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Notice of Meeting:

Cabinet

Meeting Location:

The Atrium - Perceval House

Date and Time:

Wednesday, 6 December 2023 at 5.00 pm

Contact for Enquiries:

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Chief Executive:

Tony Clements

Members:

J Anand
J Blacker
L Brett
D Costigan

S Donnelly
P Knewstub
B Mahfouz

S Manro

P Mason (Chair)
K K Nagpal

Portfolio

Cabinet Member for Tackling Inequality
Cabinet Member for Healthy Lives
Cabinet Member for Decent Living Incomes
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for
Climate Action
Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy
Cabinet Member for Thriving Communities
Cabinet Member for Safe and Genuinely
Affordable Homes
Cabinet Member for Good Growth and New
Homes
Leader of the Council
Cabinet Member for A Fairer Start

AGENDA

This meeting will be broadcast live on YouTube

Please click the following link to view the meeting:

[Ealing Council - YouTube](#)

- 1 **Apologies for Absence**
- 2 **Urgent Matters**
- 3 **Matters to be Considered in Private**
- 4 **Declarations of Interest**
- 5 **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8 November 2023.
- 6 **Appointments to Sub Committees and Outside Bodies**
- 7 **Cessation of use of Marston Court** (Pages 15 - 24)
- 8 **Cycle Network Plan** (Pages 25 - 120)
- 9 **Children's Services Capital Approvals** (Pages 121 - 136)
- 10 **Villiers High School Places Award of Main Works Contract** (Pages 137 - 218)
- 11 **Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 2 - 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic** (Pages 219 - 278)
- 12 **Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 3 - 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle** (Pages 279 - 332)
- 13 **Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 4 - 2022/2023: Genuinely Affordable Homes** (Pages 333 - 390)
- 14 **Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 17 January 2024.

Exclusion of the Public and Press

Published: Tuesday, 28 November 2023

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Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet

Date: Wednesday 8 November 2023

Venue: The Atrium, Perceval House, 14-16 Uxbridge Road,
Ealing, W5 2HL

Attendees (in person): Councillors

P Mason (Chair), J Anand, J Blacker, L Brett, D Costigan, S Donnelly,
P Knewstub, B Mahfouz and S Manro

Also present (in person): Councillors

G Malcolm and J Gallant

Also present (virtual): Councillors

G Shaw

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr K K Nagpal.

In accordance with paragraph 2.6(a) of the Council's Constitution, the following speakers addressed the Cabinet with regard to the following items:

2023/24 Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Report

- Cllr Malcolm
- Cllr Gallant

Commercial Strategy 2023-2027

- Cllr Gallant

Mattock Lane Safe Zone PSPO

- Cllr Malcolm
- Cllr Gallant

Update on School Places and Children's Services Capital Approvals

- Cllr Gallant

The meeting was held in a hybrid format with members and officers able to join the meeting remotely. However, regulations did not allow for members attending virtually to be counted as present in the attendance section of the minutes, and their attendance would not count as attendance in relation to section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. Members attending virtually would be able to speak but would not be able to vote.

2 Urgent Matters

There were none.

3 Matters to be Considered in Private

There were none.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

5 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Thursday 12 October 2023 were agreed and signed as a true and correct record.

6 Appointments to Sub Committees and Outside Bodies

There were none.

7 2023/24 Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Report

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted the estimated General Fund revenue budget outturn position of net £4.631m (1.62%) overspend for 2023/24, and an overspend of £5.975m position on the Housing Revenue Account for 2023/24.
- II. Noted the in-year Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit forecast of £3.546m to be charged to the DSG account.
- III. Noted the progress on delivering the 2023/24 savings programme.
- IV. Noted the 2023/24 capital programme forecast.
- V. Approved the re-profiling of 2023/24 capital programme net slippage of over £1m of £30.321m into future years.
- VI. Approved the decommissioning of £3.2m of capital schemes.

REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

To forecast the financial position for 2023/24 based on available information at the end of 30 September 2023. The report outlines the Council's forecast position on revenue, capital, income, and expenditure to the end of Quarter 2.

8 Commercial Strategy 2023-2027

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- I. Approved the Commercial Strategy 2023-2027 and the objectives it sought to achieve.
- II. Authorised the Strategic Director of Resource to fully implement the objectives detailed within the strategy.

REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

1. The council spends over £390 million each year on third party services contracts through competitive tendering as well as from multitude of approved Government and national purchasing consortiums.
2. The Commercial Strategy sets out our vision and ambition for achieving greater commercial, social and economic value from our commissioning, procurement and contracting activities. Based on a framework of four core imperatives, our commercial strategy sets out our ambition to explore innovative commercial contracting models, develop collaborative partnerships and work with the community and voluntary sector to drive positive change for our residents, businesses, and wider stakeholders.
3. In preparation of the forthcoming Procurement Act (the Act) expected later in the year and to be fully implemented by October 2024, the proposed commercial strategy reflects the changes that will be necessary to ensure the council meets the new requirements of the Act. The National Procurement Policy Statement is already making additional demands on all public bodies in respect of social value, climate change and effective contract management.
4. The Commercial Strategy 2023-2027 takes all these factors into account through its advocacy of innovation, a meaningful approach to social value, conscientious sourcing and improving the Council's procurement and contract management capacity and capability.
5. Some aspects of the strategy are already coming into effect:
 - A new e-tendering system is being implemented that will in due course support the development of Ealing's contract management capabilities and develop its associated supplier relationship management.
 - The new e-portal will also provide improved access for smaller and local businesses and voluntary and community sector organisations to contracting opportunities with the council.
 - The Social Value process is being continually developed and now provides many more ways in which bidders can commit to and deliver activities that will support communities and contribute to Ealing's Net Zero Carbon Targets.
6. Make or buy is now a key part of any new procurement's options

appraisal process in response to the council's commitment to its Public Service Guarantee. The strategy will build on these achievements and continue to secure tangible benefits into the future for the borough's residents and businesses alike.

9 Mattock Lane Safe Zone PSPO

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- I. Considered the impact and effect of the Mattock Lane PSPO on the behaviours targeted, as set out in the report.
- II. Authorised the Strategic Director of Housing and Environment to undertake a consultation on the renewal or variation of the Mattock Lane PSPO.

REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

1. The Mattock Lane Safe Zone Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was introduced in April 2018 in response to activities in the locality of the MSI Reproductive Choices (formerly Marie Stopes) clinic ('the Clinic) on Mattock Lane that were found to be having a detrimental impact on those visiting and using the Clinic, Clinic staff and others living in and passing through the area. Cabinet introduced the order having considered extensive documentary, testimonial and direct evidence of the harm caused predominantly by Pro-Life represented groups in the locality of the Clinic and following consultation with Ealing residents and statutory and non-statutory partners.
2. The order was introduced for a period of three years (this being the maximum period a PSPO can be made for in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014)). In November 2020, Cabinet took the decision to begin consultation on the future of the order (which would have lapsed in April 2021 if no action was taken). In February 2021 the decision was taken by Cabinet to renew the order in its full terms for a further three years. This means the order will expire in April 2024 if no action is taken.
3. Since the introduction of the PSPO in April 2018, the order has been successful in reducing to almost nil the number incidents of Clinic service users, Clinic staff and others in the locality being interfered with, intimidated or harassed by individuals or groups expressing views on abortion services. Until the implementation of the order, instances of this behaviour had been occurring on a near daily basis.
4. The order has for the most part been complied with and has been successful in tackling the objectionable activity it was introduced to address. The introduction of the order has not stopped any of the activities of abortion related protest or prayer themselves from occurring, it has simply prevented them from occurring within the narrowly and clearly defined area of the PSPO.

5. The order created a designated area within the footprint of the Safe Zone that makes provision for some limited activities associated with protest of abortion related services but in a way that is designed to minimise the detrimental impact on Clinic service users and others, as well as reducing the identification, targeting and intimidation of Clinic service users and staff. This designated area continues to be used by the same Pro-Life represented groups on a near daily basis.
6. Every year during the period of Lent (the six-week lead up to Easter in the Christian calendar), an increased presence of Pro-Life groups has been noted on the threshold of the footprint of the order. Primarily, Pro-Life groups base themselves in the locality of Ealing Green.
7. Since April 2018, some of the individuals or groups who had until that time stationed themselves at the gates of the Clinic, have on occasion instead based themselves outside Ealing civic centre (Perceval House), where they have displayed signs and images expressing a Pro-Life view and objecting to abortion.
8. The continued regular use of the designated area by Pro-Life groups, the sporadic Pro-Life protests at Perceval House and the presence of Pro-Life groups involved in protest / prayer at the threshold of the PSPO area all indicate a continued focus on the location by the same represented groups who had previously been congregating at the entrance to the Clinic. It was reasonable to conclude, therefore, that, were the order to expire, these groups would return to the area outside the Clinic and continue in the activities previously engaged in at this location.
9. Members were asked to consider whether it was appropriate to consult on the extension or variation of the PSPO, in view of the legal framework for consultation, implementation and extension of PSPOs. Members are asked to have this framework firmly in mind in reaching their decision.
10. Members are directed to the evidence base set out in the report to Cabinet in April 2018. The April 2018 report and appendices set out in full the evidence on which the Council's decision to introduce the PSPO was made, including the responses to the Council's original consultation on the introduction of a PSPO (conducted from 29th January to 26th March 2018).
11. Members were invited to consider the impact and effectiveness of the PSPO in terms of what it set out to achieve and the necessity for the continuation of the order in its current or varied form.
12. Moving into 2024, the Council have two options in relation to the Mattock Lane Safe Zone:
 1. Take no action. This will mean the PSPO will come to an end in April 2024.
 2. Proceed with consultation on renewal or variation of the existing order. This will require a consultation to be undertaken in line with the process previously undertaken during November 2020 - January 2021.
13. Should option 1 be considered appropriate by Cabinet, no further action would need to be taken by members. The PSPO would expire on 10th April 2021, signage would be removed and none of the

prohibitions or requirements of the Order would apply to any persons in the locality thereafter, save for by introduction of national powers, further order by the Council or other party or some other action.

14. If Cabinet were to conclude option 2 is most appropriate, a full consultation would be undertaken. This will involve specific consultation with all groups known to be involved in the activities regulated by the PSPO, as well as with MSI Reproductive Choices, British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS), clinic service users, the Metropolitan Police Service, Integrated Care System (ICS), NHS, Public Health and local faith groups. It will also involve an online survey in line with the public surveys undertaken in 2018 and in 2020-21.
15. Following consultation, a further report will be provided to Cabinet (most likely in February 2024), detailing the outcome of the consultation alongside an assessment of the impact and effectiveness of the Order to date and providing advice to Cabinet on the requirement for renewal or variation of the PSPO.

10 Plans to develop an Ealing Building Blocks of Health Research Collaboration (BBHRC) - Pending funding from National Institute of Health Research

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- I. Authorised the council to enter into a funding contract with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) for NIHR Health Determinants Research Collaboration (“the Funding Contract”) to receive funding of £5m to establish the Ealing’s Building Blocks of Health Research Collaboration (BBHRC), if the outcome of the bidding process was successful.
- II. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Strategy and Change and the Director of Public Health to commence work on establishing Ealing’s Health Determinants Research Collaboration, called ‘Ealing Building Blocks of Health Research collaboration (BBHRC)’ from 1 January 2024, in line with its aims, objectives and deliverables.
- III. Authorised the Strategic Director of Strategy and Change and the Director of Public Health following consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services and the Director of Strategic Resources to enter into such partner agreements, research project agreements and model research agreements with research partners including without limitation Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex, Imperial College London (ICL), and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and other organisations as part of the BBHRC pursuant to the Funding Contract, as required.

REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

1. Ealing council has applied for, through a highly competitive process, Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) funding of £5 million from the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR), to build sustainable research capacity and infrastructure in the council over the next 5 years. This was in collaboration with academic and community co-applicants and followed a competitive application process. It will be named the Ealing Building Blocks of Health Research Collaboration (BBHRC). This is an exciting opportunity for a step change in our learning culture.
2. In stage 1 of the application process, the NIHR commended Ealing for the “well-written and timely proposal with a strong team of co-applicants”. They noted our “strong focus on the wider determinants [of health] and fighting inequalities and [our] conveyed sense of positivity and commitment to working with, and for, the borough’s ethnically mixed population”. They also commended the “strong participatory angle to research proposed and the legacy that the HDRC will have” in Ealing.
3. Ealing BBHRC’s vision will be to develop a collaborative, impactful research partnership focused on promoting the building blocks of health and equity.

The aims of the BBHRC will be to:

- Transform Ealing’s research system and infrastructure.
- Strengthen and grow Ealing’s research collaborations.
- Drive organisational capacity building and culture change.
- Embed diverse and inclusive community involvement in our transformation.

The objectives, aligned with these aims, are to:

- Establish the foundational structures, roles, governance and partnership arrangements, to operate a centre of excellence in applied research on the building blocks of health.
- Improve the capacity and culture for community involvement and co-creation of research with residents and community groups ensuring research addresses issues important to local people, particularly from underserved communities.
- Improve accessibility and quality of our data, including data linkage and integration, to inform staff, partners and our communities.
- Develop capacity to use a plurality of innovative research methodologies for different research questions, including social science and complex systems-informed research and evaluation methods.
- Work with academic partners to embed high quality research training and development, with a focus on building capacity at all stages of the career pathway for council staff, and community groups.
- Strengthen our research collaborations so there is alignment of vision, priorities, and work for academics, council staff, local partners and our communities.

- Disseminate and share learning of our approach, activities and academic outputs, through our networks, building our reputation as a centre of excellence for applied health equity focused research.
 - Leverage the learning culture enabled by BBHRC to focus the role of the council as enabler of systems change approaches to improving the building blocks of health.
4. In addition to creating the necessary infrastructure and processes to build the research collaboration, the main transformative deliverables include:
 1. Developing a sustainable systemic Participatory Action Research infrastructure. This includes training a network of community researchers. They will participate in action research alongside council staff, to co-create new knowledge and action together.
 2. Integrate health and council data and co-produce a community data dashboard.
 3. Conduct an in-depth baseline assessment of the council's current system of evidence use and creation.
 4. Develop a bespoke and curated training and development offer for staff at all levels and community partners.
 5. If successful, the BBHRC bid will directly support the Council Plan 2022-2026 and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2028 as it focusses on building capacity for research that will inform the council's approach to tackling inequalities through the building blocks of health.
 6. Three academic partners, offer unique and complementary expertise to build Ealing's research capacity (Institute of Development Studies - participatory action research; Imperial College London - epidemiology and data linkage; London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine - systems thinking and evaluation). Collaborating with communities is central to BBHRC's vision and embedded throughout, including inclusive and best practice community and public involvement, ensuring that research is relevant to, and works with, Ealing's underserved communities.
 7. The leadership of the collaboration will sit within the council's Strategy and Change Directorate with significant input from Public Health in the Adults and Public Health Directorate in the council.
 8. The intention is for Ealing BBHRC to impact Ealing residents and staff, with improvements to policy and services as a result of the research partnership. There will be a greater culture of evidence use and creation, on the building blocks of health, shifting systems towards greater health equity.
 9. Dissemination of the work of Ealing BBHRC will also include sharing learning and approaches for the benefit of people and organisations in Ealing, regionally, nationally and internationally by publishing and sharing through regional and national networks.
 10. NIHR are proposing to announce the outcome of the funding application process by the end of November 2023.
 11. If Ealing is successful in securing NIHR funding, Option 1 will be to enter into a contract with the Department of Health to establish a National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) Health Determinants

Research Collaboration in Ealing (the Ealing BBHRC).
12. Option 2 would be to decline the contract.

11 Update on School Places and Children's Services Capital Approvals

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted sections 3.1 and 3.2 which set out the updated projections in relation to demand for primary and secondary school provision across the borough and the proposed strategy to meet demand.
- II. Noted the updated projections and progress made with regards to securing additional provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs.
- III. Approved the inception of £0.171m confirmed funding from the carbon offset fund into the 2023/24 Schools capital programme, for undertaking Schools Energy surveys to inform decisions by schools and the Council in relation to energy, sustainability and climate action.
- IV. Approved the invitation and evaluation of tenders for undertaking Schools Energy surveys to inform decisions by schools and the Council in relation to energy, sustainability and climate action.
- V. Noted the identification of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) at The Ellen Wilkinson School for Girls and authorised the Assistant Director: Planning, Resources and Service Development to make all necessary arrangements in relation to Department for Education (DfE) guidance, including the invitation and evaluation of tenders for any associated works, and specialist consultancy advice, funded from the existing approved High Priority Condition Programme, noting that the DfE had advised that they would provide reimbursement for all mitigation works that are capital funded.
- VI. Authorised the Assistant Director: Planning, Resources and Service Development, to work with the John Chilton School to undertake consultation on increasing the planned capacity of the school from 130 to a higher capacity and, following review of the consultation responses, and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and the school's Governing Body, authorised the Assistant Director: Planning, Resources and Service Development to publish the necessary Statutory Proposals to increase the planned capacity, if the parties agree to do so.

REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

1. The Council had a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places and to promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. The Council must also promote choice and diversity.
2. The legal framework within which Cabinet must consider the proposals

was set out in section 5 of the report.

3. The relevant background report on projected future demand, update on School Places and Children's Services Capital Approvals, was presented to Cabinet on the 12 October 2022.

12 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 6 December 2023.

Meeting commenced: 5.00 pm

Meeting finished: 5.29 pm

Signed:

Dated: Wednesday, 6 December
2023

P Mason (Chair)



Report for: ACTION
Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO
Title	Cessation of use of Marston Court.
Responsible Officer(s)	Nicky Fiedler Strategic Director of Housing & Environment Email: FiedlerN@ealing.gov.uk
Author(s)	Jon Maxwell Assistant Director Housing Management Email: MaxwellJ@ealing.gov.uk
Portfolio(s)	Genuine Affordable Housing
For Consideration By	Cllr. Bassam Mahfouz, Portfolio Holder for Genuinely Affordable Housing
Date to be Considered	6 December 2023
Implementation Date if Not Called In	18 December 2023
Affected Wards	North Hanwell ward.
Keywords/Index	Temporary Accommodation, Marston Court.

1 Purpose of Report:

To meet the challenges of providing temporary accommodation to households the Council entered arrangements to provide temporary accommodation in 2016 at two sites: Meath Court, South Acton and Marston Court, North Hanwell. The modular units were leased through a direct engagement between the Council and QED in 2016 and opened in 2017.

1.1 At the time of their installation the modular units were an innovative solution to the challenge of the housing market and the lack of local housing supply. The modular buildings were expected to offer a range of benefits to the Council in addressing local housing need, as well as reducing the costs of accommodation when compared to bed and breakfast provision. The Council, like other local authorities, provided accommodation through this method.

1.2 The Council has a very clear objective to deliver safe and genuinely affordable homes for our residents. Through the experience of using the units over a number of years, the quality of the units at Meath and Marston Court is not in line with the standard of accommodation that the Council wishes to provide. This report sets out the background to the recommendation to cease using Marston Court for the provision of temporary accommodation earlier than the lease end date of the 6 April 2027.

2 Recommendations for DECISION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- 2.2 Authorises the Strategic Director Housing and Environment to cease the use of the units at Marston Court as temporary accommodation.
- 2.3 Authorises the Strategic Director Housing and Environment to:
- a. Continue decanting residents out of Marston Court.
 - b. To negotiate and finalise with QED a solution for the future of Marston Court that better meets the council's developing temporary accommodation strategy, including (should it be possible to reach agreement in that regard) the early surrender of the lease of Marston Court.
 - c. If the negotiations to surrender the lease are not successful, to utilise the units for an alternative purpose other than accommodation until the end of the lease.
 - d. To investigate alternative housing options for the current residents of Marston Court.
 - e. Identify funding options to meet the additional financial burden of closing Marston Court, where other funding options cannot be identified these one-off costs will be met from reserves.

3 Recommendations for NOTING

- 3.1 None.

4 Reason for Decision and Options Considered

- 4.1 This report seeks approval from Cabinet to end the current lease agreement, subject to QED agreement. The lease for Marston Court ends in April 2027 and the proposal is to seek to end the lease early following the decommissioning of the service being completed.
- 4.2 The options that have been considered include:

(i) Continue as is

This option has been discounted because Marston Court does not meet the standard of the temporary accommodation that the Council wishes to provide.

(ii) Vacate the accommodation and leave empty

Although Marston Court could be left empty until the end of the lease, the Council would continue to incur costs for securing the units in addition to the rental payments. For this reason, this option has been discounted.

(iii) Re-purpose for different use

Opportunities are being considered for re-using the units for a different purpose, including accommodation at a different location through local charities or supporting local businesses and ventures. Where this is possible, this may help to reduce the cost of the units.

(iv) Exit the lease agreement early and return the units

The recommended option is for the Council to try to exit the lease agreement and decommission the site. This could be implemented at the same time as pursuing the alternative use of the site with local partners as outlined in (iii). However, if it is not possible to negotiate acceptable terms then one or more of the above options will need to be explored.

5 Recommendation:

- 5.1 The proposal is to take forward Option IV. If this is not possible because the Council is unable to reach agreement with QED, it is recommended that the Council pursues Option III if the latter is viable and there is sufficient interest. It is proposed that the Strategic Director Housing and Environment is authorised to stop the use of the units at Marston Court as temporary accommodation and authorised to negotiate the early surrender of the lease or to utilise the units for a different purpose.
- 5.2 The quality of the accommodation and value for money considerations have been considered when making this recommendation.

6 Key Implications

- 6.1 The key implications arising from this recommendation include:
- The proposed decision to negotiate ending the lease agreement earlier than the expiry date will lead to the decommissioning of this service.
 - This decision is being taken because this type of modular building does not meet the needs of local people and meet the Council's strategic objective to deliver good quality accommodation. A revised temporary accommodation strategy is being implemented to address this need.
 - Residents currently living at the site will be secured alternative accommodation through the Council, and communication with residents will happen on a regular basis.
 - As a result of ending the lease agreement early, the cost to the Council will be the annual rental cost of the units until the lease ends whilst not receiving a rental income for the units. This is £1.053m between January 2024 and April 2027.
 - There is no break clause within the lease agreement to enable the Council to return the Marston Court units earlier than April 2027.
 - Alternative options for utilising the modular buildings are being pursued and where this can be achieved this may reduce the financial impact to the General Fund.

7 Background to the provision of the Accommodation at Marston Court

- 7.1 The Council entered arrangements to provide temporary accommodation in 2016 at two sites: Meath Court, South Acton and Marston Court, North Hanwell. The modular units are leased through a direct engagement between the Council and QED in 2016 and opened in 2017.
- 7.2 At the time of their installation the modular units were an innovative solution to the challenge of providing bed and breakfast accommodation by councils. In addition, the modular buildings were expected to offer a range of benefits to in addressing local housing need, including speed of provision, reduced costs over the life of the lease when compared to bed and breakfast provision and supporting flexibility of provision within the borough. The Council, like other local authorities, provided accommodation through this method.
- 7.3 The units were placed on derelict sites which were earmarked for permanent homes and developments in the future. The units were also designed so that they could be moved to other sites when the developments commenced on the sites and the land was no longer available for this purpose.
- 7.4 Initially the use of the units was intended to identify the benefits and disbenefits of using this form of accommodation in place of bed and breakfast. The units were aimed at smaller households and are a mixture of studio, 1 bed and 2 bed accommodation.
- 7.5 At Marston Court there are 34 units comprised of:
- 10 studio flats.
 - 16 one-bedroom flats.
 - 8 two-bedroom flats.
- 7.6 It is generally acknowledged that there are limitations associated with heavily modified shipping containers, including the design, layout and the materials used. In addition, residents are not always satisfied with the design and quality of the provision.
- 7.7 The experiences at Meath and Marston Court have helped shape the revised temporary accommodation strategy being developed. The strategy will help ensure that the Council can provide the volume and quality of properties that the Council needed to respond to the demands placed upon its services.
- 7.8 Through experience of using the units over a number of years the quality of the units at Meath and Marston Court is not in line with the standard of accommodation that the Council wishes to provide. As a result, the Council will not renew the lease at Meath Court following the expiry date of the lease (28 June 2024) with residents leaving earlier to enable the dilapidations at the site to be agreed with the supplier. The lease at Marston Court ends in April 2027 and an early exit can only take place with agreement from QED as there is no break clause that can be used.

7.9 Ceasing use of Marston Court as temporary accommodation is one element of the strategy for the Council's provision of temporary accommodation and its target to deliver safe and genuinely affordable homes.

8 Temporary Accommodation Strategy - Context

8.1 London is in the midst of a severe housing affordability crisis driven by changes in the private rent sector (PRS) which include a significant reduction in the availability of accommodation and increasing rents which impact on the ability to procure such accommodation for use as temporary accommodation.

8.2 Within the report on Private Rented Sector Accommodation in London (July 2023) by LSE Consulting and Savills, there are some key figures that show that there has been a reduction in 1 to 4 bed properties by 41% since 2017, 1 to 3 bed property availability has reduced by 36% since the pandemic and asking rents were c. 20% higher compared to March 2022.

8.3 The researchers also noted that for the 300,000 households in London who are reliant on the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) are suffering from the rates being frozen and this has reduced the number of properties that are affordable. These have reduced from 18.9% of available properties being affordable in 2020/21 to only 2.3% in 2022/23.

8.4 What this has meant for London, and Ealing, is that the number of private rented properties available for use as temporary accommodation is reducing, increased mortgage rates impact on the levels of rent and the need to increase incentives. This also means that tenants in the private rented sector cannot purchase and are therefore remaining in properties for almost double the length of time which again also reduces availability of properties. They are also experiencing increasing rents which may push some below the poverty line and unable to pay their rent, and so end up as homeless.

8.5 The wider shortage of social housing means that securing PRS accommodation is one of the very few options for prevention and relief of homelessness with a resulting crisis in temporary accommodation with numbers presenting as homeless increasing, and the inability for councils to procure temporary accommodation or move them out of current temporary accommodation into settled accommodation. London Councils estimates that 166,000 Londoners are homeless and living in temporary accommodation arranged by their local borough which is equivalent to a city the size of Oxford needing a home.

8.6 As a result of the above factors, there are currently c2,700 households in temporary accommodation in Ealing.

9 Approach to the Temporary Accommodation Strategy

9.1 The sections below detail the medium- and long-term projects that form part of the strategy to increase the supply of temporary accommodation.

- *Empty Homes / Voids* - Use some of the longer-term empty homes and provide adapted / extended accommodation meeting the specific needs of

any high cost, high need residents to both reduce the negative impact on them and reduce the high cost that some of this accommodation incurs.

- *Large Scale Acquisition* - Review the market to see if there are any blocks available to acquire (either lease or acquisition) to provide more temporary accommodation units for use by the Council. Work is already underway, and competition for the sites will include other London Boroughs as they seek to secure temporary accommodation through this route.
- *Leasehold Buy Backs* - There is also an opportunity to acquire ex Right to Buy (RTB) properties from leaseholders within some of the Council regeneration schemes who have expressed a desire to sell.
- *Meanwhile Sites* - A longer-term option is to liaise with regeneration and look at any opportunities to use some of the sites for meanwhile use for delivery of new style modular housing that incorporates the learning from the design and management of these sites.
- *Regeneration Buy Backs* - Another longer-term option being assessed is acquiring properties on regeneration schemes where a leaseholder may have approached us.

9.2 A revised temporary accommodation strategy provides the opportunity for the Council to invest in properties to address the demand being placed on the Council and help reduce the costs and improve the quality associated with this accommodation.

10 Financial

10.1 There are costs associated with the lease at Marston Court that would have been incurred regardless of when the lease was ended, these include: lease payments and dilapidation costs.

10.2 The costs arising from ending the Marston Court lease early and moving residents out are related to the payments being made to the supplier and not receiving a rental income to cover the lease costs, whilst the units are empty.

10.3 The rental payments due to the supplier between January 2024 to April 2027 (when the lease ends) would be a total of £1.053m. Should these continue to be paid and alternative use not identified, the costs of the lease, or the costs of any termination payment, will need to be met from reserves.

10.4 There will be costs to relocate households however given the market pressures and context set out in this report these are not currently known.

11 Legal

11.1 As set out in the body of the report there is no break clause in the lease of Marston Court so any early surrender will have to be agreed with QED.

11.2 Residents of Marston Court were accommodated pursuant to homeless duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. If either Options (ii), (iii) or (iv) are pursued, in cases where the homeless duties are ongoing, suitable alternative

accommodation will need to be provided to those residents. For those residents who do not move voluntarily, legal proceedings will need to be commenced to secure vacant possession and enable a move.

- 11.3 Any delays in securing vacant possession of these properties as a result of legal proceedings will have an impact on the overall cost of the project. Those residents who are owed the homelessness duty and who must be moved to suitable implications may refuse offers of alternative accommodation. If the homeless duty is ceased as a result of such a refusal, the resident will be entitled to seek a review of that decision under s202 of the Housing Act 1996 and ultimately appeal to the county court pursuant to s204 of the Housing Act 1996. There is a risk that this could result in any possession proceedings to secure vacant possession being stayed, pending the outcome of an appeal. Residents may defend possession proceedings on public law grounds, which can also lead to a delay in the progress of court proceedings. Delays in moving residents on could affect the date on which the Council can exit the Marston Court lease. In respect of the Meath Court lease officers will need to ensure there is sufficient time to secure vacant possession of the units.

12 Value For Money

- 12.1 Ending the lease early will lead to a loss of income whilst payments are made to the supplier, however the improved provision of accommodation to the households currently living at Marston Court will be of benefit to the local community.

13 Sustainability Impact Appraisal

- 13.1 There are no direct sustainability impact appraisal implications for this decision.

14 Risk Management

- 14.1 The risks associated with the ending of the leases and managing the sites before and after they are vacated have been identified and form part of the project plan that is being implemented. The risks will be reviewed during the operational management meetings.

15 Community Safety

- 15.1 Ending the lease arrangement for the two sites will improve the safety of the communities in the area once the units have been removed the site.

16 Links to the 3 Key Priorities for the Borough

- 16.1 The Council's administration has three key priorities for Ealing. They are:
- Fighting inequality.
 - Tackling the climate crisis.

- Creating good jobs.

17 Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

17.1 None.

18 Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

18.1 None.

19 Property and Assets

19.1 This report relates to the ending of a lease agreement for the provision of modular build properties at Marston Court.

20 Any other implications:

20.1 None.

21 Consultation

21.1 Lead Member of Genuinely Affordable Homes

22 Timetable for Implementation

22.1 The implementation of this initiative will commence following agreement and the arrangement with the supplier concluded after vacant possession has been achieved.

23 Appendices

23.1 None.

24 Background Information

24.1 None.

Consultation

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent to consultee	Date response received	Comments appear in paragraph:
Internal				
Nicky Fiedler	Strategic Director Housing & Environment	25/10/23	26/10/23	Throughout the paper
Alice Rowland	Legal Services			Throughout the paper
Russell Dyer	Assistant Director, Accountancy Finance	XX/XX/23	XX/XX/23	5. Financial
Cllr Bassam Mahfouz	Cabinet Member for Genuinely Affordable Homes	02/11/23	XX/XX/23	Throughout the paper
External				

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
Key decision	No
Report no.:	Report author and contact for queries:
	Jon Maxwell, Assistant Director Housing Management

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		Report for: Action
		Item Number:
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No	
Title	Cycle Network Plan: Ambitions for Cycling 2023-2033	
Responsible Officer(s)	Nicky Fiedler, Strategic Director of Housing and Environment	
Author(s)	Eugene Minogue, Service Improvement Lead for Highways, Transport and Parking Tony Singh, Chief Highways Engineer Emily Shovlar, Principal Transport Planner	
Portfolio(s)	Cllr Deirdre Costigan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member - Climate Action Cllr Josh Blacker, Cabinet Member - Healthy Lives	
For Consideration By	Cabinet	
Date to be considered	6 December 2023	
Implementation Date (If Not Called In)	18 December 2023	
Affected Wards	All	
Area Committees	All	
Keywords/Index	Active and Sustainable Travel	

Purpose of Report:

The development of Ealing's first ever resident informed borough-wide Cycle Network Plan and the accompanying initial delivery programme in line with our commitment to invest at least £10m to increase cycling, walking, running, and scooting and reduce polluting vehicles through active travel schemes.

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet approve:

- 1.1 The draft borough-wide Cycle Network Plan, based on resident consultation, as shown in 3.5 and detailed in Appendix 2.
- 1.2 The action plan for improving cycle routes, arising from the resident consultation, which was undertaken in line with our Travel in Ealing Charter (TIE).

2. Background/Context

- 2.1 As set out in the [Council Plan 2022-2026](#) - Climate Action:

We want to keep Ealing clean and green, achieve net zero carbon, and ensure our

parks, open spaces and nature are protected and enhanced.

Ealing declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 as one of the biggest issues affecting our borough and beyond. We have already taken action but want to do more, putting sustainability at the heart of everything we do.

We will build on positive changes introduced during the pandemic to enable residents to walk and cycle safely by creating more space for active travel and improving air quality.

- 2.2 Additionally, the Council Plan includes a commitment to; Launch our Active Travel Charter setting out how we will deliver active travel in the borough and invest at least £10m to increase cycling, walking, running, and scooting and reduce polluting vehicles through active travel schemes.
- 2.3 This report seeks approval for the draft borough-wide Cycle Network Plan and for the work programme for cycle routes, arising from the resident consultation.
- 2.4 The council has been implementing cycle schemes for many years, working in partnership with Transport for London (TfL) to identify feasible schemes, and to provide signposting and safety measures on our roads.
- 2.5 Since 2018 we have delivered schemes including:
 - Ealing-Greenford Broadway route created 2017-2023, including shared sections alongside carriageway and through park, and quiet road sections, including junction remodelling, new lighting in park, and 2 new parallel crossings of busier roads.
 - Narrow section of off-road path between Pitshanger Park and Perivale widened.
 - East Acton-Chiswick route created 2020-23, mostly on quiet roads but also passing through 2 parks.
 - Our first-ever protected on-carriageway cycle lanes 2020-21 – Uxbridge Rd., Greenford Rd.
 - Wand-protected cycle lanes installed in Acton and East Southall 2021-2022.
 - Existing segregated cycle track upgraded in east Southall, including priority crossings over side roads.
 - Nearly 1Km of segregated cycle track created on former carriageway in North Greenford.
 - 2 roads closed to motor traffic in late 2020 (one except buses).
 - One turn ban for motor traffic to create space at key crossing on new Ealing-Greenford cycle route, which is near completion.
 - Two key off-road connections widened in 2022 and 2023.
 - Cycle access created to un-ban turn in Park Royal.
 - Bridge widened to remove pinch-point on path on south side of Ruislip Road East.
 - Shared footway created for access to school on Little Ealing Lane / Windmill Rd.
- 2.6 Whilst the existing network of cycle routes increases each year, we have an ambition to significantly ramp up our delivery of cycle schemes and to improve the integration of the network, reducing gaps by connecting up existing cycle ways. The gaps have often arisen because of the piecemeal nature of cycle funding, with the amounts in each financial year being insufficient to deliver a cycle route along the full length of, for example, Uxbridge Road. Hence we are delivering schemes in sections along key routes, and the Cycle Network Plan will enable us to work more strategically to reduce

gaps by showing the overall route ambition.

2.7 As such we are currently planning and delivering several cycling schemes, including the Uxbridge Road, Greenford Road, East Acton to Chiswick, and Boston Road. These schemes will address key concerns which residents have raised, including safety along main roads, safety at junctions, and severance from major roads and railway lines. These schemes also increase the number of residents living within 400m of the cycle network, which is one of the key objectives in the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS).

2.8 Current cycle schemes include:

- Initial designs for the whole length of Boston Road. As a first stage, there will be changes at Boston Manor Station so that cyclists on the Hounslow cycle route can safely connect to Southdown Avenue (for Elthorne High School) and Cawdor Crescent (for West Ealing). Consultation on the main scheme will follow later in the year.
- In Park Royal, we have designs to take cyclists off-carriageway on Park Royal Road, a key link with heavy HGV and bus traffic, and to improve cycling conditions on Acton Lane. Public engagement on these will be announced soon.
- The former Quietway between Ealing Broadway and Greenford Broadway is nearing completion. Recent improvements include a better connection between Gordon Road and Haven Green, and a widened footbridge on the path connecting to High Lane and Old Hanwell. We are considering options for the final connection, between St. Stephen's Avenue and St. Leonard's Road, and will then ask TfL to signpost the whole route and add it to their cycle network as a standards-compliant route.
- A continuous off-carriageway cycleway is ready for implementation along the whole length of Kensington Rd, Northolt.

Future plans include extension southwards of the North Greenford route, major improvements on Uxbridge Road between Hanwell Bridge and Iron Bridge, and upgrades on the Church Road / Mandeville Road (A312) corridor in Northolt.

2.9 The constraints in funding also mean that we needed clarity from residents on how the cycling network should be prioritised. For context, delivering c.1km of segregated cycle track costs on average c.£1m. As an example, the Uxbridge Road - a priority for cycling infrastructure - is c.11km long suggesting a c.£11m price tag. Prior to the pandemic, Ealing received c.£2m per annum for cycling schemes from TfL but this funding had to cover a wide variety of cycling and active travel related initiatives, with only around £500k directly linked to new cycle lanes. For 2023/24 we are receiving just £0.87m, a significant reduction from pre-pandemic. As such, there is a clear need to carefully prioritise this funding.

2.10 In many areas, segregated cycle routes are not needed because there are quiet signposted residential roads, shared footways, or other routes which render traffic segregation unnecessary, and it will be possible to significantly improve the network through improving residential routes. For other large schemes, there is existing Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding and Section 106 (S106) contributions which are enabling us to continue some delivery despite the funding challenges (see 3.8).

2.11 In line with the Council Plan and the TIE charter, we committed to involving residents in the development a borough-wide Cycle Network Plan. In early 2023, we prepared a map showing existing cycle routes for the consultation. As these existing routes vary from fully-segregated two-way tracks to indicated cycle routes along residential roads,

we agreed a standard definition for the consultation: *“Cycle routes shown are considered the most important for cyclists - we have made them more convenient, safe and signposted. They can be on or off road, separated from traffic or along quiet streets.”*

2.12 The consultation on Ealing’s future cycle network ran from 5 April to 17 May 2023, and asked residents several questions about cycling:

- How often they currently cycle in Ealing
- How they would describe their level of confidence in cycling in Ealing
- What prevents them from cycling, or cycling more frequently and confidently
- Whether any particular routes need improving
- Where they would like to cycle
- On which types of road we should create more cycle routes
- How Ealing should prioritise implementing the cycle network.

2.13 The consultation received detailed feedback from over 1,100 residents, who have provided a valuable source of data for specific routes, as well as wider attitudes to cycling and where we need to make improvements. The initial consultation findings are set out in Appendix 1.

2.14 A key takeaway from the consultation was on the question of how the cycle network should be prioritised. Residents told us that they want to see existing routes improved and extended, prior to developing any new routes. This is explored in more detail in section 3.5.

2.15 There was a higher level of engagement with the consultation than anticipated, and the thousands of in-depth comments on particular cycle routes, highway issues, and potential route improvements required detailed analysis. These are a rich source of local insight which will be invaluable in developing the Cycle Network Plan. Equally, they were a complex dataset to analyse, and to incorporate into the finalised cycle routes. The analysis of the comments is set out in section 3.3.

2.16 During the consultation, the council also received comments from Ealing Cycling Campaign (ECC). ECC is a group of experienced and enthusiastic residents who know the cycle network in great detail, and their input was valuable for consideration alongside the resident consultation, e.g. their on-the-ground knowledge of potential route connections. ECC produced a proposed cycle route network of their own, which laid out routes across the borough. Officers have analysed their route suggestions and incorporated them into the indicative Cycle Network Plan where appropriate.

2.17 Delivering an ambitious network of cycle routes will face challenges beyond funding. Cycle lanes which keep cyclists separate from motor traffic are sometimes installed in the place of car parking spaces, and we recognise that some residents feel strongly about this reallocation of car parking space. The TIE Charter, which was adopted in June 2023, serves as the foundation for delivering the network: we will communicate openly with residents about our plans, consult with communities who live near proposed routes, and ensure we are gathering the right data to support the implementation of the cycle routes.

3. Key Implications

3.1 Two key outputs emerged from the consultation, the previous work on cycle routes,

and the input from ECC. These were:

- The overall Cycle Network Plan
- Detailed analysis of the findings from the resident consultation.

3.2 The overall Cycle Network Plan remains a key output. This serves as a map of Ealing's plans for cycle routes over the coming decade. It will show existing routes along with the proposed routes which will connect these up to provide a cohesive network across the borough. This plan takes account of all the information the council has gathered from residents and ECC, and existing knowledge of existing and planned cycle schemes. The plan functions at a strategic level for delivery across the borough, and aims to complement and not contradict plans for local cycle routes which may be developed in the next few years as part of regeneration or development schemes.

3.3 The map will also be published with details of how we plan to prioritise and implement the proposed routes. Prioritisation will be decided according to factors such as available funding (from S106 contributions, central government funding pots, etc.), options for connecting existing routes, and the opportunity to tie in with other proposed schemes.

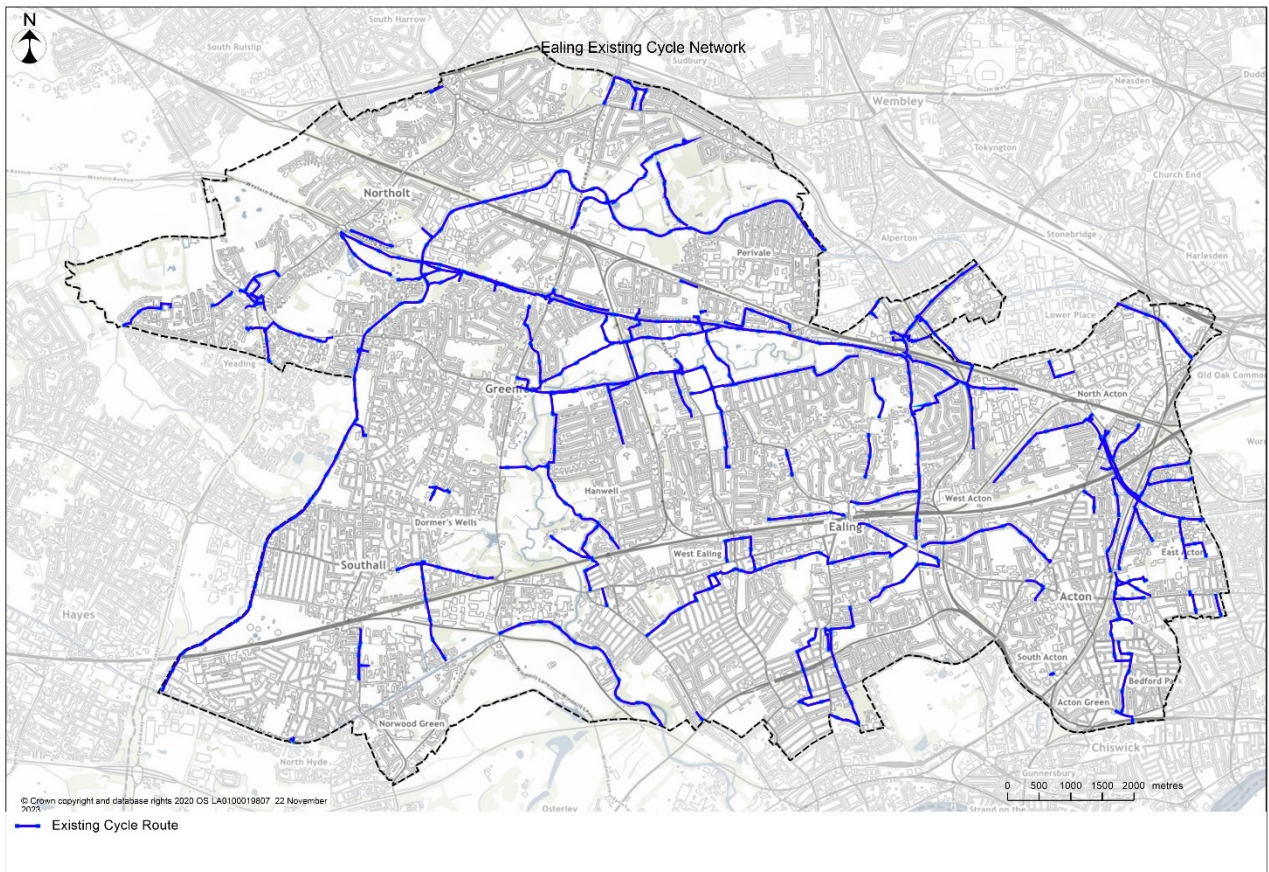
3.4 Resident feedback about prioritising existing route improvements, where they would like to cycle, and other detailed information about cycling in Ealing, provide an opportunity for the council to listen (as set out in our TIE Charter) to residents and develop concrete plans which address the issues they raised. It is also a rich data source to help the council prioritise and develop schemes across the borough, and wider associated issues such road safety, and air pollution.

3.5 The initial Cycle Network Plan:

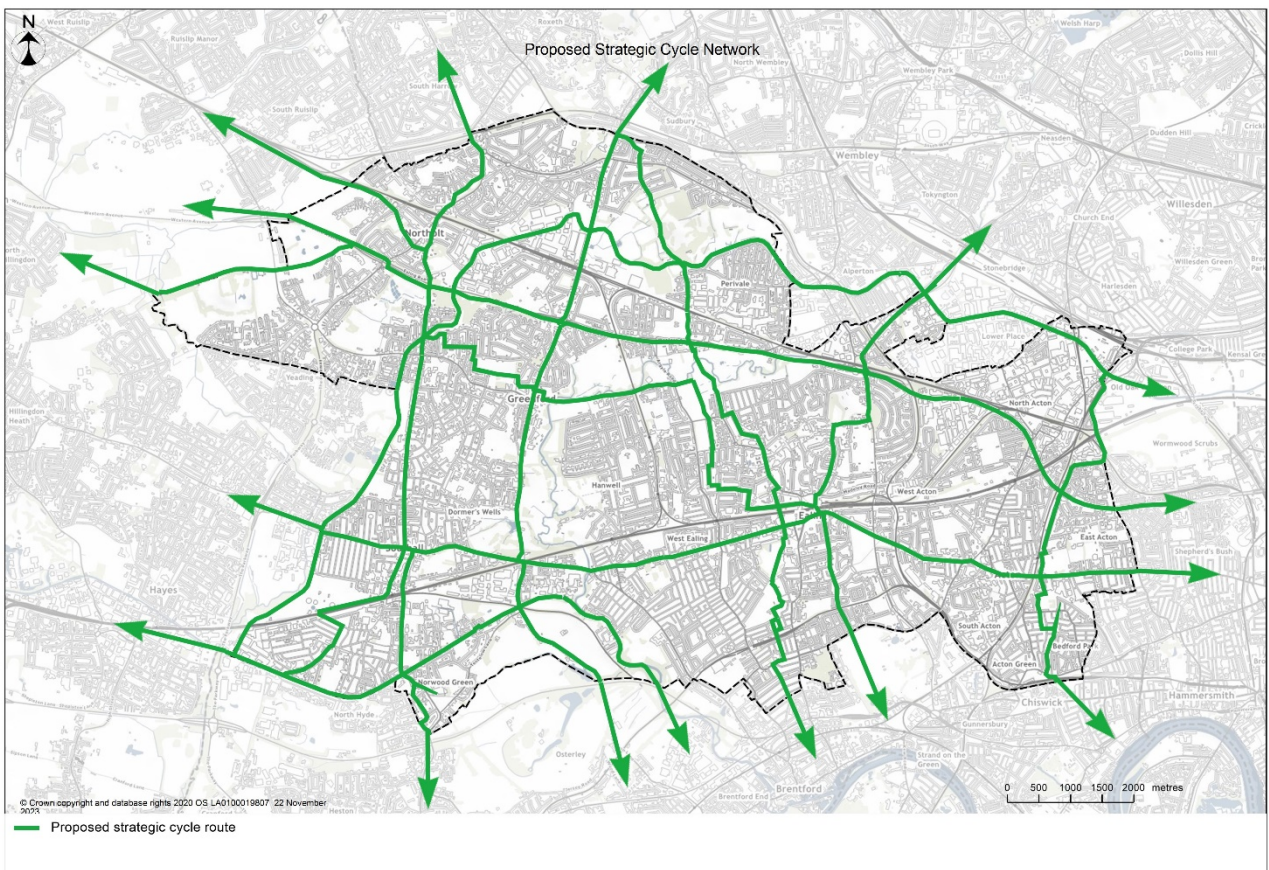
We have developed a network of cycle routes based on -

- existing infrastructure
- routes which align with the desire lines indicated by residents from the consultation
- routes proposed by ECC
- routes developed by officers.

