Cabinet, 15 October 2018.
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1.0 Purpose of the Report

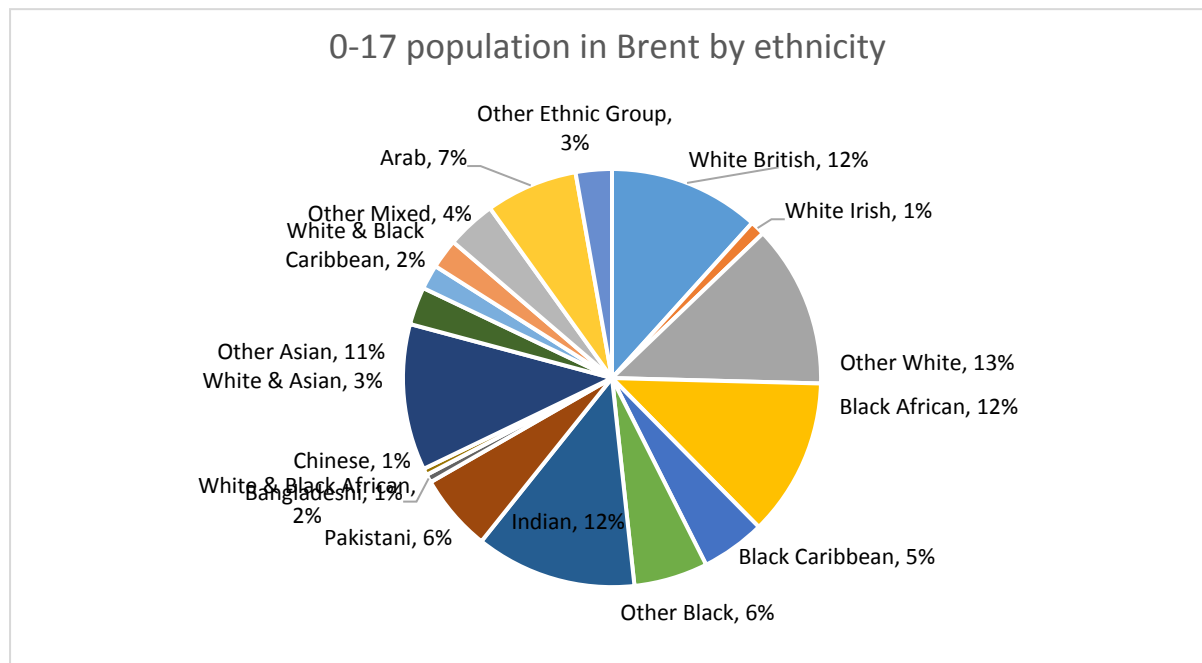
- 1.1 This report has been requested by Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and provides information on the Youth Offer in Brent. The report details information about the Connexions service, Brent Youth Parliament, services delivered from the Roundwood Youth Centre and the newly established Brent Youth Zone website. The report details how each of these services are being delivered to young people in Brent and how they have been designed in collaboration with young people.

2.0 Recommendations

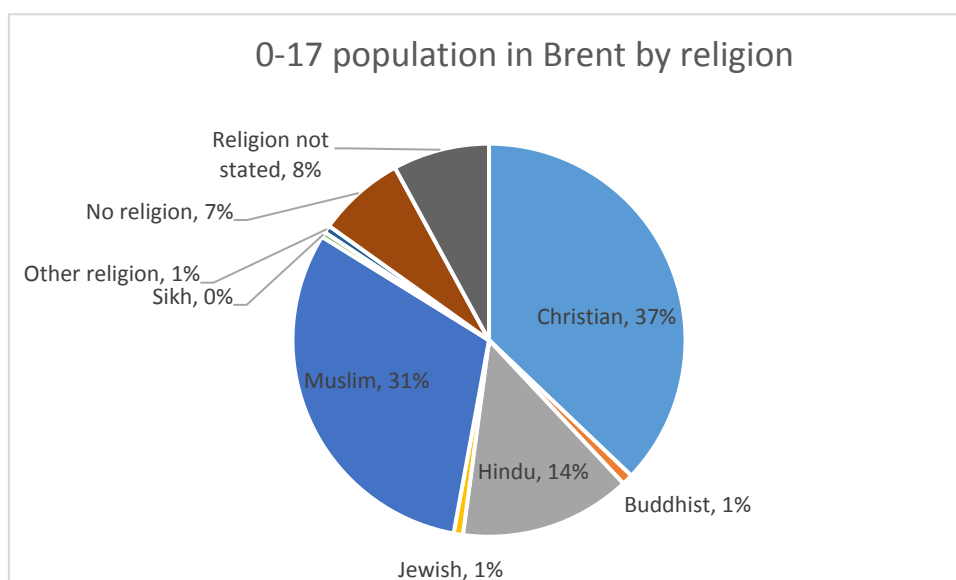
- 2.1 Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report.

