

	Full Council 22 February 2021
	Report from the Assistant Chief Executive
Borough Plan 2021-2022	

Wards Affected:	All
Open or Partly Exempt (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No of Appendices	Two: Appendix 1: Draft Borough Plan 2021- 2022 Appendix Draft Equality Strategy Action Plan 2021-2022
Background Papers	None
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1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report presents the draft Borough Plan 2021-2022, setting out a vision, strategic priorities and actions before adoption by Full Council on 22 February 2021. The draft plan builds on the work delivered for each of the priority areas over the past year as well as setting out what we aim to achieve over the next year. Appendix two sets out the draft Equality Strategy Action Plan for 2021-2022.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To adopt the Borough Plan attached as Appendix 1 and note the Equality Strategy Action Plan attached as Appendix 2.
- 2.2 To refer the Borough Plan to Cabinet for monitoring.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The draft Borough Plan is the key strategic document that sets out what we aim to achieve over the next year. The plan focuses on how we will, over the next twelve months, take forward delivery in the five priority areas agreed in 2019 as being of fundamental importance to Brent and its people:

- Every Opportunity to Succeed
- A Future Built for Everyone, An Economy Fit for All
- A Cleaner More Considerate Brent
- A Borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy
- Strong Foundations

This includes refocussed actions against each priority reflecting work since adoption of the previous version of the Plan and drawing on experience of tackling the challenges of the past year. These include actions to tackle key cross-cutting areas such as homelessness, reducing health inequalities, providing youth opportunities, the climate emergency and delivering employment and training support.

- 3.2 These are complex issues and the council cannot deliver on them by itself. That is why partnership working is a key theme running through this Plan, highlighting the importance of working across sectors and service areas. As recent events have shown, it is our community that makes Brent a great place; we make a real positive difference when we work together.
- 3.3 The priorities in this Plan recognise that the issues influencing people's life are complex and interlinked and that addressing them requires actions across organisations, sectors and service areas. The Plan builds on our successes to date but also recognises the need to refocus our efforts. The Plan's vision remains **"To make Brent a borough of culture, empathy and shared prosperity"**. However the context in which we are working means it has new resonances and that the ways we deliver will have to change. This includes how we address the immediate and longer-term impacts of the pandemic and growing and changing challenges affecting a range of service and policy areas, such as tackling the climate emergency, addressing inequalities and tackling the causes and consequences of homelessness.
- 3.4 It is likely that council finances will be stretched over the period covered by the draft Plan. Delivering on it is likely to require innovation, continued and deeper partnership, and evidence-based implementation and monitoring. It is also likely to require a continued shift from focusing on single services addressing specific issues, to a more joined-up approach based on cross-cutting issues. Of course we have a successful record of doing this; our new approaches to working with

the voluntary and community sectors - which worked well in supporting communities through the pandemic – are a particular example. We are already sector leaders in areas like housing and continue to work day-to-day to improve the range of services we provide.

- 3.5 This Plan is for residents, local businesses, people who study and visit here and all those providing services for the borough and its people and who are interested in its future success. It is ambitious, innovative and flexible enough to cope with the unexpected, but based on a clear understanding of what is deliverable given the resources and powers available.
- 3.6 The draft Plan has been informed by engagement with colleagues throughout the process of preparation. The draft Plan will be supported by a delivery plan that sets out practical activity to achieve the strategic priorities as well as a set of key performance indicators to measure progress. These will be monitored by Cabinet.
- 3.7 The draft Plan also reflects the Council's Equality Strategy 2019-23, developed following consultation and approved by Cabinet on 9 December 2019. The Equality Strategy is supported by an action plan which has been updated for 2021/22 following consultation. It comprises the transformative activity that will continue to drive forward and embed improvements in equality practice across the work of the organisation.
- 3.8 Crucially, it includes how the council will build on this activity and associated learning to continue to identify and work with our communities, how we will review and strengthen our equality and diversity practice across the organisation with a focus on robust training, informal learning opportunities, enhanced equality analysis processes and the provision of best practice accessibility guidance. These activities ensure a clear link is maintained with our Equality Strategy priorities and service planning.
- 3.9 Following the successful delivery of the [previous year's action plan](#), a set of equality and diversity standards have been developed. These standards detail existing equality practice, ensure ongoing compliance with statutory frameworks and provide assurance that the necessary 'business as usual' activity is maintained. They also demonstrate the progress we have made in delivering the Equality Strategy. The standards will be updated as activity from the action plan is delivered and embedded. Delivery will be performance managed in alignment with the Borough Plan and key equality measures will be included in the council's corporate performance reports.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The draft Borough Plan highlights the current financial context. The budget report on the Council agenda sets out the overall financial position facing the council. The proposed budget 2021/22 includes allocation of funds to support the Borough Plan priorities.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Borough Plan is one of the Policy Framework documents which is required by the Constitution to be adopted by the full Council. Legal advice will be required in respect of the implementation of a number of the actions in the Borough Plan and the Equality Action plan.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 Brent is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion; the council is determined to be an exemplar of good practice in equality, diversity and human rights and it is our policy to treat everyone fairly and with respect. We aim to ensure that all our current and future residents, staff and stakeholders are treated fairly and receive appropriate, accessible services, and fair and equal opportunities.
- 6.2 This commitment requires that equality considerations play a key role in our decision-making processes and that our policies are fully compliant with the duties placed on us as a public sector body by the Equality Act 2010. Our Equality Analyses (EAs) ensure that we follow through on our commitment to equality and they provide a method for clearly demonstrating the necessary legal compliance.
- 6.3 The Equality Act 2010 replaced the pre-existing anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The legislation covers the exercise of public functions, employment and work, goods and services, premises, associations, transport and education. The act prohibits victimisation and harassment, and all of the following forms of discrimination: direct; indirect; by association; by perception; or discrimination arising from disability. When considering the Public Sector Equality Duty pursuant to section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,
- 6.4 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The purpose of the duty is to enquire into whether a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic. In other words, the indirect discriminatory effects of a proposed decision. Due regard is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances.
- 6.5 The Borough Plan will support Brent Council to continue to meet its public sector equality duties. Equality Impact Assessments will be completed as projects are progressed. Those already completed will be reviewed as projects move through the implementation stage. The Equality Strategy and Action Plan also support the council in meeting its public sector duties.

7.0 Any Other Implications (HR, Property etc. - if necessary)

7.1 There are no other implications.

8.0 Proposed Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

8.1 The Lead Member has been consulted throughout the process. Ward Members have been engaged with the Borough Plan priorities through the budget scrutiny process and Brent Connects as well as for particular strands of activity. Engagement with the voluntary and community sector on the Borough Plan has been undertaken at the strategic group meetings and at the Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum on 17 December 2020. Community consultation and engagement has been undertaken for specific strategies and action plans that feed into the Borough Plan. The draft Borough Plan was presented to Cabinet on 8 February 2021.

Report sign off:

Shazia Hussain

Assistant Chief Executive