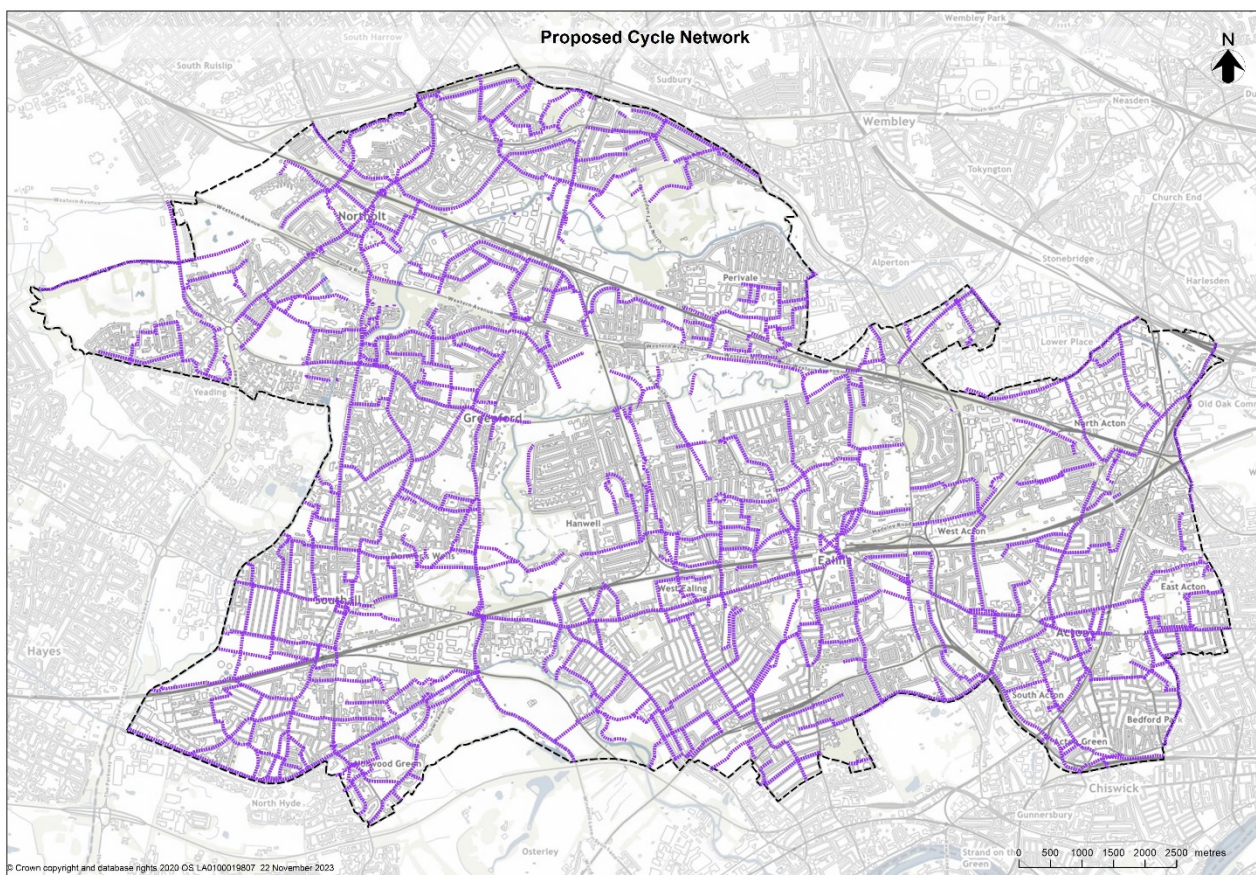
The map below shows existing cycle routes in Ealing, shown in dark blue. It indicates that although progress has been made to connect routes together, in much of the borough the route development has been somewhat piecemeal, as outlined in 2.6.



We have then devised a network of strategic routes, shown below in green, which will enable cycling between town centres and along key routes such as the Uxbridge Road. Finally we have proposed a network of safe residential and off-road cycle routes to

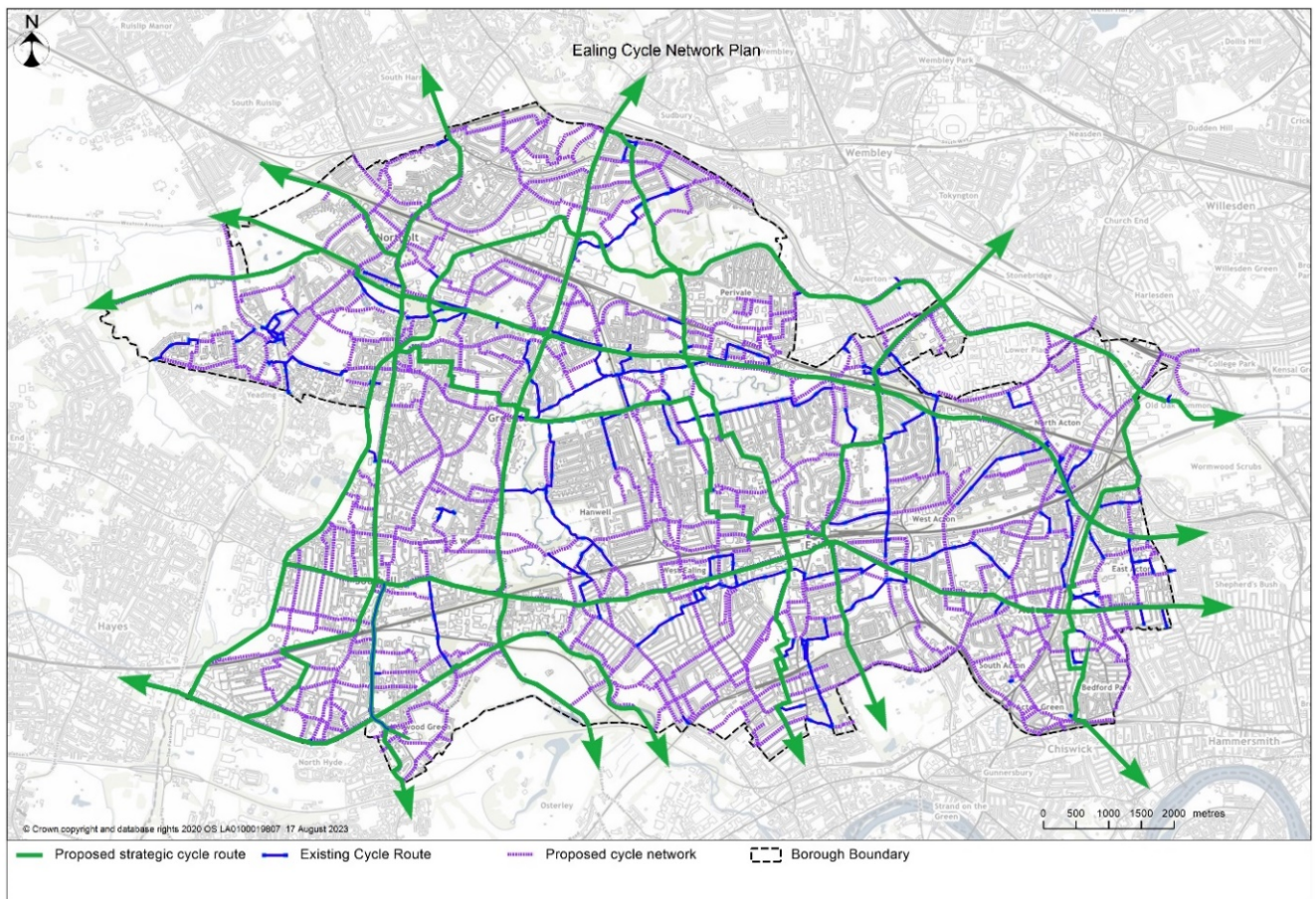


connect the existing routes and link to the strategic routes. These are shown below in purple.



The map below combines all of the above routes into a single Cycle Network Plan, and is indicative of how the final Cycle Network Plan will appear. The map is also provided in Appendix 2.

As in the above maps, the existing cycle network is shown in blue. Proposed new strategic routes (creating the most important connections) are shown in green, including their potential connectivity to neighbouring boroughs. The proposed new routes to link up this network are shown in purple.



3.6 Detailed findings from the consultation:

The consultation generated significant engagement and detailed responses, which indicates the high level of enthusiasm for cycling in Ealing and the number of residents who are keen for the council to do more to support it.

A key finding from the consultation was from the question which asked how Ealing should prioritise implementing the cycle network. Over 800 residents responded to this question, and the outline results are shown below.

These results indicate that residents favour the council prioritising the completion and improvement of existing routes, including addressing maintenance issues and poor connectivity, prior to the development of new routes. This tallies with the large number of comments addressing issues with existing routes.

How should the council prioritise implementing the cycle network?



✓ 800 answered - Could have chosen up to 3 choices ▶ 59 skipped 👁 870 viewed

Broadly, the sentiment from the consultation is that we need to prioritise connecting existing routes, dealing with maintenance issues and improving connectivity, before we further develop the longer-term cycle network .

This is reflected in the Cycle Network Plan, which links up (wherever possible) existing routes, especially where a small addition can join up longer routes. The proposed strategic routes would be a combination of new routes and extensions to existing strategic corridors (e.g. completion of a route along the Uxbridge Road), and will be developed in more detail over the longer term.

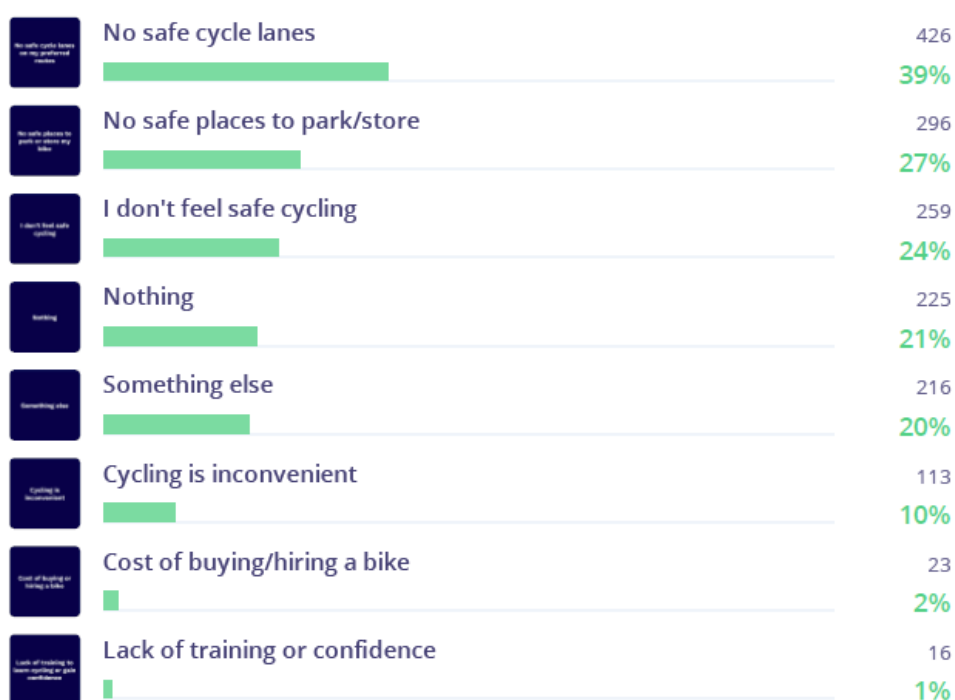
This focus on improving the current network and taking time to plan the future network aligns with the development of the new transport and active travel strategy.

Three of the consultation questions generated significant amounts of data, which has required further analysis since the consultation ended.

3.6.1 “What prevents you from cycling, or cycling more confidently?”

1,088 residents answered this question, as shown in the results from Give My View below:

What prevents you from cycling, or cycling more frequently and confidently?



✓ 1085 answered - Could have chosen up to 3 choices ▶ 0 skipped 👁 1102 viewed

We are tackling the issue of lack of safe cycle parking / storage through the roll-out of bike hangars across the borough. In line with our Council Plan commitment for at least 150 bike hangars in the borough by 2026, we have installed 54 hangars during 2023, which has more than doubled the number from March 2023. We are installing hangars where communities want them, to address long waiting lists and very high demand for safe cycle storage.

We also received 206 comments from residents who had answered 'Something else' to this question. We then grouped the comments into themes. The table below shows all the reasons which were given by more than 10 residents. Other reasons with smaller numbers of responses included concerns about air quality; not owning a bicycle; and not wanting cyclists or cycle infrastructure in the borough.

Factor preventing cycling	Proportion of comments
Disability / poor health / age	24%
Weather / hills / geography	15%
Poor highway surfaces / potholes / street cleaning	14%
Lack of / poor cycle infrastructure	10%
Poor driver behaviour / road safety	9%
Luggage / passengers / work vehicle	9%
Law / highway code enforcement	5%
Preference for other mode of transport	5%
No desire to cycle	5%
Journey time / distance	4%

The comments which related to specific issues, e.g. with road surface or enforcement, are now being evaluated by officers to identify the improvements

There were also 127 comments about poor driver behaviour, and 85 comments about enforcement of parking restrictions and/or the Highway Code.

3.6.3 *“Where would you like to cycle? Use pins to show start and end of a journey.”*

Residents provided 1,220 start and finish points in total. There were different numbers of start and end points, and the consultation platform did not provide automatic pairing of points, so connecting the points into routes has not been feasible. However, residents also provided over 500 comments indicating where they would like to cycle, which has been a valuable data source in developing the initial Cycle Network Plan.

The analysis has provided a list of identifiable actions (for example, delivering a particular cycle route) and lists of possible hot priorities to explore as cycle route schemes.

As in 3.3.2, the data has been broken down into three types of suggestion:

- ‘Quick wins’ of which 5 were suggested, for example removing broken glass from cycle lanes.
- ‘Short term improvements’ of which 182 were suggested, for example tackling rat-running and speeding along particular routes.
- ‘Long-term improvements’ of which 193 were suggested, for example safe cycle routes across railways and bridges where none currently exist.

3.7 **Next Steps**

Publishing the Cycle Network Plan enables the council to use funding strategically to deliver Ealing’s cycle network. It allows us to build a coherent ‘ask’ of TfL, where extra funding may become available. It also makes clear the scale of the challenge in delivering this network, and shows residents that we are aware of the scale of improvements needed to enable larger numbers of cycling journeys.

The findings from the consultation will be published for residents to view, in line with the Travel in Ealing Charter.

We have incorporated the findings from the consultation into the work programme in **Section 3.8**. During the next financial year we will develop a more fully-formed delivery plan, prioritising the routes and exploring potential funding options. This will continue to evolve and to be included in the council’s work programme over the coming years, as the funding context changes.

The council are also liaising with neighbouring boroughs to ensure the routes in the Cycle Network Plan align with other proposed routes. Aligning schemes along key routes, e.g. Boston Road / Boston Manor Road, will be a priority to reduce potential issues at borough boundaries.

Future statutory consultations on specific schemes will take place in accordance with the Travel in Ealing Charter, at the appropriate juncture in the schemes’ development.

3.8 Initial Delivery Programme

Aligning our ambition for cycling with the reality of reduced funding, while maintaining a longer-term perspective on what we want to deliver, is key.

There are two elements to our initial delivery programme:

1. Improving existing routes, in response to the resident consultation, through ‘quick wins’, straightforward route improvements, and the highway maintenance programme.
2. Developing new routes, in order to implement the Cycle Network Plan, through existing funding streams such as S106 contributions, and building a coherent plan for future routes in order to maximise future TfL funding.

1. Responding to the resident consultation.

Residents provided over 1,000 comments about improvements to existing cycle routes. Together with the overall response to improve existing routes prior to developing new ones, there is a clear mandate to make these improvements. They are divided into several categories:

Cycle Route Maintenance

Issue	Comments	Actions
Poor highway surface, potholes, lighting etc	142	We currently manage our highways according to the statutory requirements, investigating and considering remedial works for potholes more than 40mm in depth. However we intend to introduce a new level of investigation and potential remedial action of 20mm. It is anticipated this will provide not only safer streets for pedestrians and cyclists but also quicker and more cost-effective repairs.
Street cleaning	35	All cycle lanes will be explicitly included in the street cleansing schedule for regular cleaning. We will purchase smaller footway mechanical cleaners, which are able to clean segregated cycle lanes.
Hedge/branch trimming	14	As part of our safety inspections regime, our inspectors who are out and about on the public highway will report any hedges and overgrowths to the Parks and Tree departments for action. Although off-track cycle tracks are not included as part of our safety inspections, we will look at commencing routine inspection of these cycle tracks so defects can also be picked up and actioned.

Cycle Route Provision and Availability

Issue	Comments	Actions
Lack of cycle infrastructure	416	The development of the Cycle Network Plan aims to address this. Our ambition

		is to provide safe cycling routes across the borough.
Increase cycle lane physical segregation	284	This is dependent on TfL funding due to high cost, but we are aware of the need and are focusing on delivering existing and planned schemes. Current schemes include sections of the Uxbridge Road, with the ambition to join them up to complete the strategic route; Boston Road, connecting to Boston Manor Road.
Lack of cycle route designation	221	We are working with TfL to designate more residential roads as cycle routes, which in many cases requires only small changes, e.g. better signage or traffic calming measures. We are also planning to increase cycle signage on leisure and green routes.
Improve residential blue routes etc	163	As above, we are working with TfL to designate more residential roads as cycle routes. We are also ensuring the routes connect to each other rather than stopping / starting abruptly. The aim is to create a cohesive network of safe routes along residential roads, shared cycle/footpaths, along canals, etc.
Traffic lights	116	We are aware of junctions in the borough at which cyclists do not feel safe, due to a lack of markings or priority at traffic lights, or layouts which bring cyclists into conflict with motor traffic. One example is the junction of Uxbridge Road with Leopold Road and Wolverton Gardens. We are conducting traffic surveys in this area to understand how traffic is using the junction and what measures could make it safer. We will work with TfL to identify areas for improvement at this junction and other difficult junctions.
Cycle parking	36	We are delivering new cycle parking each year as part of the TfL funded programme. This includes both Sheffield stands and bike hangars. We will be installing 270 Sheffield stands in 23/24, at locations including schools, stations, and high streets / town centres. We are also delivering new cycle parking at Southall station, which is planned to be complete by July 2024. In addition, we are making excellent progress towards our manifesto commitment of 150 bike hangars by 2026; we have more than doubled the number of hangars since

		March 2023, and there are now 98 in the borough.
Cargo bike issue / cycle lane too narrow	21	We are signing up to the Borough Charter for cargo bikes, which helps boroughs understand how to accommodate cargo bikes in cycle scheme planning, and ensure they are catered for in cycle routes, cycling parking etc. Going forward, wherever feasible, routes will be implemented which have sufficient space for cargo bikes to safely use them. The Charter also helps boroughs make it easier for residents to switch to cargo bikes, which Ealing is already doing through our cargo bike hire scheme. We are exploring more potential schemes to support residents as well as businesses to use cargo bikes.

Road User Behaviour

Issue	Comments	Actions
Parking in cycle lanes	167	We are working with the enforcement team to tackle this issue. We also want to improve the reporting function on our website to make it easier for residents to report as an issue, to enable quicker and more consistent enforcement. We also want to tighten restrictions, i.e. making more cycle lanes mandatory, to reduce the parking issue along routes including Uxbridge Road. We will confirm next steps once the process for tightening restrictions is fully understood.
Poor driver behaviour	127	Driver behaviour is complex, and depends on factors including road layouts, risk perceptions, and individual circumstances. However, there is more we can do to limit the ability of poor driver behaviour to impinge on cyclists' safety and enjoyment of the roads, e.g. increasing segregation from traffic, improving residential routes, and expanding the network of off-road routes. The delivery of the Cycle Network Plan aims to achieve all of these.
Law / highway code enforcement	85	We are aware that some inconsiderate drivers continue to exceed the 20mph limit which we rolled out to all borough roads in 2022. Enforcement is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police and the council has no powers in this matter, but Ealing is continuing to lobby

		for powers to enforce 20mph zones ourselves.
Poor cyclist behaviour	8	Unsafe cycle infrastructure, which forces cyclists to ride among motor traffic, can lead to risky behaviour. By providing more cycling routes, we aim to reduce conflicts between cyclists and motor traffic (whatever the cause) and ensure that active travel becomes a safe and natural choice.

Traffic Measures

Issue	Comments	Actions
Reduce 'rat running'	24	Where 'rat running' is identified as a problem, we first take steps to understand the specifics of the problem, as it's different in each local area. We then evaluate potential measures to alleviate the problem, including one-way roads and closures to motor vehicles. This is done through engagement with residents and key stakeholders to ensure the schemes fit the needs of each area. Tackling rat-running is part of a wider shift towards prioritising active and sustainable travel, so we are also exploring bolder ways to reallocate space from cars and make streets safer and more welcoming places to be. We will be bringing forward pilot schemes to tackle rat running in 2024, in line with 'Free-range Urban Neighbourhood' (FUN) principles, co-designing with residents to find a solution that works.
Bus stop concerns	20	We are working with TfL, who are responsible for bus stop locations, to ensure they are suitable and meet the needs of all road users.
Remove parking	20	Removal of car parking is often vital for delivery of cycle routes. However, we recognise that it is also often contentious, and that some residents feel strongly about it. Approximately half of Ealing's kerbside is currently used for car parking, and we are in the early stages of developing fairer ways of sharing our streets more equally with all road users, including walkers and cyclists.
Traffic calming measures	18	We have changed our approach to monitoring speeds and traffic volumes, conducting surveys at consistent times of

		year rather than ad-hoc, to ensure a better dataset is gathered, and using this to prioritise projects for traffic calming where they are needed most, in consultation with residents.
Remove cycle infrastructure	15	We will not be removing cycle infrastructure, as this would conflict with our commitment to supporting active travel and making it easier for residents to cycle for everyday journeys.
Re-introduce LTNs	10	We will not be re-introducing LTNs, which were a specific scheme funded by the government in 2020-2021. We have listened to resident feedback and removed all but two of Ealing's LTNs. However, we know that residents in many areas want to see restrictions on traffic, speeding, rat running or other problems. As part of the new Transport Strategy, we will begin to explore other options with residents for how to tackle these problems, listening to communities and working together to try different solutions.
Speed bump concerns	9	We are introducing sinusoidal ('cyclist-friendly') speed humps across the borough. Many roads are already complete and we are continuing the rollout.
Personal safety	9	We are currently rolling out enhanced LED lighting across the borough, prioritising areas which have been reported as having poor lighting, to help residents feel safer along cycle routes. Concerns about personal safety while cycling predominantly relate to lack of safe infrastructure, which will be addressed through delivering the Cycle Network Plan.
School traffic	4	We have introduced 24 school streets in the borough, with a target to achieve 50 school streets by 2026. We also continue to engage with schools as part of School Travel programme.

2. Delivering the Cycle Network Plan

Residents provided hundreds of suggestions for route and connection improvements. Some of these are already part of specific existing or planned cycling schemes; some are already on the Cycle Network Plan map; and a small number will not be feasible to deliver. We have collated and analysed the suggestions into a list of 94 frequently mentioned routes or issues, and added comments on their viability. This list is included

as Appendix 3.

Funding is the main challenge for delivery, and there is greater clarity on available funding for the next 1-3 years than for the next decade. Therefore, we can plan schemes with greater accuracy up to 2025. A sample of schemes and their funding sources up to 2025 are shown below:

Scheme – cycle route	Estimated cost	Funding source
Greenford Road (Rockware Avenue to Whitton Avenue)	£50k	S106 contributions
Kensington Road (Ruislip Road to Ealing Road)	£1.1m	Levelling Up Fund
Small Acton connectivity schemes: Mill Hill Terrace, Newton Avenue, Mill Hill Grove / Edgecote Close	£18k	S106 contributions
Small Acton connectivity scheme: Oaklands access	£10k	S106 contributions
Gunnersbury Crescent contraflow cycle lane	£7k	S106 contributions

Scheme – junction improvements	Estimated cost	Funding source
Uxbridge Road corridor – Iron Bridge	£470k for initial phase (design, engagement and part construction)	LIP funding
Ealing-Greenford Broadway cycleway – east end of Gordon Road	£40k	LIP funding
York Rd and Rosebank Way at A40 – cycle safety for A40	£40k	S106 contributions
Boston Manor Station crossing improvements for 2-way cycling	£50k	TfL Boston Road funding

Section 106 contributions from developments across the borough will play a key role in funding the Cycle Network Plan. We have approximately £1.2m of S106 outstanding funds currently available to commit over the next 5 years for cycling and walking improvements. There is also £10m of S106 contributions for road safety improvements, parts of which are eligible to be used for cycling improvements.

These schemes, along with S106 funding, other developer funding opportunities, and the LIP programme each year, will help to deliver parts of the network.

In addition, the strategic routes are aligned with the spatial plans contained within the draft Regulation 19 Local Plan, ensuring that planned priority and secondary active travel routes for each town are aligned with feasible schemes. While the funding context means the schemes are usually piecemeal by necessity, having the agreed Cycle Network Plan in place will enable us to connect schemes as they are implemented, maintaining awareness of the bigger picture and ambition for the network across Ealing, rather than creating disconnected routes.

The overall network of strategic routes will be developed over the longer term, in conjunction with other projects across Ealing, particularly the development of the

spatial plans for each of the seven towns. Funding for this period is still uncertain. We will continue to develop schemes and build a cohesive 'ask' of TfL for future LIP funding each year, and to identify other funding sources where possible.

3.9 Wider strategy

As the council's existing Transport Strategy (2019) focused on the initial 2019-22 period, we have commenced a wide-ranging strategic review to develop a new Transport and Active Travel strategy.

The development of a new Transport and Active Travel strategy will provide a new bold, ambitious framework which will build on the positive achievements made to date and help us work collaboratively to better address our key challenges. The strategy will not be developed in isolation and will be co-designed and developed on a place-based and 'whole system' basis to facilitate impact, and not simply to sit on a shelf. It will set out clearly our ambitions for Transport and Active Travel and how we will work together to achieve these ambitions.

Furthermore, the new strategy will also provide a clear, strategic, and sustainable approach to inform effective future investment into infrastructure and services that support, facilitate, and enable Transport and Active Travel in Ealing.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The proposed routes in the Cycle Network Plan, as well as the proposed improvements and interventions to existing routes, are dependent on funding to the Highways and Transport teams from TfL and other sources e.g. S106.
- 4.2 TfL funding was c.£2m per annum, prior to the pandemic, but post-pandemic this has been substantially reduced. In 2023/24 the funding for various cycle improvements including cycle training funded through TfL is c.£0.87m.
- 4.3 Cycle infrastructure costs are significant e.g. delivering 1km of segregated track costs c.£1m. Given the funding constraints, prioritising the schemes which deliver the best value for money is essential. The council will work closely with TfL to ensure the Cycle Network Plan schemes are funded by TfL and other funding sources such as S106.

5. Legal

- 5.1 The council has a number of different powers under which it can introduce traffic and highways schemes, including in particular the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and each has its own statutory consultation process.
- 5.2 Where schemes are introduced by exercising powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 by virtue of section 122 of the Act, the council must exercise such functions to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway...' and having regards to matters including the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises and the effect on the amenities of any locality affected and any other matter appearing to the council to be relevant.

6. Value for Money

- 6.1 The Cycle Network Plan will support more residents to cycle as part of their everyday journeys, by ensuring that there are safe routes across the borough. Cycle routes vary in cost depending on the level of segregation from road traffic required, the design scope, accompanying works and many other factors. The council will ensure all schemes delivered will achieve value for money through rigorous cost-benefit analyses.

7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

- 7.1 Sustainability Impact Appraisals would be conducted for each cycle route scheme as required, at the appropriate juncture.

8. Risk Management

- 8.1 The Cycle Network Plan lays out Ealing's ambition for a network of cycle routes. However, this network is reliant on funding, primarily from TfL to enable this to happen. As such the most significant risk is that funding over the coming years is insufficient for the continued development of the borough-wide Cycle Network Plan and implementation of the associated workstreams.
- 8.2 This is mitigated by the various shorter-term, 'quick win' interventions which would further develop the route network in the borough without requiring the most expensive types of infrastructure.
- 8.3 As the Cycle Network Plan develops further into specific schemes, the council will undertake risk management in accordance with good practice, to ensure risks are accounted for and mitigated wherever possible.

9. Community Safety

- 9.1 Cycle schemes in Ealing are delivered in line with the London Cycle Design Standards (LCDS) and other relevant best practice guidance. This ensures that safety and accessibility aspects are fully considered as part of any cycle schemes, both in design aspects (e.g. lighting, road surface) and ensuring the safety of all road users.

10. Links to the 3 Priorities for the Borough

- 10.1 *Creating good jobs: Transport links throughout the Borough will be improved, particularly sustainable modes and orbital journeys. This will help local people access jobs and employers attract local people more effectively.*
- 10.2 *Tackling the climate crisis: As part of all transport schemes the council will ensure that transport emissions, road safety, and personal security issues are fully considered. Cycling is the most energy-efficient of all forms of transport.*
- 10.3 *Fighting inequality: Transport links throughout the Borough will be further improved, particularly sustainable modes and orbital journeys. This will further enable local people to access education, health, and other services more easily.*

11. Equalities and Community Cohesion

11.1 The public sector equality duty applies to the making of traffic schemes and the needs of those with protected characteristics are an integral part of the design and assessment process. Schemes for specific cycle routes, which will be consulted on, will require an EAA and these will be published at the appropriate time in the development of the scheme.

12. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications

12.1 Schemes indicated in the Cycle Network Plan will be delivered by the Transport and Highways teams. There is existing capacity and expertise within the teams, but the delivery of such an ambitious route network will require extensive resourcing over the coming years.

13. Property and Assets

13.1 n/a.

14. Any other implications

14.1 None.

15. Consultation

15.1 Past consultation is detailed in Section 2, and in Appendix 1 - Cycle Network initial consultation results.

15.2 Future consultations on specific schemes will take place in accordance with the Travel in Ealing Charter, at the appropriate juncture in the schemes' development.

16. Timescale for Implementation

16.1 The initial Cycle Network Plan outlines Ealing's ambition for cycle routes over the next decade, so the timescale for implementing the routes is 2023-2033. The council will also be implementing specific improvements and smaller schemes throughout that period.

17. Appendices

1. Cycle Network initial consultation results, 4 August 2023
2. Indicative Cycle Network Plan, 17 August 2023
3. Detailed data from Cycle Network consultation, 5 October 2023

18. Additional Background Information

None

19. Report Consultation

Name of consultee	Department	Date sent to consultee	Response received from consultee	Comments appear in report para:

Cllr Deirdre Costigan	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Action			
Cllr Josh Blacker	Cabinet Member for Healthy Lives			
Nicky Fiedler	Strategic Director of Housing and Environment	26/10/2023		
Emily Hill	Strategic Director of Resources			
Earl McKenzie	Assistant Director Streets and Direct Services	26/10/2023		
Jessica Tamayao	Assistant Director of Strategic Property and Investment	09/11/2023		
Alice Rowland	Head of Legal (Commercial)	09/11/2023		
Twahid Islam	Senior Regeneration Lawyer	09/11/2023		
Russell Dyer	Assistant Director, Accountancy			
Yalini Gunarajah	Finance Manager, Place			
Abdi Moallin	Finance Business Advisor, Place	09/11/2023		

Report History

Decision type: Key decision	Urgency item? No
Report no.:	Report author and contact for queries:
20230809 [INITIAL DRAFT]	Emily Shovlar, Principal Transport Planner
20230824 [REVISED DRAFT]	Emily Shovlar, Principal Transport Planner Eugene Minogue, Service Improvement Lead for Highways, Transport and Parking
20230831 [UPDATED DRAFT]	Eugene Minogue, Service Improvement Lead for Highways, Transport and Parking
20230901 [REPORT DEFERRED]	Eugene Minogue, Service Improvement Lead for Highways, Transport and Parking
20231026 [REVISED DRAFT]	Emily Shovlar, Principal Transport Planner Tony Singh, Chief Highways Engineer

20231109

[UPDATED DRAFT
FOR INITIAL
CIRCULATION]

Eugene Minogue, Service Improvement Lead for
Highways, Transport and Parking

Appendix 1 – Cycle Network initial consultation results, 4 August 2023

Appendix 2 – Indicative Cycle Network Plan, 17 August 2023

Appendix 3 - Detailed data from Cycle Network consultation, 5 October 2023

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Ealing Cycle Network consultation results

Generated 04-08-2023

Users



Total visits GA*

1511

visits to the project

* UA - legacy



Voters

1118

number of people voted



Votes

6051

questions answered



Emails

0

unique emails from voters leaving open feedback



Qualitative answers

1608

pieces of written feedback



Total visits GA4*

0

visits to the project

* GA4 - new

Surveys



Ealing Cycle Route Survey

1118

voters

Segmentation

Which part of Ealing do you spend most of your time in (e.g. work, live, study)?





Multiple image choice

How often do you currently cycle in the borough?



✓ 1114 answered - Could have chosen 1 choice ⏩ 5 skipped 👁 1129 viewed



Multiple image choice

How would you describe your confidence in cycling in the borough?



✓ 1083 answered - Could have chosen 1 choice ⏩ 17 skipped 👁 1119 viewed



Multiple image choice

What prevents you from cycling, or cycling more frequently and confidently?



✓ 1085 answered - Could have chosen up to 3 choices ▶▶ 0 skipped 👁 1102 viewed



|T Quick answer

What else prevents you from cycling, or cycling more?

1 possible answer

✓ 206 answered ▶▶ 8 skipped 👁 216 viewed

Fact media

Cycle routes shown are considered the most important for cyclists – we have made them more convenient, safe and signposted. They can be on or off road, separated from traffic or along quiet streets.



1078 viewed



≡ Fact text

Tell us if any of the existing cycle routes at the next screen need improving. Zoom in/out on the map as needed, then place up to five 'cycle' icons onto any of the existing routes and leave feedback to tell us what improvements are needed.

👁 1069 viewed

 Annotate map

Are there any existing routes/quietways that need improving? Place up to 5 pins.



Bicycle

1809 reactions / 61% feedback



100%

✓ 565 answered - Could have chosen up to 5 choices ⏩ 406 skipped 👁 1061 viewed



≡ Fact text

Also tell us where else you would like to cycle, alongside the existing cycle routes and quietways in the borough shown on the screen.

Zoom in/out on the map as needed. Drag Start and Finish pins onto the map to show start and end points of a cycle journey. Use the feedback form to describe the location. You can tell us about two cycle routes you'd like by using two pairs of pins.

👁 956 viewed

Annotate map

Where would you like to cycle? Use pins to show start and end of a journey.



Start

634 reactions / 29% feedback



52%



Finish

586 reactions / 18% feedback



48%

✓ 434 answered - Could have chosen up to 4 choices ▶▶ 459 skipped 👁 941 viewed

 Reorder

In which areas should we create more cycle routes?

Highest priority

- 1 Roads linking town centres 1.95
- 2 In town centres 2.28
- 3 Off-road routes, e.g. canals 2.83
- 4 Quiet and residential roads 2.94

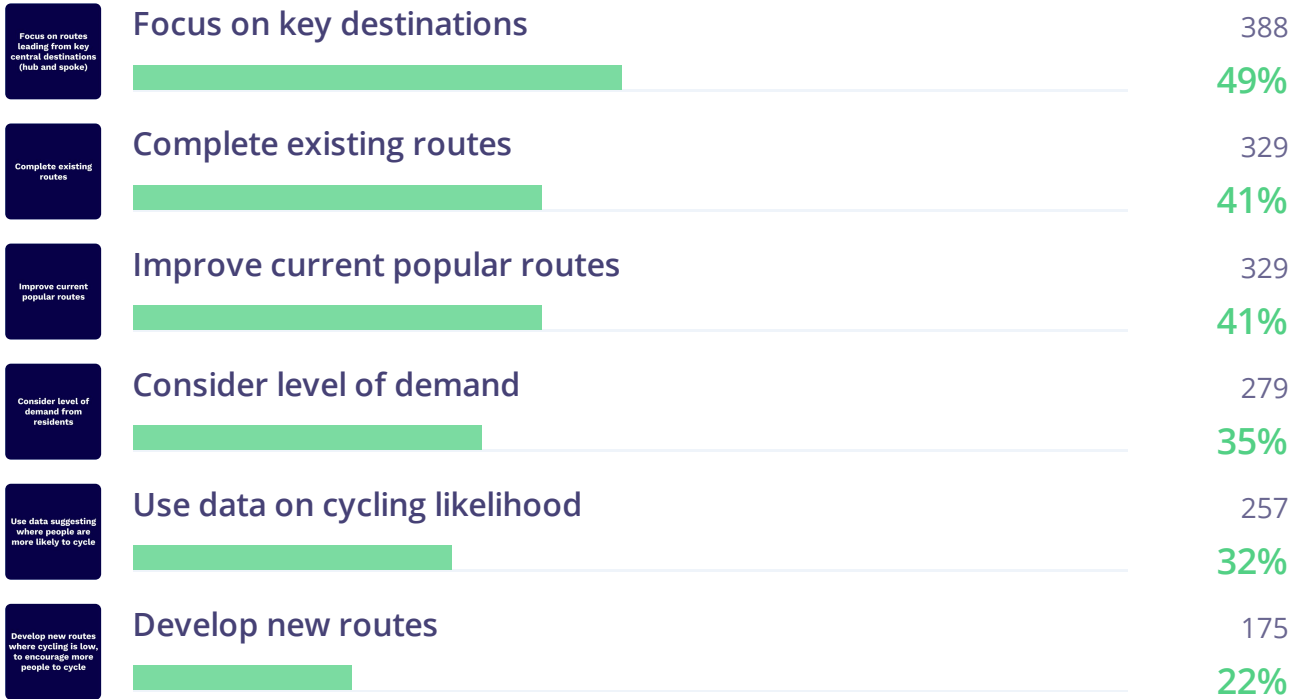
Lowest priority

✓ 764 answered ▶▶ 106 skipped 👁 893 viewed



Multiple image choice

How should the council prioritise implementing the cycle network?



✓ 800 answered - Could have chosen up to 3 choices ▶▶ 59 skipped 👁 870 viewed



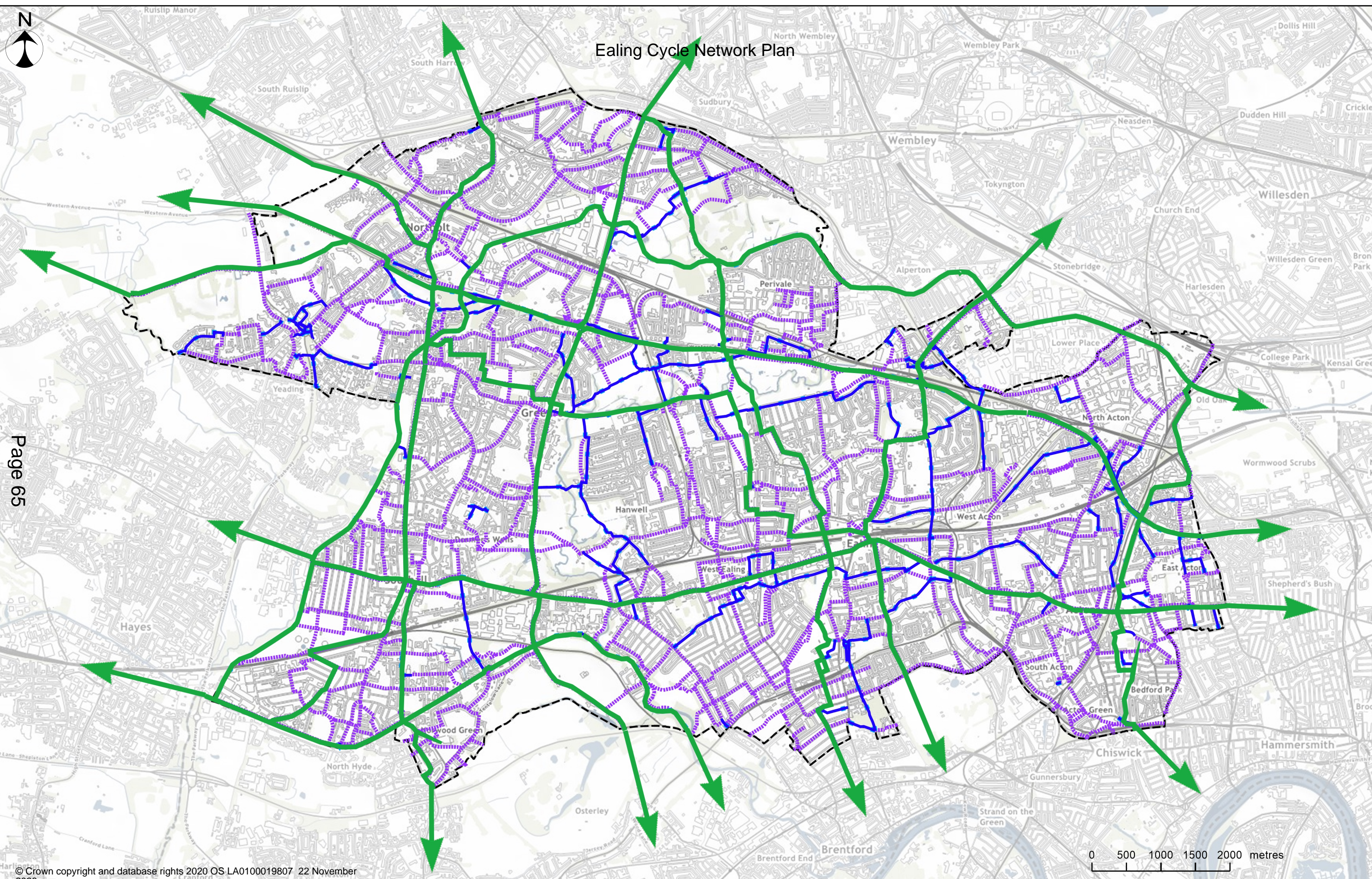
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Ealing Cycle Network Plan

Page 65



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— Proposed strategic cycle route
 — Existing Cycle Route
 - - - Proposed cycle network

0 500 1000 1500 2000 metres

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Year	Project Title	Project ID	Project Type	Project Status	Project Description	Project Location	Project Start	Project End	Project Budget	Project Funding	Project Impact	Project Notes
2000
2001
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2030



Report for:
ACTION

Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	YES (Part) Appendix A contains Exempt Information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972
Title	Children's Services Capital Approvals
Responsible Officer	Tamara Quinn, Assistant Director, Planning, Resources and Service Development, Ext. 8444, E-mail: TQuinn@ealing.gov.uk
Author	Laurence Field, Ext. 5425, E-mail: fieldl@ealing.gov.uk
Portfolio	Cllr Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, A Fairer Start
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	6 th December 2023
Implementation Date if Not Called In	18 th December 2023
Affected Wards	All
Keywords/Index	High Priority Condition Works; Invite and Evaluate Tenders.

Purpose of Report:

To inform Cabinet of proposed High Priority Condition capital works to invest £9.8m in school buildings, commencing in the Summer 2024 holiday period.

To note the projects and, where necessary, provide authority to invite and evaluate tenders to deliver the high priority condition works programme in line with the Authority's building programme under the Asset Management Plan (AMP) to maintain school places and improve facilities for children, families and the wider community.

Notes the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) 3c Grant funding bid and authorises funding inception and associated procurement, if successful.

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1** Agrees the list of proposed High Priority Condition Works as set out in Confidential Appendix A, and that further work will take place to finalise detailed schemes.
- 1.2** Authorises the Assistant Director: Planning, Resources and Service Development to invite and evaluate tenders or make call offs from appropriate frameworks or dynamic purchasing systems, including where these exceed £0.500m, in accordance with their rules for the works contracts for the schemes set out in Confidential Appendix A.
- 1.3** Delegates to the Assistant Director: Planning, Resources and Service Development authority to award contracts for the schemes, where these exceed £0.500m, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder and the Strategic Director, Resources, set out in Confidential Appendix A.

- 1.4** If the bid for Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) 3c Grant funding of up to £2.235m is successful, delegates authority to the Assistant Director: Planning Resources and Service development, to procure the appointment of a delivery agent in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs) to manage and deliver Phase 3c, and to approve the inception of up to £2.235m into the capital programme; this will be funded by the PSDS grant. Also, in addition, agrees match funding of approximately £0.525m to be funded from the existing approved High Priority Condition programme.
- 1.5** Approves the inclusion of Grant funding for High Priority Condition Works and associated spend into the capital programme in 2024/25 from the Schools Condition Allocation Grant once the 2024/25 final allocation has been announced; and
- 1.6** Authorises the Assistant Director: Planning, Resources and Service Development to seek all necessary Planning and Statutory Approvals for the schemes described in this report.

2. Reason for Decision and Options Considered

- 2.1** The decisions are required to enable the Council to progress with capital works to schools.
- 2.2** Under the Council's Constitution, Cabinet approval is required to proceed with schemes over £5m per annum in value, Portfolio Holder approval is required in order to proceed with schemes between £0.500m and £5m per annum, and the schemes up to £0.500m per annum fall within Director delegated powers. As all of the schemes are to be undertaken during the same time period, authority is being sought from Cabinet for all of the projects in this report rather than submitting separate reports for smaller numbers of projects to Cabinet, the Portfolio Holder or Director.

3. Key Implications

- 3.1** The outcome of the High Priority Condition works schemes described in this report is to carry out the Council's statutory duty to provide a safe environment for staff and pupils and maintain school places. The majority of the works described in Confidential Appendix A cannot be carried out while the schools are in operation. These works will need to be carefully planned and co-ordinated with the schools so that they are largely completed by the beginning of the autumn term 2024. In order to achieve this, the tender procedure, award of contract and contract mobilisation for each contract must be fitted into a relatively short period of time.
- 3.2** High Priority Condition works have been identified in various schools where existing building fabric elements and systems are beyond their expected and reliable working life and where there is a high risk of failure which has the potential to lead to school closures or significant disruption. The works include: fire alarm replacements, structural works, asbestos removal and reinstatement works (requiring refurbishment and demolition surveys, by accredited providers, using controlled processes and methodologies), replacement of roof coverings and other building fabric elements, provision of essential electrical refurbishment, or replacement works in the form of distribution boards, switchgear, wiring, lightning protection, replacement of heating systems and radiators, and replacement of hot and cold water systems. The proposed list of projects with the estimated outturn costs is set out in Confidential Appendix A.