3.0 Overview – Demographic data

3.1 According to latest population estimates there are 78,800 young people aged 17 or under in Brent. The largest ethnic group are ‘Other White’, followed by White British, Indian and Black African¹. This mirrors the diversity in the wider Brent population.



3.2 Information on the 0-17 population’s stated religion is taken only from the last census, 2011. This information indicates there is a high proportion of young people who identify as Christians and Muslims, with a significant number as Hindu.



¹ GLA 2016-based Housing-led Ethnic Group Population Projections

3.3 Brent has relatively high levels of income deprivation with 18.2% of children considered to be low income families according to government child poverty statistics released in 2017². This measure does not take into account local context and does not adjust for housing costs or cost of living.

4.0 Targeted Service to Promote Education, Employment and Training for Young People

Statutory requirements

4.1 Sections 18 and 68(4) of the Education and Skills Act 2008 place a responsibility on a Local Authority to secure sufficient suitable education and training, to encourage participation in education or training and to provide support to assist the participation in education or training for individuals aged 13-19 and 20-25 for individuals with SEND. The Education Act 2011 also sets duties for the Local Authority to encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education, particularly the most vulnerable young people and those at risk of disengaging as well as to track all young people's participation through Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) to identify those at risk of not participating. The Education Act further requires the Local Authority to lead the 'September Guarantee' process, ensuring young people are engaged in education, employment and training in accordance with the raising participation age guidance.

Brent current service

4.2 Brent has retained the historic 'Connexions' name for the current service. The service meets the legislative duties as set out above. The service is designed to help young people make informed choices to enter and remain in education, employment or training and transition to adult working life. The service is delivered through a small in-house team of 'Connexions' Personal Advisors as well as through external contracts – the primary one being with an organisation called Prospects Ltd.

4.3 There are significant benefits to Brent's young people from the work of in-house Personal Advisors and the 'Connexions' service, particularly the impact of preventative work in helping young people avoid NEET outcomes. Brent 'Connexions' service reduces the percentage of young people who are NEET. The service also works closely with vulnerable cohorts who are at risk of becoming NEET.

In-house provision

4.4 A small supervisory team oversees Connexions and the Youth Service. The Council employs an in house team of 5 Intensive Personal Advisors to deliver support to targeted groups of young people who are Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET, i.e. to assist them in making informed choices about education, employment and training. These Intensive Personal Advisors are embedded into statutory services so as to maximise their impact with young people most in need of support. This includes

² HMRC (2017) The Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure, 2015

the Youth Offending Service, Family Solutions, Looked After Children and Leaving Care teams, the Virtual School team and Inclusion Support team, focusing on keeping children in education as well as within alternative educational settings.