4. Financial

- 4.1** The total estimated cost of the high priority condition works proposed is £9.866m to be fully funded from the High Priority Condition Works budget in the Schools Service Capital programme and Government School Condition Allocations grant for 2024/25. This includes £5.950m base school condition grant 2023/24, and £0.459m S106 carried over from 2022/23, plus the further additional school condition grant anticipated for 2024/25 as noted at Recommendation 1.5 in the report, for which the precise amount is, as yet unknown.
- 4.2** This School Condition Allocations funding is grant allocated to Ealing by the Department for Education (DfE) to address high priority condition works across the schools' estate in the borough. The approved capital programme contains £5.950m in 2024/25 for High Priority Condition Works which is grant carried forward from 2023/24. A further grant allocation for Ealing for 2024/25 will be announced around April 2024 and will be added to the existing funds in the capital programme.
- 4.3** The 2024/25 allocation is anticipated to be sufficient to undertake the planned programme of works for 2024/25. However, if the 2024/25 allocation is lower than estimated, the scope of the works will be scaled back following a further risk assessment and prioritisation exercise, to ensure that no capital spending is above the grant allocation. If the actual grant allocation is higher than estimated, then the next highest priority works may be included. The 2021/22 allocation was £6m. The 2022/23 allocation was £5.971m. And the 2023/24 grant allocation was £5.950m.
- 4.4** The bid for the earlier rounds of Government PSDS 3 Salix Grant funding for projects commencing in 2022 and 2023 were successful, and the 2023 Phase 3b Grant funds £3.006m of the costs for the 7 schemes being progressed through it, with the Council funding the balance. A bid for the next round of Government PSDS 3c Salix Grant funding has been submitted by the Council, which includes further Condition-related school projects. If the bid is successful, it would be anticipated to contribute £2.235m to the heating projects, resulting in a reduction in the cost of these projects to the Council of this amount. The Council's contribution to the PSDS 3c projects would then reduce to an estimated £0.525m.

Table 1 shows the revised High Priority Condition Works grant in the capital programme.

Table 1: Capital Programme: High Priority Condition Works

Scheme	Funding Source	2023/24 £m Estimate	2024/25 £m Estimate	Total 2023- 25 £m Estimate
High Priority Condition Works – currently in capital programme	Grant	0.285	-	0.285
High Priority Condition Works – grant allocations for 22/23 & 23/24	Grant	5.971	5.950	11.921
High Priority Condition Works	S106	0.459	-	0.459
Total		6.715	5.950	12.665

4.5 The Council's Schools Property team and Projects Delivery Unit will manage the budgets for the individual High Priority Condition Works projects and the overall programme will be carefully monitored. Financial risks will be added to the risk registers for each project as detailed in item 8.1.

5. Legal

The tender processes to be followed for the contracts for the schemes described in this report will be compliant with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended) and in accordance with the relevant framework or dynamic purchasing system as applicable.

The local authority has a duty (section 542(2) Education Act 1996; School Premises Regulations 2012) in respect of the schools which it maintains to ensure that school buildings are maintained to prescribed standards.

A local authority, as an employer, has a general health and safety duty for employees and others who may be affected (Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974).

A local authority must manage the risk from asbestos in community school buildings (Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012)

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Council as landlord must ensure that its buildings are safe from fire and that it carries out regular and periodical risk assessments.

6. Value For Money

Specifications for the works for each scheme described in this report will be prepared by the Council's in-house technical team and tenders will be obtained and evaluated in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The specifications will be designed to meet statutory requirements and provide value for money, whilst also taking account of longevity (life cycle), quality, energy saving, maintenance, and the relatively short period of time available to complete the works in the schools' summer holiday. This will help ensure that the benefits from the funding are maximised.

During the execution of the projects, regular progress review meetings will be held to ensure projects are being executed to approved budgets and timescales.

7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

The proposals will include an assessment of the impact on sustainability as outlined within the Council's procurement policies.

8. Risk Management

There are established processes for managing Capital projects and risks are identified as part of the project management process. The tendering processes will comply with best practice and be fully compliant with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the requirements under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) as appropriate. Risk Registers will be prepared for all of the projects, and these will be updated and managed until completion of the projects.

9. Community Safety

None

10. Links to the 3 Priorities for the Borough

The project is linked to 'Fighting inequality - that blights too many lives and disproportionately holds back all too many people from achieving their dreams and aspirations.' priority.

11. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

An Equalities Assessment has been carried out for the projects described in this report.

12. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

None.

13. Property and Assets

This report deals with schools' property and assets.

14. Any other implications:

None

15. Consultation

Consultation has taken place with the Portfolio Holder. Extensive consultations have been/will be carried out with the relevant schools, partner consultants and contractors on the projects described in this report.

16. Timetable for Implementation

Cabinet Approval	6 th December 2023
Consultation with schools, scoping, validation and finalising schemes	18 th December 2023
Design and preparation of specifications	January/February 2024
Tender invitations and evaluations	April/May 2024
Award of contracts (Contract Sealing)	May/June 2024
Start works on site	29 th July 2024
Completion of Works	30 th August 2024

17. Appendices

Confidential Appendix A. List of Proposed High Priority Condition works projects with estimated budgets.

18. Background Information

- DfE Advice on standards for school premises for local authorities, proprietors, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies (March 2015)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410294/Advice_on_standards_for_school_premises.pdf

Consultation

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent to consultee	Date response received	Comments appear in paragraph:
Internal				
Cllr Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal	Portfolio Holder, A Fairer Start	9/11/23	9/11/23	Throughout
Robert South	Strategic Director Children' Services	9/11/23	9/11/23	Throughout
Tamara Quinn	Assistant Director Planning, Resources and Service Development	9/11/23	9/11/23	Throughout
Justin Morley	Head of Legal Services (Litigation)	2/11/23		
Kathleen Ennis	Principal Lawyer (Housing and Social Care)	7/11/23	22/11/23	5
Chuhr Nijjar	Senior Contracts Lawyer	2/11/23		
Afam Ajoh	Contracts & Project Lawyer	2/11/23	3/11/23	1
Russell Dyer	Assistant Director, Accountancy	2/11/23		
Adrian Moody	Category Lead	2/11/23		
Katherine Ball	Finance Manager Capital and Projects	2/11/23	9/11/23	1,4
Kamaljit Kaur	Interim Finance Business Manager - Education	2/11/23	9/11/23	4
External				
	eg voluntary organisation			

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
Key decision	No
Report no.:	Report author and contact for queries:
	Laurence Field, Schools Property/Programme Manager; Ext. 5425

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Full Equalities Analysis Assessment

1. Proposal Summary Information	
EAA Title	Children’s Services Capital Approvals – 2024 High Priority Condition capital works for schools
Please describe your proposal?	Schemes
Is it HR Related?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Corporate Purpose	Cabinet Decision

1. What is the Initiative/Function/Policy/Project/Scheme (<i>pick one</i>) looking to achieve? Who will be affected?
<p>The scheme is the High Priority Condition capital works for schools to take place in the Summer 2024 holiday period.</p> <p>The works include: fire alarm replacements, structural works, asbestos removal and reinstatement works (requiring refurbishment and demolition surveys, by accredited providers, using controlled processes and methodologies), replacement of external roof coverings and other building fabric elements, provision of essential electrical refurbishment, or replacement works in the form of distribution boards, switchgear, wiring, replacement of heating systems and radiators and replacement of hot and cold water systems.</p> <p>The proposed list of projects with the estimated outturn costs is set out in Confidential Appendix A of the Cabinet report “Children’s Services Capital Approvals” 06 December 2023.</p>

2. What will the impact of you proposal be?
<p>High Priority Condition works have been identified in various schools where existing building fabric elements and systems are beyond their expected and reliable working life and where there is a high risk of failure which has the potential to lead to school closures or significant disruption.</p> <p>The outcome of the High Priority Condition schemes described in the report will be to carry out the Council’s statutory duty to provide a safe environment for staff and pupils and maintain school places.</p>

Full Equalities Analysis Assessment

2. Impact on Groups having a Protected Characteristic

AGE: <i>A person of a particular age or being within an age group.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. This proposal focuses on school age children, school staff and other users as service users and should have a neutral impact.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a.

DISABILITY: <i>A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities¹.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. This proposal should have a neutral impact on users who have disabilities.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a.

¹ Due regard to meeting the needs of people with disabilities involves taking steps to take account of their disabilities and may involve making reasonable adjustments and prioritizing certain groups of disabled people on the basis that they are particularly affected by the proposal.

Full Equalities Analysis Assessment

GENDER REASSIGNMENT: <i>This is the process of transitioning from one sex to another. This includes persons who consider themselves to be trans, transgender and transsexual.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. There should be a neutral impact on gender reassignment.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a

RACE: <i>A group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins or race.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. There should be a neutral impact on race.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a.

Full Equalities Analysis Assessment

RELIGION & BELIEF: <i>Religion means any religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect a person's life choices or the way you live for it to be included.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. There should be a neutral impact on religion and belief.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a.

SEX: <i>Someone being a man or a woman.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. There should be a neutral impact on sex.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a.

Full Equalities Analysis Assessment

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: <i>A person's sexual attraction towards his or her own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. There should be a neutral impact on sexual orientation.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a.

PREGNANCY & MATERNITY: <i>Description: Pregnancy: Being pregnant. Maternity: The period after giving birth - linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. There should be a neutral impact on pregnancy & maternity.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a.

Full Equalities Analysis Assessment

MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP: <i>Marriage: A union between a man and a woman. or of the same sex, which is legally recognised in the UK as a marriage</i> <i>Civil partnership: Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
Neutral. There should be a neutral impact on marriage & civil partnership.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
N/a.

3. Human Rights²
4a. Does your proposal impact on Human Rights as defined by the Human Rights Act 1998?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4b. Does your proposal impact on the rights of children as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4c. Does your proposal impact on the rights of persons with disabilities as defined by the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>(If yes, please describe the effect and any mitigating action you have considered.)</i>

² For further guidance please refer to the Human Rights & UNRC Guidance on the Council Equalities [web page](#).

Full Equalities Analysis Assessment

4. Conclusion

The schemes will not disadvantage any equality groups or sub-groups;

4a. What evidence, data sources and intelligence did you use to assess the potential impact/effect of your proposal? Please note the systems/processes you used to collect the data that has helped inform your proposal. Please list the file paths and/or relevant web links to the information you have described.

Condition Surveys are carried out across Ealing's maintained school estate every five years as part of the Asset Management process. In addition the survey data is refreshed annually after condition works are completed or when further need is identified.

Ealing's condition surveys are undertaken by external surveyors appointed by Children's Services Schools Property to carry out these surveys on a consistent basis. Data is stored on the Asset Management data-base and schools have access to their condition data via a dedicated portal.

The level of need is categorised in accordance with the widely recognised DfE asset management ratings for building elements

5. Action Planning: (What are the next steps for the proposal please list i.e. what it comes into effect, when migrating actions³ will take place, how you will measure impact etc.)

Action	Outcomes	Success Measures	Timescales/ Milestones	Lead Officer (Contact Details)

Additional Comments:

No mitigating actions to be taken.

³ Linked to the protected characteristics above



Report for: ACTION
Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	Yes (in part) Appendix B is exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972
Title	Villiers High School Places Award of Main Works Contract
Responsible Officer(s)	Robert South, Strategic Director Children’s Services Tamara Quinn, Assistant Director Planning, Resources and Service Development
Author(s)	Laurence Field, Programme Manager FieldL@ealing.gov.uk
Portfolio(s)	Cllr Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, A Fairer Start
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	6 th December 2023
Implementation Date if Not Called In	18 th December 2023
Affected Wards	Southall Broadway
Keywords/Index	Villiers High School; Schools Capital Programme; Pre-Construction Services; award contract.

Purpose of Report:
This report seeks authority to:

1. accept tender and award contract for the Villiers High School Places main works project.
2. add funds to the capital programme.

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i. subject to receipt of planning approval for the scheme, awards a contract in the sum of £25,298,501.00 to Geoffrey Osborne Construction Limited for construction of the new building at Villiers High School to be funded from the Villiers High School budget as set out in the Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2025/26.
- ii. approves the inception of £2.058m Section 106 money into the existing approved Villiers High School budget.
- iii. approves the inception of £11.048m Basic Need grant money into the existing approved Villiers High School budget.
- iv. authorises the Strategic Director for Children’s Services to finalise the terms of the works contract.
- v. delegates authority to the Strategic Director for Children’s Services, to take any other necessary steps to secure the implementation of the works.

2. Reason for Decisions and Options Considered

2.1. The Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places and to promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. The Council must also promote choice and diversity.

2.2. Cabinet authorised the Executive Director for Children, Adults and Public Health, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to invite and evaluate tenders for the Villiers High School Places project, on 15th October 2019.

2.3. The Cabinet Member for a Fairer Start, in April 2022, authorized the award of a contract in the sum of £543,803.00 to Geoffrey Osborne Construction Limited for Pre-Construction Services for the new building at Villiers High School.

2.4. Cabinet, in September 2022, authorised the inclusion of accommodation for an additional form of entry, and to progress an Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP).

2.5. As reported to Cabinet in October 2021 and April 2022, despite the increase in capacity and projected reduction in demand elsewhere in the borough, the Council continues to experience significant pressure on places in Southall. This is due to a combination of the increased popularity of high schools in the area, and primary cohort sizes reducing later than elsewhere in the borough. This pressure is expected to increase as the major planned residential developments in the area progress, with a need for further secondary capacity likely in Southall over the next 10 years. The Council continues to keep the timings and potential child yield from these developments under close review and work closely with schools in the area to look at potential options to meet this demand. Villiers High School continues to fill at 8 forms of entry, plus bulge classes. The school had 1,501 students on roll at October 2023 census. This has risen from 1,459 students at January 2022 census, and 1,370 at the October 2019 schools census prior to the October 2019 Cabinet report. The school's roll was 1,140 at the summer 2014 schools' census.

2.6. Awarding the main works contract for the new building at Villiers High School will enable the work to commence.

2.7. The relevant background reports, "Villiers High School Expansion, ARP and Capital Approvals", which was presented to Cabinet on 15th September 2022, "Update on School Places, Determination of Statutory Proposals for Havelock Primary School ARP and Children's Services Capital Approvals", which was presented to Cabinet on the 15th October 2019, and "Authority to award a contract for Pre-Construction Services for the new building at Villiers High School", which was an Individual Cabinet Member Decision on 6th April 2022 can be accessed via the following link:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 14 September 2022, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

[Meeting of Cabinet on Tuesday, 15 October 2019, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

[Meeting of Individual Cabinet Member Decisions - A Fairer Start on Wednesday, 6 April 2022, 9.00 am \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

3. Key Implications

3.1 The London Construction Programme (LCP) Major Works Construction Framework was chosen for the procurement. The tender returns were evaluated in accordance with the published LCP Framework evaluation criteria by the Council's Projects Delivery Unit (PDU). The top scoring tenderer, Geoffrey Osborne Construction Limited, was appointed as the selected Contractor by Cabinet in April 2022, and the Pre-Construction Services are now complete. The contractor has submitted their contractor's proposals, which have been evaluated by the Council's technical team, and it is recommended to enter into a main works contract in the sum of £25,298,501.00 for the new building at Villiers High School. The Tender Evaluation Report can be found in Confidential Appendix B.

4. Financial Implications

A schedule of costs for the Villiers High School project is contained in Appendix A. The total cost of the project for the new building at Villiers High School is estimated at £ 26,962,467.01, which will be funded from the Schools Programme budget as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Funding Stream for Villiers High School (Adapted from February 2023 Budget Strategy and MTFS 2022/23 to 2023/24 Cabinet Report Appendix 7 Capital Programme 2020/21 to 2025/26)

Scheme	Funding	Budget 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Total Budget 2023/24-2025/26
		£m	£m	£m	£m
Villiers High School	Grant	2.000	11.856	-	13.856
Villiers High School	New Grant	-	-	11.048	11.048
Villiers High School	New S106	-	2.058	-	2.058
Total		2.000	13.914	11.048	26.962

5. Legal

5.1 Following tender evaluations in accordance with the published LCP Framework evaluation criteria by the Council's Projects Delivery Unit, cabinet in September 2022 authorised the award of contract for pre-construction services to Geoffrey Osborne Construction Limited (GOC). The procurement process anticipated that, on completion of the pre-construction services, the full design, agreed maximum price, employer's requirements and contractor's proposals for the main works will be settled and a contract for the main works awarded to the contractor. The procurement process culminating in the proposed award of the main works contract to GOC has been carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, the

Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the call-off terms of the LCP Major Works Construction Framework Agreement.

5.2 Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 establishes that the Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, to promote high educational standards, to ensure fair access to educational opportunity and to promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. They must also ensure that there are sufficient schools in their area and promote diversity and increase parental choice.

5.3 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a statutory duty on the Council to maintain the fabric of the premises of a maintained and community schools. Further, the Council has statutory duties to provide school places and to comply with the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012.

5.4 When making decisions the Council must act reasonably and rationally. It must take into account all relevant information and disregard all irrelevant information and consult those affected, taking into account their views before final decisions are made. It must also comply with its legal duties, including relating to equalities.

5.5 As public bodies schools and local authorities have duties, known as the 'public sector equalities duties' under S 149 the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 places separate duties on Local Authorities as the responsible body (alongside the governing body) for schools maintained by the local authority.

6. Value for Money

6.1 Tenders were sought from the London Construction Programme (LCP) Major Works Construction Framework for the PCSA for the new building at Villiers High School. The Council's Projects Delivery Unit evaluated the tenders in accordance with the published LCP Framework evaluation criteria. The proposals now submitted by Geoffrey Osborne Construction Limited for the main works contract have been fully examined by the Council's Projects Delivery Unit and are considered to represent value for money.

6.2 During the execution of the projects, regular progress review meetings will be held to ensure the project is being executed to approved budgets and timescales.

7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

7.1 The proposals will include an assessment of the impact on sustainability as outlined within the Council's procurement policies.

8. Risk Management

8.1 There are established processes for managing capital projects and risks are identified as part of the project management process. Risk Registers will be prepared for all of the projects, and these will be updated and managed until completion of the projects.

9. Community Safety

Transport, traffic and travel is a concern for many stakeholders. The proposed designs make appropriate changes to the access to, and layout of vehicle drop off

areas to ensure the safe and efficient arrival and departure of pupils and staff.

10. Links to the 3 Priorities for the Borough

The project is linked to 'Fighting inequality - that blights too many lives and disproportionately holds back all too many people from achieving their dreams and aspirations.' priority.

11. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

An Equalities Analysis Assessment has been carried out for the proposals described in this report.

12. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

Implications of Schools Service programmes will be managed within existing Council staff and any partner consultants. School works and expansions will have an impact on the school workforce and on school accommodation (i.e., appropriate expansion of staff and accommodation to manage additional pupils).

13. Property and Assets

This report deals with schools' property and assets.

14. Any other implications

None.

15. Consultation

Consultation has been carried out with the relevant stakeholders.

16. Timetable for Implementation

- 6th December 2023 – Cabinet approval to award the contract.
- 13th December 2023 – Planning approval for the scheme as designed
- 24th January 2024 – contract signed and sealed
- March 2024 - works commence
- Winter 2025/26 – works complete and school occupies new building.

17. Appendices

Appendix A – Financial Implications
Confidential Appendix B – Tender Report.
Appendix C - EAA

18. Background Information

Report to Cabinet, September 2022:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 14 September 2022, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Individual Cabinet Member Decision April 2022:

[Meeting of Individual Cabinet Member Decisions - A Fairer Start on Wednesday, 6 April 2022, 9.00 am \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Report to Cabinet, October 2019:

[Meeting of Cabinet on Tuesday, 15 October 2019, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Consultation

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent to consultee	Date response received	Comments appear in paragraph:
Internal				
Cllr Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal	Portfolio Holder, A Fairer Start	9/11/23	9/11/23	Throughout
Robert South	Strategic Director Children' Services	9/11/23	9/11/23	Throughout
Tamara Quinn	Assistant Director Planning, Resources & Service Development	9/11/23	9/11/23	Throughout
Justin Morley	Head of Legal Services (Social Care and Education)	2/11/23		
Kathleen Ennis	Principal Lawyer (Housing and Social Care)	2/11/23		
Chuhr Nijjar	Senior Lawyer (Legal Contracts)	2/11/23		
Afam Ajoh	Lawyer (Legal Contracts)	2/11/23	14/11/23	5
Russell Dyer	Assistant Director, Accountancy	2/11/23		
Kamaljit Kaur	Interim Finance Business Manager - Education	2/11/23	8/11/23	Throughout
Adrian Moody	Category Lead (People)	2/11/23		
Katherine Ball	Finance Manager - Capital and Projects	2/11/23	3/11/23	1,4

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
Key decision	No
Report no.:	Report author and contact for queries:
	Laurence Field, Schools Property/Programme Manager

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Appendix A – Villiers High School Financial Implications

The total expenditure to be approved is as follows:

Ref.	Item	Basis	£
1	Construction Works (including the PCSA element) following post submission exercises	Geoffrey Osborne Ltd	25,298,501.00
2	LBE Design and Management Fees – Stage A & B	LBE Budget	50,000.00
3	LBE Design and Management Fees – New Build D&B to Stage B	LBE Budget	303,582.01
4	CDMC Advisor Fees	LBE Budget	25,000.00
5	Planning and Building Control Fees	LBE Budget	10,000.00
6	LBE Site Investigations and Surveys	LBE Budget	30,000.00
7	Loose FF&E	LBE Budget	140,000.00
8	ICT Equipment	LBE Budget	140,000.00
9	Removals, Storage and Decanting Costs	LBE Budget	30,000.00
10	Planning Contribution (Section 106 Agreement) – Carbon Offset	LBE Planning Department Cost	26,634.00
11	Planning Contribution (Section 106 Agreement) – Renewable/Low-carbon Energy Equipment Monitoring	LBE Planning Department Cost	6,750.00
12	ADDITIONAL Planning Costs	LBE Budget	70,000.00
13	Client Contingency	LBE Budget	832,000.00
	ESTIMATED TOTAL COST [exc. VAT]		<u>£26,962,467.01</u>

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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Equalities Impact Assessment

1. Proposal Summary Information

EAA Title	Award of contract for the construction works for the new building at Villiers High School
Please describe your proposal?	Scheme: approval for award of contract for the Pre-Construction Services Agreement for the new building at Villiers High School.
Is it HR Related?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Corporate Purpose	Cabinet Decision

1. What is the Initiative/Function/Policy/Project/Scheme (*pick one*) looking to achieve? Who will be affected?

Seeks Cabinet approval for the award of contract for the construction works for the new building at Villiers High School, as part of the project to provide a new larger building and expansion at Villiers School.

2. What will the impact of your proposal be?

The impact of the Villiers High School proposal is to ensure sufficient school places in good quality physical educational environment are available to serve the local community.

Equalities Impact Assessment

2. Impact on Groups having a Protected Characteristic

AGE: <i>A person of a particular age or being within an age group.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Positive
Describe the Impact
The proposal is considered to have a positive impact on current and future high school age students attending the school.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
No negative effect identified.

DISABILITY: <i>A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities¹.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Positive
Describe the Impact
The proposed new development is considered to have a positive impact for the users of the school and the wider community.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
No negative effect identified.

¹ Due regard to meeting the needs of people with disabilities involves taking steps to take account of their disabilities and may involve making reasonable adjustments and prioritizing certain groups of disabled people on the basis that they are particularly affected by the proposal.

Equalities Impact Assessment

GENDER REASSIGNMENT: <i>This is the process of transitioning from one sex to another. This includes persons who consider themselves to be trans, transgender and transsexual.</i>	
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Neutral	
Describe the Impact	
Neutral impact. Persons who are undergoing gender reassignment or consider themselves to be trans, transgender and transsexual may have children at, or intending to attend, the school.	
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:	
Describe the Mitigating Action	
No negative effect identified.	

RACE: <i>A group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins or race.</i>	
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Neutral	
Describe the Impact	
Neutral impact. Places at the school are available to all, and there is no discrimination by race, ethnic origins or nationality.	
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:	
Describe the Mitigating Action	
No negative effect identified.	

RELIGION & BELIEF: <i>Religion means any religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect a person's life choices or the way you live for it to be included.</i>	
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Neutral	
Describe the Impact	
The school is open to young people of all religions and beliefs, and there would be no negative impact to people of any faith or belief as a result of this proposal.	
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:	
Describe the Mitigating Action	
No negative effect identified.	

SEX: <i>Someone being a man or a woman.</i>	
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Neutral	
Describe the Impact	
Neutral effect identified in terms of the above recommendations.	
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:	
Describe the Mitigating Action	
No negative effect identified.	

Equalities Impact Assessment

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SEXUAL ORIENTATION: <i>A person's sexual attraction towards his or her own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Neutral
Describe the Impact
No differential impact on people based on sexual orientation so neutral impact identified.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
No negative effect identified.

PREGNANCY & MATERNITY: <i>Description: Pregnancy: Being pregnant. Maternity: The period after giving birth - linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Neutral
Describe the Impact
There should be a neutral impact on pregnancy & maternity.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
No negative effect identified.

MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP: <i>Marriage: A union between a man and a woman. or of the same sex, which is legally recognised in the UK as a marriage Civil partnership: Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral: Neutral
Describe the Impact
There should be a neutral impact on marriage & civil partnership.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
Describe the Mitigating Action
No negative effect identified.

Equalities Impact Assessment

3. Human Rights²

4a. Does your proposal impact on Human Rights as defined by the Human Rights Act 1998?

Yes No

4b. Does your proposal impact on the rights of children as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Yes No

4c. Does your proposal impact on the rights of persons with disabilities as defined by the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities?

Yes No

The proposal links to article 28 (right to education) as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child. The Act facilitates the education of the most educationally and physically disabled children. It supports high aspirations and plans around the child. This provision will enhance the education and life chances of such children.

4. Conclusion

The proposals will not disadvantage any group or individual with a protected characteristic.

4a. What evidence, data sources and intelligence did you use to assess the potential impact/effect of your proposal? Please note the systems/processes you used to collect the data that has helped inform your proposal. Please list the file paths and/or relevant web links to the information you have described.

SEN Code of Practice; Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014; Children and Families Act 2014; Early Years Census Data reports; Connexions data on attendance at Ealing Youth Centres.

5. Action Planning: (What are the next steps for the proposal please list i.e. what it comes into effect, when migrating actions³ will take place, how you will measure impact etc.)

Action	Outcomes	Success Measures	Timescales/ Milestones	Lead Officer (Contact Details)

Additional Comments:

No mitigating actions to be taken.

² For further guidance please refer to the Human Rights & URNC Guidance on the Council Equalities [web page](#).

³ Linked to the protected characteristics above

Equalities Impact Assessment

6. Sign off: (All EAA's must be signed off once completed)

Completing Officer Sign Off:	Service Director Sign Off:	HR related proposal (Signed off by directorate HR officer)
Signed:  Name (Block Capitals): L M FIELD Date: 9 th November 2023	Signed:  Name (Block Capitals): T QUINN Date: 9 th November 2023	Signed: Name (Block Capitals): Date:

For EA's relating to Cabinet decisions: received by Committee Section for publication by (date):

Appendix 1: *Legal obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010:*

- As a public authority we must have due regard to the need to:
 - a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- The protected characteristics are: AGE, DISABILITY, GENDER REASSIGNMENT, RACE, RELIGION & BELIEF, SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, PREGNANCY & MATERNITY, MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP
- Having due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, involves considering the need to:
 - a) Remove or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
 - b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant characteristic that are different from the needs of the persons who do not share it.
 - c) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- Having due regard to fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not, involves showing that you are tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Complying with the duties may involve treating some people more favourably than others; but this should not be taken as permitting conduct that would be otherwise prohibited under the Act.



Report for: ACTION
Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No
Title	Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic
Responsible Officer(s)	Helen Harris Director of Legal and Democratic Services harrish@ealing.gov.uk
Author(s)	Cllr Jon Ball (Chair) Cllr Praveen Anand (Vice Chair) Harjeet Bains Overview and Scrutiny Officer Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120
Portfolio(s)	Councillor Shital Manro (Good Growth and New Housing) Councillor Louise Brett (Decent Living Incomes) Councillor Steve Donnelly (Inclusive Economy)
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	06 December 2023
Implementation Date if Not Called In	18 December 2023
Affected Wards	All
Keywords/Index	scrutiny; review, recovery from the pandemic, recommendations

Purpose of Report:
The purpose of this report is to refer to Cabinet the final report and recommendations of Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- notes the final report of Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic, which is attached as **Appendix 1**;
- accepts the Panel’s recommendations in Section 7.0 of the final report;
- identifies whether further information or advice is required from service officers on any of the recommendations before Cabinet can take a decision about accepting or rejecting these; and
- directs service officers to produce/or finalise an action plan within an agreed timescale on those recommendations that are agreed by Cabinet.

2. Reason for decision and options considered

- 2.1 Scrutiny panels have a role in improving decision-making and service delivery through effective scrutiny. Recommendations from scrutiny panels need to be taken forward in a timely manner and in accordance with the Council's constitution if the scrutiny function is to be effective. The Scrutiny and Executive Protocol identifies the timescale for Cabinet to respond to scrutiny panel recommendations. This decision will mean that the response is made in a timely manner and that services can implement the accepted recommendations.

3. Key implications

- 3.1 The recommendations of Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic are provided in a table format in Section 7.0 of the Panel's final report in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The Council constitution (Part 2 Article 6.03) gives the OSC power to 'set up individual specialist panels to investigate and report back to OSC ...' Part 4 of the constitution, scrutiny procedure rules (par.10) identifies that OSC prepares a formal report on its recommendations and submits it to Cabinet.
- 3.3 Where appropriate, service officers have identified the financial, legal and any other pertinent implications against each recommendation to enable Cabinet to reach a decision.
- 3.4 OSC will monitor the progress on the implementation of each recommendation agreed by Cabinet.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1 The service officer response, including suggested actions which may have potential financial implications, to each recommendation is provided in Section 7.0 of Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The majority of the recommendations have no financial implications or those that have can be contained within existing service budgets. Where a recommendation involves additional funds then these will have to be contained at present and any further allocation of funds would need to be obtained through the normal budget setting process.

5. Legal

- 5.1 The constitution requires that scrutiny panel recommendations be submitted to OSC for approval prior to submission to Cabinet.
- 5.2 The council has the powers to implement all those recommendations that have been accepted. Detailed legal advice will be provided at the point that they are taken forward for implementation.

6. Value for money

- 6.1 The effectiveness of Scrutiny is measured by the quality of its recommendations to Cabinet and the extent to which it has contributed to both democratic renewal and members' community development role. The scrutiny panel held open meetings in public, solicited views through expert witnesses and media channels to ensure a regular and sustained input to the work of the panel.

- 6.2 With respect to scrutiny panel recommendations, value for money implications are outlined in the officer response to each recommendation in the schedule, as appropriate.
- 6.3 If recommendations arising from scrutiny panels are not taken forward and implemented in a timely manner then improvements to service delivery are not made efficiently.
- 7. Sustainability impact appraisal**
- 7.1 There is none arising directly from this report.
- 8. Risk management**
- 8.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report but the failure to act on agreed recommendations or action plans arising could give rise to risk issues in service delivery.
- 9. Community safety**
- 9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report but the failure to act on agreed recommendations or action plans arising could give rise to risk issues in service delivery and community safety.
- 10. Links applicable to the three key priorities for the borough**
- 10.1 The recommendations arising from the panel's review relate to the key priorities of creating good jobs, tackling the climate crisis and fighting inequality.
- 11. Equalities, human rights and community cohesion**
- 11.1 No Equality Analysis Assessment has been undertaken on these recommendations. Any equalities or community cohesion issues have been addressed by the service officers' response as appropriate.
- 12. Staffing/workforce and accommodation implications**
- 12.1 Any staffing/workforce and accommodation implications have been addressed by the service officers' response as appropriate.
- 13. Property and assets**
- 13.1 None.
- 14. Any other implications**
- 14.1 None.
- 15. Consultation**
- 15.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the final report of the Panel on 05 October 2023.
- 15.2 The recommendations take into consideration the views of local organisations and residents as expressed at the panel's open meetings and site visits.
- 16. Timetable for implementation**
- 16.1 OSC will monitor, twice yearly, the implementation of the recommendations accepted by Cabinet.

Cabinet Action		Date	Service Implementation
1.	Cabinet accepts some or all recommendations.	06 December 2023	18 December 2023 – in line with Call-in requirements.
2.	Cabinet requests further information.	06 December 2023	Service provides additional information for Cabinet on 17 January 2024 .
3.	As a result of further information, Cabinet accepts or rejects remaining recommendations.	17 January 2024	29 January 2024 – in line with Call-in requirements.

17. Appendices

- 17.1 **Appendix 1:** Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic

18. Background information

- 18.1 Ealing Council's constitution is available at [Council Constitution](#).
- 18.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – agendas, minutes and reports, available at [Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#).
- 18.3 Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic – agendas, minutes and reports, available at [Committee details - Scrutiny Panel 2 - 2022/23: Recovery from the Pandemic \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).
- 18.4 Current agendas and reports are available at [Committees \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

Report Consultation

<i>Name of Consultee</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Date Sent to Consultee</i>	<i>Date Response Received from Consultee</i>	<i>Comments Appear in Report Para</i>
Internal				
Peter George	Strategic Director Economy and Sustainability	12.10.23		
Connor McDonagh	Assistant Director Economic Growth	12.10.23		
Angela McKeever	Assistant Director of Employment and Skills	12.10.23		
Naseem Kauser	Employment and Apprenticeships Manager	12.10.23		
Ian Jenkins	Head of Youth Justice Service	12.10.23		
Jess Murray	Assistant Director of Safer Communities	12.10.23		
Paul Murphy	Head of Community Safety	12.10.23		
Nicky Fiedler	Strategic Director for Housing and Environment	24.10.23		
Helen Harris	Director of Legal and Democratic Services	02.11.23		
Emily Hill	Strategic Director Resources	02.11.23		
Sam Bailey	Head of Democratic Services	02.11.23		
Senior Leadership Team	All Members	15.11.23		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	All Committee Members	05.10.23		
Cllr Shital Manro	Cabinet Member – Good Growth and New Housing	12.10.23		
Cllr Louise Brett	Cabinet Member – Decent Living Incomes	12.10.23		
Cllr Steve Donnelly	Cabinet Member – Inclusive Economy	24.10.23		
External				
Superintendent Sean Lynch	Ealing Police	12.10.23		

Report History

Decision Type:		Urgency item?	
Non-key Decision		No	
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	Date Report Drafted:	Report Deadline:	Date Report Sent:
N/A	-	23.11.23	23.11.23
Report No.:	Report Author and Contact for Queries:		
	Harjeet Bains Overview and Scrutiny Officer Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120		

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SCRUTINY PANEL 2 – 2022/2023

RECOVERY FROM THE PANDEMIC

FINAL REPORT

03 MAY 2023

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CHAIR'S OVERVIEW



Councillor Jon Ball
(Panel Chair)

I wish to sincerely thank all service officers and the many external witnesses from the business and educational sectors who gave evidence to the panel at our meetings or engaged with panel members during our site visits.

Ealing was especially badly hit by the economic effects of the pandemic due to the local economy's reliance on industries like aviation and filmmaking that largely closed down for a long period. Some of these industries have now recovered but the outlook for retail, hospitality and construction remains uncertain. Local businesses and residents without well-paid work need our support.

I welcome a number of new potential initiatives that were proposed during our meetings, one of which I'd single out for special praise is that from the University of West London's Westmont Enterprise Hub to develop a scheme to divert young people at risk of coming to the attention of the criminal justice system into entrepreneurship.

It is very clear from the evidence we heard that there are a wealth of very valuable initiatives being provided by the Council and various local bodies and organisations to support local businesses and to provide vocational training and job-searching assistance for residents. However, it is not always obvious to businesses and residents that these services exist and how to access them. More subtly there are fields of decently-paid work in which employers find it difficult to fill vacancies and for which there is training available but are not on the radar of most job-seekers, for instance dry lining within the construction industry. Communication both between support providing organisations and to business owners and jobseekers is thus key and features in most of our recommendations.

It was notable from our discussions with businesses large and small that crime and anti-social behaviour is a significant problem for retail businesses right across the borough, and that this has been getting worse. Aggressive shoplifting and ASB put off shoppers and have led to some retail workers leaving the sector in addition to the direct cost to businesses of the theft. The viability of some shops is at risk due to crime. There is work to be done by the police as well as the Council and BIDs in tackling these issues.

Finally, I would like to thank my Vice-Chair, Cllr Praveen Anand, all the members who served on the Panel and our two co-optees for their valuable input into our meetings, recommendations and the site visits that we undertook from North Acton to Southall.

Councillor Jon Ball
Chair

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had established the Panel in response to the commitments of the new administration's manifesto pledge of **Recovery from the Pandemic** "We will secure 10,000 new well-paid jobs across the borough to help every family get a decent living income. Coronavirus has hit people's incomes hard, so we will secure new well-paid jobs, support people back into work after lockdown and deliver more support for small and local businesses to thrive." and the associated priorities within the Council Plan.

Scope

1.2 The Panel's scope was to scrutinise matters relating to the economic recovery of the borough from the COVID-19 pandemic and make recommendations for improvements accordingly. The Panel focused on the training support provision; local jobs provision; and support for small and local businesses to help the local economic recovery.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

General

2.1 The Panel received reports and presentations from internal services, external agencies and expert witnesses at its four hybrid meetings which participants could join in person or virtually via Zoom. The meetings were held in Ealing Town Hall and webcast live on the Council's YouTube channel. The Panel also conducted several site visits within the borough.

Site Visits

2.2 The Panel visited:

- Youth Hub at Ealing Green College
- Winter Jobs Fair at University of West London
- Various Local Business Premises:
 - Excelsior Studios in Park Royal Industrial Estate, North Acton
 - Acton Market Square in Acton Town Centre
 - Charmy's Newsagent in Acton High Street
 - International House refurbishment in Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre
 - The Fox Inn on Green Lane, Hanwell
 - Greenford Quay development in Greenford
 - Aria's Coffee Shop on King Street, Southall
 - Chana Chemist on South Road, Southall

Co-option

2.3 Mr Denver Dias (Chartered Accountant, Williams Chartered Accountants, Park Royal) and Ms Roop Kaur (Founder, King Street Shopkeepers Forum, Southall) were co-opted onto the Panel at the second meeting.

Publicity

2.4 The Panel's work was publicised in the Council's *Around Ealing* free magazine which is delivered to all households in the borough, website and direct emails.

3.0 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

BOROUGH'S ECONOMIC SITUATION AND RECOVERY

- 3.1 Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director for Economic Growth) and Councillor Shital Manro (Cabinet Member for Good Growth) presented an overview of the borough's economic situation and recovery since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.2 Ealing was one of the hardest hit boroughs in London by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pre-pandemic inequalities that had existed within the borough in Southall, Northolt and parts of Acton were further compounded by the impact. Many residents of these areas worked at the adversely affected Heathrow Airport and its supply chain network.
- 3.3 The pandemic had exposed that Ealing had one of the least resilient economies in London. The key pre-pandemic deprivation statistics for the borough indicated that 8 of the 23 wards were in the 20% most deprived in England; employment rate for women was 12% lower than men; employment rate for the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) residents was 9.9% lower than White ethnicity; 1 in 3 residents earned less than the London Living Wage (LLW); and over 23% of households were overcrowded.
- 3.4 At the onset of the pandemic, West London Alliance (WLA) which comprised of the seven West London boroughs had commissioned Oxford Economics to research how the Coronavirus might impact the West London economy. The projected research showed that there were 50% of job cuts from the three sectors that made up a quarter of its economy. It was estimated that over 75,000 Heathrow Airport related jobs would be lost in West London. Ealing's unemployment rate was the second highest in West London. There had been 75,000 Ealing residents on furlough in October 2021 with Southall having the highest furlough rate in London mainly due to the adverse impact on the aviation sector. The number of people claiming employment support had doubled to 20,105.
- 3.5 The recently published census data showed that Ealing's population had grown by 8.5% but there had been a decline in the population amongst 20-34 year olds, which would affect future service delivery and economic vitality.
- 3.6 Ealing had a high number of jobs paying less than the LLW, the 6th highest London borough. 40% of the jobs in the borough were in the typically low paying sectors such as retail, hospitality and leisure compared to 33% in London. This situation was considerably higher in Southall (52%) and Northolt (47%) reinforcing challenges of an east-west divide in terms of prosperity and opportunity.
- 3.7 The children living in absolute low-income families had risen by 10% in the borough since 2015. The increase had been driven by children living in working families which suggested that work was failing to pay for many families.

- 3.8 Most of Ealing's high streets were dominated by retail which was in long-term decline. 1,000 retail jobs had been lost across Greenford and Perivale alone in the last five years.
- 3.9 The borough had lots of carbon intensive industries compared to elsewhere in London which would make the transition to net zero carbon emissions by 2030 more challenging to achieve. 23% of Ealing's jobs were in more carbon intensive sectors compared to about 11% in London as a whole.
- 3.10 In response to the impact of the pandemic, the Council had acted swiftly in setting up an Ealing High Street Task Force (EHSTF) and conducted several surveys for local businesses. EHSTF had empowered local communities and businesses to lead change in their locality. It had enabled the Council and its partners to communicate with businesses and provide quicker support to them, including awarding nearly £135M in grants.
- 3.11 Consequently, in September 2021 the Council had published its action plan to deliver the current Council Plan priority of Creating Good Jobs in its 'Plan for Good Jobs – Towards an Inclusive Economy' document. The Council's vision for good jobs was to ensure a sustainable, inclusive and socially just economy for Ealing where people, businesses, towns and communities grow and thrive together.
- 3.12 The Council was presently drafting a new Local Plan for the borough. The Local Plan would have a strong emphasis on the Council working closely with its partners within the public, private and third sectors in growing the local economies of the seven town areas – Northolt, Southall, Greenford, Perivale, Hanwell, Ealing, Acton plus an emerging eighth town which was currently under the control of Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC). The Council was working closely with OPDC to leverage the best outcomes from the significant regeneration zone that would deliver thousands of new jobs over the next 20-30 years. It was one of the biggest regeneration zones in UK.
- 3.13 The Local Plan would include a new policy on affordable workplace and policies to intensify employment floorspace across the borough's industrial land and town centres. It would promote innovation and creativity across the borough such as a Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ) in North Acton and Park Royal; an innovation hub in Greenford; and accelerating meanwhile employment hubs in Council assets. Ealing's Local Plan focused on having an inclusive, resilient, diverse and well-functioning economy to create local jobs for local people so that they could continue to work and live in this borough. The Local Plan would help to guide developers and future development of the Council's requirements for the next 10-15 years.
- 3.14 The Council had undertaken a Shaping Ealing survey from November 2021-May 2022 to help formulate the new Local Plan. It had received over 10,500 responses which included the need for great public transport; good social cohesion; sense of belonging; feeling welcome; more affordable homes; good employment opportunities; less congestion and air pollution. Some people were not happy with the way the area was changing so the Council

would introduce a community-led regeneration programme by ensuring that people were at the very heart of regeneration projects to help address these issues. The survey would inform medium-term measures to enable an inclusive economy. The Council planned to use a new inward investment model involving Ealing's businesses, landowners, developers, investors and communities to achieve this.

- 3.15 The Plan for Good Jobs had four recovery themes of Focus on Local People – supporting out hardest hit residents; Support to Business – protecting, nurturing and expanding businesses; Towns and Communities – investing in our most left behind town and communities; and Climate Change Action – promoting green recovery. 12 objectives across the four themes were being delivered to make a difference for the borough's communities. Short-term measures to accelerate the borough's economic recovery included partnership working, innovation, creativity, meanwhile community use of assets, support and public realm.
- 3.16 The Council's town centre vision framework and 20-minute neighbourhood plans would ensure that people living in the borough could access jobs and other amenities within a 20-minute walk from their dwelling, making these much more sustainable and inclusive neighbourhoods. An economy strategy for Ealing would incorporate inclusive growth and economy.
- 3.17 Multiple projects were being delivered around the borough which included Open Havelock project in Southall whereby the Council was working with Catalyst, Greater London Authority (GLA) and Canal & River Trust to convert 36 redundant garages back into community use as a meet-up space for young entrepreneurs and businesses to liaise. The project was funded through a £600,000 GLA Good Growth Fund. Similar projects would be rolled out across the borough.
- 3.18 As part of its inward investment model, the Council aimed to create Greenford into a potential innovation district or hub. It had several assets in the town centre and would work closely with businesses such as SEGRO Plc which owned substantial land in the borough including within Greenford Park industrial area. The manufacturing and distribution centre of Brompton Bicycle and Vantage Power which designed and manufactured hybrid and electric technology were also based in the Greenford Park industrial area, providing vital local jobs. The Greenford Quay development would offer more employment spaces.
- 3.19 The newly accredited CEZ was UK's largest industrial estate with 46,000 workers. It contained a cluster of creative and digital industries. The Council planned to leverage more income from public and private sectors to invest in this area to provide opportunities for young people in accessing future jobs. It worked closely with the local schools and other education establishments such as University of West London (UWL) and West London College (WLC) in bringing about an innovation district to the area. The CEZ would enable people who had lost jobs at Heathrow Airport and its supply chains to upskill for other types of employment.

- 3.20 Southall Manor House, a Grade II listed building, had recently undergone a £2.4M refurbishment to create a community and business hub. It was anticipated that the convergence of businesses and local community would create new businesses and entrepreneurs in that area.
- 3.21 EHSTF had been established with £600,000 funding received from GLA's Resilience Fund programme to help the borough's high streets and seven town centres to emerge from the pandemic. EHSTF had worked closely with the Council in its establishment and operations. EHSTF's first priority had been to enable the safe operation and reopening of the high streets during the pandemic. EHSTF's work had since evolved into finding innovative solutions for the future of the borough's high streets including reimaging and repurposing them to become more diverse and resilient for the changing needs of the people visiting, living or working in the borough. Many other Councils from around the country had enquired about the success of EHSTF in changing the borough's public realm. It was important to invest in active travel projects to reduce the dominance of car congestion and air pollution in making the public realm accessible and attractive, enabling better social cohesion and the creation of destinations where people wanted to come and relax.
- 3.22 Ealing was one of three boroughs that had been selected by the government for its Levelling Up fund. Consequently, the Council had secured a £7.23M funding for improvements to the public realm and active travel projects. It had added further funds and was working closely with the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for London (TfL) to transform parts of the borough. The present £1M enhancement of the Northolt High Street scheduled for completion by 2024 would attract new businesses there.
- 3.23 The aviation sector had been one of the first sectors to shut down during the pandemic and amongst the last to reopen. Many people who had previously worked at Heathrow Airport or its supply chain network had sought other jobs elsewhere once their furlough period had ended and did not want to return to their old jobs. The job vacancy situation at the Airport had presented a challenge so various programmes and initiatives were introduced to recruit local people into these jobs. The job losses in the aviation sector had a significant adverse impact on a large number of Southall residents who had been employed in this sector before the pandemic. Consequently, Ealing Council had established a strategic Southall Jobs Partnership (SJP) comprising of various key stakeholders including Heathrow Airport Limited, Jobcentre Plus (JCP), West London Business (WLB) and WLA to help these residents into the vacant positions. Heathrow was presently focusing on regrowing in a more sustainable way to address the climate crisis. It had invested considerably on research, development and innovation to create sustainable air travel. This drive would give Ealing residents the opportunity to access new higher value and knowledge economy jobs.
- 3.24 Genuinely affordable homes was a key manifesto commitment of the new administration which had pledged to provide 4,000 new affordable homes. The last administration had delivered 2,700 genuinely affordable homes in

the borough. There had been a major impact on the supply chain within the development industry due to Brexit and the pandemic. The increased prices of materials and other construction costs had made many developer schemes unviable including some of the Council's Broadway Living schemes. There were approximately 11,000 people currently on the Council's housing waiting list and despite numerous challenges the administration would continue to look at ways to fulfil its manifesto commitment.

- 3.25 The 20-minute neighbourhood model was suitable for the borough. The last Local Plan had focused on growth along the two growth corridors of Uxbridge Road with its Elizabeth Line stations and the A40/Western Avenue with its industrial land. Consequently, Southall had undergone significant regeneration and investment growth in the last decade and there had been pockets of growth within the industrial land along the A40. The new Local Plan was about a polycentric approach whereby all the seven town centres of the borough would see investments, regeneration, redevelopment and good growth. This approach would take the pressure off places like Southall and provide investment in left-behind places such as Northolt that had not received much investment in the last few decades. The Council's community-led regeneration programme for the seven towns such as 'Visions for Northolt' which had started a couple of years ago had enabled it to secure further funding for Northolt town centre. Greenford, Perivale and Acton town centres were being regenerated. Regeneration work in Hanwell and Ealing town centres would commence in the next few months. Details of the Southall Reset programme would be presented to Cabinet imminently. The 20-minute neighbourhoods were critical for the long-term future of the borough in making it more sustainable by ensuring that people had quicker access between their services, homes and jobs.
- 3.26 Before the pandemic, the borough was mainly seen as a residential dormitory with lots of residential housing and people travelling to work in the business district of central London using the Elizabeth Line and other tube stations. The new administration had considered the development in the borough and deemed that people ought to be coming into Ealing as a destination to work. More commercial and employment space in the town centres would attract organisations to invest in the borough. The 20-minute neighbourhoods and implementation of active travel programmes would help people to travel in different and sustainable ways to come and work here. Some development schemes that were already in the pipeline during the last 2-3 years would continue.
- 3.27 There were no quick fix solutions to the decline of the high streets and town centres. It was evident that the high streets and town centres had to change to survive in the long-term. Independent businesses benefitted when people stayed at home and as a result the local high streets would thrive. The main town centres had suffered because more people were working from home. It was important to get people to work from their office spaces for the town centres to thrive. Consideration was being given to innovative ways of working such as in cafés by paying a nominal sum for the day and other incentives of buying a coffee or soft drink and getting free refills thereafter.

The Council's new affordable workplace policy was already being implemented within the planning applications process. The local town centres would benefit from people working locally. The Council had undertaken health checks of all the borough's town centres and gathered evidence for the new Local Plan. It had also conducted an employment land review and the Industrious Ealing socio-economic evidence on the performance of Ealing's economy would be published shortly.

- 3.28 The Council was looking at its own assets for potential meanwhile use sites. There was consideration of deriving best commercial income against actual social value for the use of such sites. For example, Southall Manor House provided an opportunity for local businesses to access cheaper space and the income helped with the maintenance of the grade II listed facility. There was continuous dialogue with large private developers about vacant units within their developments for good use. Community Land Trust Network had agreed to the use of an attractive affordable creative space in Friary Park, Acton. A portacabin was available for the use of the local community at the Northolt development site.
- 3.29 The affordable office space was normally agreed as part of Section 106 agreements during the planning application process and came into effect permanently when the offices were built. The developer was expected to charge lower rents and publicise the space for start-ups. The affordable space got a throughput of firms growing and moving on to become successful with newer start-ups coming through the same office space. The Council was expecting to enter into a similar agreement with the British Land development.

Ealing's Unemployment and Qualifications Statistics

- 3.30 In March 2022, Ealing's unemployment rate of 7.1% had been 1.7% higher than that for London (5.4%) and 3% higher than for Great Britain (4.1%). The unemployment rate applied to people who were available to start work and not the long-term sick. Ealing's unemployment rate was the highest in West London followed by London Boroughs of Barnet and Brent at 7.0% and 6.1%, respectively. Ealing's unemployment rates had fluctuated during the pandemic and peaked at 7.6% in June 2021. The current unemployment rate was still higher than the pre-pandemic levels.
- 3.31 The alternative claimant count (ACC), a measure of unemployment data, had shown that the all-age Ealing figures in February 2020 before the pandemic had been 9,269. In May 2020, the ACC was 20,853 and had risen to 21,655 in May 2021. The ACC had continued to decline in May 2021-April 2022. There had been a 1% rise in the provisional number of residents on unemployment benefits in May 2022 (14,214) compared to April 2022 (14,052). Ealing had the second highest provisional ACC within West London in May 2022 at 14,214 (6.46%) whilst London Borough of Brent had the highest at 14,667 (6.81%).
- 3.32 In January-December 2021, at 148,000 (65.7%) Ealing had a higher proportion of residents aged 16-64 years with National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at Level 4 and above compared to London (59%) and

Great Britain (43.6%). This was the second highest rate in West London after Hammersmith & Fulham (74.4%).

- 3.33 16,400 (7.3%) Ealing residents had no qualifications and 16,900 (7.5%) had other qualifications. This was a barrier to employment because 'other qualifications' meant that the resident may have studied abroad and often their qualifications could not be converted to the UK level structures or were levelled down. Many employers favoured residents who had Mathematics and English qualifications as a minimum requirement for the role, making it more difficult for people with no qualifications to apply for jobs or apprenticeship opportunities.

TRAINING SUPPORT PROVISION

- 3.34 The Panel received presentations from Ealing Council officers and three partner organisations – University of West London (UWL), West London College (WLC), Ealing & Hounslow Community Voluntary Service (EHCVS) on the training support provision to get residents back into work.

Ealing Council

- 3.35 Learn Ealing (LE), part of Ealing Council's Employment, Learning and Skills (ELS) service, was the adult learning provider tasked with the implementation of the administration's manifesto target of delivering 12,000 new qualifications and training programme graduations in 2022-26 for people looking to upskill.
- 3.36 LE worked closely with other Council services and external partners to support the creation of jobs and apprenticeships in the borough. The service was guided by the London Mayor's Adult Education Roadmap objectives of creating an empowered and locally relevant adult education system, ensuring that impactful adult education was recognised and supporting Londoners most in need to better access adult education.
- 3.37 LE applied the three key strategies of expanding its partnerships; delivering more bespoke, innovative and high-quality provision that would meet the needs of clients; and bidding for further funding from GLA to meet set targets.
- 3.38 LE worked closely with its external partners such as UWL, WLC, JCP, EHCVS, Southall Community Alliance, A2Dominion and The Forge@Park Royal (The Forge) to deliver online and classroom based courses across the borough. It particularly tapped the deprived areas of Acton, Northolt and Southall. Wraparound support was provided for the learners to enable progression into further education at a college/university, employment, volunteering opportunities and placements.
- 3.39 LE had adapted various modes of teaching in the past three academic years to suit residents. It had worked closely with external partners such as North West London NHS Trust (NWLNHST) to create a pathway for primary care non-clinical staff into employment and Lloyd's Pharmacy in reskilling its large workforce through a bespoke ESOL programme. LE had worked with internal teams within Work Ealing to develop programmes that tackled

inequality and enabled residents to acquire qualifications and skills for earning decent living incomes.

- 3.40 610 learners had completed 1,894 employability qualifications and training programmes in 2021-22. Compared to pre-pandemic, there had been a significant increase in the number of learners (312 in 2018-19 and 592 in 2020-21) and enrolments (517 in 2018-19 and 1,254 in 2020-21). In 2020-21, there had been a 37% increase in the number of unemployed learners at 514 (375 in 2018-19) who completed 1,573 (1,305 in 2018-19, an increase of 21%) training programmes. The success of the programmes was attributed to good quality teaching, information, advice, guidance and pastoral care.
- 3.41 In fighting inequality, LE had extended its family learning provision and offered a face-to-face responsive digital offer. It had collaborated and worked with partners to create a locally relevant offer that supported the GLA roadmap in offering partner venues for delivery of courses which extended its reach. The partners now supported hard to reach communities across the borough. Parents, particularly women, and their children had access to a provision that built and supported skills needed for work and life. For example, the family ESOL offer at children's centres was responsive to local language needs of users where the parents had no English skills. This offer had enabled parents and their children to bond and mix with a wide range of groups, supporting progressing to English and community cohesion. In 2021-22, there had been a 104% increase in learners 196 (96 in 2020-21) and a 142% increase in enrolments 551 (228 in 2020-21) on this programme.
- 3.42 LE had worked with EHCVS and Ealing libraries in providing access to existing IT resources. This had extended the range of delivery venues for hard to reach groups across the borough. The bespoke offer supported digitally disadvantaged residents to develop and progress their computer skills for life and work. The courses ranged from beginner to advanced level with progression pathways to accredited provision.
- 3.43 In 2021-22, LE's Start-up School for Seniors course was specifically for people aged 50+ about starting their own business. There had been three cohorts each consisting of about 30 learners over the year. The course ran a series of workshops which included steps to setting up a business, links across networks, financial and marketing aspects. Several case studies demonstrated that some learners had successfully started their own businesses on completion of the training. LE was developing a specific programme with JCP for people aged 50+ years. Ealing Council and Imperial College were part of the CEZ. The Council was looking to work more closely with the creative industries to develop people's skills in that sector.
- 3.44 As a result of the pandemic, LE had identified five main sectors as avenues for employment – aviation; construction; service industry either relating to Heathrow Airport or small retailers in the high streets; retail; and hospitality. There had been buoyancy in recruitment within the borough with job

vacancies at Heathrow Airport, property developers, JD Sports and pubs. Less interest was shown in hospitality sector jobs because of its volatility, low wages, and long/unsocial hours.

- 3.45 In addition to the traditional telephone calls and leaflets, older people were provided digital support through the LE programmes to help improve their digital skills. Digital skills enabled them to access a variety of communications for work and life. The service aimed to develop people through upskilling and advancing their careers.
- 3.46 LE had targeted hard to reach groups by offering specific programmes with partners in various venues such as schools, community centres and libraries. The courses included ESOL sessions; first aid courses for voluntary organisations at the Gurdwara; and an Easter programme for an Indian women's group, Voice to Women, in Southall Town Hall focusing on digital skills and wellbeing. In response to the recovery from the pandemic, Ealing Council had established Southall Jobs Partnership to work closely with the local community on training and employment opportunities. The Council was also launching a new Learning Zone initiative across all its managed libraries to enable residents and businesses to access training and deliver seminars, webinars and employee support.

University of West London

- 3.47 Mr John Charlton (Head of Knowledge Exchange and Business Engagement, UWL) outlined that:
- 3.48 UWL was a partner in the borough for higher education. It was committed to being a good local university by strengthening working relationships with Ealing Council and optimising outcomes by collating resources.
- 3.49 UWL focused on local people by supporting the hardest hit residents; invested in the most left behind towns and communities; supported business by protecting, nurturing and expansion in the borough; and promoted a green recovery.
- 3.50 Over 1,000 (11%) of the UWL learners were Ealing residents, excluding Park Royal. This trend had remained over the last three years despite the pandemic and competition from other West and Greater London universities. 18% of learners resided in the borough during term time which included constituents and new learners.
- 3.51 The data for graduate outcomes was held centrally by the government and Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA). UWL did not have records of where the learners resided after graduation. 10% of graduates had an Ealing-based employer within 15 months of completing studies including those having started their own business.
- 3.52 Based on HESA data, UWL had identified that two-thirds of students who lived in the borough before enrolment had met some criteria for indices of multiple deprivation. Hence, UWL's role was partially to support social mobility of Ealing residents.

- 3.53 About two-thirds of the students residing in the borough were from under represented BAME groups and a large proportion of these were mature learners on entry. UWL had a higher than national average of mature learners. Mature learners were classified as 21+ years. There were 44% of mature students nationally. UWL's outreach team had successfully brought together hundreds of learners aged 60+ years as part of the national University of Third Age (U3A) initiative. The initiative aimed for education and stimulation of mainly retired members of the community including those seeking career changes. UWL had social care through its college of health and nursing.
- 3.54 UWL had received the University of the Year for Teaching Quality and University of the Year for Student Experience awards in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023.
- 3.55 UWL's higher education offer was employability focused. It maintained a close alignment with employer demands to ensure that student work placement and experience was gained through the degree requirements. Its student support mechanisms and facilities were designed to ensure job readiness to complement the academic requirements. The work experience placements were mainly located within the West London economy which included micro businesses, start-ups and global entities.
- 3.56 UWL's degree apprenticeships offer had seen a significant growth to over 1,000 presently without compromising quality. Its apprenticeships team partnered with the Council in supporting the 2000+ new apprenticeships target.
- 3.57 UWL was a member of Ealing Local Strategic Partnership (ELSP) – a partnership of public agencies, business, voluntary and community sectors working together for the benefit of local people – and worked alongside WLB, WLA, other regional universities and business partners in the same spirit to promote growth, social mobility and support local businesses.
- 3.58 In the past two years, there had been a new initiative of the internship recruitment match-funding in hiring graduate interns for local business start-ups. The initiative met the criteria of the Regeneration for Ealing in West London commitment.
- 3.59 UWL had a Westmont Enterprise Hub that enabled Ealing residents with the right idea to potentially tap into funding, expertise and support for their business. The Ealing Business Expo 2023 would be held at the Ealing campus with UWL playing a key role in organising the event. UWL also offered short courses such as applied project management and executive education for professional development.
- 3.60 UWL was one of the few greener universities in the country and assisted in creating a more sustainable Ealing. It had secured approximately £5M in the public sector decarbonisation scheme to implement highly technological equipment to help make it a net-zero campus by 2030.

- 3.61 UWL had lobbied the government for changes in legislation to make it easier for workers to deploy their right to work through a contract of employment. UWL's recent work with Better Hiring Institute and some very large employers nationally, who were also local to the West London economy, had seen a permanent change in the right to work legislation. These changes had helped certain groups of the labour market such as graduate cohorts.
- 3.62 UWL had a significant number of learners from Greater London but trying to keep them in Ealing was quite a challenge. UWL could develop more quality career opportunity programmes with local sector specific employers such as hospitality, tourism and aviation in promoting jobs to graduates so that they chose to remain in the Ealing labour market.
- 3.63 UWL had seen an increase in communications with Ealing Council at various levels. Regular communications had yielded meaningful results in partnership activities and enabled the deployment of relevant resources to enhance these for residents. It was crucial for Ealing Council to maintain and increase communications with its partners for continuous cultural improvement.

West London College

- 3.64 Mr David Warnes (Deputy Principal, Strategy, Planning and Communications, WLC) and Mr Daljit Bains (Director of Business Development & Partnerships, WLC) outlined that:
- 3.65 WLC had worked closely with local partners to support the economic recovery in West London. Ealing's Plan for Good Jobs, GLA's Skills Roadmap for London and the national Skills Builders Network (SBN) framework had informed WLA's strategy on reskilling for the recovery.
- 3.66 Many employers in West London including Heathrow Airport and other larger employers used the SBN framework to support individuals into work.
- 3.67 WLC had developed a range of programmes for its learners who were 16+ years. The programmes, aligned to the essential skills of SBN framework, were tailored to individual needs and aimed to equip job seekers with the skills and attributes to find work.
- 3.68 WLC had campuses in the London Boroughs of Ealing, Brent and Hammersmith & Fulham. It worked closely with these boroughs and other key partners offering employment support provision within the borough such as Shaw Trust for getting women into construction, Action West London (AWL) which worked with young black males, Catch-22, WLA, WLB, JCP and Department for Work & Pensions (DWP).
- 3.69 The range of programmes and support for young people included pre-apprenticeships; not in education, employment and training (NEET) programmes; young asylum seekers/refugees programmes; and Youth Hub engagement. The programmes helped young people to gain confidence,

create a CV, acquire interview techniques, work placement to progress into an apprenticeship, education or exposure to work opportunities relevant to their aspirations and long-term sustainable good jobs. Young asylum seekers and their parents were given wraparound support including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision to help them to settle into the country and become part of the local community. 150 young people had been supported through the independent Ealing Green Youth Hub. Catch-22, AWL and JCP worked closely with young people at the Youth Hub. 80% of WLC learners had progressed onto further study or apprenticeships on completion of a programme.

- 3.70 The WLC programmes for adults included working closely with DWP and JCP to align the offer to available job vacancies. WLC worked with specific employers such as Heathrow Airport and Thames Water which had numerous vacancies to co-develop appropriate programmes to meet their needs. The 2-3 week sector based work academies programmes (SWAPs) such as for retail, hospitality, construction and security sectors were designed with employers and guaranteed interviews on completion.
- 3.71 The essential digital skills qualification (EDSQ) was a key component in all WLC's work to help adults to improve their digital skills in accessing online job applications and virtual interviews. WLC's Kickstart Essential Skills programme offered a six-month work placement and employability programmes. 90% of Kickstarters at Thames Water had secured a full-time job with the organisation. The Heathrow Essential Skills programme offered recruitment to varied jobs at the Airport. The new Carbon Literacy programme would offer residents green skills. Multiply, a GLA funded programme which ran alongside ESOL programmes, focused on mathematics and financial literacy skills.
- 3.72 WLC worked closely with Work Ealing on its programmes to target residents. 78% of the 66 Ealing residents who had participated in SWAPs had progressed into jobs or further training with the associated employer. The Women into Construction (WIC) SWAP which had very good success rates of progressing people into secure employment within the construction sector was always oversubscribed. The Career Clinic SWAP which entailed working with National Health Service (NHS) and into jobs within the health sector had an 80% success rate of getting into jobs.
- 3.73 The WIC SWAP was held in Southall, making it accessible due to good transport links. WLC's new Construction Academy and Green Hub in Southall was scheduled to open in March 2023. The venue could be used productively by partners across the borough to ensure that there were no barriers to the aspirations of getting good high skill jobs for Ealing's adult community.
- 3.74 WLC was a member of Ealing Citizens to promote social inclusion and advocacy. All programmes for adults focused on addressing inequalities. For example, the inclusion of mindset and wellbeing to address the impact on people's mental health and wellbeing after the pandemic; digital skills were woven into most programmes; ESOL and Level Up programmes were

tailored to meet the needs of vulnerable asylum seekers of all ages. WLC's wider partners included Care4Calais, Ukrainian London Foundation and the Afghan Community Support. The London Mayor's Construction Academy and Green Skills Hub focused on hard to reach groups and those most impacted by the pandemic. These initiatives ensured that people could re-enter the job market confidently and into sustained employment.

- 3.75 The WLC programmes were co-designed with employers to eradicate any barriers to the basic level entry requirements such as the need for a construction skills certification scheme card and security industry authority licence for their jobs. Jointly with KPMG, Heathrow Airport was presently undertaking a review of its partnership working with others to help inform the pre-employment training and job vacancies. A bespoke Heathrow Essentials programme sought to develop core employability skills such as customer services that were required for all their airport vacancies. A checkable five-year employment history to which potential applicants were subjected was a main deterrent for the Heathrow Airport jobs. Many organisations were lobbying against the employment history checks so that new settlers and people who had been unemployed during the past five-year period could take up these jobs.

Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service

- 3.76 Mr Iain Elliott (Funding and Group Development Manager, EHCVS) outlined that:
- 3.77 The EHCVS volunteer centre in Ealing matched volunteers with opportunities in the voluntary sector. It was a useful service for people who had been unemployed to get back their confidence through volunteering and helped the community sectors which could not run without volunteers. The Centre provided support to people starting new community groups such as a charity and community interest company. It also offered training and assistance with how to secure funding for projects. Typical volunteers were older women. Three key EHCVS projects were Give Back/Feel Better – Supported Volunteering (GBFB project); Re-Klaim IT Ealing (RITE project) and The Powering Recovery (TPR project).
- 3.78 The GBFB project was a 12-week volunteering placement with mental health support for young people aged 18-25 years, living or studying in Ealing and currently struggling with a mental health problem. In addition to gaining invaluable skills through volunteering, individuals were signposted to local mental health services and informed about Crisis hotlines. The project had been running for several months and organisations such as NWLNHST, MindOut, UWL, MindFood and Mind promoted it to their beneficiaries. EHCVS was surveying its participants to assess the impact of volunteering on their mental health.
- 3.79 The RITE project aimed to tackle digital exclusion by distributing Ealing Council's surplus devices to vulnerable individuals. The project was targeted through current EHCVS database and its uptake was gradually increasing. The eligibility included meeting certain criteria and referral by a charity or non-profit organisation. Participants were expected to complete

four surveys – the first upon receiving the device, then at 30 days, 60 days and 90 days to enable EHCVS to assess outcomes. Presently, 77 devices had been distributed to NHS patients, 19 referrals made and 7 devices successfully distributed to individuals. 10 volunteers trained recipients to use the devices.

- 3.80 The GBFB and RITE projects were relatively new and EHCVS aimed to work with other organisations such as UWL to target more young people who met the criteria. EHCVS welcomed support from Ealing Council to promote the projects through its various communications channels.
- 3.81 EHCVS worked with NHS on the TPR project in providing digital support to five different partnerships – three internal NHS services and two community charities, Mind and Dementia Concern. There were currently over 20 service users with more than 100 interactions between the TPR team and referrals. The project had enabled NHS patients to access appointments and rehabilitation sessions from their home whereas in person appointments may have been cancelled. The TPR and charity teams ran face-to-face digital support workshops for service users of the two charities to help improve their health and wellbeing through digital skills and usage. The positive feedback received for the project had included improved accessibility, home visits by health inclusion team, enabling online shopping and training.

Panel Conclusions

- 3.82 The Panel concluded that the Council should maintain continuous communications with its education sector partners regarding employment matters; lobby the government to relax the five-year employment history checks at Heathrow Airport; organise a combined event for all relevant employment and education partners in providing appropriate information to the borough’s residents; have an employment communications programme advertised regularly through appropriate channels for all employment events, training opportunities and job vacancies on offer; and ensure that Councillors, frontline staff and other appropriate professionals, such as General Practitioners, were kept informed of all employment and training opportunities to refer people to the right place.

No.	Recommendation
R1	Ealing Council should maintain continuous and improved communications with its education sector partners regarding employment matters to provide appropriate support for the borough’s residents in getting them back into work through training.
R2	The Cabinet Portfolio Holder should lobby Heathrow Airport to clarify and relax its five-year employment history checks as this would have direct benefits for local employment.
R3	Ealing Council should organise a combined event for all relevant employment and education partners in providing appropriate information to the borough’s residents and getting them back into work after the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic.
R4	Ealing Council should have an employment communications

No.	Recommendation
	programme that is advertised regularly through appropriate channels for all employment events, training opportunities and job vacancies on offer so that residents could easily find out what was available to them.
R5	Ealing Council should ensure that Councillors, frontline staff and other appropriate professionals, such as General Practitioners, were regularly informed of all employment and training opportunities in the borough to enable referrals to the right place.

THE LOCAL JOBS PROVISION

- 3.83 The Panel received presentations from Ealing Council officers and two partner organisations, High Speed 2 Ltd (HS2) and OPDC, on bringing new and well-paid jobs back in this borough.

Ealing Council – Delivery of New Local Well Paid Jobs

- 3.84 The Council's Business Growth & Inward Investment (BG&I) service worked with other internal services and external stakeholders to deliver the Administration's commitment of securing 10,000 new local well-paid jobs.
- 3.85 The Council's target of 10,000 new local well-paid jobs was split in the ratio 7,000:3,000 between ELS service and BG&I, respectively. Two new posts had been created to support these services in achieving the targets.
- 3.86 BG&I had scoped the approach, developed relationships internally and externally, and drawn up plans to identify opportunities to help achieve its target. Some of the key stakeholders that BG&I had worked with to engage business networks included EHSTF, West London Chamber of Commerce (WLCC), OPDC, WLB, UWL, WLC and Imperial College & Brunel University (IC&BU).
- 3.87 The Regeneration service had considered employment space and the physical needs of businesses to enable them to grow. The Sustainability team had considered a range of net zero agenda programmes for suppliers in responding to retrofit and other works. This had offered greater opportunities for local businesses in the construction sector, the second highest cluster of businesses within the borough. In considering food hygiene, the Environmental Health service had assisted businesses to improve operating standards, ratings, join online platforms and promote their offer to the market. The Strategic Property service had considered underused spaces and assets within the Council to accommodate employment space and support start-ups. The Procurement service had reviewed the Council's purchasing practices ensuring that local suppliers were considered first.
- 3.88 The delivery of the Council's cultural manifesto and action plan was being considered together with the regeneration and jobs agendas. Presently, tourism was more closely linked with the Council's cultural manifesto work. Ealing was well known for being a green place with navigable and walkable pathways. It was recognised that Ealing's rich social history such as music/

film heritage and other characteristics were not widely known outside the borough. The Council was contemplating the infrastructure required to promote Ealing's culture and heritage to attract more visitors. A range of public realm initiatives were being considered as part of the delivery plan for the UKSPF scheme to promote, celebrate and showcase the place. A greater footfall in the area would hugely benefit the local businesses.

- 3.89 EHSTF had considered place-based improvement plans which entailed engaging new business groups and setup of new business associations in different parts of the borough. BG&I had worked closely with EHSTF to support and promote the borough's hospitality, retail and tourism sectors.
- 3.90 BG&I had recently funded a business award through WLCC and actively worked with affordable workspace providers. It had worked with OPDC in the CEZ and supported creative businesses in the Park Royal area. BG&I had worked with WLB on high growth businesses that had recently received Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG).
- 3.91 BG&I had worked closely with UWL in holding a joint event for built environment businesses, WLC's Green Skills Hub regarding green skills, and IC&BU about an innovative proposal for the local economy in Greenford. It had planned further forums for other business sectors in 2023 and would commission a provider to create a platform at the Park Royal CEZ with the potential of making it boroughwide.
- 3.92 In 2022, there had been 19,585 businesses in the borough with a total of 128,000 direct employees. BG&I had engaged with businesses and ELS to identify recruitment needs and matched these with available training or job opportunities.
- 3.93 BG&I had worked with community networks to support business start-ups and nurture entrepreneurship among those furthest from the labour market, targeting local women who were under-represented in this sector. BG&I and ELS had supported entrepreneurs in developing their enterprise ideas at the Start-up School.
- 3.94 BG&I had supported and promoted the Living Wage Employer Mark to local businesses. The Council had committed to have 200 local businesses registered for the accreditation by 2026. Presently, 45 employers had registered with the Foundation to pay their employees the LLW.
- 3.95 Approximately £2M funding from the GLA's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for business support and advice was due in early 2023. £500,000 was allocated to support new and existing businesses through a series of joint key stakeholder events for accessing market opportunities.
- 3.96 The Council's business growth programmes for 2022-26 to unlock job opportunities included ARG funding to grow businesses; development of the CEZ, UKSPF projects such as artwork, festive lighting, and planting improvements in high streets to promote footfall; and High Street Challenge

Fund projects such as the restoration of a circular economy pop-up shop at W3 Hive on Churchfield Road in Acton.

Ealing Council's Apprenticeship Provision

- 3.97 The Council's apprenticeship scheme had commenced in 2007 and until 2016 was open only to young people. The eligibility was extended to people of all ages in 2017. Presently, 295 apprentices had been recruited to the scheme of which 284 were young people aged 16-24 years and 11 aged 25+ years. The national apprenticeship retention rate in 2021 was 65% whilst Ealing's was 96% of which 95% had progressed into employment, education and training (EET).
- 3.98 The apprenticeship model entailed the participants having to achieve the apprenticeship standard through practical work experience, professional knowledge, behaviours and values required in a professional environment before the end point assessment to demonstrate competence in their role. The apprenticeship standards were available at different stages ranging from Levels 2-7. Level 2 was equivalent to 5 GCSEs; Level 3 equivalent to two A Levels; Level 4 equivalent to a Foundation Degree; Levels 5/6 equivalent to a Degree and Level 7 equivalent to a Postgraduate Degree.
- 3.99 The Council's apprenticeship scheme had been successful due to a range of measures including an apprenticeship team which supported managers to setup, recruit, monitor and manage their apprentices; strong relationships with training providers; pastoral support; a priority recruitment policy; role models of apprentices who became Council employees still in the organisation after 15 years with some recruiting apprentices to their own teams; and the availability of degree apprenticeships such as in planning and surveying.
- 3.100 The pandemic had impacted on working practices. Many managers were unable to offer apprenticeship roles due to the uncertainty and need to work from home. The number of national apprenticeships had declined by 70%. Ealing had employed 30 young people on a Kickstart scheme as part of the government's Plan for Good Jobs programme. In addition to the easing of COVID-19 restrictions and getting accustomed to working from home, the scheme had helped managers to gain confidence in supporting young people with limited work experience. Consequently, four people had started apprenticeships and eight had secured jobs within the Council. 26 Kickstarters had moved into EET. There had been a marked increase in the number of apprenticeships and the Council was on track in recruiting 15 people during the current financial year.
- 3.101 The present national apprentice minimum wage was £4.81 per hour. Ealing Council had always paid well above the minimum level and its model rose incrementally over an apprenticeship period, reflecting an individual's skills and experience. The Council's current training allowance for Level 2 apprentices started at £6.00/hour rising to £9.50/hour (national minimum wage (NMW)) after six months, an annual allowance of £14,105. Levels 3-4 apprentices started at £11.95/hour (LLW), an annual allowance of £21,749.

The Senior Leadership Team was due to review the Council's training allowance model for apprentices in 2023.

- 3.102 The apprenticeship scheme had enabled the Council to address its workforce imbalance in age as most apprentices were aged 16-24 years and create roles with training that had led to positive progressions for most participants.
- 3.103 In its commitment to care leavers, the Council had commenced a pre-apprenticeship Horizons Pathways Programme (HPP) in 2022. HPP would support four cohorts of 15 care leavers on a 5-month programme involving a two-day paid work placement, one day employment support, mentoring and progression support. Trainees were paid up to 15 hours per week at NMW. Previous programmes had achieved a 75% rate into EET outcomes.
- 3.104 The introduction of the apprenticeship levy in 2017 had changed the eligibility to enable people of all ages and qualification levels to undertake an apprenticeship. The Council had created its own corporate programme with 140 staff starting apprenticeships as part of the staff training scheme. This scheme had enabled the Council to train social workers and presently eight people were undertaking social work apprenticeship degrees.
- 3.105 Ealing Council had committed to a levy transfer scheme for local employers, or those with a strong link to the borough, which utilised its unspent apprenticeship levy to pay for apprenticeship training for the employers. The Council had committed to gift £400,000 of levy over four years and presently £66,000 had been gifted for apprenticeships including a teacher, sports coach, horticulture, and early years practitioners.
- 3.106 The Council had recently established an Ealing Apprenticeship Partnership with some apprenticeship training providers. The Council would develop an apprenticeship offer to support residents into good careers and assist businesses to create a highly skilled workforce. This action was anticipated to increase apprenticeship vacancies to help meet the target of creating 2,000 apprenticeships in the borough.

High Speed 2 Ltd

- 3.107 Mr Ambrose Quashie (Skills Manager, HS2) highlighted that:
- 3.108 The role of Skills Manager for London at HS2 was twofold. The first role entailed overseeing the contractual requirements of SCS Railways, its tier one contractor in London for main civils works; contractors Balfour Beatty, Vinci, and Systra – the station construction partners for Old Oak Common; and Euston Station construction partner, Mace and Dragados. The second role was to oversee key stakeholder relationships which included Ealing Council in connecting Ealing residents to the opportunities that the borough's proximity to the HS2 line of route offered.
- 3.109 Skills and employment were one of the seven strategic goals of the HS2 programme that were integral to its delivery, making these a core part of the work. HS2 had significant workforce requirements and its previous year's

data indicated the need for 34,000 people during the peak construction period in building the railway line from London to Manchester. The peak workforce requirement in London was approximately 9,000. Insufficient people to help in the programme delivery was a significant risk. HS2 was keen for a sustainable legacy to demonstrate the programme's benefits by offering opportunities to local communities, disadvantaged people and under-represented groups.

- 3.110 The HS2 Skills, Employment and Education (SEE) Strategy, published in 2018, had four key priorities. The first priority was to ensure the skills to deliver the programme and leave a sustainable skills legacy for the transport infrastructure sector and wider UK economy. The second priority was to create sustainable skills, employment and education opportunities in the HS2 supply chain using procurement levers. This included activities such as employing previously workless individuals; creating work placements to a pathway into paid employment; recruiting apprentices through schools and further education colleges; and undertaking work to upskill the existing workforce. One of these activities had to be delivered per £3M of contract value which meant that lots of activities had to be delivered in the right way by the supply chain for contracts worth billions of pounds. The third priority was working with schools and young people to stimulate interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects to encourage more young people into transport infrastructure related careers. HS2 had delivered workshops, career fairs and employability support such as mock interviews across schools and colleges located along the line of route. It had also attended large-scale events such as Skills London, UK's largest jobs and careers event for 14 -24-year-olds and their families, at ExCeL London in November 2022. The fourth priority was to work in partnership with stakeholders and industry to maximise the economic and regeneration benefits of the HS2 programme locally along the line's route and across UK. Local stakeholders would help to create the right pathways into employment and better representation across its workforce, ensuring that employees could sustain their employment and progress in the workplace.
- 3.111 HS2 aimed to deliver a job brokerage model that showcased vacancies and made it easier for under-represented and disadvantaged groups to access the job opportunities. The model, launched in 2021, had two key components to create pathways into employment at scale for local communities and diverse groups. The first component was a jobs board on the HS2 website for all vacancies across its supply chain. The second component was a network of job brokerage partners, such as local authorities, which had the requisite expertise in creating the pathways.
- 3.112 HS2 interventions in the borough had included participation in local jobs fairs through its partners; STEM workshops in local schools such as at Greenford High School; supporting 11 young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) from Belvue High School through an 8-week employability project in 2022 with a second project planned for 2023; and conducted competitions in schools for the naming of tunnel-boring machines (TBMs) resulting in two local schools, Dairy Meadow Primary School and Brentside Primary Academy, naming two TBMs –

Sushila and Caroline (after Sushila Hirani, Head of Department and Lead for STEM at Greenford High School and astronaut Caroline Herschel). TBMs were traditionally given female names after Saint Barbara, the patron saint of miners.

- 3.113 Five miles of tunnelling work from West Ruislip through Northolt to Greenpark Way in Greenford, taking approximately 22 months to complete, had commenced in October 2022 using TBM Sushila. TBM Caroline was scheduled to launch shortly from the West Ruislip site to build the second twin-bore tunnel towards London. WLC had delivered training for the HS2 pre-employment programme linked to its tunnelling works. Three of the 11 people presently on these work placements were Ealing residents and HS2 aimed to get them all into apprenticeships or other roles.
- 3.114 HS2 used two key metrics to determine how local people had benefitted from its opportunities. One metric, workless job starts, measured individuals who had secured employment across its programme for at least 26 weeks. The second metric measured apprenticeship starts in which individuals had lasted for at least 12 weeks. In February 2017-September 2022, there had been 96 Ealing workless job starts (11% of Greater London total) and 24 Ealing apprenticeship starts (9% of Greater London total). If the total number of available apprenticeships had been spread equally across London then there would only have been 3% Ealing apprenticeship starts. HS2's focused work in the borough had benefitted residents significantly compared to other London boroughs. HS2 aimed to have at least 7% Ealing apprenticeship starts in future years.
- 3.115 A large-scale construction programme such as HS2 had a broad range of job opportunities including apprenticeships in construction engineering, cyber security, and fraud investigation. HS2 had launched various pathways to help people into these job opportunities such as offering work placements to civil engineering postgraduates from University of East London and ultimately most had secured permanent paid employment on the programme. The paid placements were an excellent opportunity for people to learn more about the whole civil engineering industry before deciding which discipline interested them most for long-term employment.
- 3.116 HS2 had engaged with WLC for several years. It continued to work with WLC at the Green Skills Hub from where training for the tunnelling pre-employment programme had been delivered and WLC's plans for Southall Community College.
- 3.117 The 34,000 jobs for the overall HS2 project were anticipated to peak in 2027-28. The project's phase one, London to Birmingham line of route, was likely to peak around this time as the tunnelling works had just commenced. Presently, there were numerous job opportunities for which HS2 and Ealing Council had been preparing in the past 2-3 years, such as through the tunnelling pre-employment programme, to enable local people to take up the available jobs. The work across the two new stations of Old Oak Common and Euston would accelerate thereafter.

- 3.118 The low take-up of apprenticeships was a multi-faceted issue. Since Brexit, there had been a severe skills shortage in the construction industry and the take-up of construction apprenticeships had remained low despite HS2 paying a higher LLW to its apprentices. Many people deemed the construction industry less attractive due to safety and cleanliness concerns despite the vast range of different job opportunities that it offered. This perception was often held by young people, parents, carers and influencers. Many parents aspired for their children to go to a university despite the high costs and considered all other routes to a qualification as inferior even though a Level 7 apprenticeship was equivalent to a master's degree and fully paid for by the employer. Some employers had used their apprenticeship levy to retrain existing staff to create apprenticeships. Many young people did not want to attend college so preferred to go straight into a job. Some parents on state benefits were reluctant for young people to start apprenticeships because of the financial impact. HS2 provided sufficient information to young people and their parents to enable them to make informed decisions about the options. The low take-up of apprenticeships in London was evident across several sectors because it had a higher dependency on European Union migrant labour. The rising levels of economic inactivity since the pandemic had impacted on take-up of apprenticeships. The poor quality of job applications, non-attendance at interviews and inadequate interview skills were also significant problems. It was vital to raise greater awareness among young people, their families, and teachers of the good job opportunities that construction could offer as part of the built environment.
- 3.119 Presently, HS2 engaged with young people and their parents during the visits to high schools regarding job opportunities. As HS2 was a 30-year project, OPDC would consider visiting primary schools to raise awareness about the opportunities to encourage young people and their families to decide at a much earlier stage of available options. The Forge Manager would highlight the merits of apprenticeships at the Acton Bid in January 2023. Work Ealing would also promote apprenticeships and guidance on STEM subjects to schools much earlier before young people selected their GCSE subjects. It was important to ensure that young people had a linear progression from education to employment. Some apprenticeships sectors, such as construction, required rebranding to attract more young people.

Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation

- 3.120 Mr William Seago (Manager, The Forge@Park Royal, OPDC) outlined that:
- 3.121 The Forge, part of OPDC, was based in Park Royal. It was a collaborative business support, recruitment and up-skilling service launched in August 2020. The service was funded (£255,200) through the HS2 business and local economy fund (BLEF) programme and OPDC match funding.
- 3.122 OPDC was a Mayoral Development Corporation, established by the Mayor of London to secure the regeneration of the Old Oak Opportunity area, spanning land in three London boroughs – Ealing, Brent and Hammersmith & Fulham. The area included Park Royal industrial estate, the Old Oak development area around the new HS2 Old Oak Common Station and

protected land at Wormwood Scrubs. OPDC's Local Plan, adopted recently, set out the development framework area. Plans for Old Oak West on land surrounding Old Oak Common Station, Willesden Junction and North Acton were being developed to create an urban district.

- 3.123 The Forge was a delivery partnership between OPDC, the three London boroughs, DWP, Shaw Trust and WLC. It worked closely with HS2 and its contractors.
- 3.124 The Forge Manager led a team of one apprentice and three full time recruitment and business advisers. The Forge team supported businesses in Park Royal and the three boroughs, connecting them with a local talent pool of jobseekers. The staffing positions had been match-funded until June 2024 by the three boroughs. Ealing's Employment and Apprenticeships Manager sat on The Forge's delivery board that met quarterly. All vacancies were posted on The Forge online portal and across its networks. The Forge promoted the vacancies and assisted residents to compete for the listed jobs. The Forge team also delivered outreach services and events in JCP and the local community.
- 3.125 Park Royal was London's largest industrial estate spanning the three boroughs of Ealing (40%), Brent (40%) and Hammersmith & Fulham (20%). OPDC was its Local Planning Authority located in Brent. The area had a strange mix of commercial premises and housing. The commercial sectors included food and drink manufacturers, garage and motor repair, public services, retail, restaurants, hotels, wholesale, warehousing and logistics. There were 1,700 businesses located in Park Royal, mainly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) employing less than 500 people but most were microbusinesses employing less than 10 people. Approximately 800 of these businesses were in Ealing. About 40,000 people were employed at the industrial estate and 4,000 people lived there. It hosted 250 creative businesses which included film studios and makeup provision. The Forge and Ealing Council were jointly working on the funding bid for Acton CEZ.
- 3.126 The Forge had engaged with 234 employers, mainly in Park Royal, since August 2022 and 124 had used the services. 424 vacancies had been advertised over this period of which 164 had been filled with 87 candidates still in employment after six months. 755 residents had registered on The Forge online portal which had 30 employment vacancies presently.
- 3.127 The Ealing outcomes had included 90 Ealing employer registrations and 36 had used The Forge services. 87 Ealing vacancies had been advertised on the portal. 307 Ealing residents had registered with The Forge. 71 of the 165 vacancies advertised had been filled by Ealing residents and 35 were still in employment after six months. There had been 11 live Ealing vacancies presently, mostly in the food manufacturing sector.
- 3.128 The Forge's plans for 2023 included funding a creative careers fair with CEZ and Ealing Council at the Acton CEZ; organising an HS2/construction careers fair at OPDC site in Brent; jointly with TfL commission a new programme of business support for Park Royal SMEs; commission a

Change Foundation Street Elite (CFSE) programme for 15 gang members across the three boroughs through HS2 and its contractors. CFSE was a multi-award-winning training for work programme that used sport and intensive mentoring to support young people impacted by crime, violence and inequality into secure EET opportunities – Berkeley Group provided work opportunities for people completing the CFSE programme presently; referring suitable Park Royal businesses to GLA’s Better Futures programme for businesses that delivered clean technology and solar panel support funded by OPDC; and continued mainstream recruitment and outreach delivery.

- 3.129 The Forge was liaising with Systra, a major landowner in Park Royal, regarding the solar panel support scheme. Many high energy usage businesses such as the food sector were keen to install solar panels due to the rising energy costs but buildings with asbestos roofs were deemed unsuitable. Councillors would be sent details of the scheme which they could share with others.
- 3.130 The Forge worked closely with the Council’s Work Ealing service to identify what could be done to get more Ealing residents into the job vacancies. Some of the problems in filling the vacancies included low quality CVs received through DWP. The Forge had tackled this issue by referring people into the national career service for support. The Forge team had also worked with recruiting employers to screen and match individuals to vacancies. The team worked closely with job brokerages of all three boroughs and had helped individuals to improve their CVs to secure job interviews and suitable employment.

Panel Conclusions

- 3.131 The Panel concluded that much good work was being done across the borough by Council services and various partner organisations in creating employment opportunities but more needed to be done for local people by raising early awareness of schemes and providing appropriate support to increase the creation and take-up of apprenticeships and job vacancies.

No.	Recommendation
R6	Councillors should be provided details of the solar panel support scheme so that they could inform constituents about the offer.
R7	Ealing Council should actively encourage the borough’s schools to promote apprenticeships more including at primary level.
R8	Ealing Council should promote the borough’s rich heritage to attract more tourism and the creation of additional associated jobs in this area for local people.

SUPPORTING SMALL AND LOCAL BUSINESSES

- 3.132 The Panel received presentations from Ealing Council officers and four partner organisations – Loom Projects/Park Royal Design District (PRDD); West London Business (WLB); Your Acton Business Improvement District (BID); and University of West London, on the support provided to small and local businesses to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and unlocking good job creation opportunities in this borough.
- Ealing Council**
- 3.133 The Council's Economic Growth service included the Business Growth & Inward Investment team, Regeneration team and Skills & Employment team. The service had worked closely with a vast array of small and local businesses across the borough's high streets and commercial areas over the past few years in helping them to recover from the pandemic and thrive. The service had a strategic responsibility to deliver the Council Plan target of 10,000 new jobs for the borough's residents by 2026.
- 3.134 Ealing had 19,585 businesses employing 127,000 people. 93.1% (compared to London average of 90.9% and England average of 89.8%) of these businesses were classed as micro businesses employing less than 10 people, indicating that it was a very entrepreneurial borough. The largest business sectors were retail & wholesale (17%); professional scientific & technical (15%); construction (13%); and information & communication (10%). The business sectors with the highest number of jobs were retail and wholesale (19%); business administration and support (10%); health (10%), manufacturing (9%) and education (9%). The sectors most impacted by the pandemic and cost of living included retail; hospitality; wholesale; manufacturing, particularly food production for the aviation industry; creative arts; and aviation.
- 3.135 Some challenges facing businesses included reduced profits due to low footfall in high streets from hybrid working patterns, resulting in under-occupied offices and impacting on the night time economy; market changes from Brexit leading to more paperwork, demand on storage space for inventory, supply chain delays and disruption, longer lead times for the delivery of parts and materials; the war in Ukraine impacting on the availability of goods such as some metals and food; significant increases in overhead expenditure from high inflation and energy costs; affordable work spaces; recruitment and retention difficulties with people leaving jobs due to low wages and rising cost of living; skills shortages at mid-skill level employment roles; and greater competition in recruiting highly skilled staff.
- 3.136 The Economic Growth service had worked jointly with other internal services such as procurement, sustainability & climate action, arts & culture, strategic asset management and customer services; and external partners such as UWL, WLC, WLB, Heathrow Airport, Imperial College, Brunel University, developers, employers and West London Chambers of Commerce to help local businesses in tackling some of their complex and varied challenges.
- 3.137 EHSTF ensured that the borough's high streets could reopen in a safe COVID-19 compliant way, aided by £300,000 government funding secured

through Reopening the High Streets Safely fund. As COVID-19 restrictions relaxed further, EHSTF successfully obtained additional funding through the Welcome Back fund and had been delivering numerous projects to help improve high streets across the borough. It encouraged people to support local businesses through a “Love Local” campaign. EHSTF collaborated with the Police and the Council's Community Safety team to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour in the borough's high streets, ensuring that people felt safe when working in or visiting these locations.

- 3.138 To mitigate the impact of the pandemic on businesses in 2021-22, the Council had distributed £2.7M of Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) of under £25,000 to over 260 businesses through its business support programme. The programme included advising 430 small and local businesses to adapt to a new trading environment; distribution of £2.2M to 146 businesses linked to the aviation industry; and £500,000 assigned to 115 creative and cultural businesses/organisations. The Council had also awarded £1.18M Pioneer Grants to 12 businesses in various sectors that had the potential of high growth and creation of 278 jobs. Three businesses were within the food and drink sector, three within technology sector, five within creative and innovation sector, and one in environmental sector. BG&I officers regularly reviewed the progress of the 12 businesses and offered additional support accordingly.
- 3.139 Ealing Council had received £2.08M from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) through GLA which had to be utilised by March 2025. Ealing's UKSPF programme included working with various partners such as UWL's Media School on projects that would continue local business recovery on the borough's high streets; provision of ongoing advice and support to business sectors through forums, start-up enterprise support for women, recruitment of a Food Hygiene Support Officer to help businesses to improve their food hygiene ratings, developing 'How to Guides' for businesses within the retail and hospitality sectors, and boroughwide events for place promotion to link with delivery of the Council's cultural manifesto.
- 3.140 There were business growth opportunities in many sectors, particularly within retail and hospitality; wholesale, logistics and manufacturing; and built environment including construction. The innovation and Net Zero agenda impacted all business sectors. The Net Zero commitments were driving demand for carbon saving measures such as phasing out of gas boilers from 2025 and only new green vehicles from 2030.
- 3.141 The Acton & Park Royal CEZ raised visibility of creative businesses within the traditional food production and manufacturing sectors in Park Royal. The creative businesses were mainly micro businesses and small startups with potential for growth. The CEZ was developing further relationships with the wider community such as W3 Hive circular economy project in Acton. The CEZ Hub would be launched formally during the London Craft Week (LCW) in May 2023.
- 3.142 Ealing Council had raised criminal and antisocial behaviour issues affecting businesses during the BID board meetings and dialogue with the Police.

The businesses were actively encouraged to report all incidents as evidence in getting the required level of policing for the area. The Council's Community Safety Team had conducted surveys in the previous year to identify safety issues and action required to make places safer. EHSTF was engaged in a range of discussions to encourage more active policing on the borough's high streets. The Council's CCTV team could assist by sharing coverage of incidents to help identify criminals and support the prosecution process.