External Contract – Connexions Service Delivery

- 4.5 Prospects Ltd deliver statutory responsibilities of face to face Careers Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) for 16-19 year olds and up to 25 for those with SEND in the NEET group. Prospects Ltd also deliver a number of commissioned targeted projects for the Local Authority. Three such projects have been commissioned this reporting year (2018-19) including NEET events aimed at both NEET young people and those 'at risk' of NEET: Maintaining Against Change (MAC) – a series of participatory workshops, to reduce the number of looked after children that are in the NEET cohort, and Branching Out (one-off employment event), aimed at individuals with SEND up to the age of 25. One other project for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children will be commissioned in this financial year, aimed at reducing the number of NEET within this cohort.
- 4.6 Prospects deliver services through a number of access points in Brent including Roundwood Youth Centre, Stonebridge Hillside Hub, Brent Civic Centre, Willesden, Kilburn and Kingsbury Libraries as well as the Living Room on the St Raphael's estate. Prospects undertake follow up work with those in the NEET and Not Known groups through community calling and home visits. They follow up the September guarantee destination measures and provide tracking reports. Prospects have close links with Job Centre Plus, and run regular apprenticeships / master classes and workshops on employability. The contract with Prospects Ltd to deliver statutory responsibilities is in place until March 2019 (extended for an additional year from 2018).
- 4.7 A tender for the provision of a new contract for a Targeted Service to Promote Education, Employment and Training for Young People is currently live, with award of contracts scheduled for January 2019 and a new service start date of 1 April 2019. The new contract will be awarded for a 5 year term. The service specification for the new tender took into account the recommendations from the Outcome Based Reviews recently undertaken across the Council regarding Gangs and Children on the Edge of Care. The new tender specifies the following targeted EET activity:
- Deliver the Local Authority statutory duty to ensure young people who are NEET aged 16-19 years old and up to 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan receive relevant **information, advice and guidance** in order to be supported to a successful transition into post 16 education, employment and/or training. This includes young people who are new to the borough and/or attending specialist English Language provision as well as young people attending out of borough Alternative Provision settings;
 - Deliver a **targeted service** to promote Education, Employment and Training (EET) to vulnerable groups. The focus of the targeted service will be through intensive working in partnership with specialist services

to support specified vulnerable groups such as care leavers, young offenders and those with special educational needs;

- Deliver an **outreach programme** to target those in the NEET cohort, whose situation is currently not known, in order to achieve full participation in education/employment/training to age 18, and ensure individuals are supported to remain EET thereafter;
- Work closely with statutory services to deliver a range of **targeted and bespoke projects** to ensure a smooth transition into employment and training.

4.8 The service provider will be expected to consult with young people, schools, colleges and parents on a regular basis. This feedback should be used to shape and develop the service in order that it can best meet the needs of young people in Brent. The new name for the service based on 'Targeted service to promote Education, Employment and Training (EET) to vulnerable groups' will be developed in consultation with Service Users. The Council will then agree with the provider any new branding.

4.9 The Brent Council employed Intensive Personal Advisors will be subject to TUPE transfer to the new service provider.

NEET Performance in Brent

4.10 Nationally Brent's combined NEET headline measure at the end 2017/18 (Dec/Jan/Feb average) was in Quintile 1 for both London and England at 3.4% (96% EET). Brent was the 19th highest performing Local Authority in England and the 9th highest performing Local Authority in London.

4.11 Performance data will be available in March 2019 for the 18/19 reporting period (which comprises Dec 18 and Jan/Feb 19). However, across Q1 18/19 on average 96% of Brent 16-17 year olds were in Education, Employment or Training.

Brent NEET, Not Known³, EET figures – 18/19 Q1⁴

	Apr	May	Jun	Q1 Avg
NEET (%)	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Not Known (%)	1.7	2	2.3	2
EET (%)	96.3	96.2	96	96.2

³ Activity 'Not Known' is measured by an annual destination survey conducted in November and December as well as regular communication with post 16 providers. The Council takes measures to contact the 'Not Known' cohort through Prospect Ltd and the West London Partnership Unit at regular intervals including telephone contact, home visits and via post/email (where GDPR allows).

⁴ West London Partnership Support Unit (Youth & Connexions) October 2018

West London Boroughs – 18/19 Q1⁵

West London Boroughs	NEET (%)	Not known (%)	Combined (%)
Barnet	1.77	1.83	3.6
Brent	1.50	2.00	3.5
Ealing	1.20	1.07	2.27
H&F	1.10	0.77	1.87
Harrow	1.13	1.27	2.4
Hillingdon	2.67	2.33	5.0
Hounslow	2.63	2.90	5.53

Brent Youth Provision

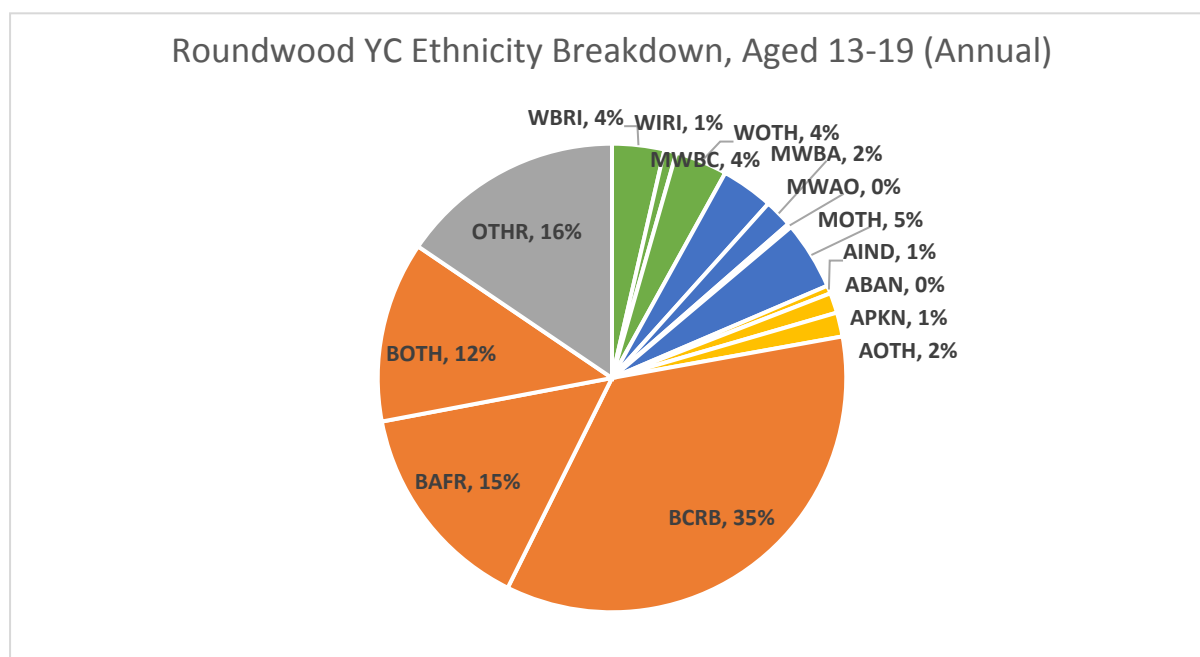
- 5.1 The Local Authority has a responsibility under section 507b of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Education and Inspections Act 2006) to **secure**, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient educational and recreational activities which are for the improvement of young people's well-being, personal and social development, and sufficient facilities for such activities for young people aged 13 – 19, (or up to 25 for young people with additional needs).

Roundwood Youth Centre

- 5.2 In March 2015 the Council agreed to make savings of £900k from the Youth Service budget. This required the closure of all Youth Centres except the site at Roundwood and the end to the detached Youth Work team of street based workers delivering intensive youth work targeted in areas of high risk across the Borough by March 2016. In 2015 the Council invited tenders from providers to deliver youth activities and to manage the Youth Centre at Roundwood in Harlesden. This tendering exercise was unsuccessful. To support in bridging the gap in provision, the intention was for the voluntary sector, led by the newly established Young Brent Foundation and supported by the John Lyon's Trust, to obtain funding through charitable grants to continue to run or to expand a wide range of services.
- 5.3 The Council retained a small Youth service of a team leader and 5 part time youth workers who continued after the 2015 budget reduction to deliver activities for young people 3 nights per week from the Roundwood Youth Centre. Roundwood acts, as planned, as a hub, with a range of other providers operating from the centre. A variety of activities are delivered by both the Local Authority youth workers and the Voluntary Sector including cookery, martial arts, music production, table tennis, Wii sport, craft activities and a steel band, as well as positive mentoring by qualified and experienced Local Authority youth workers. Providers from the voluntary sector deliver a service on the remaining weekday nights and some income is generated from this as well as other community lets.

⁵ DfE (2018) NEET and 'Not Known' Scorecard, with Participation of 16 and 17 year-olds, October 2018

5.4 In 17/18 361 young people aged 13-19 attended Roundwood Youth Centre. The ethnicity of the majority of young people in attendance was Black Caribbean, followed by Black African and Black Other. The proportion of Black Caribbean attendees is significantly higher than the proportion of Black Caribbean young people across Brent.



5.5 Following the unsuccessful attempt to tender the delivery of Youth services in 2016 the Council has considered options to redesign services from the Roundwood Youth Centre, seeking to involve the voluntary sector and local education providers. Contained within the Council’s budget proposals for 2019-20 and 2020-21 are details of how these services could be delivered whilst also identifying additional savings required by the Council of the Children and Young People’s department. The recommended budget proposals detail the following;

- Transform the site to an educational setting with community youth activities.
- As a consequence, end youth services delivered from Roundwood run by the Local Authority.