- 3.143 There was presently a small cluster of businesses in the borough that installed a range of different zero carbon measures such as solar panels and air source heat pumps. Businesses had asked for support to access contract opportunities to support their sector. Ealing Council was keen to encourage growth in this area and was exploring how these businesses could be helped to acquire the necessary accreditations to compete for zero carbon initiative contracts. The Council could help the businesses to access more customers wanting to install carbon saving measures including government grants for qualifying households. The Council could list on its website the companies in the borough that were accredited to provide zero carbon goods, works and services.
- 3.144 Some manufacturing, production and construction businesses in Park Royal had difficulty recruiting due to the location and perception of the sectors. The Council's BGII and Skills & Employment teams had recently met with Park Royal Business Group (PRBG) to discuss this issue and would be launching recruitment campaigns to attract quality applicants to work in the very innovative forward-looking businesses at the industrial estate. Presently, only 400 out of 19,585 businesses in the borough offered work experience placements so it was important to urge more businesses to take up this opportunity. The Council would advise businesses about age neutral work placements that might encourage young people who were growing up and studying in the borough to take up local jobs. There had been a recent influx of former Hong Kong residents settling in the borough. The BGII team was liaising with the Community Management team to broker opportunities for volunteering and local jobs to help them and other new arrivals to integrate and continue to live here. The Council would also seek to promote local job vacancies, Ealing's culture and lobby the government for an extension to graduate visas.
- 3.145 BGII officers had recently met with 11 of the 12 EPG recipients to assess progress in their business plans and offer any follow-up support. Some recipients had sought additional help with their marketing and sales plans including exports. WLB regularly monitored the job outcomes and other target commitments related to the funding. All 12 recipients had committed to register with the Real Living Wage Foundation which assisted the Council's wage improvement campaign. One recipient was located into UWL's West London Food Innovation Centre through the Enterprise Hub so that an expanding business no longer had to operate from home.
- 3.146 Ealing Council had integrated into its UKSPF delivery plans some opportunities for students at UWL to gain live experience to support their

learning and development. For example, the media school agreement included the creation of social media content and videography during the development of business design proposals and implementation of improvements on the High Street. BGII would liaise with UWL and WLC College about linking their other faculties with relevant local businesses in providing work experience to their students. Ealing Council was one of the biggest employers in the borough but it could do more to provide work placements for graduates.

Loom Projects and Park Royal Design District

- 3.147 Grace Williams (Director, Loom Projects and Programme Director, PRDD) highlighted the work of PRDD:
- 3.148 Loom Projects supported and delivered creative projects across North West London which included the PRDD project. PRDD was a non-profit organisation led by some artists, designers, studio owners and other stakeholders based in or around Park Royal. It was funded through a CEZ grant and its mission was to support, promote and celebrate the growing community of designers, artists and makers in Park Royal through an inclusive programme of public events, networking and projects. PRDD aimed to raise the profile and boost economic resilience of Park Royal's makers and small creative businesses; and better connect the surrounding residential communities with the hidden cultural offers of Park Royal.
- 3.149 Park Royal was well known for its industry, food production and manufacturing sectors but more artist studios and creative businesses had recently moved into the area. Several old industrial warehouses had been converted into artist studios. About 300 individual creatives and many larger creative companies such as film production, music studios and photographers were presently based in Park Royal.
- 3.150 PRDD's online platform included a website featuring a directory of different makers which included individual portfolio pages showcasing their work through interactive galleries. It was developing an interactive map that would be searchable by the business name or type of work and sought to expand its reach of artist listings to cover other parts of the borough. An events calendar featured a 'what's on' guide for local events such as exhibitions, events, film screenings, product launches, studio social events and workshops. A series of short films commissioned by a local filmmaker related the stories of different businesses.
- 3.151 Events for LCW included a two-day festival featuring about 40 local businesses in a central marketplace. It would explore the intersection of future technology and traditional crafts through exhibitions, workshops, demonstrations and guided walks in the neighbourhood.
- 3.152 PRDD had participated in the London Design Festival (LDF) for the last two years which had enabled involvement in a wider range of activities to celebrate the rich diversity of design and talent in Park Royal. Many new local projects had resulted from exposure at the LDF and this year's event was scheduled for 16-24 September 2023.

- 3.153 PRDD's other year-round programmes included talks, films, public realm improvements, supper clubs, product launches and music events. The new Re-Made project in Park Royal was a material exchange hub that connected artists and makers with waste and surplus materials from local industries such as film studios. PRDD had raised £35,000 from crowdfunding through Space Hive to employ someone to run this hub. Many local creatives had also developed innovative solutions using waste materials from the streets and skips of Park Royal.
- 3.154 Excelsior Studios planned to create an Open Access Workshop in their new building. The project would provide affordable and accessible shared workbenches and tools to members of the space. Concessions were available for students, low-income individuals, unemployed and retired people. Local artists and makers would be encouraged to share their skills through workshops and seminars for use of the facilities. Local schools and universities would be encouraged to participate in the project, enabling a hobby to become a business idea.
- 3.155 PRDD had recently started a Park Royal's Women's Group in direct response to women from the creative sector and small businesses feeling unsafe in the area due to lack of street lights and presence of other people. Many women took cabs home after events due to non-existent safe routes in the industrial estate. The group had met several times and PRDD aimed to do a proper launch to reach more women in the area. Safety was critical for the success of the increasing cultural offer and events in Park Royal.

West London Business

- 3.156 Andrew Dakers (Chief Executive, WLB) highlighted the work of WLB:
- 3.157 WLB had been established nearly 30 years ago as a non-project company limited by guarantee. Its members worked collaboratively to maintain its global economic competitiveness and catalyse action for people. The organisational brand was co-developed with West London Alliance (WLA) and used by both organisations to promote West London.
- 3.158 WLB's offer to smaller businesses ranged from insight and analysis of the West London landscape; light touch business support through a varied annual events programme enabling networking, navigating current financial support and delivery of the Better Futures+ programme for the Mayor of London, enabling small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to plan their transition to the Net Zero targets.
- 3.159 WLB hosted PRBG that was established in 2014. PRBG's operational challenges included antisocial behaviour, security, and developing the local supply chain of businesses. WLB had been instrumental in acquiring a super-fast broadband investment across Park Royal industrial estate and was working on the energy supply challenges restricting the Park Royal and wider West London's economic growth. WLB had several cross-cutting programmes through which it signposted businesses to incubators, accelerators, knowledge transfer partnership opportunities with local

universities and a new London West Innovation Network (LWIN) pathway. The Screen Capital West (SCW) programme supported inward investment for the screen and film sector across North West London, a rapidly grown sector.

- 3.160 The recently celebrated 10th WLB Awards that exposed micros businesses and SMEs to very large enterprises would be relaunched in 2024.
- 3.161 WLB had acted as a managing agent for the delivery of the Council's Ealing Pioneers' Fund programme, enabling 12 out of approximately 70 businesses to successfully access the available funding. One business, VMI, had attended COP26 and was recognised as one of two leading UK companies for its pioneering work on Net Zero. Focal Sun, another successful business, had maximised efficiency of solar and wind inputs to produce green hydrogen.
- 3.162 WLB sought to take fast growth businesses through the foreign network pathway. It had worked in partnership with further education colleges and higher education institutions in supporting about 150 businesses to develop their innovation, culture and capabilities.
- 3.163 WLB had secured additional funding for the Better Futures+ programme through the UKSPF that would sustain the programme for another two years. The programme had enabled WLB to assist businesses in accessing free climate essentials to measure their carbon baseline and develop a carbon reduction plan with particular focus on energy crisis.
- 3.164 WLB had developed a beneficial loans toolkit for employers to help provide loans through their payroll for staff, protecting them from loan sharks.
- 3.165 WLB was a local organisation with a global outlook. It partnered the Institute of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability. WLB was a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact and had attained an observer organisation status at the UN Climate Change Conference UK 2021. It planned to send a delegation to COP28 later this year.
- 3.166 WLB's dealings with PRBG had highlighted increased crime and antisocial behaviour across the estate in recent years. WLB had found it harder to engage with the local police and would closely observe the new Police Commissioner's commitment to get more grassroot policing in industrial estates, residential areas and high streets.
- 3.167 WLB's survey had revealed that North West London (NWL) had a long way to go in building a zero carbon supply chain capacity. The three main factors in attracting established and growing businesses to an area were A-grade office space (which NWL, other than White City, lacked), permeable higher education institutions (which NWL had in UWL, Brunel University and Imperial College), and a good cultural offer which Ealing also had in place. In addition to existing UKSPF programmes such as Better Futures+, Imperial College and WLB were delivering the Sustainable Ventures programme that aimed to use commercial innovations to tackle climate

change. The programme supported early stage highly promising climate tech SMEs which often lack the skills, networks and confidence to bring their ideas to market or grow them quickly. WLB and UWL worked closely with Heathrow Airport on its Heathrow Lift Off programme which enabled innovative start-up growth businesses in West London to plug into the airport ecosystem supply chain.

- 3.168 Local businesses were presently struggling to recruit staff so it was important for them to tap into the job fairs arranged by universities and colleges to attract their learners/leavers for vacant positions. WLB promoted the job fairs to its members. WLB had recently recruited two international graduate students who were granted two-year visas. It was important for local businesses and Ealing Council to lobby central government to extend graduate visas for longer periods to enable West London's economy to be built on a global pool of talent.
- 3.169 WLB had experienced that with more people working remotely there was less capacity to host workplace visits and extended work placements. It encouraged its members to maximise the time that graduates and airline managers spent in the office environment to help progress their development.

Your Acton BID

- 3.170 Natasha Patel (Your Acton BID Manager) highlighted her organisation's work:
- 3.171 A BID was a defined geographical area in which the local businesses had voted to invest together to improve their environment. Businesses within the defined BID boundary paid a levy charge that was calculated as a percentage of the rateable value for their business premises. The collected levy was reinvested in the area to support services for its members including special projects and events.
- 3.172 Your Acton BID was established in 2018 and the businesses had recently voted for it to continue for another five years from 2023-2028. The BID worked to deliver a new mandate for the 600 businesses within its boundary. The Acton BID area included South Acton industrial estate, Acton Park industrial estate, The Vale industrial estate, and independent businesses along Acton High Street, Churchville Road and Oxford Road.
- 3.173 Some projects delivered by the Acton BID had included new Christmas lights; flower baskets and planters; branded bins in the town centre; CCTV cameras in South Acton industrial estate that were monitored by Ealing Council's CCTV team; a second screen for Act One cinema; way finding maps for Acton Town Centre; creation of more green spaces; additional deep cleans for the town centre; rebuilding big businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic; offering free pest control to SMEs; discounted rates on waste management; providing free training courses such as emergency first, health and safety and level two food hygiene; free broker services to help businesses find alternative utility providers; hiring a private security company, My Local Bobby (MLB), to provide additional support for

businesses to combat antisocial behaviour and retail crime; issuing free security radios to businesses for increased communications and crime prevention; liaison with the Council's Regeneration Team to help promote industrial establishments; and working with various High Speed 2 partners in the nearby areas.

- 3.174 Your Acton BID had found that businesses often did not report crime due to the low cost of items stolen. Hence, the BID had enlisted MLB to work in Acton Town Centre for four days a week. MLB worked closely with Metropolitan Police and Ealing Council's CCTV and Community Safety teams. Educating businesses to report crimes, provide evidence and attend law court proceedings were a major challenge in Acton Town Centre. Retail staff were reluctant to act against criminals for fear of reprisal and not paid by their employer to attend law courts. There had been a significant reduction in antisocial behaviour in parts of Acton since the introduction of MLB within the area.
- 3.175 Your Acton BID planned to create a welcome pack for small and new businesses in Acton that would include all the projects and services delivered to big businesses. The BID officers visited new occupants to ensure that they were up to date with all requirements such as a waste contract, pest control and helped with any Council communications. The small businesses within Acton Town Centre recognised the benefits of a BID and appreciated the support provision. WLB's Beneficial Loans Toolkit for Employers was recommended as a useful resource to local businesses.

University of West London

- 3.176 Stephen Fry (Executive Director, Westmont Enterprise Hub, UWL) highlighted the work of UWL:
- 3.177 UWL was a good partnership and career university. It focused specifically on ensuring that the graduates were work-ready and went into jobs with clarity. Its student surveys suggested a high rate of satisfaction.
- 3.178 Entrepreneurship was at the foundation of every career. It meant having the ability to take risks, be happy and secure in taking risks, knowing that an individual had the competence and knowledge to risk, and the assurance of own success. UWL built these fundamentals into the students as they graduated from their studies.
- 3.179 UWL's research focused on emerging technologies, disciplines and sciences. It assisted local businesses in these three emerging areas. UWL's venture making model was an early stage think through process that was central to the Hub's activities.
- 3.180 The Hub was established in 2018 with philanthropic gift and had gone live in 2019. This had enabled it to help start-ups pivot to a post COVID-19 environment.
- 3.181 The Hub had worked with Ealing and other sub-regional businesses to develop and grow their ideas into commercial realities, managing to get two

companies (one was now valued at £32M) to market during lockdown and presently incubating eight start-ups. It had 200 members across West London who were mostly located within Ealing.

- 3.182 The Hub was due to work with Ealing Council in delivering a women entrepreneurs initiative using its venture making as a core tool for assisting ideas. It aimed to get 50 women through the programme and 10 start-up businesses operating in 12 months. UWL was in the centre of a talent-rich community so it sought to understand and bring this talent into the university through its skills and knowledge transfer. It worked with investors to ensure that companies leaving the Hub were properly funded through best possible deals. Funding was being arranged for three Ealing incubating start-ups before their graduation and going live to market with venture capital investment.
- 3.183 The Hub's biggest challenge was encouraging some reticent micro businesses to come out of their homes and working with them face to face in the real world. The Hub was willing to collaborate with Ealing Council in getting such businesses to work with and learn from other experienced businesses across the borough.
- 3.184 The Hub was keen to work with the Council to ensure that Ealing businesses received the best of what UWL had to offer.
- 3.185 UWL could work with Ealing Council to consider why some young people were disenfranchised and apply its venture making programme for young people in schools that were on the verge of entering a criminal life. The programme would give such young people a sense of purpose in becoming entrepreneurs, running a business and seeing the other side of their past actions.
- 3.186 UWL was a career university and the biggest recruiters of its graduates were small and medium enterprises which had been hardest hit by the pandemic. UWL would ensure that the degrees were converted into jobs and assist its learners to grow and become employer-ready on graduation.
- 3.187 Sustainability was at the heart of UWL's ideation development so the Hub ensured that all the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were built into a business start-up idea. SDG 13 was climate action. The start-ups needed to adopt the SDGs and understand what they had to do as compliant and valuable businesses of the community. A good business ought to have a social view of its position within the communities that it worked in and served. The start-ups also had to understand how to exploit the SDGs into market actions in finding opportunities for their products and services quickly and easily.

Panel Conclusions

3.188 The Panel concluded that:

- Despite all the good work that was being done across the borough by Council services and its partners in supporting small and local businesses to recover from the pandemic and unlocking good job creation opportunities more needed to be done for continuous prosperity of all business sectors and residents.
- The Council's Youth Justice Service needed to liaise with UWL's Westmont Enterprise Hub to develop a scheme to divert young people at risk of coming to the attention of the criminal justice system into entrepreneurship.
- Ealing Police needed to work with the BIDs to formulate a strategy for dealing with crime and antisocial behaviour in the borough's town centres. This would encourage more businesses to report crime and engage in any associated prosecution processes, making it safe and pleasant for people working in or visiting the town centres.
- The Council ought to provide information on its website about how businesses could come together to form a BID in town centres, such as Southall and Northolt, that currently did not have one.
- As part of its Violence Against Women and Girls initiative, the Council ought to proactively review safety measures, such as street lighting and accessible public transport, in the borough's industrial estates to ensure that women and girls could visit and work in these places safely at all times.
- The Council needed to list the borough's companies that were accredited to provide zero carbon services such as heat pump installation on its website to encourage more local businesses to attain this accreditation.
- The Council needed to publicise the services available for local businesses on its website including additional beneficial information and links to appropriate associations to enable businesses to access these services readily.
- The Council needed to encourage more businesses in the borough to participate in visitor visits to showcase their premises to potential employees and offer work experience placements for local people of all ages. This would help residents to take up local employment opportunities.

No.	Recommendation
R9	Ealing Council's Youth Justice Service should liaise with University of West London's Westmont Enterprise Hub to develop a scheme to divert young people at risk of coming to the attention of the criminal justice system into entrepreneurship.
R10	Ealing Police should work with the local Business Improvement Districts to formulate a strategy for dealing with crime and antisocial behaviour in the borough's town centres. This would encourage more businesses to report crime and engage in any associated prosecution processes, making it safe and pleasant for people working in or visiting the town centres.
R11	Ealing Council should provide information on its website about how businesses could come together to form a Business Improvement District in town centres that currently did not have one.
R12	Ealing Council's Violence Against Women and Girls initiative should proactively review safety measures in the borough's industrial estates to ensure that women and girls could visit and work in these places safely at all times.
R13	Ealing Council should list the borough's companies that were accredited to provide zero carbon services on its website to encourage more local businesses to attain this accreditation.
R14	Ealing Council should publicise the services available for local businesses on its website including additional beneficial information and links to appropriate associations to enable businesses to access these services readily.
R15	Ealing Council should encourage more businesses in the borough to participate in visitor visits to showcase their premises to potential employees and offer work experience placements for local people of all ages. This would help residents to take up local employment opportunities.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

4.1 The tables below show the Panel membership and attendance at meetings and site visits.

Membership and Attendance at Panel Meetings

Name	Total Possible	Actual Attendance	Apologies Received
<u>Councillors</u>			
Cllr Jon Ball (Chair)	4	4	-
Cllr Praveen Anand (Vice Chair)	4	4	-
Cllr Kamaljit Dhindsa	4	4	-
Cllr Monica Hamidi	4	4	-
Cllr John Martin	4	4	-
Cllr Kim Nagpal	4	2	-
Cllr Charan Sharma	4	4	-
Cllr Tarept Sidhu	4	4	-
Cllr Anthony Young	4	3	1
<u>Co-optees</u>			
Mr Denver Dias (Chartered Accountant, Williams Chartered Accountants, Park Royal)	3	2	1
Ms Roop Kaur (Founder, King Street Shopkeepers Forum, Southall)	3	3	-
<u>Substitutes and Other Councillors</u>			
<u>Meeting 1:</u>			
- Cllr Shital Manro (Cabinet Member for Good Growth)			
<u>Meeting 2:</u>			
- Cllr Fabio Conti substituted for Cllr Anthony Young			

External Witnesses

- Mr John Charlton (Head of Knowledge Exchange and Business Engagement, University of West London)
- Mr David Warnes (Deputy Principal, Strategy, Planning and Communications, West London College)
- Mr Daljit Bains (Director of Business Development and Partnerships, West London College)
- Mr Iain Elliott (Funding and Group Development Manager, Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service)
- Mr Ambrose Quashie (Skills Manager, High Speed 2 Ltd)
- Mr William Seago (Manager, The Forge@Park Royal, Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation)
- Ms Grace Williams (Director, Loom Projects and Programme Director, Park Royal Design District)
- Mr Andrew Dakers (Chief Executive, West London Business)
- Ms Natasha Patel (Your Acton BID Manager)
- Mr Stephen Fry (Executive Director, Westmont Enterprise Hub, University of West London)

Service Officers

- Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director of Economic Growth)
- Angela McKeever (Assistant Director of Employment, Learning and Skills)
- Cristi Gonzalez (Learn Ealing Manager)
- Diana Skwarczowska (Partnerships and Performance Officer)
- Una Crotty-Joyce (Curriculum & Quality Manager)
- Ljiljana Colak (Curriculum & Quality Manager)
- Fiona Crehan (Interim Head of Business Growth and Investment)
- Naseem Kauser (Employment and Apprenticeships Manager)
- Vanita Nicholls (Apprenticeships Programme Manager)

Attendance at Site Visits

Site Visited		Member Attendance
1.	<p>Youth Hub Ealing Green College 3.00pm-4.00pm Thursday 22 September 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Praveen Anand (Vice Chair) - Cllr Kamaljit Dhindsa - Cllr Monica Hamidi - Cllr John Martin - Cllr Anthony Young - Ms Roop Kaur (Co-optee)
2.	<p>Winter Jobs Fair University of West London 10.00am-11.00am Wednesday 30 November 2022 <i>(This was a joint site visit with Scrutiny Panel 1 – Tackling the Cost of Living Crisis)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Jon Ball (Chair) - Cllr Praveen Anand (Vice Chair)
3.	<p>Various Local Business Premises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excelsior Studios Park Royal Industrial Estate, North Acton - Acton Market Square - Charmy's Newsagent Acton High Street - International House refurbishment Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre - The Fox Inn Green Lane, Hanwell - Greenford Quay development Greenford - Aria's Coffee Shop King Street, Southall - Chana Chemist South Road, Southall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Jon Ball (Chair) - Cllr Praveen Anand (Vice Chair) - Cllr John Martin - Cllr Charan Sharma - Cllr Anthony Young - Ms Roop Kaur (Co-optee)

Youth Hub, Ealing Green College



Winter Jobs Fair, University of West London



Excelsior Studios, Park Royal Industrial Estate, North Acton



Acton Market Square, Town Centre



Charmy's Newsagent, Acton



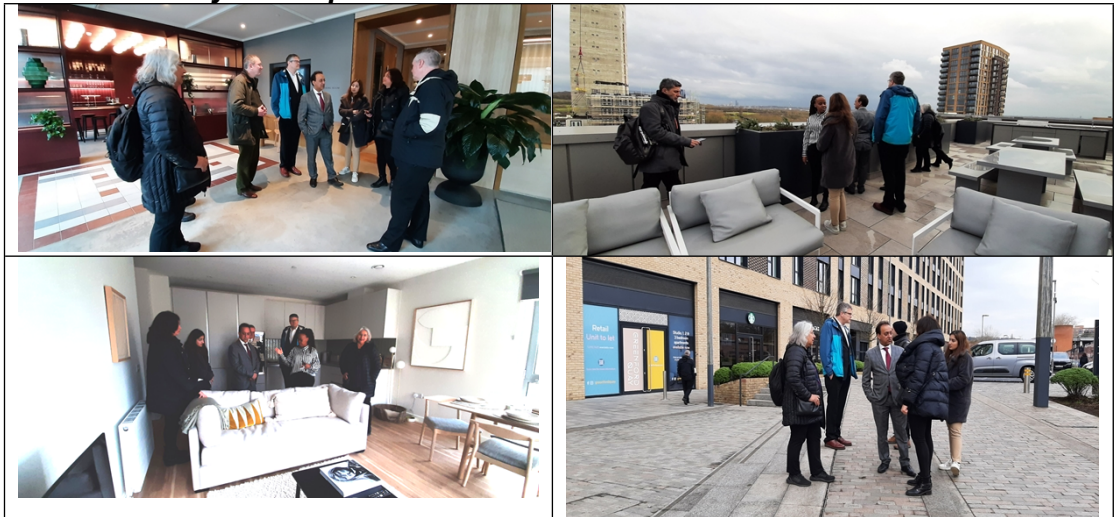
Ealing Broadway Centre – International House refurbishment



The Fox Inn, Hanwell



Greenford Quay development



Aria's Coffee Shop, Southall



Chana Chemist, Southall



5.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5.1 Useful Papers

Ealing Council's Constitution, available at [Council constitution | Council constitution | Ealing Council](#)

Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic – Work Programme, Agendas, Minutes and Reports available at [Committee details - Scrutiny Panel 2 - 2022/23: Recovery from the Pandemic \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme, Agendas, Minutes and Reports available at [Committee details - Overview and Scrutiny Committee \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

Current agendas and reports are available at [Committees \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

5.2 Useful Websites

Ealing Council – www.ealing.gov.uk

Centre for Governance and Scrutiny – [Home - Centre for Governance and Scrutiny \(cfgs.org.uk\)](#)

Government Services and Information – www.gov.uk

Greater London Authority – [Home page \(london.gov.uk\)](#)

Local Government Association – [Home | Local Government Association](#)

University of West London – [Discover the Career University | University of West London \(uwl.ac.uk\)](#)

West London College – [Ealing Green College | West London College \(wlc.ac.uk\)](#)

Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service – [Ealing and Hounslow CVS | Team London](#)

High Speed 2 Ltd – [Homepage - HS2](#)

Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation – [Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation \(OPDC\) | London City Hall](#)

Loom Projects – [Loom \(loomprojects.co.uk\)](#)

Park Royal Design District – [Park Royal Design District](#)

West London Business – [Homepage - West London Business](#)

Your Acton BID – [Your Acton BID |](#)

5.3 **Further Information**

For further information about Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic please contact:

Harjeet Bains
Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Ealing Council
Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk
Tel: 020-8825 7120

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation
R1	Ealing Council should maintain continuous and improved communications with its education sector partners regarding employment matters to provide appropriate support for the borough's residents in getting them back into work through training.
R2	The Cabinet Portfolio Holder should lobby Heathrow Airport to clarify and relax its five-year employment history checks as this would have direct benefits for local employment.
R3	Ealing Council should organise a combined event for all relevant employment and education partners in providing appropriate information to the borough's residents and getting them back into work after the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic.
R4	Ealing Council should have an employment communications programme that is advertised regularly through appropriate channels for all employment events, training opportunities and job vacancies on offer so that residents could easily find out what was available to them.
R5	Ealing Council should ensure that Councillors, frontline staff and other appropriate professionals, such as General Practitioners, were regularly informed of all employment and training opportunities in the borough to enable referrals to the right place.
R6	Councillors should be provided details of the solar panel support scheme so that they could inform constituents about the offer.
R7	Ealing Council should actively encourage the borough's schools to promote apprenticeships more including at primary level.
R8	Ealing Council should promote the borough's rich heritage to attract more tourism and the creation of additional associated jobs in this area for local people.
R9	Ealing Council's Youth Justice Service should liaise with University of West London's Westmont Enterprise Hub to develop a scheme to divert young people at risk of coming to the attention of the criminal justice system into entrepreneurship.
R10	Ealing Police should work with the local Business Improvement Districts to formulate a strategy for dealing with crime and antisocial behaviour in the borough's town centres. This would encourage more businesses to report crime and engage in any associated prosecution processes, making it safe and pleasant for people working in or visiting the town centres.
R11	Ealing Council should provide information on its website about how businesses could come together to form a Business Improvement District in town centres that currently did not have one.
R12	Ealing Council's Violence Against Women and Girls initiative should proactively review safety measures in the

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation
	borough's industrial estates to ensure that women and girls could visit and work in these places safely at all times.
R13	Ealing Council should list the borough's companies that were accredited to provide zero carbon services on its website to encourage more local businesses to attain this accreditation.
R14	Ealing Council should publicise the services available for local businesses on its website including additional beneficial information and links to appropriate associations to enable businesses to access these services readily.
R15	Ealing Council should encourage more businesses in the borough to participate in visitor visits to showcase their premises to potential employees and offer work experience placements for local people of all ages. This would help residents to take up local employment opportunities.

7.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS WITH OFFICER COMMENTS**

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
R1	Ealing Council should maintain continuous and improved communications with its education sector partners regarding employment matters to provide appropriate support for the borough's residents in getting them back into work through training.	<p><u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> We will continue to work with education sector partners to continue to provide communications.</p> <p>We have commissioned the University of West London to deliver a programme to support women into entrepreneurship to start their own business.</p> <p>We had our inaugural high growth sector steering group with these partners on 24 October and this will happen 3 to 4 times a year.</p>	Accept
R2	The Cabinet Portfolio Holder should lobby Heathrow Airport to clarify and relax its five-year employment history checks as this would have direct benefits for local employment.	<p><u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> The council is to recalibrate its relationship with Heathrow and this can form an action as part of that.</p>	Accept
R3	Ealing Council should organise a combined event for all relevant employment and education partners in providing appropriate information to the borough's residents and getting them back into	<p><u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> Resource implications –</p>	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
	work after the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic.	<p>requires financial investment and adequate venue to organise an event.</p> <p>Multiple events held, including Employment and Skills Spring Job Fair - 25 April 2023 - Greenford Hall, Greenford - the fair focused on all types of employment and had attendance from various employers and exhibitors from each key sector.</p> <p>Sector forums will be co-curated with employment and education partners and delivered in settings most inspirational and practical for attendees.</p>	
R4	Ealing Council should have an employment communications programme that is advertised regularly through appropriate channels for all employment events, training opportunities and job vacancies on offer so that residents could easily find out what was available to them.	<p><u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> Ongoing communications through newsletters and campaigns.</p> <p>The Work Ealing and Good for Ealing webpages will be used to maximise promotion.</p>	Accept
R5	Ealing Council should ensure that Councillors, frontline staff and	<u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant</u>	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
	other appropriate professionals, such as General Practitioners, were regularly informed of all employment and training opportunities in the borough to enable referrals to the right place.	<u>Director Economic Growth</u> This will continue via no wrong door and IPS referrals.	
R6	Councillors should be provided details of the solar panel support scheme so that they could inform constituents about the offer.	<u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> The Climate Action Team will issue details.	Accept
R7	Ealing Council should actively encourage the borough's schools to promote apprenticeships more including at primary level.	<u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> Ongoing work with schools through Connexions and Work Ealing, Ealing Apprenticeship Partnership.	Accept
R8	Ealing Council should promote the borough's rich heritage to attract more tourism and the creation of additional associated jobs in this area for local people.	<u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> This is ongoing following the publication of the Cultural Manifesto and development of the Culture Infrastructure Plan. The Good for Ealing website launched in September also promotes the heritage of each town and link through to job opportunities.	Accept
R9	Ealing Council's Youth Justice Service should liaise with University of West London's Westmont Enterprise Hub to develop a scheme to divert young people at risk of coming to the attention of the criminal justice system into entrepreneurship.	<u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> The service is currently developing a pilot called 'Project Zoo', which will be	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
		consulted with UWL and other HE and FE providers to maximise its reach and impact.	
R10	Ealing Police should work with the local Business Improvement Districts to formulate a strategy for dealing with crime and antisocial behaviour in the borough's town centres. This would encourage more businesses to report crime and engage in any associated prosecution processes, making it safe and pleasant for people working in or visiting the town centres.	Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth) This already occurs via Ealing's High Street Taskforce and will continue.	Accept
R11	Ealing Council should provide information on its website about how businesses could come together to form a Business Improvement District in town centres that currently did not have one.	Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth) The Good for Ealing website launched in September provides information.	Accept
R12	Ealing Council's Violence Against Women and Girls initiative should proactively review safety measures in the borough's industrial estates to ensure that women and girls could visit and work in these places safely at all times.	Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth) The council is producing a new Evening & Night Time Economy Strategy and safety will be a key component of that.	Accept
R13	Ealing Council should list the borough's companies that were accredited to provide zero carbon services on its website to encourage more local businesses to attain this accreditation.	Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth) The council recently obtained Good Business Charter accreditation and is encouraging other businesses to secure the same	Accept
R14	Ealing Council should publicise the services available for local businesses on its website including additional beneficial information	Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
	and links to appropriate associations to enable businesses to access these services readily.	The Good for Ealing website launched in September provides information.	
R15	Ealing Council should encourage more businesses in the borough to participate in visitor visits to showcase their premises to potential employees and offer work experience placements for local people of all ages. This would help residents to take up local employment opportunities.	<p><u>Connor McDonagh (Assistant Director Economic Growth)</u> The council already supports this approach in the North Acton & Park Royal Creative Enterprise Zone via the annual Park Royal Design District festival.</p> <p>Subject to securing further resource, this approach can be expanded to other towns.</p>	Accept

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Report for:
ACTION

Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No
Title	Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 3 – 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle
Responsible Officer(s)	Helen Harris Director of Legal and Democratic Services harrish@ealing.gov.uk
Author(s)	Cllr Miriam Rice (Chair) Cllr Athena Zissimos (Vice Chair) Harjeet Bains Overview and Scrutiny Officer Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120
Portfolio(s)	Councillor Deirdre Costigan (Deputy Leader and Climate Action) Councillor Polly Knewstub (Thriving Communities)
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	06 December 2023
Implementation Date if Not Called In	18 December 2023
Affected Wards	All
Keywords/Index	scrutiny; review; regrow, rewild and recycle; recommendations

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to refer to Cabinet the final report and recommendations of Scrutiny Panel 3 – 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- notes the final report of Scrutiny Panel 3 – 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle, which is attached as **Appendix 1**;
- accepts the Panel’s recommendations in Section 7.0 of the final report;
- identifies whether further information or advice is required from service officers on any of the recommendations before Cabinet can take a decision about accepting or rejecting these; and
- directs service officers to produce/or finalise an action plan within an agreed timescale on those recommendations that are agreed by Cabinet.

2. Reason for decision and options considered

2.1 Scrutiny panels have a role in improving decision-making and service delivery through effective scrutiny. Recommendations from scrutiny panels need to be taken forward in a timely manner and in accordance with the Council's constitution if the scrutiny function is to be effective. The Scrutiny and Executive Protocol identifies the timescale for Cabinet to respond to scrutiny panel recommendations. This decision will mean that the response is made in a timely manner and that services can implement the accepted recommendations.

3. Key implications

3.1 The recommendations of Scrutiny Panel 3 – 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle are provided in a table format in Section 7.0 of the Panel's final report in Appendix 1.

3.2 The Council constitution (Part 2 Article 6.03) gives the OSC power to 'set up individual specialist panels to investigate and report back to OSC ...' Part 4 of the constitution, scrutiny procedure rules (par.10) identifies that OSC prepares a formal report on its recommendations and submits it to Cabinet.

3.3 Where appropriate, service officers have identified the financial, legal and any other pertinent implications against each recommendation to enable Cabinet to reach a decision.

3.4 OSC will monitor the progress on the implementation of each recommendation agreed by Cabinet.

4. Financial implications

4.1 The service officer response, including suggested actions which may have potential financial implications, to each recommendation is provided in Section 7.0 of Appendix 1.

4.2 The majority of the recommendations have no financial implications or those that have can be contained within existing service budgets. Where a recommendation involves additional funds then these will have to be contained at present and any further allocation of funds would need to be obtained through the normal budget setting process.

5. Legal

5.1 The constitution requires that scrutiny panel recommendations be submitted to OSC for approval prior to submission to Cabinet.

5.2 The council has the powers to implement all those recommendations that have been accepted. Detailed legal advice will be provided at the point that they are taken forward for implementation.

6. Value for money

6.1 The effectiveness of Scrutiny is measured by the quality of its recommendations to Cabinet and the extent to which it has contributed to both democratic renewal and members' community development role. The scrutiny panel held open meetings in public, solicited views through expert witnesses and media channels to ensure a regular and sustained input to the work of the panel.

- 6.2 With respect to scrutiny panel recommendations, value for money implications are outlined in the officer response to each recommendation in the schedule, as appropriate.
- 6.3 If recommendations arising from scrutiny panels are not taken forward and implemented in a timely manner then improvements to service delivery are not made efficiently.
- 7. Sustainability impact appraisal**
- 7.1 There is none arising directly from this report.
- 8. Risk management**
- 8.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report but the failure to act on agreed recommendations or action plans arising could give rise to risk issues in service delivery.
- 9. Community safety**
- 9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report but the failure to act on agreed recommendations or action plans arising could give rise to risk issues in service delivery and community safety.
- 10. Links applicable to the three key priorities for the borough**
- 10.1 The recommendations arising from the panel's review relate to the key priorities of tackling the climate crisis and fighting inequality.
- 11. Equalities, human rights and community cohesion**
- 11.1 No Equality Analysis Assessment has been undertaken on these recommendations. Any equalities or community cohesion issues have been addressed by the service officers' response as appropriate.
- 12. Staffing/workforce and accommodation implications**
- 12.1 Any staffing/workforce and accommodation implications have been addressed by the service officers' response as appropriate.
- 13. Property and assets**
- 13.1 None.
- 14. Any other implications**
- 14.1 None.
- 15. Consultation**
- 15.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the final report of the Panel on 05 October 2023.
- 15.2 The recommendations take into consideration the views of local organisations and residents as expressed at the panel's open meetings and site visits.
- 16. Timetable for implementation**
- 16.1 OSC will monitor, twice yearly, the implementation of the recommendations accepted by Cabinet.

Cabinet Action		Date	Service Implementation
1.	Cabinet accepts some or all recommendations.	06 December 2023	18 December 2023 – in line with Call-in requirements.
2.	Cabinet requests further information.	06 December 2023	Service provides additional information for Cabinet on 17 January 2024 .
3.	As a result of further information, Cabinet accepts or rejects remaining recommendations.	17 January 2024	29 January 2024 – in line with Call-in requirements.

17. Appendices

- 17.1 **Appendix 1:** Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 3 – 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle

18. Background information

- 18.1 Ealing Council's constitution is available at [Council Constitution](#).
- 18.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – agendas, minutes and reports, available at [Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#).
- 18.3 Scrutiny Panel 3 – 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle – agendas, minutes and reports, available at [Committee details - Scrutiny Panel 3 - 2022/23: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#).
- 18.4 Current agendas and reports are available at [Committees \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#).

Report Consultation

<i>Name of Consultee</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Date Sent to Consultee</i>	<i>Date Response Received from Consultee</i>	<i>Comments Appear in Report Para</i>
Internal				
Peter George	Strategic Director Economy and Sustainability	12.10.23		
Nicky Fiedler	Strategic Director for Housing and Environment	12.10.23		
Chris Bunting	Assistant Director Leisure	12.10.23		
Chris Welsh	Parks Operations Manager	12.10.23		
Dale Mortimer	Tree Service Manager	12.10.23		
Earl McKenzie	Assistant Director Street Services	12.10.23		
Catherina Pack	Waste and Street Services Manager	12.10.23		
Helen Harris	Director of Legal and Democratic Services	02.11.23		
Emily Hill	Strategic Director Resources	02.11.23		
Sam Bailey	Head of Democratic Services	02.11.23		
Senior Leadership Team	All Members	15.11.23		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	All Committee Members	05.10.23		
Cllr Deirdre Costigan	Deputy Leader and Climate Action	12.10.23		
Cllr Polly Knewstub	Cabinet Member – Thriving Communities	12.10.23		
External				
None				

Report History

Decision Type:		Urgency item?	
Non-key Decision		No	
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	Date Report Drafted:	Report Deadline:	Date Report Sent:
N/A	-	23.11.23	23.11.23
Report No.:	Report Author and Contact for Queries:		
	Harjeet Bains Overview and Scrutiny Officer Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120		

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SCRUTINY PANEL 3 – 2022/2023

REGROW, REWILD AND RECYCLE

FINAL REPORT

11 MAY 2023

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CHAIR'S OVERVIEW



Councillor Miriam Rice
(Panel Chair)

The Regrow, Rewild and Recycle Scrutiny Review Panel knew it had a substantial brief, and the areas covered would coincide with a number of hot topics in Ealing.

For that reason, this panel demanded much more than meetings and discussions, and I was delighted that we managed to pack in such an excellent programme of site visits. North Acton Playing Fields to visit ARTification, Horsenden Farm, Perivale Park to witness the fruits of the Greenford to Gurnell Greenway Project, Warren Farm, Bixley Fields Allotments, Grove Farm and the N&P Material Recycling Facility (MRF) in Crayford.

It has certainly been an honour to meet and hear from expert witnesses including Dr Sean McCormack from Ealing Wildlife Group and Susannah Littlewood from Trees for Cities, and place the focus on the magnificent volunteer effort from Ealing residents, and the running theme throughout the year has been to look at how best we can support existing volunteers and build on that to further promote Active Citizenship in the borough.

The panel settled on three areas, Ealing Council Biodiversity Action Plan, Ealing Trees Programme, and Reducing, Reusing and Recycling of Waste in the Borough.

It was exciting to discuss the BAP and how Ealing was all set to welcome beavers to Paradise Fields, and again, we did want to learn more about the undoubted reliance we have on volunteers to deliver, whether it be planting, clearing waters, or creating educational opportunities for the community. A day visiting a number of sites illuminated the panel on what was happening in the borough.

Trees are critical, especially in a climate emergency, and we do emphasise this through the number of trees which we plant. We do recognise the challenge to maintain our trees, and we must consider the impact of development on existing trees. Residents are always encouraged to assist with our efforts to plant trees and ensure they thrive.

We also have an obligation to make it easier for as many residents as possible to recycle, and ensure they are informed as to how to reduce, reuse and recycle effectively, and so it was extremely useful to witness a MRF in action and be equipped to reassure residents of the value of their efforts. Ealing already leads in recycling due to the initiatives taken over the past few years, and it was beneficial to highlight present work and future aspirations, whilst we look to getting residents even more involved.

I personally would like to thank all the expert witnesses, officers, and panel members for their contributions, and for the recommendations which are included in this report at the end of an inspiring year.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Panel's work would assist the Council in meeting the commitments of the new administration's manifesto pledge of **Regrow, Rewild and Recycle** "We will create 10 new parks and open spaces, plant 50,000 more trees, and give 800,000 sqm back to nature. Everyone agrees we need to tackle the climate crisis, protect the environment and do even more to make our borough open and accessible for people to enjoy" and the associated priorities within the Council Plan.

Scope

1.2 The Panel's scope was to scrutinise matters relating to regrowing, rewilding and recycling in greening of the borough and make recommendations for improvements accordingly. The Panel focused on the Council's biodiversity action plan; Ealing trees programme; and the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste in the borough.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

General

2.1 The Panel received reports and presentations from internal services, external agencies and expert witnesses at its four hybrid meetings which participants could join in person or virtually via Zoom. The meetings were held in Ealing Town Hall and webcast live on the Council's YouTube channel. The Panel also conducted several site visits.

Site Visits

Within the Borough

- **Various Biodiverse Sites:**
 - North Acton Playing Fields, Acton
 - Horsenden Hill Farm, Perivale
 - Greenford to Gurnell Greenway, Perivale
 - Warren Farm, Southall
 - Bixley Fields Allotments, Southall
- **Grove Farm Local Nature Reserve, Greenford**

Outside the Borough

- **Materials Recycling Facility, Crayford Creek in Dartford**

Co-option

2.4 Mr Paul Carter (Trustee of Ealing Parks Foundation and Chairman of Ealing Allotments Partnership) was co-opted onto the Panel at the second meeting.

Publicity

2.5 The Panel's work was publicised in the Council's *Around Ealing* free magazine which is delivered to all households in the borough, website and direct emails.

3.0 **DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**
OVERVIEW – REGROW, REWILD AND RECYCLE

3.1 The Panel received an overview of rewild, regrow and recycle from Council officers and two partner organisations – Parks for London (PfL) and Ealing Allotments Partnership (EAP):

Ealing Council

- 3.2 Chris Welsh (Parks Operations Manager) outlined that the new Ealing Biodiversity Action Plan 2022-2027 (BAP) had defined *Rewild* as “*leaving spaces unmanaged for nature to revert to its natural processes*”. In 2015, the Council had decided to start rewilding the municipal sites by reducing its grooming regime. The Ealing Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021-2030 (ECEES) had defined *Regrow* as “*food growing is one way we interact with the environment; it offers us a unique opportunity to place ourselves within the ecosystem and see the workings of nature first-hand*”. The ECEES had defined *Recycle* as “*increasing the amount of our belongings that we fix, reuse, upcycle and recycle throughout the borough*”. The BAP and ECEES would guide the Council’s work in the next four years and beyond.
- 3.3 Some of the borough’s recent achievements had included the publication of the BAP; more Green Flag awards; Britain in Bloom accreditation; working closely with Trees for Cities plus securing funding for planting more trees; and ongoing success as one of the Tree Cities of the World.
- 3.4 The Council had actively changed its approach to land management since 2017 in rewilding the borough. It had worked with nature and de-intensified historical municipal maintenance regimes. Vast hectares of previously mown grass had been converted into wildflower meadows since 2015. The reduction in mechanical mowing and compaction had initially started under tree canopies. It had taken three years to convince people, particularly dog owners, that in moving back to a more natural environment was a positive change. Harvest mice had been released at Horsenden Hill and new wetland habitats had been created in parts of the borough. For example, the creation of new swales in Lammas Park helped to stop continuing flooding, hosted a vast quantity of new fauna and flora, and ensured that the paths remained accessible to park users. This project was used as a case study in the Greater London Authority’s (GLA) guide to sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in parks and open spaces. The Greenford to Gurnell Greenway SuDS scheme in Perivale Park had created new habitats and managed water quality and flood risk. Many kilometres of hedgerow, for example the mixed border in Walpole Park, had been planted around the borough.
- 3.5 Planting of 37,000 trees, which included 20,000 trees planted at Marnham Fields in Northolt and Greenford Country Park, in the past four years had exceeded the previous administration’s manifesto commitment to plant 30,000 trees by 2022. The new administration had pledged to plant 50,000 trees in the next four years. There had been a reduction in the use of chemicals for weed control particularly on paving areas. The use of some chemicals was inevitable in containing the giant hogweeds that came down

the river from the neighbouring boroughs to ensure public safety. Parks for London had devised an integrated weeds management plan template for London boroughs to use which Ealing aimed to complete by December 2022.

- 3.6 Over the past few years there had been many achievements and positive steps towards increasing the access to and education of locally grown food. There were over 2,000 allotment tenants across the borough who were supported by various organisations including ARTification which was based in North Acton Playing Fields (NAPF), MindFood which had several plots across a few sites such as Cleveland Crescent in Acton and Horsenden Hill, and APPLE supported initiatives in Acton Park. Cultivating Ealing (previously Ealing in Bloom) was a judged process which had been taken on by EAP. There had been renewed enthusiasm with allotment tenants, residents and schools participating in the Cultivating Ealing competitions. Hundreds of fruit trees had been planted around the borough. The Hanwell and Norwood Green Orchard Trail had several hundred fruit trees in a string of public community orchards along the Grand Union Canal corridor. Following a restructure, the Council no longer had dedicated staff to support allotments and food growing. Existing staff had taken on the additional duties and depended upon volunteers to sustain these areas. There were supported volunteer sessions such as at Walpole Park Walled Garden. A previous post at Walpole Park, funded through the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) project, had delivered for schools and food growing sessions. EPF had sometimes funded a continuation of this activity. Ealing Wildlife Group (EWG) had partnered with educational sessions on locally grown/sourced food. Trees for Cities (TfC) had developed an edible playground at Blair Peach Primary School in Southall. The Nepalese community visited Horsenden Farm twice a week during the growing season. Horsenden Horticultural Association, which managed three allotment sites north of Greenford, had involved the community in growing grapes along a previously overgrown south-facing slope at the Horsenden Grape and Honey Farm.
- 3.7 Ealing was one of the top performing London boroughs for recycling with a rate of 49% in 2020-21. The Council had increased efforts through the ECEES to further progress up the waste hierarchy with the aim to help engender behavioural change. The service supported community groups such as LAGER Can and service users on litter recycling through litter reduction initiatives and exploring infrastructure for recycling in parks. The Library of Things scheme enabled individuals to rent useful household items cheaply, encouraging reuse. The recycling/repair initiatives such as the repairing of bicycles through the Let's Go Southall programme gave a new lease of life to discarded bicycles collected from the West London Waste Authority. People were encouraged to cycle and use more active travel methods to maintain a healthy lifestyle and protect the environment. The Council was exploring options for a circular economy hub and updating Ealing's reduction, reuse and recycling plan.
- 3.8 In the last 5-7 years, volunteers from across the borough had made a significant contribution to the Council's achievements in rewilding, regrowing

and recycling. They had come up with innovative initiatives and solutions to help attain the borough's target of zero carbon by 2030. The Council continued to work as a partner on an initiative and provided as much support as possible to a community group without turning it into a Council-led group.