5.6 The intention is to change the use of Roundwood Youth Centre to an Alternative Education Provision for young people aged 11-16 during the school day. Outside of these times it would be used as a hub for youth and community activity. Plans are currently being designed to develop the model with the aim to have one single provider delivering both services. A core aim is for secondary schools, alongside the Local Authority, to be able to commission places (both short term, and longer term for Key Stage 4), within this new Alternative Education Provision. There is support from secondary head teachers in Brent for this approach and the intention is for the new provision to be established by September 2019. Discussions are ongoing to determine how the service provision will be run with Brent Specialist Academy Trust and the Young Brent Foundation.

Brent Youth Parliament

- 5.7 Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) was established by Brent Council in March 2007 so that young people in Brent could express their views and have a say in decisions that affect them. BYP is made up of 88 young people⁶ aged between 10 and 19 years who represent their schools and youth organisations. Members of BYP come from a variety of schools and youth organisations as well as backgrounds and there is representation of vulnerable groups such as young carers and children in care. Individuals in BYP are voted in on a 2 year term and become Members of Youth Parliament (MYP), with the opportunity to be in the Executive group (6 young people) who steer the agenda of the larger group.
- 5.8 BYP have continued to expand the number of internal committees and external organisations they work with. BYP have two seats on the Brent Safer Neighbourhood Board and speaking rights at the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. Brent Youth Parliament members were an integral part of writing the bid for the Borough of Culture 2020 and will be leading on one of the work streams alongside Quintain and the Brent Borough of Culture Team. BYP have also worked on a local project to improve mental health services. BYP have helped develop and deliver the 'Youth Stories of Brent' film in collaboration with YOYO and Brent Council. They have also worked closely with K2K radio station to develop radio shows around mental health and young people, particularly around the engagement of young people in politics and local democracy.
- 5.9 A key part of BYP's work is their regular involvement in statutory and voluntary consultation. This has included work with Victim Support and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

Brent Youth Zone

- 5.10 The Council has a statutory responsibility to publish its Youth Offer – a directory listing all provisions across Brent. Work has been undertaken in the Local Authority to develop the online Youth Offer with an early launch of the new online, **Brent Youth Zone**, scheduled for 23 November 2018 at the Children's Commissioner's Takeover day. Brent Youth Zone has been developed in collaboration with young people across the borough including Brent Youth Parliament and users of Roundwood Youth Centre. A questionnaire was distributed with around 40 responses giving comment on what they would like from their website. Council officers will continue to gauge feedback to improve the site to make it accessible to young people.
- 5.11 Brent Youth Zone provides information and advice around the following areas:
- Work & Learning
 - Help, Safety & Advice
 - Things to do!
 - Get Involved!

⁶ Annual report of Brent Youth Parliament (BYP), 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

5.12 Future plans are being developed to create a Youth App. to further the use of Brent Youth Zone and expand its reach.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 The current budget consultation contains proposals to make savings from both the Roundwood Youth Centre budget and from the Connexions budget.

6.2 Savings proposal CYP005 for the Roundwood Youth Centre is listed in appendix A and is 'recommended' in the consultation. This proposal would save £250K by stopping the direct provision of youth services from the Roundwood Centre and transforming it to an educational setting with community activities.

6.3 Savings proposal CYP009A saves £100K from the Connexions budget and is also listed in appendix A as a recommended option. This saving would be achieved from the total budget of £1M through recommissioning of the contracted service and targeted projects.

6.4 Savings proposal CYP009 is an alternative that would save £600K (an additional £500K to CYP009A). The revised service offer would be reduced to the minimum requirement which is to track and monitor engagement and outcomes for vulnerable groups. This savings options is listed in appendix C of the consultation, recognised as 'very difficult'.

6.5 Savings proposal CYP011 is a further alternative which would save £900K from the Connexions budget of £1M. The proposal would reduce the service to leave a residual service focused on the basic statutory responsibilities with no direct work undertaken with young people. This proposal is listed as 'most difficult' in appendix D of the budget consultation.

7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 None

8.0 Equality Implications

8.1 None

9.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

9.1 Ward members who are members of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee will be involved in scrutinising this report at committee.

Report sign-off

GAIL TOLLEY

Strategic Director of Children and Young People