- 3.9 Inconsistencies in the aftercare within parks depended on the community group with which the service worked. It was challenging for the stretched Parks Service to provide the level of continued support that was required by some community groups. This situation was also reflected within the allotments. When a community group approached the Parks Service with an idea, officers highlighted to them the time and resource commitment that would be required to look after some of the spaces. The service would review its present advice and guidance for community groups and individuals to ensure that it was clearer on the ongoing involvement and dedication required of them to maintain the spaces. The Council was looking at different ways in which it could reduce the use of chemicals for weed control.
- 3.10 The resource constraints made it challenging for existing Parks Services staff to keep abreast of regular communications required to inform the public of new initiatives and changes to the standard regimes. The service would look to emulate London Borough of Sutton's website which provided clear updated information about what the Council was doing about their various green spaces.
- 3.11 The Council's work with the Government was limited. The small amounts of £25,000 in grants funding for the various Government initiatives had been inadequate. The Parks Service had started to make small changes to its provision from 2015 in doing things differently by learning from others through the Pfl benchmarking group. There had been budget cuts but some of the changes that were implemented had required reduced resources. Convincing the public of the need for change had been the biggest challenge for the service. Increasingly, more people were willing to work with the service on various initiatives. There had been a significant increase in the membership of many local voluntary organisations such as EWG and LAGER Can in the past five years. More people tended to join community-led initiatives.
- 3.12 Traditionally, Friends Groups existed in areas with high levels of home ownership and stable occupation compared to areas that had high levels of private renting. The COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the need for green spaces particularly for apartment blocks and multi-occupancy dwellings. Parks usage had increased by 200-250% during the pandemic. The sustained surge in usage had been evident from the increased litter. Many residents had joined groups to pick litter in their local neighbourhoods instead of complaining to the Council. There had been more wear and tear of the Council's assets as a result of increased usage but many volunteers were helping the service to manage some of these challenges.

- 3.13 Dog fouling in the parks was a challenge for the service. There had been an increase in the number of new dog owners during the pandemic. In the initial summer period, the service had partnered with Parkguard Limited to conduct dog training programmes at some parks where spare funding had been available. The service continued to work closely with the Council's enforcement team at some persistent sites to tackle the ongoing problem.

Parks for London

- 3.14 Mr Tony Leach (Chief Executive, Pfl) highlighted that Pfl, a charity supported by the London Mayor, worked across London. It produced an annual audit of all the London boroughs measured against 10 criteria of how their parks were doing. Pfl's resources hub about good parks for London had started in 2017. Ealing was always in the top half and edged more towards the top quartile in comparison with other London boroughs against the 10 criteria. Rewild, regrow and recycle crossed several of the 10 criteria for which data was gathered. Food growing was considered within the health, fitness and wellbeing criteria. The management of assets, types of kits used and kind of recycling undertaken were considered within the nature criteria.
- 3.15 The scores in Pfl's feedback report for the previous year had shown that Ealing was performing very well in comparison with other London boroughs. The report had indicated that the strongest area within Ealing's parks services was collaboration. This was demonstrated by the close working relationship with the local communities resulting in increased rewilding, regrowing and recycling within the borough.
- 3.16 In 2020, Pfl had undertaken a case study of sustainability in Ealing when the Council brought the grounds maintenance contract back in-house. Compared to London Borough of Lambeth, Ealing Council had done well because the Council had purchased green equipment that made a vast difference to the way in which its carbon footprint was measured. The Council had also equipped staff with electric or battery operated handheld equipment that was lighter and less noisy with reduced vibration.
- 3.17 The recently published 2022 Pfl annual assessment had assessed Ealing's Parks Service a joint 10th position out of 32 London Boroughs. The service had scored the highest possible scores for collaboration – demonstrating its work with the local communities and community involvement through the Active Citizens programme which had included the creation of Ealing Parks Foundation, friends of various parks groups and a growing network of organisations supporting the green agenda in Ealing; events – demonstrating the management, promotion and attracting diverse audiences; health, fitness and wellbeing – investing in outdoor gyms and trim trails to enable residents to keep fit and be healthy; and sustainability – actively supporting nature. It was anticipated that Ealing would score highly for strategic planning once the green spaces strategy was completed.
- 3.18 The Panel was assured that compared to other London boroughs, Ealing was in a good position and Pfl had no concerns regarding its whole area of rewilding, regrowing and recycling.

Ealing Allotments Partnership

- 3.19 Mr Paul Carter (Chair, EAP and Trustee Ealing Parks Foundation) highlighted that the Council's active citizenship programme relied significantly on volunteers, particularly those within well-established local groups. The borough's whole network was supported by volunteers so the Council needed to reconsider its relationship with local community groups and volunteers. The Council ought to set a minimum standard for situations by facilitating local enthusiasm to enable day-to-day activity by volunteer groups. For example, residents should not feel that they were not allowed to water trees outside their house even if these were dying because it was someone else's job. This model had operated successfully in the neighbouring boroughs of Hounslow and Kensington & Chelsea.
- 3.20 The Council could consider redefining its programme of engagement and communication. For example, the concept of local ownership of some green spaces could be improved by calling the volunteers 'supporters of a park' instead of 'friends of a park' as the term did not appeal to everyone.
- 3.21 There were 2,000-2,500 tenants on the borough's 45 allotment sites. EAP had compiled a questionnaire and guide for allotments which highlighted the ongoing time and resource commitment required in maintaining an allotment site. EAP was still short of achieving its goal of 'no produce left wasted on allotment sites' because lots of rotting produce was evident there in September. There was a logistical challenge in getting fresh fruit and vegetables from where it was grown on allotments, front gardens or green spaces to places such as Ealing Foodbank, Southall Food Hub and South Ealing Community Food Cupboard that could use the much needed produce in the borough. More green spaces such as front gardens, community gardens and forgotten spaces in the borough could be utilised to produce edible foods.

EALING BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

- 3.22 The Panel received presentations from Council officers and two partner organisations – EWG and Friends of Horsenden Hill (FHH) on delivery of the BAP.

Ealing Council

- 3.23 Chris Bunting (Assistant Director Leisure) and Chris Welsh (Parks Manager) highlighted that at NAPF, the first site of the five biodiverse sites visited by the Panel, ARTification's three-year funded Edible Acton project entailed working with local volunteers at various sites across Acton such as South Acton Recreation Grounds. The weekly gardening sessions at NAPF had enabled volunteers to connect more with nature, learn how to grow vegetables and meet other people in the community, particularly after isolation during the pandemic.
- 3.24 The second site, Horsenden Farm, had demonstrated ways in which volunteers from groups such as FHH had managed areas of the hill creatively through animal grazing on the meadows, food grown on the farm to support mental health charities and connecting residents with nature.

- 3.25 The third site, Greenford to Gurnell Greenway, had demonstrated how the GLA funded Greenford to Gurnell SuDS scheme had improved water quality and created new wetland habitats in disused areas. Volunteer groups such as Greenwayers, LAGER Can and Clean Up River Brent (CURB) worked collaboratively at the site by litter picking along the course of River Brent in Ealing and Brent.
- 3.26 The fourth site, Warren Farm, demonstrated the unique advantages to large scale connected meadows and the benefits for many types of wildlife including vulnerable and rare species such as skylarks. Volunteers from groups such as Brent River & Canal Society and Campaign Group for Warren Farm Nature Reserve helped to retain it as a biodiverse rewilded grassland site.
- 3.27 The fifth site, Bixley Field Allotments, showcased a variety of benefits of biodiversity and food growing. The enthusiastic allotment community was keen to form an association to help improve the site and educate more Southall residents and school children about food growing and healthy lifestyles.
- 3.28 The Council's BAP had been produced in consultation with numerous key stakeholders across the borough. The BAP aimed to include a set of objectives and actions, taking into consideration both local and national priorities, to help deliver and protect strategic biodiversity networks.
- 3.29 The BAP's vision was to conserve enhanced habitats that created better and more interconnected places for wildlife across the borough; increase awareness of biodiversity and encourage more people to connect with nature. The actions would benefit biodiversity and reduce the use of chemicals for weed control. Some accomplishment was evident from the diligent and innovative work that various volunteer groups had performed across the borough.
- 3.30 BAP outlined the status and future priorities for habitats and species for the period 2022-27 within its Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs). HAPs focused on the four specific habitats of built environment; parks and open spaces; wetlands and waterways; and woodland. Each habitat had a clear action plan that outlined what the local authority, residents and private landowners could do for it. Helpful tips and links which people could utilise were also provided. SAPs focused on seven specific species of reptiles and amphibians: bats; water voles; hedgehogs; birds; pollinators; other invertebrates; and plants that were endangered or at risk of extinction.
- 3.31 The BAP was adopted in March 2022 and the Ealing Biodiversity Partnership (EBP), comprising of Council officers and representatives of consulted organisations, would provide the first annual update in March 2023. Regular quarterly partnership meetings would review progress and prioritise actions against the set BAP targets. The progress would be monitored and actioned over the next four years.

- 3.32 The key actions undertaken within the BAP had included maintaining and updating local planning practice guidance (LPPG) and ensuring sustained communication with planning colleagues; developing and maintaining the ecological network map; creating an EBP; reviewing and improving land management uses and practices; creating and updating site specific management plans; regularly monitoring and updating records; and sharing the BAP and engaging with various audiences.
- 3.33 Tangible outcome targets within the BAP included improving a minimum of five hectares of grassland by 2027; improving 0.5 hectares of gardens for pollinators by 2027; increasing tree canopy in the borough to 25% by 2030; and creating new wetlands/flood management projects managing 10,000m³ surface water by 2027. Independent ecologists were presently assessing all the sites to inform the Council's new local plan. The enhanced information would assist the service to successfully achieve the set quantitative targets. The BAP would be reviewed annually to ensure the aspirations were met.
- 3.34 The BAP had targets to build wildlife-friendly practices into the planning process and listed a selection of things for developers to do on their sites. Actions such as green roofs within built environments would have a big impact on capturing carbon, support pollinators, and enable people to enjoy and learn more about nature from their homes.
- 3.35 The BAP provided information on what residents could do to engage with nature such as with window boxes, gardens, allotments and various species. The service planned to send out periodic bite-sized information publications of the BAP to enable residents to undertake appropriate biodiversity activities. There were toolkits for residents on how to embrace biodiversity and gardening. The Council's Do Something Good website contained toolkits on how to engage residents, volunteer and involvement with groups. This summer's inaugural tree festival sought to educate and inform residents on the benefits of trees including the planting of trees on highways, front and back gardens, attitudes and policy change around car use, parking and crossovers.
- 3.36 Conflict was inevitable in development and green spaces. It was evident that there should be a better connection between active planning decisions and the BAP to ensure that planners and developers used it as a live document to progress environmental matters. The Trees Service used a Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees (CAVAT) method to calculate the community valuation for the loss of trees due to development as well as secure adequate and appropriate compensation for their removal through private development from the developer. In some developments trees were irreplaceable due to the lost generations of tree development and growth which money could not compensate. Such situations were always difficult to resolve in London which had a housing shortage.
- 3.37 For the eighth consecutive year, Ealing had attained several awards for some of its parks and open spaces from London in Bloom. Horsenden Hill East, Horsenden Hill West, Longfield Meadow, Perivale Meadow and Bolo

Brook Park had received gold awards. Yeading Brook Meadow had received a silver gilt and Longfield Meadow had also received a Special Trustees Award.

- 3.38 The Trees and Parks Services had received significant resources to transform the canopy cover in parts of the borough. The service was working closely with the Canal and River Trust (C&RT) on a project in Southall to create a wellbeing way. The project had received £700,000 from the London Mayor to transform the relationship of communities with the canal and green/open spaces. Southall residents wanted an intervention within 500 metres of their front door to get daily exercise and interaction with nature. The project would create a hyper localised space that was expected to change people's behaviour and attitude towards daily physical activity.
- 3.39 The service acknowledged the valuable input from collaborators for the achievements in the borough's parks and open spaces. The social return on investment and a community's engagement in certain locations of the borough was deemed more rewarding than commercial opportunities.
- 3.40 The Council and the Parks Service were custodians of the borough's green spaces. The last Council's green spaces strategy adopted in 2012 had largely met its target of no net loss of open space over the last 10 years except for some loss of space due to the HS2 project and a utility company projects. It would be beneficial to inform residents of this achievement as some public concerns had been expressed about these issues.
- 3.41 Some conflicting issues occurred on sites which were often created by the Council. Some sites were unique such as NAPF which was 99% sports orientated but horticulture community gardening had been introduced there. It was anticipated that this offer would be applied more widely to other sites across the borough. There had been some resistance from residents when the Council changed its grass management practices to make financial savings. Ealing was a trailblazer in London for creating biodiverse area pollinating corridors and some mature sites now contained new species. Community engagement regarding this approach had challenges such as with Warren Farm. Warren Farm used to be a farm and then a sports ground from 1966-7 which fell into disrepair in 2009-10. Consequently, it had been allowed to rewild and the Council now needed to work with the local communities and interested groups to co-design and achieve the best solution for this site. Ealing Council was liaising with Imperial College and other nearby landowners regarding the use of their land and how that could complement the current activities at Warren Farm Sports Ground. The Parks Service had recommended more locations in the borough for nature reserve designations which included Horsenden Hill and several meadows adjacent to Warren Farm. It was evident that there needed to be a balanced offer regarding parks and open spaces to meet the different needs of local communities such as physical activity, sport, recreation and dog walking.
- 3.42 The quarterly Around Ealing paper magazine had two pages of coverage for Leisure/ Parks/Environment services which mainly promoted the good collaborative work undertaken with partners. The weekly Around Ealing

digital bulletin also contained some articles covering leisure and culture activities. There was reasonable coverage of biodiversity activities through the Council's communications channels but more extensive promotion could be undertaken.

- 3.43 It was challenging to get large diverse populations to be interested and involved in activities so it was important to build a community of practice for a common goal. For example, a group of 45 people from diverse backgrounds in Southall were consulted on the Let's Go Southall project which aimed to help inactive residents become healthier and more active. The group has since been consulted and involved in various local activities such as development planning issues, physical activity, nutrition, nature and nature conservation. C&RT and Ealing Council had recently worked with the group to launch the Southall Grand Union Canal Wellbeing Way Project to improve the canal towpath and surrounding green spaces in Southall. This project had been funded through a grant of approximately £1m from C&RT and Ealing Council.

Ealing Wildlife Group

- 3.44 Dr Sean McCormack (Chair, EWG) highlighted that EWG was set up in 2016 as a Facebook group to put on some bat walks and had grown into a community group of over 5,000 members. EWG had a core group of about 100 active volunteers across the borough so its projects now covered more areas.
- 3.45 EWG's present volunteers were predominantly white middle-class people interested in nature and green spaces. EWG had recently included a diversity and inclusion strategy into its work and would shortly be recruiting a diversity inclusion officer. It sought to cover the whole borough through targeted outreach activities but got less engagement from the Acton, Northolt and Southall areas. EWG had limited resources to undertake extensive community engagement as most of its volunteers worked full time and undertook wildlife conservation activities in their spare time.
- 3.46 EWG had contributed to the SAPs and regarded Ealing Council as progressive due to its value of green space and biodiversity. EWG focused on delivering meaningful change for people and wildlife. It operated on the ethos of conservation, collaboration and community. EWG aimed to get people actively involved in what green spaces meant for nature and people.
- 3.47 EWG concentrated on species that were of national and London concern. Species within BAP were termed as umbrella species because any action on them would have a wide-ranging impact on lots of other wildlife and people. Some of the actions were habitat management and public engagement. Charismatic species had been selected to attract and involve the public.
- 3.48 EWG assumed BAP's five-year timescale to be very short. For example, it had taken EWG 3-4 years to get barn owls to breed again in Ealing by changing the management of grassland to encourage their food which included field voles and harvest mice. EWG had selected harvest mouse,

which was not on the BAP, due to its massive public appeal. The public had crowdfunded harvest mice, an emblem of good mosaic grassland habitat, that would also support other species. EWG had applied for a licence to introduce beavers in Ealing.

- 3.49 Many public fears about species such as beavers were common and often mislaid. The UK now had over 1,000 free living beavers in the wild that were reintroduced legally and illegally, through natural spread or escape. Beavers were a protected species in England. EWG had worked closely with the Beaver Trust and would apply for a 5-year enclosure trial of beavers in an urban landscape licence. The entire 10-hectare Paradise Fields would be enclosed to give beavers space away from human habitation to see what they did, the impacts such as beaver dams and resulting floods, and how these could be mitigated. People would not be restricted from entering the site. Beavers did not live more than 20 metres from a waterside environment and were easy animals to manage. A willow chopped by a beaver would sprout again into a new tree. The young willow tree supported a lot more different species of insects than a mature one which also benefitted birds and bats. Rangers regularly managed protected trees in the borough to ensure that these were unharmed and there remained a structural diversity within trees and age of trees. In response to EWG's consultation some concerns had been expressed about beavers eating trees, changing rivers/streams and making them inhospitable to fish. These concerns were unfounded because beavers had existed alongside trees and fish for millions of years and had only been gone from the UK for about 400 years. Several scientific studies had shown that beavers had increased fish in freshwater systems by putting more wood into the water system which sheltered fish from predators. Salmon could jump over obstacles and had no problem getting upstream around beaver dams through the surrounding flooded areas.
- 3.50 EWG sought to educate the public that everything was linked, equally important and had to be looked after through connected green spaces, particularly in an urban environment.
- 3.51 EWG urged the Council to provide shovel-ready projects that could be supported and additional funding sought to help deliver BAP targets.
- 3.52 EWG expressed concern that non-replacement of essential staff could cause problems in delivering the BAP as several Rangers who had undertaken the research and stakeholder sessions had left. The Council could emulate London National Park City by operating a network of volunteer rangers to replace the abolished permanent roles that supported volunteers.

Friends of Horsenden Hill

- 3.53 Mr Martin Smith (Chair, FHH) outlined that he had worked as a conservation volunteer at Horsenden Hill since 1984 and then as a Ranger/Senior Ranger for 10 years before retirement. At 100 acres, Horsenden Hill was the biggest single site nature reserve in the borough. It comprised of meadows, wetland and woodland habitat. The site was managed and maintained by

Council Rangers and FHH, a volunteer group. Horsenden Farm was a small part of the site. It had an orchard and animals such as cows, goats, pigs, chickens and geese. Since 2006, the smaller patches of grassland were managed by letting cattle graze in the fields. MindFood, which operated from the farm, was an Ealing based charity that supported people with depression, anxiety and stress to improve their wellbeing through gardening and horticulture. The produce was sold from the farm shop at weekends and the income reinvested in other farm projects.

- 3.54 Changes at Horsenden Hill had included the reintroduction of harvest mice and grass meadows been left for longer each season to provide cover. In the last three years, brown hairstreak, a butterfly not unique to Ealing had also been detected there.
- 3.55 FHH had organised community events such as an apple day to produce apple juice and a summer nature festival that was attended by nearly 2,000 people. Income from events was reinvested in the farm projects.
- 3.56 FHH had established a new Forest School on the site in 2018 and planted a new orchard two years ago. It had won several top awards over the years in the London in Bloom community category and a special award from the Royal Horticultural Society in the previous year.
- 3.57 FHH and Horsenden Farm were seeking funding for refurbishment of the derelict big house. The refurbished house would be put to community use. The refurbishment project would require about £1m and several volunteers were devising a project plan for this work. Some ideas proposed by visitors to Horsenden Hill for use of the refurbished house had included a cafeteria, conference centre and studios for small start-up businesses such as craft shops. FHH commended and endorsed the aspirations of BAP.

Panel Conclusions:

- During the Panel's site visits to various biodiverse sites to observe the community at work in helping to deliver the BAP, it was evident that there was a need for associations/forums to plan and spread learning from activities in Ealing's parks, allotments and other green spaces across the borough.
- The Council should consider putting signage in Warren Farm advising people about minimising disturbance to the nesting skylarks and improving the peripheral pathways to help preserve the rewilded site.
- Appropriate bite-sized biodiversity articles should be promoted through all Council's communications channels such as the website, social media and Around Ealing magazine, including a volunteering page in the digital edition to inform and engage residents in BAP activities that were taking place across the borough.
- Environmental volunteer groups such as EWG and EPF should also be consulted on the Local Plan and directed to the Community Amenities chapter for their input. The Council should establish the relationship

between Community Amenities and its Climate Change and Health & Wellbeing strategies. The relationship between these strategies and the built environment on commercial sites was also relevant to local business consultees. Businesses could be asked to provide space and opportunity for employees to engage in biodiversity through edible gardens on site or professionally run volunteer projects such as Greenwayers and TfC.

- The Council should consider investing some of its community infrastructure levy funds from planning projects in the borough's green spaces.
- The BAP depended on volunteers for its successful delivery so the Council ought to have sufficient resource in place to support all volunteer groups effectively for the long term to help achieve the set targets. A network of volunteers, like the London National Park City volunteer rangers, should be considered to replace abolished permanent roles that supported volunteers across the borough.
- Volunteer networks should promote diversity, inclusion and encourage excellence through rewards facilitated by the Council. Strong volunteer networks would be more effective in fundraising and facilitating ecological activities across the borough.

No.	Recommendation
R1	The Panel had visited a number of projects and witnessed the community at work in helping to deliver the Ealing Council Biodiversity Action Plan. The Council should help further to publicise and support such projects and utilise its communications channels to do so. This would entail publicising bite-sized biodiversity articles on social media to encourage more people to get involved, greater coverage in Around Ealing magazine and include a volunteering page in the digital edition. Other support could include getting information circulated such as where visitors should not venture in Warren Farm to avoid disturbing the nesting skylarks.
R2	The Council should consult environmental volunteer groups such as Ealing Wildlife Group and Ealing Parks Foundation on the Local Plan and direct them to the appropriate chapter for their input. In compiling the Local Plan, the Council should determine the relationship between community amenities and its Climate Change and Health & Wellbeing strategies. The relationship between these strategies and the built environment on commercial sites was also relevant to local business consultees. Businesses could be asked to provide space and opportunity for employees to engage in biodiversity through edible gardens on site or professionally run volunteer projects such as Greenwayers and Trees for Cities.
R3	Ealing's parks, allotments and other green spaces identified a need for associations/forums where holders could plan and learn from across the borough, aspire towards improved enforcement and amenities, and ascertain how progress could be sought in

No.	Recommendation
	<p>the current financial climate. These would depend on voluntary efforts, recognising the dependency also of the Council Plan on voluntary commitment. The Council could learn from others such as London National Park City's network of volunteer rangers in replacing abolished permanent roles which had supported volunteers. Volunteer networks should promote diversity, inclusion and encourage excellence via rewards facilitated by the Council. Strong networks would be more effective in fundraising and instrumental in facilitating activities across the borough. The Council should consider investing some of its community infrastructure levy funds from planning projects in the borough's green spaces.</p>

EALING TREES PROGRAMME

- 3.58 The Panel received presentations on the delivery of Ealing Trees Programme from Ealing Council officers, representatives of two partner organisations – Trees for Streets (TfS), Trees for Cities (TfC), and an Acton resident.

Ealing Council

- 3.59 Dale Mortimer (Tree Service Manager) outlined that in growing Ealing's urban forest, the Council's vision was to ensure trees remained a defining feature of the borough. Aligned with the London target, it was committed to increasing canopy cover from 16.9% to 25%, attaining a 35% increase on the existing canopy cover by 2030.
- 3.60 London Borough of Ealing was one of the greenest boroughs in London, containing a vast collection of street trees, housing trees, many parks and green spaces which all contributed to its urban forest.
- 3.61 The Council's 2018 i-Tree Project had accurately measured the full extent of the urban forest and highlighted the numerous eco-system benefits that it provided such as the interception of 48 Olympic swimming pools of water. The urban forest also offered many environmental, economic and social benefits, many yet unmeasurable. The borough's trees greatly enhanced the quality of life for its people and the need for trees had never been greater.
- 3.62 The potential effects of climate change were widely recognised now as a significant threat for humanity and its ecological systems. Ealing Council had declared a climate emergency in April 2019 and adopted ECEES in 2021, pledging to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.63 The impact and role of nature had been considered within one of the four themes of CEE and identified three objectives – increasing tree canopy across Ealing by 2030; managing green spaces to increase biodiversity, increasing natural carbon capture and reducing carbon emissions; and utilising green infrastructure to capture carbon, mitigate surface water flooding and improve biodiversity and water quality.

- 3.64 Growing and sustaining Ealing's urban forest was paramount in achieving the nature objectives. This would entail preserving and protecting existing trees and planting new trees and woodlands. The Council had recently pledged to plant 50,000 new trees by 2025 to help meet its canopy cover target.
- 3.65 Canopy cover was the area of land covered by trees when viewed from above. The Ealing i-Tree Canopy survey had used aerial photography at random points to conduct a land cover assessment. Each point had been classified to a ground cover type such as tree canopy, road and water. 500-700 random sample points had been classified for each of the 23 Wards. The canopy assessment had highlighted disparities in the extent of tree cover between Wards – North Greenford had the highest at nearly 26% and Southall Green the lowest at 6.4% – but the environmental and sociological reasons for the variations were more complex.
- 3.66 The borough's present vast urban forest comprising of extensive woodlands, parkland trees, garden planting and street trees contributed to an estimated 234,000 trees. Ealing had been awarded the status of Tree City of the World in 2019 which recognised its responsible and innovative arboricultural management.
- 3.67 Ealing Council had increased its street tree stock by approximately 8% in the last decade and created more woodlands. Its ambitious target of growing the urban forest by 35% would require thorough planning and due care to ensure that the local impact of tree planting was positive and existing land uses not compromised.
- 3.68 The Council recognised GLA's 2005 'Tree and Woodland Framework for London' principle of 'right place, right tree' and the importance of considering the context within which a tree was planted and likely impact of future design issues over its lifetime. When planting new trees, it was important to select the right species and location as that would affect the establishment of a tree, future management and have a long-term impact on the local environment.
- 3.69 The Council had provided a capital budget of £3M over four years to plant the 50,000 trees which included the employment of a Tree Planting Officer. An uplift in the revenue budget for tree maintenance had been approved when the trees target was set. There was an ongoing revenue contribution to support the additional trees and the overall budget target to support the increase in tree canopy was £5M over four years. The Tree Service had presently acquired £3.8M of the overall budget through various funding streams including the Mayor of London's Street Trees Programme. The costs of tree maintenance had increased significantly in recent years and the Tree Service was reviewing its schedules to assess how the budget could be stretched to support ongoing maintenance.
- 3.70 The most appropriate tree establishment method varied depending on the budget, site factors, growing challenges and opportunities. Planting very

young trees in large groups was most cost-effective to establish canopy cover but this was often incompatible with the site conditions and its existing usage. The site conditions in an urban environment were often inhospitable for very small trees so larger and stronger specimens were required which also provided significant and instant impact. A very young tree could be purchased for under £1 whilst a 10 metre semi-mature tree could cost over £5,000.

- 3.71 Very young trees known as 'Whips' were about 18 months old, approximately 50cm long and planted in large groups of 30+ trees. Whips would be planted on copses and woodlands within existing park grassland at 1.5 metre spacing, accounting to 4,444 trees per hectare (2,400 per acre). The new trees would be heavily mulched to suppress other vegetation and not require watering.
- 3.72 Specimen parkland trees would be planted with larger young trees known as 'Light Standards' which were about 2 metres long with a stem circumference of 6-8 centimetres. Light Standards were significantly more established than Whips but relatively easy to handle and could be planted as open-grown trees or in groups with a minimum of 6-metre spacing. Light Standards would be double-staked with tree ties, heavily mulched and generally required a two-year watering programme which had been increased to three years in recent summers. Ealing Council had contractors with contract arrangements for routine watering and aftercare of trees. Volunteers and Tree Wardens were required for additional care.
- 3.73 New street trees would be 'Standards' or 'Select Standards' that were 2.5-3.0 metres long with a stem circumference of 8-10 centimetres and 10-12 centimetres, respectively. An average street tree faced many challenges because a built urban environment presented harsh conditions for tree establishment which often included heavily compacted ground, surrounded impermeable surfaces, reflective structures, and pedestrian/vehicle traffic. Standard sized trees were widely planted in street locations for being large enough to have an immediate presence, reserves to assist establishment, and planted practically without substantial excavation and cost.
- 3.74 The planned 50,000 new trees would consist of 30,000 Whips; 10,000 Light Standards; and 10,000 regular Standards. The proposed street tree planting would be investigated and confirmed three months prior to the planting season and about 2,500 trees planted annually. It was anticipated that the bulk of tree planting would happen in 2023-24 and completed in 2025.
- 3.75 Ealing Council's Tree Service, the custodian of the borough's urban forest, worked closely with various stakeholders and partners including TfS and TfC. The team was responsible for the management and maintenance of all publicly owned trees, provided professional arboricultural advice to all internal departments, and responded to all tree-related enquiries. The Tree Service was responsible for the delivery of Growing Ealing's Urban Forest project. A recently appointed Tree Planting Officer would plan, coordinate

and deliver the planting of 50,000 new trees plus a wider expansion of the urban forest on private land and residential gardens.

- 3.76 The Council's Parks and Rangers Service would be integral in planning, investigating and locating the new trees, copses and woodlands on parkland. Their extensive knowledge of local sites, habitats and park users would ensure that new trees enhanced the aesthetics of the landscape and offered a significant positive outcome for the local community.
- 3.77 In 2023, the Tree Service would relaunch the Ealing Tree Wardens scheme by engaging local volunteers to help maintain new trees, promote the benefits of trees and encourage residents to plant trees in their gardens. The Tree Service would offer annual training to Tree Wardens and encourage them to attend tree planting and young tree maintenance event days.
- 3.78 The Tree Service had signed up to the national TfS project in November 2022. The project provided an online platform for residents to request and contribute for a new tree in their street. An additional discount was offered to any residents willing and able to water the new tree for two years. The platform also provided a Memorial/Celebration Tree Sponsorship Scheme which facilitated the purchase of a new tree and an ornamental plaque in a designated park location.
- 3.79 In 2016, Ealing Council had created a strategic partnership with tree planting charity, TfC. The collaboration had planted thousands of new trees, engaged community groups and facilitated the Ealing i-Tree project. The strategic partnership would continue to expand the Council's tree stock, seeking opportunities for tree planting across all sites. It would be challenging to increase 35% in canopy cover on Council land alone due to insufficient space. Working with TfC, the Tree Service would seek to engage with residents, community groups, businesses, schools and all landowners in a campaign to encourage planting of more trees. The partnership would promote the many social and environmental benefits of trees and their importance in meeting the challenges of climate change through social media, educational activities, events and roadshows.
- 3.80 The trees were routinely surveyed every three years but consideration would be given for a two-year check on new trees subject to resources. The Tree Planting Officer would monitor young trees annually for the first three years until better established.
- 3.81 1,500 trees had been planted in the previous year and the majority of trees that had died were in parkland sites. This could be because many residents had watered the street trees which also had less competition in water take-up within a built environment. Trees planted in parkland sites two years ago had been watered in the summer instead of a regular three-year cycle. It would be difficult to increase this frequency but the Tree Service could work with the Rangers Service to re-mulch grass sites annually to retain moisture in the soil. This treatment would be costly so consideration would be given to involving volunteer friends' groups at parks in assisting with the task.

- 3.82 There were 28,000 street trees that were checked every three years. An average street tree pit was 60 by 60 centimetres but contractors could be asked to enlarge these in the future. It appeared that some pits had been tarmacked during highway alterations to the surrounding pavement which made it difficult to spot and resolve this issue.
- 3.83 Sponsoring a memorial tree was expensive because half the cost (£450.00) was for a long-lasting cast aluminium alloy plaque. Some boroughs used cheaper wooden plaques which rotted away after some years. The cost of a memorial tree included the price of tree, planting it and three-year maintenance. If a memorial tree failed within the initial three years then a replacement was planted and maintained for a further three years. Memorial trees could be sponsored without a plaque, making it more affordable for residents. Residents could be involved in the planting and aftercare of a memorial tree.
- 3.84 The Council was considering promoting tree planting in private front gardens. The Council anticipated subsidising such trees and would recommend the choice of species through Tree Wardens and Tree Planting Officer.
- 3.85 Ealing Council did not have its own tree nursery. It was more cost effective to buy trees because nurseries required substantial resources such as land to grow trees and extensive water supplies. The Council purchased its trees from some well-established suppliers.
- 3.86 An additional 35% of existing 234,000 overall forest had to be planted to achieve a 25% boroughwide canopy cover by 2030. This would require planting numerous trees on Council and private land. The Council would initially plant trees on its land where appropriate and liaise with residents and private landowners to plant on private land. This would be a challenging exercise to undertake. Tree planting was aimed first at low canopy areas such as Southall Green Ward. The Council had planted nearly 500 trees in the Ward over recent years but some had not survived due to unique challenges such as parking pressures from residents and vandalism. The Council would endeavour to plant more trees in this Ward despite the issues. The Park Royal industrial estate, a massive predominantly private land, had very low canopy cover so the Council would seek to plant trees there.
- 3.87 The annual tree planting season was from October to March so any damaged and diseased trees were replaced almost straight way, depending on when a tree had been removed and where the Council planned to plant in the next planting season.
- 3.88 The Tree Officer commented on arboriculture issues in planning applications and there had been an improved response from Planning Officers regarding Section 106 agreements since. The Tree Service rarely visited development sites to check whether agreed actions had been implemented due to resource constraints. The Service acknowledged that it was

beneficial to undertake checks after five years at newly completed developments. The biggest challenge in new developments was the lack of sufficient space for tree planting once a building was constructed near the edge of a property to provide much needed housing.

- 3.89 A wide variety of trees were planted annually to deter potential pests and diseases. Presently, London Plane trees had the largest canopy cover across London and there was concern that these could be destroyed within 10-15 years if the disease affecting France reached Great Britain.
- 3.90 The 10,000 street trees would be planted in suitable sites across the borough but a site list was currently unavailable. A tree surveyor was presently surveying the existing trees and identifying new sites in accordance with the tree planting criteria. Any trees planted in error, such as under existing canopy cover, were removed and the pavement restored. The regulations required a minimum space of 90 centimetres on a pavement to enable a double buggy to pass. Some large historic London Planes did not meet this criterion on certain roads of the borough but local residents found the best way to manoeuvre around these obstacles.
- 3.91 Presently, no consideration had been given to hay fever issues in tree planting. When disturbed by wind in summer, fine hair on the underside of London Plane leaves could cause some irritation such as coughing to individuals but not hay fever. Birch trees were more likely to aggravate hay fever but the Council was unlikely to stop planting them for this reason.
- 3.92 The benefits of trees were difficult to measure and quantify. The Council only removed trees for good or arboricultural reasons such as unreasonable and unfeasible ongoing maintenance. Trees were only removed if assessed as dangerous, dead, diseased or dying. All good quality trees that had been removed were replanted in other suitable sites. The life expectancy of a street tree was 60-80 years. Sheffield City Council had undertaken a cost benefit exercise of its trees about five years ago which had determined the removal of numerous street trees to reduce pavement maintenance costs. The controversial tree-felling programme was very unpopular with residents and had provoked scenes with protesters, police, arrests and immense adverse national publicity.
- 3.93 The present untimely response to complaints about trees was mainly due to lack of staff and resources within the Tree Service. The Service anticipated an improved trees complaints procedure with the additional new staff.

Trees for Streets

- 3.94 Mr Simeon Linstead (Project Director, TfS) highlighted that TfS was the new national street tree sponsorship scheme from the national charity, TfC. The scheme enabled Councils an easy mechanism to run a sponsorship scheme for trees in streets and parks.
- 3.95 The Street Trees Sponsorship Scheme (STSS) offered residents the opportunity to donate for sponsorship of a new street tree to go outside their house or somewhere in their neighbourhood. Residents could access the

TfS website and select a spot on the street where they would like their tree. There were some questions to determine whether the location was suitable for planting. TfS relayed this information to the Council who assessed the suitability of the location and planted the trees accordingly.

- 3.96 In some London boroughs such as Haringey, many residents had come together to green whole streets by crowdfunding the planting of their trees. Approximately 430 trees had been sponsored there over two seasons.
- 3.97 The London Mayor had funded 110 extra trees to each participating London Council including Ealing. The additional funding was used to plant trees in priority streets which included spots that had low canopy, high deprivation, less affluence, state schools or playgrounds.
- 3.98 For the Memorial/Celebration Tree Sponsorship Scheme, residents could donate for sponsorship of a new tree, complete with an ornamental plaque, in a designated park location.
- 3.99 The schemes had generated significant engagement about trees and greening of neighbourhoods. Sponsorship was another source for funding trees in addition to the Council's direct funding, grants, Section 106 agreements and community infrastructure levy funds.
- 3.100 STSS offered sponsors a reduced sponsorship contribution of £170 for watering their tree instead of £275 if the Council had to water it. TfS had sent weekly reminders to sponsors throughout the watering season and advised about the required amount of water as recommended by the Agricultural Association. This scheme was launched in Ealing recently and TfS had put promotion notices on trees to encourage more sponsorship which could be taken up jointly with other residents. The Tree Officer at London Borough of Croydon had observed that their residents who had invested in a tree took good care of it and sometimes planted other smaller flowering plants around it. The care of sponsored trees by residents had often been better than that provided by their contractors. Similar to other Councils, TfS sought regular promotion of STSS through Ealing Council's website and social media channels to encourage increased participation in the scheme by residents.
- 3.101 STSS was about connecting, enabling and empowering residents so collaboration to sponsor a single or several street trees was encouraged. The TfS website enabled crowdfunding for street trees so that people could contribute what was affordable for them. For example, 180 residents and businesses in a rundown retail street in the centre of Croydon had successfully raised £113,500 and some residents in Haringey had raised enough to sponsor 18 trees for their street. STSS had received funding from participating Councils in the first year and some additional GLA funding in the second year. Ealing Council had become involved in the scheme when it received GLA funding for 110 street trees. The GLA funding requirements included the planting of trees in areas of high deprivation; streets with low canopy cover; streets with a state school; and shade planting around children's playgrounds.

Trees for Cities

- 3.102 Ms Susannah Littlewood (Senior Partnerships and Development Coordinator, TfC) outlined that TfC had a long ongoing partnership with Ealing Council for over a decade. It had planted nearly 90,000 trees with the Council since 2010 and anticipated helping to plant the planned new 50,000 trees.
- 3.103 TfC had undertaken 30 projects in the borough including a mixture of planting in parks, woodland creation, edible playgrounds in schools involving the growing of fruit and vegetables with children. TfC had significant community engagement in their projects. It had helped to organise the first Ealing Tree Festival held in May 2022 to get residents more interested in trees and learn about their importance in an urban environment.
- 3.104 TfC had a Whole Schools Programme which entailed engaging with schools to undertake various projects involving children in tree planting and growing fruits/vegetables. TfC also organised community engagement days which involved families, children and young people. TfC offered workshops to local schools near a planting site for all its tree planting projects. It also conducted surveys with participants to gauge the success of activities and inform future projects.
- 3.105 The maintenance of trees was critical particularly during the recent hot summer weather. TfC had worked closely with various Council departments including the Tree Service, Parks Service, Regeneration Service, and Schools. TfC had previously worked with the Council annually on various projects but had formed a three-year strategic partnership in 2016 which had been more effective in the planning and delivery of projects. The three-year strategic partnership had since been renewed in 2019-22 and 2022-25.
- 3.106 The Council had changed the type of ties used to support trees over the years. Initially, a single rigid plastic buckle tie on a single stake method had been replaced by a two ties technique but the current method employed two stakes with a loose-fitting loop. The latest method enabled a tree to grow within the loop and the wooden stakes gradually rotted away. TfC used the loop method with biodegradable hessian ties and maintained new trees for three years. TfC kept a record of all the trees and their staff checked these trees periodically, removing ties after three years once the trees were well established.
- 3.107 TfC anticipated supporting the Council's plan of planting 50,000 new trees by planning appropriate projects; getting match funding; and increasing community awareness and participation to help achieve this ambitious target.

Acton Resident

- 3.108 Dr Martin Kunz (Acton Resident) expressed views on the planting of street trees in his area. He was a member of Mill Hill Residents Association and had previously been involved in planting an orchard in Heathfield Gardens, Acton which had not thrived due to lack of water and poor soil conditions.

- 3.109 In the Council's quest to meet its tree planting targets, the street trees were often planted in unsuitable locations such as under overhanging canopies from existing trees in private gardens and parks; too close to the curb so trees were often mown down by large construction lorries trying to turn the narrow corner at Mill Hill Road and Gunnersbury Lane; too narrow pavements with trees taking at least 25% of the space; failure of protection in allowing sufficient space around trees; appropriate tree species such as hardy Turkish Hazel should be planted near schools to prevent damage by exuberant young people; and lack of aftercare for example, regular watering.
- 3.110 Ealing Council's online complaints procedure for reporting issues about street trees was inadequate. The process enabled easy reporting about tree obstructions but not vandalism to trees.

Panel Conclusions:

- The Council's efforts in planting more trees in greening the borough were commendable.
- The recent site visit to Grove Farm Local Nature Reserve had highlighted the overshadowing to trees and green spaces from nearby building developments resulting in loss of vital light and cession of its metropolitan open land status.
- Consideration should be given to employing an Ecology Officer to offer advice and guidance at all levels of tree planting.
- More information ought to be provided to residents and key stakeholders on the planting and maintenance of trees. There needed to be better aftercare in tree planting including the replacement of vandalised trees; frequent trimming of overgrown canopy and basal growth; regular watering particularly in hot dry weather; and ample tree pits around street trees to enable adequate watering.
- Consideration should be given to subsidising the Memorial/Celebration Tree Sponsorship Scheme to enable more residents to plant trees in memory of their loved ones.
- More information should be provided to residents about planting trees in their private gardens and a list of tree species to the Councillors.
- The Council should actively encourage more volunteering in the borough, identify volunteers and provide appropriate support to them.

No.	Recommendation
R4	The Planning process should also consider the matter of overshadowing to the borough's trees and green spaces in preventing loss of vital light. In the absence of an Ecology Officer at Ealing Council, more education on this matter should be made available to Councillors and relevant staff. Ideally, Ealing Council should consider employing an Ecology Officer to offer advice and guidance at all levels. Further clarification on the proposed changes to status of spaces within the Local Plan was essential, for example why Grove Farm would cease to be metropolitan open land, and an Ecology Officer could play a useful role in this exercise.
R5	For the reassurance of residents and other stakeholders, more information on the maintenance of trees was necessary particularly in light of the 50,000 new trees manifesto pledge. Additional trees would result in more leaves on the ground, making pavements unsafe for those less steady on their feet and the roots could damage pavements which would create further work for the Highways Department. A system must be in place to monitor the unwelcome outcomes of tree planting and how these would be addressed within available budgets. Also, residents should be informed of how the Council would avoid infringing on other budgets to maintain its trees.
R6	Increased reliance on voluntary efforts required empowerment for residents and Councillors. Councillors needed a list of tree species in the borough, further knowledge about the work of Trees for Streets and how residents could get involved and sponsor trees. Also, residents with suitable gardens should be informed of the opportunity to have trees planted in their gardens. Volunteers required support and the Council should be explicit about how it intended to identify volunteers and provide that support to them.

REDUCING, REUSING AND RECYCLING OF WASTE

- 3.111 The Panel received presentations on the progress in the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste in this borough from officers of Ealing Council and West London Waste Authority (WLWA).

Ealing Council

- 3.112 Earl McKenzie (Assistant Director Street Services) and Catherina Pack (Waste and Street Services Manager) highlighted that Ealing Council, a Waste Collection Authority, had a statutory duty to collect waste and recycling from residents (and businesses on request) in the borough.
- 3.113 The Council's local authority trading company, Greener Ealing Limited (GEL), carried out the collections and was responsible for street cleansing including flytipping within the borough.

- 3.114 Residents could recycle a wide range of materials from their homes, a network of neighbourhood recycling sites or the Household Reuse and Recycling Centre in Greenford.
- 3.115 Ealing's recycling rates were consistently in the top three of the London local authorities. The recycling rate for the current year to date (April-December 2022) was 48.29%, an improvement from 47.25% in 2021-22. The recycling rate in 2020-21 (during the COVID-19 pandemic) had been 48.82% and 50.07% in 2019-20 (pre-COVID 19 pandemic).
- 3.116 The Council's waste disposal authority, WLWA, was responsible for the processing and disposal contracts for much of the waste from the borough's residents and businesses.
- 3.117 Ealing's dry mixed recycling was processed at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Crayford Creek, Dartford which several Panel Members and Waste and Street Service (WSS) officers had visited on 29 March 2023. The process for separating mixed materials into individual materials for onward sale to be made into new products involved mechanical sorting, screening, use of infra-red technology, magnets and eddy currents.
- 3.118 Regular and targeted communications by the Council helped to ensure that the material collected for recycling from residents and businesses was of a high quality. A recent doorstep campaign across the seven lower performing rounds had encouraged participation in kerbside food waste recycling and correct dry mixed recycling, reducing contamination.
- 3.119 The Council continued to roll out food waste recycling to flatted properties and 29% of the roll out had been accomplished.
- 3.120 Ealing Council's Cabinet was due to approve its new Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP), a requirement of the London Environment Strategy 2018, in May 2023. The RRP disclosed that Ealing was already meeting the London Mayor's minimum service level for collection of the six main dry recyclable materials and separate collection of food waste for kerbside properties including flats. The RRP themes were waste reduction, maximising recycling, reducing environmental impact and maximising waste sites.
- 3.121 There had been ongoing work in engaging with communities to reduce waste and reuse activities to move towards a circular economy approach. A circular system maintained the reclaiming of materials through sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling – reducing waste to a minimum.
- 3.122 Ealing Council was involved in an innovative pan-London food waste campaign, *Eat Like a Londoner*, that was designed to help Londoners shop, cook and eat better more sustainably, cost-effectively and deliciously.
- 3.123 WSS ensured that businesses were aware of the requirement to have separate arrangements in place for the collection and disposal of their

commercial waste as this was not covered through business rates. Businesses could sign up to the Council's business waste collection service for residual waste and dry mixed recycling. The Council did not have a food waste collection service presently but had considered the feasibility and recently surveyed existing customers. Businesses could have contracts with other private contractors for the collection of food waste and used cooking oil. The Council was keen to extend its food waste collection service to businesses and expand its existing dry mix recycling offer to them in the near future.

- 3.124 There was a need for enforcement as not all residents and businesses disposed of their waste responsibly. In 2022-23, the service had issued 1,754 fixed penalty notices (FPN) for flytipping offences in the borough of which nearly two-thirds related to flytipped household rubbish and a third to flytipped commercial waste.
- 3.125 WSS also ensured that new residents were made aware of the rubbish and recycling services available to them, including collection dates and times.
- 3.126 WSS worked closely with residents, businesses, landlords and managing/letting agents to ensure that correct information was provided to them.
- 3.127 Waste contamination was initially considered through collection crews who placed contamination tags on the relevant bins to help inform occupants of those properties. The crews recorded details of the offending properties through their in-cab technology. It was anticipated that the contamination tags which had pictures of what could or could not be recycled would help inform the occupants to recycle materials correctly. Similarly, contamination from flats was also monitored and addressed through the collection crews. The service intervened where persistent contamination was encountered by communicating with the occupants directly or through landlords and managing agents.
- 3.128 Soft plastics were presently recycled by supermarkets which would be subject to the imminent extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging regulations. Local authorities would receive funding support from the government to enable recycling of soft plastics in the next few years.
- 3.129 Ealing was the largest of the six WLWA boroughs so it seemingly collected a higher tonnage of waste which was still the lowest kilograms per household per year of residual waste. The performance of the boroughs was measured as a percentage to provide an accurate comparison of recycling rates. Ealing's recycling rate had consistently been in the top three of all London boroughs over the last few years.
- 3.130 WSS worked closely with the Private Sector Licensing team for the provision of bins in HMOs. The quantity of bins were issued according to the number of occupants in a property and reviewed when necessary. Leaflets and posters to inform residents about recycling were also provided. The service was presently reviewing some of its recycling leaflets and would consider making these available more readily online and through collection crews.

Illustrative stickers of what could or could not be recycled in bins were stuck on the inside of lids when alternate weekly collections had been introduced. WSS would also review the recycling information presently provided to HMOs.

- 3.131 WSS maintained data for recycling and reuse of different types of items. Ealing's contamination rate was 11-13% and the main contaminants were waste from black bags, food waste, sanitary waste and textiles. WSS was developing some awareness campaigns through social media about common recycling contaminants such as soiled nappies.
- 3.132 Textiles were collected separately to the blue bin if placed in a clear bag on top of or next to the bin. Residents could also book an appointment with TRAIID, Ealing Council's textiles recycler, for the collection of textiles and small electrical items. This provision was not widely known by residents so the service would have to promote the offer extensively.
- 3.133 The clear bags provided for household mixed recycling at flatted properties did state this on them but the service would review that to make it clearer.
- 3.134 Ealing Council engaged with schools and had recently sent them information and resources about food waste. Many schools had participated in the food waste action week in March 2023 and had sought additional information. The service intended to run a competition for schools that would involve designing a poster on the side of a waste collection vehicle and get recycling crews to explain about their work. Various video resources were also available for schools. School children were not allowed to visit recycling sites due to health and safety reasons.
- 3.135 Council officers were liaising with the new Circular Economy Manager at Acton Market about various recycling related activities such as repair workshops in the area. WSS was also liaising with housing officers about facilitating repair workshops in community areas of the borough's seven towns.
- 3.136 WSS provided information leaflets to people on request and had articles on waste management in every issue of the Council's free Around Ealing magazine that was distributed to households in the borough. There had been information leaflets in various commonly spoken languages in the borough that could be refreshed to meet the needs of specific communities.
- 3.137 WSS had worked with various community groups such as LAGER Can regarding volunteering and litter picking. It was keen to liaise with faith and other community groups in the borough.
- 3.138 The booking system at Greenford Centre had been introduced for health and safety reasons during the pandemic but the site efficiency had improved significantly since. There had been reduced illegal waste getting through the paid waste system. The Council had received positive feedback from residents about the booking system as it enabled them to plan ahead accordingly. Although the site had been used by pedestrians and cyclists

previously, the Health and Safety team deemed it to be unsafe for them with large vehicles in operation. The Council would inform residents and businesses through its various communications channels once the site was made safe for use by pedestrians and cyclists.

- 3.139 Younger people could learn from older generations who were generally thriftier and tended to home compost their food waste, repaired, reused and recycled items. The older generations had used reusable nappies whilst disposable nappies were mostly used nowadays. Although it was environmentally friendly to use reusable nappies consideration had to be given to drying them economically indoors or on balconies in flats. Compared to other recyclables that were being captured, 30% of Ealing's rubbish was food waste so it was important to focus more on this area to achieve a significant increase in recycling rates. Ward Councillors could promote food waste recycling in their areas to encourage more residents to participate in the activity.
- 3.140 Any unauthorised waste put in the environment was illegal. Flytipping was a problem across the borough. Preventing people from flytipping was a massive ongoing challenge for the limited enforcement resources within the service. The Council's special flytipping investigation team and up to six officers a day from its external enforcement contractor looked at the flytipping hotspots. CCTV camera had been deployed at the hotspots based on intelligence, leading to some successful prosecutions of perpetrators. Flytipping was an environmental blight, a fire risk and costly. Removal of flytipping had costed the Council £350,000 per annum excluding disposal costs. The Enforcement Manager produced a bi-monthly bulletin of all enforcement activity in the borough such as flytipping investigated, fixed penalty notices issued and number of prosecutions. The bulletin was also circulated to Councillors. The service would work more closely with the Housing team to ensure that preventative measures such as regular fire risk surveys were in place for all Council housing stock and surrounding environment to mitigate any adverse risks.
- 3.141 Organised gangs carried out flytipping across West London. Flytipping was a criminal offence so local authorities regularly shared intelligence on major flytipping instances in order to catch the perpetrators. The boroughs had similar flytipping challenges which they continued to tackle through their teams. There was a transient population in many of the hotspot areas which made it difficult for services to get the right messages across to everyone.
- 3.142 The Council was not doing enough presently to support volunteer groups adequately. The Assistant Director Street Services had a personal objective set to increase the number of volunteer groups that his service worked with but had not achieved it this year due to capacity issues. WSS worked well with some groups such as LAGER Can and would continue to build on this work to engage and support more volunteer groups.

West London Waste Authority

- 3.143 Ms Emma Beal (Managing Director, West London Waste Authority) highlighted that WLWA was a statutory body, created in 1986, that represented the six West London boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, and Richmond upon Thames. It was responsible for disposing of waste collected by these boroughs and the recycling centres. Its expertise was collaboration and cooperation across the sub-region to create efficiencies.
- 3.144 WLWA was governed by six Councillors, one from each borough, and funded through pay as you throw and fixed cost levies. It serviced a population of approximately 1.8 million across the whole area, giving the boroughs a city-sized purchasing power and an opportunity for collaborative work.
- 3.145 WLWA focused on materials and infrastructure. Its head office was in West Drayton and trains were used to take waste to the energy recovery site through the two large rail link transfer stations in Brentford and Ruislip. It also had a recycling centre in Brent. It leased several contracts which included MRF.
- 3.146 Food waste was transported to WLWA's anaerobic digestion facility where it was transformed into gas and then energy. Vehicles that transported food waste in the sub-region utilised some of the gas produced, creating a circular system.
- 3.147 WLWA had been decarbonising waste for some time by getting waste out of landfill as that was within its control. Decarbonising by increasing recycling and reducing waste was more complex as it required circular economy thinking; working with partners including local groups, businesses, and residents; integration with growth; and place making.
- 3.148 WLWA measured carbon in the waste annually to help prioritise its waste projects. The largest carbon producing components were food waste; composite and hard to recycle materials such as plastic; and textiles. It was particularly important to get the high carbon producing materials out of the waste to help achieve the government's Net Zero standard.
- 3.149 WLWA had developed a framework with the boroughs in March 2022 to reduce waste by tackling food, textile and plastic waste and encouraging more reuse of materials. It aimed to have a clear plan in place by 2030 that would be delivered using data and communications. The plan would be underpinned by a change in skills.
- 3.150 WLWA had invested £3M in 2019 in projects across the six boroughs to increase food waste recycling including introduction of the service to 24,500 flats and providing bin swap and cleaning services. This had increased the food waste capture rate from 21% in 2019-20 to 24% in 2022-23. Reducing food waste from going into landfill had decreased the carbon impact on the environment and saved money for individuals and Councils.

- 3.151 WLWA had offered resources to stimulate the growth of reuse and repair markets and drive innovation by setting up new bulky waste collection and booking systems; training operatives and extracting valuable products such as bicycles, furniture, laptops and smartphones, and healthcare equipment. It had a fixing factory where items were repaired for reuse.
- 3.152 In measuring the social value of its furniture project, WLWA had found that there had been £4.39 in social value created for every £1 expenditure. The benefits had included reduced isolation in individuals, green skills development, improved mental health, support into work, volunteer opportunities, business support for small and medium enterprises as well as reduction in carbon emissions and waste materials.
- 3.153 There were presently 13-14 electrical recycling banks in the borough to which people could take their small electrical items. Laptops that were taken to the Greenford Recycling Centre were fixed through WLWA's Fixing Factory and redistributed through its Reuse project to those in need within the local community. Bicycles that were disposed at the Recycling Centres were repaired and given to the local community through the Let's Go Southall and Let's Ride Southall projects. There was an online repair directory that residents could use to check where they could get items fixed.
- 3.154 WLWA had found that more publicity of its activities such as the Fixing Factory, refurbishment of furniture and bicycles being repaired at the onsite workshop had helped to raise awareness and interest in local communities. Many people tweeted and posted online messages about these activities and it was anticipated that this process would grow. The present partnership working with the Councils and understanding how things worked was very beneficial. There were funding difficulties for local authorities but EPR would be an excellent model for attracting further funds to help scale up these projects considerably. The Council's aspirations for a circular economy would localise much of this activity within the borough's seven towns, enabling people to exchange items and get things repaired.

Panel Conclusions:

- Members commended the commitment and responsiveness of the Waste and Street Services teams in tackling flytipping reported through the Love Clean Streets application and Council's website.
- The Panel's site visit to the MRF had been very informative in learning about how the borough's mixed dry recycling was processed.
- Volunteers were essential for the Council's work so it needed to ensure that they were well supported and their contribution recognised.
- The enforcement bi-monthly bulletin needed to be circulated more widely through different communication channels to make people aware of the activity that was taking place in the borough.

- The Council’s recycling information should be refreshed and made available in different formats and languages to inform the borough’s diverse communities and meet their varying needs effectively.
- In meeting the Council’s objective of tackling the climate crisis, WSS needed to apply a more coordinated approach in working more closely with other internal services and external partners for proactive identification and implementation of relevant activities for the borough’s residents and businesses.

No.	Recommendation
R7	Volunteers had proven beyond a doubt how critical they were to the Council’s efforts. The Council should be investing further to provide support to volunteer groups to form and thrive whilst in turn they supported its efforts and were enabled to work more effectively. Specific incentives should be offered such as awards for exceptional volunteer and recycling efforts, whilst highlighting where there was still need for volunteers to step in. The Council already had structure and experience, including its Do Something Good initiative, to build the central support.
R8	Important and relevant facts were publicly circulated on matters such as the number of fixed penalty notices issued, however, residents and Councillors were not always in receipt of the documents. As the Council had stated that there would be Town Forums put in place, then these would provide an ideal opportunity to ensure that all attendees were aware of the enforcement work undertaken. Town Forums should be open and welcoming to all, and it would be useful to provide guidance through them on how to effectively recycle and this should be in a number of languages and in a manner accessible to those with little online access. By whatever medium the information was communicated, picture symbols should be included to educate residents on what could be recycled, and how to avoid contamination, especially to explain why the recycling that had been left out had not been collected.
R9	The Council’s administration has three key priorities for Ealing which included tackling the climate crisis. Departments across the Council would be working with this in mind, and there may be further opportunities for partnership between relevant activities. These included Active Travel where bicycles could be refurbished for the benefit of those who could use them, where Housing Services should be proactive in speaking to landlords to identify where more recycling bins were needed in flats, and where the Food Safety Service should encourage commercial sites to recycle food in order to combat the threat of vermin. The skills of residents could be key in this, and this covered where greater knowledge and encouragement could be given to schools, and where the Council could raise further awareness of the Acton Market Reduce and Recycle Hub, for example. Also, projects such as <i>Eat Like a Londoner</i> could offer opportunities to improve skills and tackle loneliness.

4.0 **MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE**

4.1 The tables below show the Panel membership and attendance at meetings and site visits.

Membership and Attendance at Panel Meetings

Name	Total Possible	Actual Attendance	Apologies Received
<u>Councillors</u>			
Cllr Miriam Rice (Chair)	4	4	-
Cllr Athena Zissimos (Vice Chair)	4	4	-
Cllr Shahbaz Ahmed	4	2	-
Cllr Fabio Conti	4	4	-
Cllr Kate Crawford	4	4	-
Cllr Monica Hamidi	4	3	1
Cllr Karam Mohan	4	4	-
Cllr Grace Quansah	4	4	-
Cllr Hitesh Tailor	4	4	-
<u>Co-optee</u>			
Mr Paul Carter (Trustee, Ealing Parks Foundation and Chairman, Ealing Allotments Partnership)	3	2	1
<u>Substitutes and Other Councillors</u>			
None.			
<u>External Witnesses</u>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Tony Leach (Chief Executive, Parks for London) - Mr Paul Carter (Chairman, Ealing Allotments Partnership) - Dr Sean McCormack (Chair, Ealing Wildlife Group) - Mr Martin Smith (Chair, Friends of Horsenden Hill) - Mr Simeon Linstead (Project Director, Trees for Streets) - Ms Susannah Littlewood (Senior Partnerships & Development Co-ordinator, Trees for Cities) - Dr Martin Kunz (Acton Resident) - Ms Emma Beal (Managing Director, West London Waste Authority) 			
<u>Service Officers</u>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chris Bunting (Assistant Director Leisure) - Chris Welsh (Parks Operations Manager) - Dale Mortimer (Tree Service Manager) - Earl McKenzie (Assistant Director Street Services) - Catherina Pack (Waste and Street Services Manager) 			

4.2 **Attendance at Panel Site Visits**

Site Visited		Member Attendance
1.	<p>Various Local Biodiverse Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - North Acton Playing Fields, Acton - Horsenden Hill Farm, Perivale - Greenford to Gurnell Greenway, Perivale - Warren Farm, Southall - Bixley Fields Allotments, Southall <p>10:00am-4:00pm Saturday 15 October 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Miriam Rice (Chair) - Cllr Athena Zissimos (Vice Chair) - Cllr Fabio Conti - Cllr Kate Crawford - Cllr Monica Hamidi - Cllr Karam Mohan - Cllr Hitesh Tailor - Mr Paul Carter (Co-optee)
2.	<p>Grove Farm Nature Reserve Greenford 10:00am-1:00pm Sunday 15 January 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Miriam Rice (Chair) - Cllr Athena Zissimos (Vice Chair) - Cllr Fabio Conti - Cllr Karam Mohan - Cllr Grace Quansah
3.	<p>Materials Recycling Facility Century Wharf, Crayford Creek, Dartford 9:30am-4:00pm Wednesday 29 March 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Miriam Rice (Chair) - Cllr Athena Zissimos (Vice Chair) - Cllr Kate Crawford - Mr Paul Carter (Co-optee)

Materials Recycling Facility, Crayford Creek in Dartford



Grove Farm Nature Reserve, Greenford



Various Biodiverse Sites in the Borough



5.0 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

5.1 **Useful Papers**

Ealing Council's Constitution, available at [Council constitution | Council constitution | Ealing Council](#)

Scrutiny Panel 3 – 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle – Work Programme, Agendas, Minutes and Reports available at [Committee details - Scrutiny Panel 3 - 2022/23: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme, Agendas, Minutes and Reports available at [Committee details - Overview and Scrutiny Committee \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

Current agendas and reports are available at [Committees \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

5.2 **Useful Websites**

- Ealing Council – www.ealing.gov.uk
- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny – [Home - Centre for Governance and Scrutiny \(cfgs.org.uk\)](#)
- Government Services and Information – www.gov.uk
- Greater London Authority – [Home page \(london.gov.uk\)](#)
- Local Government Association – [Home | Local Government Association](#)
- Canal and River Trust – [Canal & River Trust | Wellbeing for everyone \(canalrivertrust.org.uk\)](#)
- Ealing Parks Foundation – [Parks | Ealing Parks Foundation | England](#)
- Ealing Allotments Partnership – [EAP website \(ealingallotmentspartnership.co.uk\)](#)
- Parks for London – [Parks for London](#)
- Ealing Wildlife Group – [Home - Ealing Wildlife Group](#)
- Friends of Horsenden Hill – [Friends of Horsenden Hill – Horsenden Farm & Hill](#)
- Trees for Cities – [Home | Trees for Cities](#)
- Trees for Streets – [Trees for Streets - Let's fill our streets with trees](#)
- West London Waste Authority – [West London Waste | Homepage](#)
- N&P – [N+P Group](#)
- TRAIID – [Clothes Reuse and Recycling - TRAIID](#)

5.3 **Further Information**

For further information about Scrutiny Panel 3 – 2022/2023: Regrow, Rewild and Recycle please contact:

Harjeet Bains
Scrutiny Review Officer
Ealing Council
Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk
Tel: 020-8825 7120

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation
R1	The Panel had visited a number of projects and witnessed the community at work in helping to deliver the Ealing Council Biodiversity Action Plan. The Council should help further to publicise and support such projects and utilise its communications channels to do so. This would entail publicising bite-sized biodiversity articles on social media to encourage more people to get involved, greater coverage in Around Ealing magazine and include a volunteering page in the digital edition. Other support could include getting information circulated such as where visitors should not venture in Warren Farm to avoid disturbing the nesting skylarks.
R2	The Council should consult environmental volunteer groups such as Ealing Wildlife Group and Ealing Parks Foundation on the Local Plan and direct them to the appropriate chapter for their input. In compiling the Local Plan, the Council should determine the relationship between community amenities and its Climate Change and Health & Wellbeing strategies. The relationship between these strategies and the built environment on commercial sites was also relevant to local business consultees. Businesses could be asked to provide space and opportunity for employees to engage in biodiversity through edible gardens on site or professionally run volunteer projects such as Greenwayers and Trees for Cities.
R3	Ealing's parks, allotments and other green spaces identified a need for associations/forums where holders could plan and learn from across the borough, aspire towards improved enforcement and amenities, and ascertain how progress could be sought in the current financial climate. These would depend on voluntary efforts, recognising the dependency also of the Council Plan on voluntary commitment. The Council could learn from others such London National Park City's network of volunteer rangers in replacing abolished permanent roles which had supported volunteers. Volunteer networks should promote diversity, inclusion and encourage excellence via rewards facilitated by the Council. Strong networks would be more effective in fundraising and instrumental in facilitating activities across the borough. The Council should consider investing some of its community infrastructure levy funds from planning projects in the borough's green spaces.
R4	The Planning process should also consider the matter of overshadowing to the borough's trees and green spaces in preventing loss of vital light. In the absence of an Ecology Officer at Ealing Council, more education on this matter should be made available to Councillors and relevant staff. Ideally, Ealing Council should consider employing an Ecology Officer to offer advice and guidance at all levels. Further clarification on the proposed changes to status of spaces within the Local Plan was essential, for example why Grove Farm would cease to be metropolitan open land, and an Ecology Officer could play a useful role in this exercise.
R5	For the reassurance of residents and other stakeholders, more information on the maintenance of trees was necessary particularly in light of the 50,000 new trees manifesto pledge. Additional trees would result in more leaves on the

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation
	ground, making pavements unsafe for those less steady on their feet and the roots could damage pavements which would create further work for the Highways Department. A system must be in place to monitor the unwelcome outcomes of tree planting and how these would be addressed within available budgets. Also, residents should be informed of how the Council would avoid infringing on other budgets to maintain its trees.
R6	Increased reliance on voluntary efforts required empowerment for residents and Councillors. Councillors needed a list of tree species in the borough, further knowledge about the work of Trees for Streets and how residents could get involved and sponsor trees. Also, residents with suitable gardens should be informed of the opportunity to have trees planted in their gardens. Volunteers required support and the Council should be explicit about how it intended to identify volunteers and provide that support to them.
R7	Volunteers had proven beyond a doubt how critical they were to the Council's efforts. The Council should be investing further to provide support to volunteer groups to form and thrive whilst in turn they supported its efforts and were enabled to work more effectively. Specific incentives should be offered such as awards for exceptional volunteer and recycling efforts, whilst highlighting where there was still need for volunteers to step in. The Council already had structure and experience, including its Do Something Good initiative, to build the central support.
R8	Important and relevant facts were publicly circulated on matters such as the number of fixed penalty notices issued, however, residents and Councillors were not always in receipt of the documents. As the Council had stated that there would be Town Forums put in place, then these would provide an ideal opportunity to ensure that all attendees were aware of the enforcement work undertaken. Town Forums should be open and welcoming to all, and it would be useful to provide guidance through them on how to effectively recycle and this should be in a number of languages and in a manner accessible to those with little online access. By whatever medium the information was communicated, picture symbols should be included to educate residents on what could be recycled, and how to avoid contamination, especially to explain why the recycling that had been left out had not been collected.
R9	The Council's administration has three key priorities for Ealing which included tackling the climate crisis. Departments across the Council would be working with this in mind, and there may be further opportunities for partnership between relevant activities. These included Active Travel where bicycles could be refurbished for the benefit of those who could use them, where Housing Services should be proactive in speaking to landlords to identify where more recycling bins were needed in flats, and where the Food Safety Service should encourage commercial sites to recycle food in order to combat the threat of vermin. The skills of residents could be key in this, and this covered where greater knowledge and encouragement could be given to schools, and where the Council could raise further awareness of the Acton Market Reduce and Recycle Hub, for example. Also, projects such as <i>Eat Like A Londoner</i> could offer opportunities to improve skills and tackle loneliness.

7.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS WITH OFFICER COMMENTS**

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
R1	<p>The Panel had visited a number of projects and witnessed the community at work in helping to deliver the Ealing Council Biodiversity Action Plan. The Council should help further to publicise and support such projects and utilise its communications channels to do so. This would entail publicising bite-sized biodiversity articles on social media to encourage more people to get involved, greater coverage in Around Ealing magazine and include a volunteering page in the digital edition. Other support could include getting information circulated such as where visitors should not venture in Warren Farm to avoid disturbing the nesting skylarks.</p>	<p><u>Chris Bunting (Assistant Director Leisure)</u> The parks service continues to engage with the council's communications team to further develop the council's promotion of park's activities and programmes. The communications team are currently developing a new volunteering section for the council's website in addition to the Volunteer - Do Something Good platform.</p> <p>The parks service has engaged with the Brent River and Canal Society to agree wording and location of 'skylark' notices at Warren Farm. This is considered a practical approach rather than circulating information which might encourage more visitors.</p>	Accept
R2	<p>The Council should consult environmental volunteer groups such as Ealing Wildlife Group and Ealing Parks Foundation on the Local Plan and direct them to the appropriate chapter for their input. In compiling the Local Plan, the Council should determine the relationship between</p>	<p><u>Chris Bunting (Assistant Director Leisure)</u> The planning service has engaged directly with the</p>	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
	community amenities and its Climate Change and Health & Wellbeing strategies. The relationship between these strategies and the built environment on commercial sites was also relevant to local business consultees. Businesses could be asked to provide space and opportunity for employees to engage in biodiversity through edible gardens on site or professionally run volunteer projects such as Greenways and Trees for Cities.	Ealing Parks Foundation at Regulation 18 stage.	
R3	Ealing's parks, allotments and other green spaces identified a need for associations/forums where holders could plan and learn from across the borough, aspire towards improved enforcement and amenities, and ascertain how progress could be sought in the current financial climate. These would depend on voluntary efforts, recognising the dependency also of the Council Plan on voluntary commitment. The Council could learn from others such London National Park City's network of volunteer rangers in replacing abolished permanent roles which had supported volunteers. Volunteer networks should promote diversity, inclusion and encourage excellence via rewards facilitated by the Council. Strong networks would be more effective in fundraising and instrumental in facilitating activities across the borough. The Council should consider investing some of its community infrastructure levy funds from planning projects in the borough's green spaces.	<u>Chris Bunting (Assistant Director Leisure)</u> The Ealing Parks Foundation supported by the council are planning to engage with associations and volunteer groups to create a support and sharing network. The tree service have launched a tree warden campaign.	Accept
R4	The Planning process should also consider the matter of overshadowing to the borough's trees and green spaces in preventing loss of vital light. In the absence of an Ecology Officer at Ealing Council, more education on this matter should be made available to Councillors and relevant staff. Ideally, Ealing Council should consider employing an Ecology Officer to offer advice and guidance at all levels. Further clarification on the proposed changes to status of spaces within the Local Plan was essential, for example why Grove	<u>Chris Bunting (Assistant Director Leisure)</u> The parks service will be employing an ecology officer in lieu of the vacant senior ranger post.	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
	Farm would cease to be metropolitan open land, and an Ecology Officer could play a useful role in this exercise.		
R5	For the reassurance of residents and other stakeholders, more information on the maintenance of trees was necessary particularly in light of the 50,000 new trees manifesto pledge. Additional trees would result in more leaves on the ground, making pavements unsafe for those less steady on their feet and the roots could damage pavements which would create further work for the Highways Department. A system must be in place to monitor the unwelcome outcomes of tree planting and how these would be addressed within available budgets. Also, residents should be informed of how the Council would avoid infringing on other budgets to maintain its trees.	<p><u>Dale Mortimer (Tree Service Manager) and Tony Singh (Head of Highways)</u> The Tree Service continues to survey all street trees on a three yearly basis and prioritises resources to ensure the council meets its 'duty of care' obligations.</p> <p>Leaf collection will remain part of the seasonal street cleansing operations - any additional challenge will be gradual and absorbed over the next 30 years. Likewise, surface roots and pavement maintenance will be absorbed into the routine inspection and repair of highway assets.</p> <p>The specification of tree species by Parks has been changed to reduce the impact of trees on the highway network. New trees in recent years has been for species with roots that penetrate into</p>	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
		<p>the ground and are less likely to affect the footway or carriageway. Species which have shallow roots extending below the surface of the ground are no longer planted. The majority of tree root problems in the borough relate to existing or large or mature trees, and as trees grow this will be the main area of concern in relation to damage to the highway network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan of action to deal with existing street trees that are causing highway maintenance issues and how this will be budgeted for. <p>Ensuring that any new street trees are carefully selected with a view to minimising the need for future highway maintenance.</p>	
R6	Increased reliance on voluntary efforts required empowerment for residents and Councillors. Councillors needed a list of tree species in the borough, further knowledge about the work of Trees for Streets and how residents could get involved and sponsor trees. Also, residents with suitable gardens should be informed of the opportunity	<p><u>Chris Bunting (Assistant Director Leisure)</u> Councillors were provided with a list of tree species as part of the Scrutiny programme.</p>	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
	to have trees planted in their gardens. Volunteers required support and the Council should be explicit about how it intended to identify volunteers and provide that support to them.		
R7	<p>Volunteers had proven beyond a doubt how critical they were to the Council's efforts. The Council should be investing further to provide support to volunteer groups to form and thrive whilst in turn they supported its efforts and were enabled to work more effectively. Specific incentives should be offered such as awards for exceptional volunteer and recycling efforts, whilst highlighting where there was still need for volunteers to step in. The Council already had structure and experience, including its Do Something Good initiative, to build the central support.</p>	<p><u>Chris Bunting (Assistant Director Leisure) and Catherina Pack (Waste and Street Services Manager)</u></p> <p>The parks service continues to engage with the council's communications team to further develop the council's promotion of park's activities and programmes.</p> <p>Street Services also continues to engage with volunteers to enhance the street scene.</p> <p>The communications team is currently developing a new volunteering section for the council's website in addition to the Volunteer - Do Something Good platform.</p> <p>Street Services engages regularly with schools, running competitions to promote and reward reuse and recycling.</p>	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
R8	<p>Important and relevant facts were publicly circulated on matters such as the number of fixed penalty notices issued, however, residents and Councillors were not always in receipt of the documents. As the Council had stated that there would be Town Forums put in place, then these would provide an ideal opportunity to ensure that all attendees were aware of the enforcement work undertaken. Town Forums should be open and welcoming to all, and it would be useful to provide guidance through them on how to effectively recycle and this should be in a number of languages and in a manner accessible to those with little online access. By whatever medium the information was communicated, picture symbols should be included to educate residents on what could be recycled, and how to avoid contamination, especially to explain why the recycling that had been left out had not been collected.</p>	<p><u>Catherina Pack (Waste and Street Services Manager)</u> Street Services will produce a regular enforcement bulletin to include relevant statistics.</p> <p>The team has reviewed the current leaflets, which include pictures of materials acceptable/not acceptable for recycling and will look at the feasibility of translations. The contamination tags are scheduled to be reviewed with Greener Ealing so the message is clear to residents.</p>	Accept
R9	<p>The Council's administration has three key priorities for Ealing which included tackling the climate crisis. Departments across the Council would be working with this in mind, and there may be further opportunities for partnership between relevant activities. These included Active Travel where bicycles could be refurbished for the benefit of those who could use them, where Housing Services should be proactive in speaking to landlords to identify where more recycling bins were needed in flats, and where the Food Safety Service should encourage commercial sites to recycle food in order to combat the threat of vermin. The skills of residents could be key in this, and this covered where greater knowledge and encouragement could be given to schools, and where the Council could raise further awareness of the Acton Market Reduce and Recycle Hub, for example. Also,</p>	<p><u>Catherina Pack (Waste and Street Services Manager)</u> and <u>Emily Shovlar (Principal Transport Planner)</u> Street Services currently support a group of community organisations, charities and volunteers linked to – Let's Go Southall. This is a local initiative to get the town of Southall more physically active, and to create a space for a circular economy model. Let's Go Southall collect</p>	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
	<p>projects such as <i>Eat Like A Londoner</i> could offer opportunities to improve skills and tackle loneliness.</p>	<p>abandoned and old bikes (that would otherwise have been disposed of), they are repaired and refurbished and given to local residents.</p> <p>Street Services continues to raise awareness of local activities such as the Acton Market Reduce and Recycle Hub and the Ealing Repair Café, including recently running electrical repair and clothes repair workshops and creating a zero waste map, which provides opportunities for unwanted or broken items to receive a new lease of life and helps to create a circular economy where things are kept in use for longer periods. www.ealing.gov.uk/recyclingmap.</p> <p>Street Services will continue to be involved in pan-London communication campaigns such as <i>Eat Like A Londoner</i>.</p>	

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
		The Active Travel team does not currently have resource for offering refurbished bicycles, due to the reduction in funding from Transport for London. However, there are certainly opportunities for more partnership working to link the circular economy approach to active travel.	



Report for: ACTION
Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No
Title	Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 4 – 2022/2023: Genuinely Affordable Homes
Responsible Officer(s)	Helen Harris Director of Legal and Democratic Services harrish@ealing.gov.uk
Author(s)	Cllr Chris Summers (Chair) Cllr Gregory Stafford (Vice Chair) Harjeet Bains Overview and Scrutiny Officer Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120
Portfolio(s)	Councillor Bassam Mahfouz (Safe and Genuinely Affordable Homes) Councillor Shital Manro (Good Growth and New Housing)
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	06 December 2023
Implementation Date if Not Called In	18 December 2023
Affected Wards	All
Keywords/Index	scrutiny; review; genuinely affordable homes; recommendations

Purpose of Report:
The purpose of this report is to refer to Cabinet the final report and recommendations of Scrutiny Panel 4 – 2022/2023: Genuinely Affordable Homes

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- notes the final report of Scrutiny Panel 4 – 2022/2023: Genuinely Affordable Homes, which is attached as **Appendix 1**;
- accepts the Panel’s recommendations in Section 7.0 of the final report;
- identifies whether further information or advice is required from service officers on any of the recommendations before Cabinet can take a decision about accepting or rejecting these; and
- directs service officers to produce/or finalise an action plan within an agreed timescale on those recommendations that are agreed by Cabinet.

2. Reason for decision and options considered

2.1 Scrutiny panels have a role in improving decision-making and service delivery through effective scrutiny. Recommendations from scrutiny panels need to be taken forward in a timely manner and in accordance with the Council's constitution if the scrutiny function is to be effective. The Scrutiny and Executive Protocol identifies the timescale for Cabinet to respond to scrutiny panel recommendations. This decision will mean that the response is made in a timely manner and that services can implement the accepted recommendations.

3. Key implications

3.1 The recommendations of Scrutiny Panel 4 – 2022/2023: Genuinely Affordable Homes are provided in a table format in Section 7.0 of the Panel's final report in Appendix 1.

3.2 The Council constitution (Part 2 Article 6.03) gives the OSC power to 'set up individual specialist panels to investigate and report back to OSC ...' Part 4 of the constitution, scrutiny procedure rules (par.10) identifies that OSC prepares a formal report on its recommendations and submits it to Cabinet.

3.3 Where appropriate, service officers have identified the financial, legal and any other pertinent implications against each recommendation to enable Cabinet to reach a decision.

3.4 OSC will monitor the progress on the implementation of each recommendation agreed by Cabinet.

4. Financial implications

4.1 The service officer response, including suggested actions which may have potential financial implications, to each recommendation is provided in Section 7.0 of Appendix 1.

4.2 The majority of the recommendations have no financial implications or those that have can be contained within existing service budgets. Where a recommendation involves additional funds then these will have to be contained at present and any further allocation of funds would need to be obtained through the normal budget setting process.

4.3 Recommendation R6, that the Council should regularly assess the financial risks for the proposed housing developments, will further safeguard financial control.

5. Legal

5.1 The constitution requires that scrutiny panel recommendations be submitted to OSC for approval prior to submission to Cabinet.

5.2 The council has the powers to implement all those recommendations that have been accepted. Detailed legal advice will be provided at the point that they are taken forward for implementation.

6. Value for money

6.1 The effectiveness of Scrutiny is measured by the quality of its recommendations to Cabinet and the extent to which it has contributed to

- both democratic renewal and members' community development role. The scrutiny panel held open meetings in public, solicited views through expert witnesses and media channels to ensure a regular and sustained input to the work of the panel.
- 6.2 With respect to scrutiny panel recommendations, value for money implications are outlined in the officer response to each recommendation in the schedule, as appropriate.
- 6.3 If recommendations arising from scrutiny panels are not taken forward and implemented in a timely manner then improvements to service delivery are not made efficiently.
- 7. Sustainability impact appraisal**
- 7.1 There is none arising directly from this report.
- 8. Risk management**
- 8.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report but the failure to act on agreed recommendations or action plans arising could give rise to risk issues in service delivery.
- 9. Community safety**
- 9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report but the failure to act on agreed recommendations or action plans arising could give rise to risk issues in service delivery and community safety.
- 10. Links applicable to the three key priorities for the borough**
- 10.1 The recommendations arising from the panel's review relate to the key priorities of tackling the climate crisis and fighting inequality.
- 11. Equalities, human rights and community cohesion**
- 11.1 No Equality Analysis Assessment has been undertaken on these recommendations. Any equalities or community cohesion issues have been addressed by the service officers' response as appropriate.
- 12. Staffing/workforce and accommodation implications**
- 12.1 Any staffing/workforce and accommodation implications have been addressed by the service officers' response as appropriate.
- 13. Property and assets**
- 13.1 None.
- 14. Any other implications**
- 14.1 None.
- 15. Consultation**
- 15.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the final report of the Panel on 05 October 2023.
- 15.2 The recommendations take into consideration the views of local organisations and residents as expressed at the panel's open meetings and site visits.

16. Timetable for implementation

16.1 OSC will monitor, twice yearly, the implementation of the recommendations accepted by Cabinet.

Cabinet Action		Date	Service Implementation
1.	Cabinet accepts some or all recommendations.	06 December 2023	18 December 2023 – in line with Call-in requirements.
2.	Cabinet requests further information.	06 December 2023	Service provides additional information for Cabinet on 17 January 2024 .
3.	As a result of further information, Cabinet accepts or rejects remaining recommendations.	17 January 2024	29 January 2024 – in line with Call-in requirements.

17. Appendices

17.1 **Appendix 1:** Final Report of Scrutiny Panel 4 – 2022/2023: Genuinely Affordable Homes

18. Background information

18.1 Ealing Council's constitution is available at [Council Constitution](#).

18.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – agendas, minutes and reports, available at [Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#).

18.3 Scrutiny Panel 2 – 2022/2023: Recovery from the Pandemic – agendas, minutes and reports, available at [Committee details - Scrutiny Panel 4 - 2022/23: Genuinely Affordable Homes \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#).

18.4 Current agendas and reports are available at [Committees \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#).

Report Consultation

<i>Name of Consultee</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Date Sent to Consultee</i>	<i>Date Response Received from Consultee</i>	<i>Comments Appear in Report Para</i>
<i>Internal</i>				
Peter George	Strategic Director Economy and Sustainability	12.10.23		
Nicky Fiedler	Strategic Director for Housing and Environment	12.10.23		
Philip Browne	Director of Housing Development	12.10.23		
Jamie Burns	Assistant Director of Housing Commissioning and Strategy	12.10.23		
Andy Berridge	Head of Construction	12.10.23		
Jessica Tamayao	Assistant Director Strategic Property	12.10.23		
Elaine Dorricott	Development Programme Manager	12.10.23		
Adam Towle	Head of New Business	12.10.23		
David Colley	Head of Housing Regeneration	12.10.23		
Simeon Abraham	Housing Regeneration Manager	12.10.23		
Samuel Cuthbert	Principal Planner	12.10.23		
Lisa Watson	Housing Policy and Strategy Manager	12.10.23		
Jack Dempsey	Head of Allocations and Accommodation	12.10.23		
Gordon Cooper	Principal Project Manager, Broadway Living	12.10.23		
Stephen Rizzo	Assistant Director for Building Control	12.10.23		
Helen Harris	Director of Legal and Democratic Services	02.11.23		
Emily Hill	Strategic Director Resources	02.11.23		
Sam Bailey	Head of Democratic Services	02.11.23		
Senior Leadership Team	All Members	15.11.23		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	All Committee Members	05.10.23		
Cllr Bassam Mahfouz	Cabinet Member – Safe and Genuinely Affordable Homes	12.10.23		
Cllr Shital Manro	Cabinet Member – Good Growth and New Housing	12.10.23		
<i>External</i>				
None				

Report History

Decision Type:		Urgency item?	
Non-key Decision		No	
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	Date Report Drafted:	Report Deadline:	Date Report Sent:
N/A	-	23.11.23	23.11.23
Report No.:	Report Author and Contact for Queries:		
	Harjeet Bains Overview and Scrutiny Officer Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120		



SCRUTINY PANEL 4 – 2022/2023

GENUINELY AFFORDABLE HOMES

FINAL REPORT

16 MAY 2023

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CHAIR'S OVERVIEW



Cllr Chris Summers
(Panel Chair)

The Genuinely Affordable Homes Scrutiny Panel was formed in May 2022, shortly after the council elections, and had an ambitious work programme. This included discussion of how the council could work with partners in the social housing landlord sector and the private sector, considering the future challenges faced by the council and reviewing possible improvements to the handling of the waiting list and the allocation of properties.

The panel consisted of a number brand new councillors who were on their first scrutiny panel but I was impressed by their enthusiasm, knowledge and willingness to challenge the council and its partners. I thank them all the for their contributions.

The panel's work programme was conducted against the background of major political and economic turmoil, with two prime ministers resigning and a government mini-budget being delivered in September 2022 which had catastrophic consequences for interest rates and the economy in general.

Furthermore, we heard throughout the year from several guests and from council officers how inflation, both in terms of labour costs and building material costs, was having a major impact on the viability of genuinely affordable housing projects across the borough.

The panel was also apprised of the emerging government policy, in the wake of the Grenfell Tower and the subsequent public inquiry, of making two stairwells mandatory in all tall buildings, and how this would also have a major impact on genuinely affordable housing schemes. The Housing Secretary, Michael Gove, finally confirmed this policy in July 2023, setting a height of 18 metres as the maximum for which a building only needed one stairwell.

The panel also conducted a visit to the Copley (formerly Copley Close) estate in Hanwell in February 2023, discussed the evolution of the project with officials from Broadway Living and the council and also met with a number of residents. We were impressed by the quality of the homes we saw at Matlock Court, which were aimed at key workers who were struggling to pay full market rent. The panel hopes the new community centre will help to rebuild a community spirit on the estate which some residents felt had been lost over the years.

Overall, the panel was successful and has come up with some good recommendations but in my opinion the issue of genuinely affordable housing is so crucial to the borough that it is a subject which should be revisited regularly in 2023/24 and beyond.

Cllr Chris Summers
Chair, Genuinely Affordable Homes Scrutiny Panel 2022-23

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Panel's work would assist the Council to meet the commitments of the new administration's manifesto pledge of **More Genuinely Affordable Homes** "*We will deliver 4,000 new and safe genuinely affordable homes. London's affordable housing crisis means we need to do everything we can to build more genuinely affordable homes that cost no more than a third of household incomes, stop people being priced out of local housing, and build many more new council homes for rent.*" and the associated priorities within the Council Plan.

Scope

1.2 The Panel's scope was to scrutinise matters relating to the delivery of more genuinely affordable homes in the borough and make recommendations for further improvements accordingly. The Panel focused on the Council's affordable housing development programme; partnership working; new Ealing housing and homelessness strategy; Locata IT System; and Ealing Council's readiness in tackling future challenges.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

General

2.1 The Panel received reports and presentations from internal services, external agencies and expert witnesses at its four hybrid meetings which participants could join in person or virtually via Zoom. The meetings were held in Ealing Town Hall and webcast live on the Council's YouTube channel. The Panel also conducted a site visit within the borough.

Site Visits

2.2 The Panel visited Ealing Council's Copley Estate in Hanwell that was undergoing major regeneration.

Co-option

2.3 Ms Alicia Kennedy (Director, Generation Rent) was co-opted onto the Panel at the first meeting.

Publicity

2.4 The Panel's work was publicised in the Council's *Around Ealing* free magazine which is delivered to all households in the borough, website and direct emails.

3.0 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

GENUINELY AFFORDABLE HOMES PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The Panel considered the Council's genuinely affordable homes (GAH) programme at its first meeting and received regular updates on progress at subsequent meetings.
- 3.2 Philip Browne (Director of Housing Development), Jamie Burns (Assistant Director Housing Strategy and Commissioning), Dave Baptiste (Head of Housing Development), Andrew Berridge (Head of Construction), Firas Al-Sheikh (Finance Manager) and Jessica Tamayao (Assistant Director Strategic Property) highlighted that:
- 3.3 The Housing Development Service was primarily responsible for the delivery of a range of affordable housing in the borough and the Council's regeneration scheme.
- 3.4 There was more demand for the supply of affordable housing and increasing housing supply across all tenures was one of the six proposed priorities of Ealing's new housing and homelessness strategy. Increasing genuinely affordable housing was a key local priority which the Council had to balance with the challenging overall housing delivery targets imposed by central government and Greater London Authority (GLA) through the London Plan. It was monitored via the Housing Delivery Test.
- 3.5 Ealing's draft strategic market housing assessment (SMHA) had indicated that a lot more social and market housing was required to tackle the housing need in the borough. The SHMA was the evidence that supported the direction of the Council's regeneration policy. The targets were set on a scheme by scheme basis and the Council attempted to get as much housing and affordable housing reasonably possible within a local community including the provision of amenities. The service was not driven by an obsession with targets. The targets and evidence were used as the basis for what could be delivered through planning, available funding and market support. The schemes needed to maximise the opportunities to address an increasing need for more housing of all tenure types.
- 3.6 The Council's last administration had set an ambitious target to deliver 2,500 GAH in 2018-22 and had delivered 2,576 GAH.
- 3.7 Within the broad definition of affordable housing, GLA's preferred affordable housing tenures were homes based on social rent levels, including Social Rent, London Affordable Rent (LAR), London Living Rent (LLR) and London Shared Ownership.
- 3.8 Ealing defined GAH as the GLA did except that shared ownership and intermediate homes were deemed GAH if housing costs took up no more than a third of gross household income, this was in line with the rent setting methodology of GLA's LLR.

- 3.9 LAR was aimed at low income households, with rents based on social rent levels that were allocated through local authority allocation policies. The rent levels were approximately 50% of market rent in Ealing.
- 3.10 LLR was offered to London households with incomes below £60,000 and insufficient current savings to purchase a home in the local area. It was a below-market rent with tenancies for a minimum of three years to help renters to save for a deposit to buy their own home. The rents were based on a third of average gross local incomes and adjusted to reflect location and bedroom size.
- 3.11 New GAH in the borough were delivered through a combination of private sector development with affordable housing secured through planning Section 106 agreements for developments over 10 units; housing association/registered provider development providing these within their programmes; and Ealing Council house building through the housing revenue account (HRA) and its housing association, Broadway Living Registered Provider (BLRP).
- 3.12 The majority of GAH had routinely been delivered by about 15 developing housing associations and there was increasing reliance on them to build more. A substantial proportion of GAH was delivered through the Council's programme of delivery which included its regeneration schemes and by BLRP.
- 3.13 The main funders of GAH were GLA grant, Council grant through right to buy receipts, private borrowing by registered providers, Council and BLRP borrowing, cross subsidy generated through market sale. In Ealing, a small pot of money was available through the Section 106 funds. It was kept small because the Council pressed for affordable housing to be built on site rather than take a commuted sum in lieu of housing.
- 3.14 The new administration had set a challenging target of delivering 4,000 GAH for 2022-26. The assumed basis of delivery to achieve this target was largely based on past performance. Ealing had a good record of meeting housing targets so there was more confidence in achieving the proposed delivery of GAH in the first year but less certainty for the remaining years due to unknown factors at this stage. Ealing's definition for genuinely affordable housing in respect of the 4,000 homes target was that a housing cost should not be more than a third of the local household income in the locality of an application. This was done on a Ward basis and did not include any shared ownership. All affordable housing to be delivered in the new plan would be at social rent or Council rent. This meant that all the rental housing delivered through the new plan would meet the definition and be much more affordable than the current LAR homes being delivered in the 2018-23 programme. It was likely that the majority of homes in the new programme would be more affordable than the 2,500 homes delivered in the 2018-23 programme due to the switch to social rent in the new funding regime.

- 3.15 There was a dependence on developing registered providers to deliver over half of the set target for GAHs so the strategic alliance with them needed to be strong in order to understand their priorities, ambitions, challenges and requirements. It was too soon to plan the programme of delivery in detail because much of it depended on registered providers purchasing land and obtaining planning permission. The Council also had the role of an enabler to ensure that its partners could deliver on schemes. It could become a critical and strategic friend to enable development of more GAH in this sector.
- 3.16 Although it was too early in the GAH programme to count starts on site it was anticipated that 994 units would have started on site by March 2023. 639 units would be through the Council and BLRP with 355 units through other registered providers in the borough. Officers ensured that starts on site and completed GAH were not double counted for the delivery of the programme.
- 3.17 The emerging challenges in maintaining a financially viable development programme at project and business plan levels included the market impacts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, taxation, energy cost rises, UK interest rate rises, rapidly rising inflation and revised building regulations requirements.
- 3.18 Consequently, there were significant increases in the materials and labour costs within the construction sector and main contactors were increasingly reluctant to commit to long-term fixed price contracts, with many expecting to see an uplift mechanism in future contacts to allow for continued cost increases for schemes over 2-3 years. Many contractors were becoming selective in tendering for schemes and were dismissing single-stage competitive tendering in preference for direct negotiation or a two-stage tendering approach. Market analysts had predicted that tender prices would increase by 7-8% during 2022.
- 3.19 The GLA had removed LAR as a funded rent and replaced it with Social Rent which was set using a national formula incorporating local factors. In Ealing, rents were lower than LAR. The reduced rent meant that to maintain financial viability, a home let at Social Rent would require a higher grant than a home let at LAR. People with housing needs received rental support through their benefit receipts. The service did not conduct routine affordability checks other than whether people qualified for the low rents. GAH were primarily driven by housing needs.
- 3.20 GLA funding was no longer available for homes that replaced homes that had been, or would be, demolished. For example, if 100 existing homes were demolished to build 150 new homes then funding would only be available for the additional 50 homes. The GLA was also not providing grants for Section 106 homes unless schemes delivered above what was required in the planning system. The changes to GLA funding had significant implications for Ealing's regeneration programme in improving some of its housing estates.

- 3.21 Housing was often delivered in surges which could be at the beginning or end of a programme. The 2018-22 programme had been extended by a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and expected to complete by March 2023. In 2018, Ealing had received approximately £100M from the London Mayor's fund for delivery of 1,138 homes. Not all the funding was for the 2,500 GAH as shared-ownership homes were a major proportion of the overall housing delivered. The Council had secured a similar amount of funding for 2022-26 towards GAH and shared-ownership homes. Approximately 80% of the homes would be built for social rent and LAR.
- 3.22 The Council had awarded a total funding package of up to £400M for the BLRP business plan which had been agreed by Cabinet and Council in November and December 2020. This finance was for the delivery of 1,500 homes. Subsequently, BLRP had brought forward Tranche 1 of its schemes and secured approximately £103M of the overall Council's lending pot. The Council had recently agreed to lend £212M for the Tranche 2 BLRP schemes. In addition, the Council had agreed a budget of £36M capital spend to bring forward schemes to a point for transferring to BLRP and on transfer the capital spends repaid to the Council. Almost 1,000 homes were expected to be delivered in the next year.
- 3.23 The GLA funding was a capital grant and the Council had received a total of £250M for both Ealing and BLRP across the two programmes for 2018-23 and 2021-26. The GLA capital grant did not have to be paid back. The £400M was a loan from the Council to BLRP that had to be repaid over BLRP's 50-year cashflow of its business plan. The loan, which amounted to approximately 30% of the total building costs, plugged the gap between the grant and remaining costs for the housing schemes.
- 3.24 In 2018, a Council-wide review of mainly general fund assets had identified a number of sites that were suitable for a change of use. Presently, four sites that were deemed suitable for housing delivery had been disposed to BLRP. The Council's Assets Board assessed the suitability of a site for housing or another purpose against a number of options appraisals including the Council objectives.
- 3.25 The Council's new housing and homelessness strategy would consider its commissioning, regeneration opportunities, and the wider social community values regarding development. A new commissioning document would establish the Council's expected achievements and the BLRP design guide identified what was being built.
- 3.26 Once the Council's Cabinet and BLRP Board had approved the housing schemes, a procurement process to competitively select a contractor to deliver the scheme on site was undertaken. A number of established frameworks including pre-vetted contractors were used for the tendering of schemes. Discussions with the selected contractor and appointed consultants took place to fine-tune the tender price before the contractor was instructed to deliver the scheme on site. A team of consultants and officers oversaw the delivery of the schemes on sites to practical completion.

- 3.27 BLRP worked very closely but at an arm's length with planning officers regarding formal planning applications. There was a pre-planning consultation meeting with planners to discuss the proposals, a series of consultation meetings with local residents affected by the planning application and Ward Councillors to understand views before any proposals were adapted. This was an iterative process which led to a final detailed planning application that would be acceptable in addressing the concerns of the local community and viable for delivery by Broadway Living.
- 3.28 It was anticipated that the cost increases would continue for this year and could level out next year, making it difficult presently to predict the trend. Several contractors were unwilling to do single stage tendering and preferred to undertake a two-stage process. Contractors also stipulated that they would not provide a fixed price contract figure on their tender returns and included a caveat with an inflationary requirement during the build period on site. There would be significant implications for larger schemes of about 200 units which took 2-3 years to deliver. The non-capping of increase in costs made it difficult to predict the financial outcomes of a scheme.
- 3.29 The tenure and mix of a housing scheme was agreed early on in the process during the consultation with local communities and planning officers prior to the formal planning application stage.
- 3.30 The Council's housing strategy and the local plan were informed by the strategic housing needs assessment (SHNA). This process was undertaken as part of the evidence base for the local plan and was about to be conducted again in the borough. A thorough understanding of the housing needs was captured in the SHNA which informed what the local planning authority agreed as the required mix in its housing strategy. It was the governance around housing need being factored into planning decisions. The local plan required certain mixes and 10 years of affordable housing to be built.
- 3.31 A developer had to conform to the local plan and have discussions with the planning officers before an application went to the Planning Committee. Planning officers established that the developer had properly complied with the local plan and made recommendations to the Committee on whether the application had fulfilled the density, height and other aspects of the planning application. The Planning Committee's decision was based on its own view supported by the officers' recommendations.
- 3.32 Ealing Council currently did not have a specific scheme that ringfenced shared ownership to a particular group of people. The shared ownership scheme was targeted at local people but insufficient take-up led to accepting people from outside the borough. Affordability of shared ownership varied across the borough with central Ealing locations more expensive than Northolt. The government's highly subsidised help to buy scheme which enabled people into home ownership was a challenge to the shared ownership scheme. The Council's intermediate housing policy would

consider all tenures that were not low-cost rent such as LLR, intermediate rent and shared ownership to see what could be done for entry into homeownership or intermediate housing.

- 3.33 The SHNA was being updated as part of the housing strategy in the local plan that was being refreshed. The local plan would become the policy against which planning applications were judged. The SHNA would feed in the decisions by the planning authorities of what percentage to include for various tenures and proportions. The monitoring was undertaken annually through an annual monitoring report published by the local planning authority which showed what had been achieved against the local plan targets. Broadway Living only delivered a proportion of the boroughwide delivery. The aspiration of the planning authority was to achieve 50% affordable housing overall of all housing delivered. Its mechanism to achieve this target was through the local plan. Each individual scheme was encouraged to achieve at least 35% affordable housing and there were other 100% affordable housing schemes delivered by housing associations. The aspiration was to achieve 50% affordable housing from the total housing developed. The Council did not have full control over housing delivery as it was not the applicant or landowner for all housing schemes and had to negotiate the amount of affordable housing per scheme. The Council could bring forward the affordable housing for schemes where it had control.

Further Progress Updates

- 3.34 At the second meeting, Council Officers informed the Panel that the progress against the delivery of the set targets for 4,000 GAH in the Council Plan forecasted that 1,375 homes would be delivered in May 2022-March 2023, 500 in April 2023-March 2024, 850 in April 2024-March 2025 and 1,275 in April 2025-March 2026. This reflected the four-year cycle of the funding programmes with the aim to achieve the overall 4,000 GAH target by March 2026.
- 3.35 Broadway Living and BLRP had continued to work closely with Ealing Council since November 2020 to deliver the first phase (Tranche 1) comprising of 10 schemes of which nine were underway.
- 3.36 In April 2022, Cabinet had approved a revised BLRP Tranche 2 financial plan for eight projects for the delivery of 562 new GAHs towards the 4,000 target. These were due to start on site before March 2023.
- 3.37 There had been a serious negative impact on the viability of redevelopment schemes including the Tranche 2 schemes due to the significant downturn in the current economic climate. Consequently, the Council and BLRP had reviewed the Tranche 2 schemes and deferred two of the eight schemes, Broomcroft Avenue (41 homes) and Canberra Drive (35 homes), into the GLA APH 2021-2026. Following local consultation, a third scheme (Park View Road – 59 homes), would remain as a youth centre and not taken forward. The viability of the remaining five schemes comprising of 427 homes was still being tested.

- 3.38 The key challenges resulting from the international economic downturn and a turbulent construction sector had included significant increases in lending rates, supply chain difficulties, workforce shortages, increased overheads, and uncertainty in the housing market, resulting in major cost implications with increased build costs and contract conditions.
- 3.39 The increase in lending rates impacted on both the Council's HRA and BLRP's borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). PWLB was a statutory body of the UK Government that provided loans to public bodies from the National Loans Fund (NFL).
- 3.40 The uncertainty in the housing market included uncertain house values and availability in cost of mortgages, impacting on the delivery of affordable housing.
- 3.41 In the recent Autumn Statement, the Chancellor had announced a rent cap at 7% from April 2023 for social rents in England. The rent cap would impact on the income in the HRA and that of BLRP.
- 3.42 The current operating environment and challenges applied to all deliverers of affordable housing.
- 3.43 At the third meeting, Council Officers informed the Panel that the GLA 2018-23 Affordable Homes Programme was drawing to a close so various projects were scheduled to start on site by the end of March 2023. This meant that many contract signings and negotiations were presently underway with changes happening very rapidly.
- 3.44 The previously reported 1,375 GAH due to start on site by March 2023 had decreased to 1,263 mainly due to the present economic challenges faced by the Council and other housing developers. The three GAH projects at Mandeville Road (Northolt), Canberra Drive (Yeading) and Broomcroft Road (Yeading) scheduled to start in the current year had been deferred to start in the remodelled 2021-26 Affordable Housing Programme with GLA's agreement. Only details of Council and BLRP led projects were presented due to commercial sensitivity regarding projects by other partners until these were secured. The Council would continue to work with existing partners and new ones such as Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) in North Acton to identify new projects towards its new homes target.
- 3.45 The 10 transform projects undertaken by BLRP and other partners, nine of which were underway, had been included in the previous GAH target with the exception of some larger estate regeneration projects such as Greenman Lane, Dean Gardens and South Acton (due to commence in the next two years) were accounted for the 4,000 new homes target.
- 3.46 The initially agreed BLRP Tranche 2 financial plan for eight projects to start on site by March 2023 in delivering 560 new GAH towards the 4,000 target had been reduced to 279 GAH with the remainder deferred to subsequent years into the new GLA Programme. In January 2023, the Council had

secured an additional £9.4M safeguarding grant from the GLA to ensure viability and delivery of the projects. The proposed four projects – Northolt Grange (92 GAH); Lexden Road (161 GAH); Perceval House (70 GAH); and Sussex Crescent (26 GAH) would now be delivered within the HRA financial plan instead of by BLRP as that would give a greater ability to absorb global economic challenges.

- 3.47 The Perceval House redevelopment was to be delivered through a partnership between Ealing Council and Vistry Group which had recently merged with Countryside. It was an ambitious mixed-use development to deliver new Council headquarters, a library, community hub and 477 homes. 266 homes would be retained by the Council – 70 at London affordable rent and 156 at discounted market rent. In December 2022, Cabinet had approved acquisition of affordable housing to the Council's HRA and the scheme within the HRA Capital Programme. Ealing Council was presently finalising grant details and Right to Buy receipt usage with the GLA. It was also agreeing terms with the electricity provider to secure vacant possession of the existing substation on site which was the last remaining condition in the development agreement before work commenced on site in March 2023.
- 3.48 The Tranche 3 schemes were included in the GLA 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme and on 12 October 2022 Cabinet had approved entering into the grant agreement. At GLA's request, a bid was presently being made to remove and substitute projects within this Programme. The Northolt High School (175 GAH) project was being removed because it was unavailable as a housing site due to constraints attached to funding from the Department for Education for the school rebuild as an additional special educational needs school. The Hanwell Children's Centre project had been removed from the Programme following further consultation with the service as it would remain a children's centre.
- 3.49 The current planned sites within Tranche 3 included Mandeville Road (106 GAH); Broomcroft Avenue (42 GAH); and Canberra Drive (which had been added to the Programme with revised plan rates of 9 family GAH and a requirement in the new grant conditions to switch London affordable rent to social rent). An indicative bid had been made for a further 92 homes to secure the remaining ground. The revised bid was for 472 homes compared to 449 homes previously. A total grant of approximately £110M remained the same as did Ealing Council's HRA side of the bid. There were a total of 1,055 homes of all tenures. The GLA had yet to confirm a formal process for changes to the Programme as it was undergoing further negotiations with the government. The Council would proceed once the process was agreed.
- 3.50 Discussions were presently taking place about BLRP buying back properties built through the Council's HRA subject to more favourable borrowing rates in the near future. These properties would then qualify for the Right to Buy scheme.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO ACHIEVE HOUSING TARGETS

- 3.51 The Panel received presentations from Ealing Council officers and partner organisations – Peabody Group (PG), Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing (MTVH) and London Community Land Trust (LCLT) on the collaborative work undertaken to achieve the GAH programme targets.

Ealing Council

- 3.52 The framework for the Council working with partners included public subsidy control (PSC), procurement and best consideration. PSC, previously controlled by European Union regulation, was now controlled by the Subsidy Control Act 2022. The Council had to satisfy several statutory and Ealing policy requirements. In the procurement of partners, the Council was governed by public contract regulations and had its own contract procurement rules. It also had to achieve best consideration in any disposal of land including to partners.
- 3.53 Affordable homes were encouraged through planning with Section 106 planning obligations helping to secure a large element of GAH to meet increasing housing demand. Early engagement with planners and housing officers was encouraged to ensure that the planning permission secured addressed the borough's housing needs. Engagement support and advice was offered to housing associations and developers to help formulate their investment plans for building new homes. Regular housing forums were held with housing associations to foster a spirit of partnership working and sharing information. Even where the Council had no formal partnerships with Registered Providers, it encouraged and supported them to progress in the borough and on their schemes through various stages such as engaging with GLA regarding bids for grants and as the LPA.
- 3.54 In accordance with its 2008 and 2012 estates reviews, the Council was continuing the estate regeneration programme in demolishing 3,500 old homes and building 7,500 new homes across eight projects. The new homes were of high quality and would be maintained to avoid unnecessary impacts on health. The Council relied heavily on registered providers and house builders/developers to help build these homes. There were advantages and disadvantages to this approach.
- 3.55 The Perceval House project, a partnership between Ealing Council and Vistry Group, was subject to further Cabinet decision before it became unconditional. It was a commercial-led project that included some GAH. The Council's current biggest partnership was with L&Q and Countryside Partnerships at the South Acton Estate for the delivery of 3,500 new homes. Vistry Group and Countryside Partnerships had merged recently, making the new merged company a very substantial partner of Ealing Council in the delivery of these two projects.
- 3.56 The Council's plans for partnership working focused on larger projects whereby its partners could bring benefits including diverse regulated development expertise, financial strength to mitigate financial risk, access to grant subsidy and building to scale. The disadvantages of a partnership approach included partner's corporate interests taking precedence, the

Council securing nominations rather than asset ownership, greater exposure to market risk, counterparty risk and different rent regimes with higher average rents than the Council.

- 3.57 The Council's stringent procurement and assessment processes tested the financial suitability and robustness of partners before entering any contracts with them. The counterparty risk was considered for every project. There was significant counterparty risk with Countryside Partnerships delivering the Council's major estate regeneration programme and its recent merger with Vistry Group which would deliver the commercial redevelopment of Perceval House.
- 3.58 The Council intended to allow its local housing company, BLRP, to extend its work to include private sales sites. This would enable BLRP to purchase sites in the private market for the development of GAH.
- 3.59 The Council had pledged to support the work of Community Land Trusts (CLT) and designate a site in the borough during the current administration period for a CLT housing development through its Housing Land Disposal Policy. The policy would set out the provisions for the disposal of Council-owned sites to community-led housing organisations and associations of individual self-builders.
- 3.60 Ealing Council had made available a £400M loan facility to support the work of BLRP. BLRP had also secured £104M of grant funding through GLA's 2018-2023 and 2021-2026 affordable homes programmes. The Council had established a £36M recycled capital budget to progress BLRP schemes to the point at which these were transferred to BLRP. BLRP repaid the Council for all its spend on the schemes up to the point of transferral.
- 3.61 Housing rent was paid into the Council's ringfenced HRA from which all housing costs including repairs, maintenance and new capital spend were made. The HRA delivery was supported by the 2022-23 HRA Budget and Business Plan that had been approved by Cabinet in February 2022. The approved HRA budget included a five-year capital programme from 2022-23 to 2026-27 of £351.441M and an HRA revenue budget of £73.610M for 2022-23. The Business Plan also included indicative revenue budgets for 2023-24 to 2026-27.
- 3.62 The Council and BLRP were in a strong position to deliver the GAH programme targets but the immediate macro factors were likely to impact delivery in the near term.
- 3.63 Ealing Council would play its part in creating the right planning and economic environment for partners to encourage investment in the borough but the challenges faced by the construction industry and the current economic circumstances were likely to result in a sluggish housing market with fewer homes starting in the next couple of years.
- 3.64 The Council's Draft Local Plan included a section on site allocations and the Council's development priority. It formed a catalogue of all the development

sites above a certain size or requiring any known policy guidance. There was no significant risk in the advice that the Council provided as an LPA about a site. The planners gave advice based on the site location such as in a metropolitan open land or green belt, its nature and evidence. The advice provided was for the potential yield of a site and what it could accommodate.

- 3.65 The unviability of some of the Tranche 2 housing schemes was largely due to the rise in the costs of debt, building and the way in which BLRP was funded. BLRP had secured a £400m loan facility from the Council which it must lend at the cost of securing the debt. The cost of the Council's debt from PWLB had risen in the summer and this cost had to be passed on to BLRP. The Council could not subsidise these costs due to the public subsidy rules. The original Tranche 2 Business Plan that had been approved by Cabinet in April 2022 had been on the assumption of a 3.5% interest rate. The interest rates had increased to 6.5% over the summer months, making all the schemes unviable. Although the cost had started to decrease again the Council had acted to optimise schemes through improved buildability where possible by changing tenures, moved some projects into the HRA, and asked GLA for more grants. The viable schemes would be delivered mainly through the HRA in the short term on the assumption that BLRP would buy these back from the HRA as soon as a loan agreement could be secured at around 4% interest rate. It was anticipated that this would happen before the scheme was completed. Additional grants had been approved by GLA for four schemes – Lexden Road, Acton (159 GAH); Perceval House, Ealing (70 GAH); Northolt Grange Community Centre (92 GAH); and Sussex Crescent, Northolt (26 GAH). These schemes would be delivered in the HRA and bought back by BLRP once it could secure the projects at a reasonable cost. Unlike BLRP, the HRA had numerous assets which enabled it to absorb short-term deficits. The Mandeville Road, Northolt (80 GAH) scheme had been deferred to the GLA AHP 2021-26 but its pathway to development such as planning application and tendering exercise would continue.
- 3.66 In setting the 4,000 GAH target, an initial assessment of what was doable had been undertaken in robust discussions with the then Portfolio Holder for Affordable Housing. 3,800 GAH were identified as a feasible number which the Portfolio Holder was keen to stretch to 4,000. The target had been set before the change in economic environment and it was anticipated that over a quarter of the GAH would be achieved in 2022-23 by Ealing Council and Housing Associations. There was expected to be a tail-off for the delivery of GAH in 2023-24 and 2024-25 because everyone had been impacted by the same challenges of increased building costs, inflation, rent cap and the way in which GLA ran its programmes. The programmes tended to be backloaded with everyone finishing their schemes in the last 12-18 months. Hence, the forecasted delivery of 2,625 GAH in April 2023-March 2026 compared to 1,375 in May 2022-March 2023.

Peabody Group

- 3.67 Mr Philip Church (Director of Land and Partnerships, Peabody Group) highlighted that:
- 3.68 Peabody had merged with Catalyst in early 2022 to form a new large PG. Catalyst, a West London based housing association based in Ealing, had several existing large scale regeneration projects in Ealing and Southall.
- 3.69 Ealing had been a core borough for both Peabody and Catalyst with several schemes completed over the years. PG looked to expand its investment in the borough in delivering further much needed housing.
- 3.70 PG had over 104,000 properties across the country and several major schemes in Ealing presently.
- 3.71 In 2021, PG had secured planning permission to build 564 new homes in The Green, Southall of which 50% would be GAH.
- 3.72 PG, jointly with Mount Anvil, had recently secured planning permission to deliver about 1,000 new homes at Friary Park Estate in Acton of which 45% would be GAH.
- 3.73 PG worked with Ealing Council on the regeneration of Havelock Estate in Southall which would have 922 new homes of which 50% would be GAH.
- 3.74 PG faced the same challenges to building new housing as Ealing Council and BLRP in the present macro-economic environment.
- 3.75 PG lauded that Ealing had a Scrutiny Panel reviewing the delivery of its GAH as not all London boroughs undertook such an enquiry. There had been excellent collaboration with Ealing's officers in the delivery of affordable homes, utilisation of funding, navigating the planning journey locally and with GLA. The proactive and forward-thinking approach at Ealing was helpful in the delivery of housing in the borough.
- 3.76 PG did its utmost to maintain and retain a good standard of repair for all its properties. Awaab Ishak's death was shocking but regrettably such incidents were not completely isolated across the private and housing association sector. PG dealt with vulnerable people who were unable to report their own repairs. Its Communities Directorate and housing managers actively engaged with everyone and undertook site visits to ensure that the housing stock was well maintained both for the company and residents.

Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing

- 3.77 Mr Tim Preston (Assistant Director of Land and Planning, MTVH) highlighted that:
- 3.78 Metropolitan and Thames Valley had merged in 2018 to form a new registered provider, MTVH. MTVH owned 57,000 homes across the country.

- 3.79 Ealing was a core borough for MTVH where it had invested significant funds on several sites since 2016, owning and managing about 1,000 housing units. MTVH had recently completed 137 new GAH on the former British Homes Stores site in West Ealing.
- 3.80 MTVH had just sold 84 shared ownership units in Greenford Quay as part of the major purpose-built rental housing Greystar PRS scheme.
- 3.81 MTVH currently had three schemes on site. The first scheme was Goldsmiths Arms in East Acton comprising solely of GAH. The second scheme was at the Beaconsfield Road College site in Southall for which MTVH had recently secured a Section 73 planning permission for change of use to an all-affordable housing scheme with 118 units. The third scheme was the delivery of 144 GAH near West Ealing Station.
- 3.82 The Government's recent announcement of capping social rents was a positive measure for the tenants.
- 3.83 MTVH also suffered from the impact of the current macro-economic environment with increased build cost inflation and interest rate rises.
- 3.84 MTVH concurred with the positive sentiments of PG about its work in the borough to deliver GAH. MTVH sought opportunities to purchase land on the open market and engaging with officers was crucial to achieve this. There had been some successful and unsuccessful schemes in the present tough housing market. All MTVH schemes delivered in Ealing were entirely GAH. The officers had worked with MTVH to secure GLA funding for their projects. Unlike Ealing, some boroughs that had not engaged or were not proactive failed to deliver many GAH. Overall, MTVH's experience of working in Ealing had been positive but the delays in some planning processes mainly due to lack of resource could be improved. The lack of resource in planning departments was a national issue that needed addressing to help speed up the processes in delivering much needed housing.
- 3.85 The safety of residents was paramount for MTVH. Every housing association in London was spending significant amount of resource and money on fire remediation since the introduction of Building Safety Act 2022 and Grenfell Tower fire incident. All buildings over six storeys (18 metres) were being reviewed at an incredible cost to MTVH to ensure the safety of residents. MTVH's capacity to deliver new GAH had reduced due to the substantial remediation costs for its existing housing stock.
- 3.86 MTVH had considered a vast range of developments which included brownfield sites and regeneration projects. Its operations stretched from Thames Valley in South London to Derbyshire and Nottingham. All MTVH schemes in Ealing were on brownfield sites. MTVH was presently regenerating Clapham Park estate in London Borough of Lambeth that would have 4,000 homes of which 50% were GAH. MTVH's regeneration team regularly considered and prioritised all its estates for regeneration to

provide more quality affordable homes. It was uncertain whether the Manor Gate Estate in Northolt was on the regeneration list.

London Community Land Trust

- 3.87 Mr Oliver Bulleid (Executive Director, LCLT) highlighted that:
- 3.88 CLT enabled communities to come together and take a stake in either an asset, land, or housing. There was merit in involving a community early and empowering it to actively engage in the development of local housing.
- 3.89 At 1%, CLT were relatively new to this country whereas in some countries such as Germany this formed 50% of the housing. There was scope for growth in self-build community, community build and community housing.
- 3.90 LCLT had worked with a range of communities in about eight boroughs. It had facilitated communities to either develop housing directly by acquiring sites and building on these themselves or indirectly by acquiring homes within a development led by others and becoming involved in the set up and long-term management. The model for direct development of a site had entailed LCLT taking on the role of a developer and responsibility for associated legal, financial and planning aspects.
- 3.91 LCLT's first direct development of 11 GAH on a Council's derelict garage site in London Borough of Lewisham was due to complete shortly. The homes on offer were linked to average median salary for the area with a multiplier depending on the size of the house. The homes were permanently affordable because these were sold/resold on the same basis and not subject to market fluctuations, right to buy or any other broader issues. For example, a one-bedroom home was made available for one person on a single median income and went up to a four bedroom home being affordable to two average incomes for the area.
- 3.92 The schemes in Ealing would be like a project that LCLT had undertaken in London Borough of Tower Hamlets where it had acquired 23 out of 150 homes on an ex-GLA site. LCLT worked with Redbridge Council which developed its own sites. It would help to develop the projects and acquire some community-led homes within Redbridge Council's broader developments. These homes would be discounted market sales within affordable provision.
- 3.93 LCLT envisaged acquiring homes on BLRP development sites to fulfil Ealing Council's manifesto pledge of delivering 100 CLT homes by 2026. The Council needed to act promptly to enable this target to be met.
- 3.94 For direct development, LCLT was funded through GLA's Community Housing Fund for community-led housing. This fund was due to expire in March 2024 so LCLT had to ensure that projects had either started or were about to start by this deadline. Future funding would be available through a recently announced GLA General Housing Grant. The GAH scheme only worked if sites were gifted to LCLT at no cost. The homes built on donated sites with GLA grants enabled LCLT to make these genuinely affordable for

people to own at a discounted market sale rate. People paid a similar or lower mortgage compared to rent, helping them to build up equity in their home and a substantial saving in the longer term. The key issue for LCLT was the availability of sites as Councils had complex policies on gifting land to community groups. CLCT was keen to explore opportunities for sites ranging from 10-50 homes.

- 3.95 For acquiring homes that were developed by others, LCLT was funded through Section 106 agreements for a portion of the affordable homes within a larger development which were subsidised by market sale. LCLT had recently worked with Redbridge Council through a GLA grant. The homes were linked to average income relative to the open market at the point of sale, making these GAH at 50-65% of open market sales.
- 3.96 LCLT had installed mechanical ventilation and heat recovery in its new builds to provide good quality air 24 hours a day throughout the year which would prevent the issues of condensation and mould. The filters for these systems would be serviced through regular maintenance. There had been problems with some maisonettes built by other developers which LCLT had acquired. The maisonettes had extract only ventilation and trickle vents that were inadequate for condensation and mould issues. A culture shift was necessary because often large organisations did not treat people as decent human beings in ensuring that their homes were fit for habitation. It was important for housing associations to listen to the occupants and take appropriate remedial action on their housing stock to avoid situations such as the Grenfell Tower fire and untimely deaths from exposure to mould.
- 3.97 The Council had identified a Transport for London (TfL) site for designation to CLT but there were some complexities with an existing tenant on the site making it uncertain whether this site would come forward. LCLT deemed that relying on just one site to meet the Council's commitment for community-led housing was a high-risk strategy and suggested consideration of other opportunities. For example, community-led housing could be integrated in other development sites such as Council-led development or direct development by the community groups. It was important to have a set target for genuine community-led housing to be achieved.
- 3.98 LCLT had a complex and robust housing allocations policy which included demonstration of a five-year connection to the borough through working or living in it, housing needs such as insecurity of tenancy or poor housing conditions and financial affordability for people who had to move because they were priced out of the local area.
- 3.99 LCLT deemed Lewisham Council to be a good example of best practice in building GAH. The Council was progressive and had undertaken various types of projects including self-builds. It had been the first Council to gift land to LCLT for developing homes on a derelict garage site which had strong local support for the community-led project. It was important to have early community involvement in a scheme.

Panel Conclusions:

- The direct email addresses for referral of housing casework to registered providers such as PG and MTVH regarding their properties in the borough should be circulated to all Councillors.
- Consideration should be given to the production of an ongoing five-year plan for the delivery of GAH rather than just for an election cycle of four years.
- Consideration should be given to the feasibility of allocating a certain percentage of housing within Section 106 developments to CLTs to enable community-led housing to be built on those sites.
- All social housing providers within the borough should undertake regular checks on their housing stock to maintain decent homes standards.
- All new homes should be sustainable with minimum negative impact on the environment. This meant energy efficiency, avoiding environmental toxins, responsible use of materials and resources, and having a positive physical/psychological impact on its inhabitants.
- Regular assessments of the financial risks for the proposed housing developments in the borough should be undertaken to mitigate any adverse impacts in achieving the set GAH targets.
- Registered Providers should be encouraged to undertake more regeneration of their existing housing stock in the borough such as small self-contained estates.

No.	Recommendation
R1	The direct email addresses for referral of housing casework to registered providers such as Peabody Group and Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing regarding their properties in the borough should be provided to all Councillors.
R2	Ealing Council should consider producing an ongoing five-year plan for the delivery of genuinely affordable homes rather than just for an election cycle of four years.
R3	Ealing Council should consider the feasibility of allocating a certain percentage of housing within Section 106 developments to Community Land Trusts to enable community-led housing to be built on the sites.
R4	Ealing Council should ensure that all social housing providers within the borough undertake regular checks on their housing stock to maintain decent homes standards.
R5	Ealing Council should ensure that all new homes were sustainable with minimum negative impact on the environment. This meant energy efficiency, avoiding environmental toxins, responsible use of materials and resources, and having a positive physical/psychological impact on its inhabitants.
R6	The Council should regularly assess the financial risks for the proposed housing developments in the borough to mitigate any adverse impacts in achieving the set genuinely affordable homes targets.

LOCATA IT SYSTEM

- 3.100 Jack Dempsey (Head of Allocations & Accommodation, Ealing Council) explained about how the housing Locata IT System worked:
- 3.101 The Head of Allocations & Accommodation, based within Housing Demand Service, oversaw the Council's housing register and allocations of social housing which included the existing stock of Ealing Council and registered providers.
- 3.102 Locata Housing Services Limited (Locata) was a not-for-profit company owned by four West London Boroughs (Ealing, Brent, Harrow and Hillingdon) and three RPs (Catalyst, Notting Hill Genesis and Paradigm). Locata, a leading supplier of social housing software solutions throughout the UK, was a private company limited by guarantee without share capital. It was incorporated in 2002 and had been an original pilot scheme for choice-based lettings (CBL) in the late 1990s. Locata had built and maintained allocations, lettings and homelessness systems for housing partnerships across the country.
- 3.103 A representative from each of the seven member organisations and three independent private sector representatives sat on the Locata Board. The Head of Allocations & Accommodation represented Ealing Council. The Locata Board, which met quarterly, worked to a five-year business and financial plan. The Board was responsible for the overall strategic aims of the company to ensure that it fulfilled the objective of delivering value for money by providing an efficient and high-quality IT system for local authorities nationwide.
- 3.104 A housing application process required an applicant to complete an online application form on the Ealing facet of Locata's website. Ealing Officers then assessed the applications in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocation Policy (HAP). Applications that were ineligible or non-qualifying for the housing register due to residency and higher asset/salary levels were reassessed for exceptional circumstances to ensure that a correct decision was made. Applicants were requested to submit further information such as identification, income, medical reports and residency through the Locata IT System to enable the Council to verify their application. Eligible applicants received a priority band (A, B, C or D – Band A had the highest priority and Band D the lowest) and date based on the validated details.
- 3.105 The movement on the housing register was quite fluid with people moving between Bands A to D, with those in Band A having the highest priority. There were presently about 350 people in Band A; 550-600 in Band B; and 5,500-6,000 in Bands C-D. Unlike the old system of unanticipated property offers, CBL gave people a choice in bidding and not everyone within Band A bid regularly. The largest group that got rehoused were within Band C. The website provided information about the generic waiting times. For example, people within Band C requiring a three bedroom property had a potential 10-year wait.

- 3.106 Eligible housing applicants were provided with login details to the Locata IT system through which they could check and bid for available properties. The applicants were responsible for updating any changes in their circumstances such as household size and new address on the system. The Locata IT system assessed the changes against the HAP and adjusted any change to a priority band or eligibility accordingly. Applicants could also complete online medical assessment forms and submit relevant clinical documents for household members during the process which were assessed by Officers with recommendations from the Principal Medical Officer. Applicants could request a statutory review of the Council's decision on certain grounds, such as not being allowed to join the register or priority band, which was considered by an independent officer.
- 3.107 The CBL approach, based on a Dutch model of social housing letting, had been adopted by many local authorities over the past 20 years. Applicants could bid online for properties within their bedroom size or one less bedroom. The advertisements usually had pictures and basic information about the property. Properties were loaded onto the Locata IT system daily and open for bids over five working days. Applicants could have three simultaneous live bids. Once the bidding period ended, the Council verified the shortlisted 3-5 highest priority bidders and referred them to the respective registered housing provider (RP) or inhouse Voids Team for Council units. RPs shortlisted bidders for their own units and referred these for verification to the Council. Virtual or physical property viewings were arranged for a maximum of five top priority households. A property was offered to the highest priority applicant and if it was accepted then the lower ranked applicants were released from the shortlist and property let. If the highest priority applicant refused the viewed property then it was offered to the subsequent highest priority applicant until let. A tenancy sign up was arranged subject of additional verification. The original housing application was closed once a tenancy agreement was signed and the tenant had moved into the property. Thereafter, the applicant was deemed to be suitably housed and no longer requiring housing.
- 3.108 In addition to CBL, the HAP enabled direct offers of social housing in exceptional cases or for specific properties such as accessible units for wheelchairs or major adaptations subject to approval by the Service Head. Households could also opt for the Locata IT System to auto bid for properties on their behalf which was particularly useful for people with difficulty in bidding. The Locata IT System provided easily accessible online information and advice. Additional targeted information on housing options such as jobs fairs and benefits advice was also available for households.
- 3.109 The Council's Applications Team consisted of three officers who oversaw the housing register applications. There were approximately 13,000 live applications on the Housing Register presently and projected 600 social let units in 2022-23.
- 3.110 The revised HAP was presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in Summer 2022 and considered by Cabinet on 25 January 2023.

- 3.111 A vast majority of the 600 social let units would be for Ealing residents but there would be other individuals or households that the Council had a duty to house. For example, some Ealing homeless people placed in the nearest suitable temporary accommodation out of borough by the Council would still be on the housing register. Out of borough residents were allowed to join the housing register in exceptional cases that were considered by the Social Welfare Panel. In compliance with legal requirements, the HAP included five statutory reasonable preference categories – medical, welfare, homeless, sanitary housing conditions and somebody who had to reside in the district for a particular reason such as an out of borough resident having statutory care responsibilities for a parent residing in this borough had to be included on the housing register.
- 3.112 The Locata IT System was not as sophisticated as the Rightmove or Zoopla websites but it endeavoured to continuously improve in providing information to enable bidders to make informed decisions about properties. Bidders could view the property; explore its suitability and vicinity; and express any concerns or seek advice from the relevant service officer beforehand. For issues such as mould in a property, the applicant would be advised to move in after the remedial work had completed. A housing application was normally closed on the signing of a tenancy agreement. The bidder could cease their tenancy but would have to enrol again on the housing register. Most applicants were quite well informed about the process for accommodation offers.
- 3.113 Unlike allocation of social housing through the housing register, homelessness was a different route that required emergency crisis housing. There was significant information on the Locata website for people regarding languages. Staff in the customer service hubs within libraries had received training on generic housing advice and assisted housing applicants; a duty phone line for the Allocations Service was open Monday-Friday; advice about the application process could be sought through email; a translation service was accessible where necessary; and the service directed applicants to the relevant community groups in the borough for assistance. There had been a major shift in the use of technology since digitalisation of the Universal Credit process as many housing applicants came through that route. The online process was a self-service approach that enabled people to take control of their housing application. The Applications Team continued to review the service for further enhancements and ensured that there was fair access to all.
- 3.114 The Applications Team posted the particulars of a property that was available for letting either by the Council's Voids Team or a RP onto the Locata IT System. People could consider the advertised information and bid for the property. The matching commenced once the advertisement had closed after five days. A shortlist of the highest priority applicants was passed to either the Voids Team or relevant RP. CBL enabled people to make their own selections in bidding for properties. A property was offered to the most suitable applicant depending on key factors such as right bedroom size, priority band and priority date.

- 3.115 The Applications Team did not have any control over the size of available lettable properties. Large properties were scarce so those people who needed 4-6 bedroom properties had to wait the longest compared to those requiring 1-2 bedrooms. Large properties were generally not included in the new build housing programmes. Larger properties sometimes became available from re-lets when the primary tenants had requested to downsize because their families had moved out. The Council had undertaken loft conversions on some three-bedroom properties to add further 1-2 bedrooms to increase the supply for big families.
- 3.116 To increase the social housing stock, local authorities had nomination agreements with RPs which entailed the Council taking 100% of the first lets on a new housing development. Thereafter, a standard nomination agreement stipulated that the Council would get 75% of any two or more bedroom re-let units and 50% of any one bedroom or bedsit re-let units that became available. RPs retained the remaining re-let units for their own transfer lists. The local authority normally received all the lets if a RP did not keep a transfer list.
- 3.117 RP tenants could uniquely have property choices from two separate applications – one with the relevant RP through its transfer list in accordance with their transfer allocations policy and the second with the Council primarily for Ealing properties in accordance with the HAP. For example, a tenant of Catalyst which had recently merged with Peabody (a very large housing association) would also be considered for the RP properties in other boroughs. The HAP included a vast range of applicants' needs including homeless persons, private rent sector and persons in other types of accommodation whereas RPs only dealt with their own tenants. A local authority had a statutory duty to maintain a housing register. Over the past few years, some RPs had decided against retaining transfer lists due to the extensive administration involved and referred their clients to the local authority.
- 3.118 The Applications Team had regular communications with the Council's social workers within Children's and Adults Services. The Team also conducted frequent presentations to Social Work teams regarding housing aspects including applications, tenancy management, landlord duties, homelessness, housing register and temporary accommodation. Social Workers were vital primary evidence providers for medical and social welfare cases. They were likely to be aware of the Locata IT System and refer matters to relevant housing officers. The Applications Team also had contact with Public Health colleagues and received applicants' clinical reports from General Practitioners (GPs). The Applications Service was planning to present at a future GP Forum. Most GPs, other advocacy agents and community organisations were aware of the Council's housing duties and had redirected patients with housing needs for the service. The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 had placed new duties on housing authorities to intervene earlier to prevent homelessness and take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants, not just those that had priority need under the Act. Unlike many other local authorities, Ealing had a Homelessness Forum that met quarterly and was attended by 30-50

community organisations which spread information through their networks. The Forum enabled the service to relay any changes to housing legislation or practices and manage expectations about the availability of different housing tenures.

- 3.119 The Applications Service periodically contacted people to query why they had not bidden for properties. The reasons for not bidding were often due to unchanged circumstances and lack of suitable available properties such as for specific medical requirements of no staircases or wheelchair adaptations and more bedrooms for larger families. According to the HAP, people who had not bidden would not be removed from the housing register because they were still deemed to be in housing need.
- 3.120 There was no outstanding local authority housing system presently although 4-5 systems could perform tutorial space lettings. As a co-owner of Locata, Ealing had a contractual obligation to the current system. The Locata IT System was not equivalent to more advanced housing systems, such as Rightmove and Zoopla that were trying to sell properties for the highest prices, but it was good and interacted well with the Council's other systems. Locata endeavoured to continuously improve its IT System for a better precise service to the users. The Applications Service was time critical in letting properties out as quickly as possible and officers often acted like estate agents in providing the related information to applicants. Bidders were well informed, often visited the properties straight away, and consulted the Service before submitting their bids.
- 3.121 A priority Band and Date were critical for housing applications. Individuals with medical conditions had a higher priority and underwent the same due process in bidding for properties. People with mental health conditions usually had a social worker, support worker or a community psychiatric nurse to assist them with their bids. A long waiting list and lack of sufficient available properties meant that most people had to wait for a considerable time before being rehoused.

Panel Conclusions:

- The Council's approach to convert existing three bedroom properties into 4-5 bedrooms through loft conversions was commendable and cost effective.
- It was important for the Council to ensure that there was an increased proportion of bigger properties in all new housing developments to rehouse large households on the housing waiting list.

No.	Recommendation
R7	Ealing Council should ensure that there was an increased proportion of bigger properties in new developments within the borough to rehouse larger families on the housing waiting list.

EALING HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY – DELIVERING GENUINELY AFFORDABLE HOMES

- 3.122 Mr Chris Paddock (Director, Partnering Regeneration Development Ltd), outlined the approach to the proposed new Ealing Housing and Homelessness Strategy (HHS):
- 3.123 The work of Partnering Regeneration Development Ltd (PRD) was primarily in economic and social research related to places. In addition to gathering evidence for the new HHS, PRD had undertaken various other commissions with the Council last year which had included a study on Industrious Ealing and an inclusive economy evidence base for the borough alongside a statistical baseline of the borough's seven towns.
- 3.124 PRD had conducted an evidence assessment of housing and homelessness within the borough to identify the factors to form a future strategy.
- 3.125 Ealing Council had an ambitious target to deliver 4,000 new GAH across the borough. Its Corporate Plan 2022-26 included key priorities of the things that mattered most to residents which included tackling inequality and crime; climate action; healthy lives; a fairer start; decent living incomes; inclusive economy; good growth; and thriving communities. The priorities related to housing and finding people a place to live. A successful economy would provide shelter, food and other things for people who participated in it. The breadth of impact that housing would have for people and the general wellbeing was significant.
- 3.126 GAH was an economic issue because housing costs had been a driver of the cost of living crisis in London even before energy price rises. Delivery of the GAH target would mostly take place in the context of a climate emergency, increasing costs and decreasing budgets. The aspiration to deliver higher quality would also have cost implications.
- 3.127 The Council had statutory duties to deliver and the defining challenges for the strategy included delivering good homes at scale that reflected the needs and character of its communities; the cost of living crisis and inequality; the climate emergency; improving the quality and safety of homes; and doing more with less. The delivery had to balance short term need and respond with long term systems change.
- 3.128 In gathering evidence for the strategy, PRD had taken a broader approach around housing, looking at nuance which could inform better delivery and what 'good' and 'affordable' meant. The exercise considered cost of living; energy efficiency; age and condition of stock; impact of housing growth on different populations; heat and pollution; and fuel poverty.
- 3.129 The average house price in Ealing was £525,000 compared to £510,000 in London. The lower quartile of house prices in Ealing was £385,000, still making it quite an expensive place to live and a housing affordability ratio very high compared to London. Ealing had the 5th lowest resident earnings in London. Low earnings and high house prices meant that an average

house price was 16 times median earnings, significantly above the London average.

- 3.130 The median monthly rent in Ealing was about £1,500 and was expected to increase. 30% of residents rented privately, making this the most dominant tenure within the borough and increasingly more West London boroughs. The private rental sector had increased significantly over the last decade.
- 3.131 40% of Ealing's carbon dioxide emissions were from domestic use. 57% of properties had been rated Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) D or worse. This exposed poorer people within the borough to the least energy efficient properties.
- 3.132 PRD's previous research on Ealing's inclusive economy had shown it to be quite an economically dynamic borough. Evidence in the previous year had revealed Ealing to be the fourth poorest London borough, with a growing working poor which varied significantly between Ealing's seven towns. Earnings in the metropolitan core (Ealing, Acton and Hanwell) were typically much higher than the west of the borough, particularly Southall and Northolt.
- 3.133 Many of Ealing's poorest residents were in work but the jobs were low paying and often insecure. The increase in children living in low income households had been driven by working families, showing that for many work was increasingly failing to pay. Although wages were rising, many people in the lower quartiles of income relying on low wage jobs were unable to have a rewarding, fulfilling life or engage with the property market. Having less choice affected the mobility of residents within the labour market, accessing training, ability to stay in work and the same place to work. When people had less choice it led to reduced time for ideas and innovation, impacting on the competitiveness of the local economy.
- 3.134 Housing was the primary determinant of deprivation across the borough. It was an economic, wellbeing and social justice issue. The COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the importance of housing to resident health and wellbeing. Black and Ethnic Minority (BAME) households were four times more likely to be overcrowded, more likely to live in poverty after housing costs, and significantly less likely to own their own home.
- 3.135 Ealing's house prices were amongst the least affordable in the country and earnings not abreast with house price growth. This was most stark in parts of the borough where house prices were highest in Acton, Ealing and parts of Hanwell. Despite rising prices, borrowing had been made affordable due to a decade of historically low interest rates. Residents in the borough's metropolitan core had significantly higher overall borrowing than those in the west, resulting in mortgage holders facing significant decreases in disposable income as their fixed term mortgages ended and interest rates rose.
- 3.136 Challenges for mortgage holders were matched by unprecedented challenges for tenants. Private rents had grown significantly since 2012 but official data was too lagged to capture changes in the rental market since

lockdown restrictions had eased. Anecdotal evidence showed that bidding wars and a lack of available properties had driven price increases for tenants. The rental squeeze was a global issue across capital cities. A recent Financial Times research using Zoopla's real-time data had estimated a 10% year-on-year rental increase in the last couple of years, approximately an additional £124 a month. The average annual income in Ealing was £35,000 and housing unaffordability was central to the London-specific cost of living crisis.

- 3.137 PRD's publicly available tool had used the average rent data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Financial Times to model the impact of different average housing tenures on resident disposable incomes. This approach had provided a better understanding of what gross monthly pay bought after all essential household spend. The exercise was undertaken for three example households renting in the borough using 10% inflation – a teacher working in Ealing, earning £35,000 per annum, living alone in a one-bedroom flat was £255 short; a couple (a teacher and a civil servant) working in Ealing, earning £72,000 per annum, living with two children in a three bedroom flat and paying for a childminder after school was £53 short; and a single parent with a child aged 3-4 years, paying for full time childcare had to earn £60,000 to afford an average two bedroom flat in the borough and cover essential costs. The costs excluded any luxuries and would rise further for everyone with any increases in inflation.
- 3.138 According to the housing and homelessness charity Shelter (2023), Ealing had the 10th highest rate of homelessness within the UK in 2021 and one in every 53 residents was classified as homeless. There had been 7,000 residents (approximately 2,500 families) in temporary accommodation of which half were children. 80% of London temporary accommodation residents had been there for longer than 12 months. Homelessness was a stark challenge and although Ealing's performance for managing homelessness was relatively good, more people were moving towards homelessness and subsequently rough sleeping in some cases. Unlike most other boroughs, Ealing was unique in having a Homelessness Forum.
- 3.139 Ealing had delivered about 7,000 (the 7th highest in London) new homes in the last five years. Approximately 3,000 (the 3rd highest in London) of these were affordable housing completions and about 800 (3rd highest in London) were for social rent or London affordable rent. The data showed that Ealing was doing relatively well in delivering new homes in challenging circumstances when there had been a benefits cap and freeze in housing benefits. Whether the housing was affordable enough was questionable across London.
- 3.140 The government's current Help to Buy (H2B) scheme was due to end in 2023. H2B loans had been used in 64% of Ealing's new home sales in the last six years. Savills, a leading global property agent, had estimated that 41% of H2B purchasers in London would be unable to afford a new home without it. This would impact on developer incomes and delivery in the borough. The government's new First Homes scheme would replace the H2B scheme. The First Homes scheme was not supported by GLA and was

not considered to offer an affordable solution to Londoners who needed it most.

- 3.141 Access to high quality, safe and affordable housing was integral to resident prosperity and wellbeing. The deepening of London's housing crisis meant that demand for Ealing's services was greater than ever. A 64% reduction in Ealing's core funding from the government over the last decade, increased building costs and more challenging market conditions would impact on its ability to deliver its ambitious GAH target. This situation required the need to be honest with residents about how, where and how much the Council could convene to address these challenges. The Council would have to come up with some innovative solutions in response to the changing delivery context to meet its statutory and other responsibilities.
- 3.142 In shaping the new HHS, the focus was on increasing the supply of good GAH homes for the borough and improving the quality of people's lives without compromising the net zero ambitions. The six priority themes of the HHS were delivering well managed GAH; increasing the supply of good quality, energy-efficient, affordable homes in the borough; delivering high quality, safe, carbon neutral homes in all new and existing neighbourhoods; working in partnership to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping; looking after residents and supporting tenants through a better, safer and fairer private rented sector; and tackling inequality, meeting the support and accommodation needs of vulnerable residents.
- 3.143 A 22% decrease in the number of residents renting from the local authority or housing associations had occurred in the last 10 years and could have been caused by the government's right to buy scheme, supply in housing, other housing products, and ways of engaging with the housing market.
- 3.144 Crossrail was a factor in hope value as a lot of development in London happened around stations. In the last 10-20 years, there had been land value speculation around Crossrail which impacted house prices and it was expected to continue. The mortgage exposure map almost followed the Crossrail route where people had more expensive properties and acquired bigger mortgages to purchase them.
- 3.145 In 2021, the Runnymede Trust (a UK race equality think tank) had produced the research regarding BAME households. Thereafter, Trust for London (an independent charitable foundation) which aimed to tackle poverty and inequality in London and its root causes had also followed up the research. Overcrowding within BAME households was a major issue.
- 3.146 There had been previous tenant engagement that had informed the evolution of the strategy. Tenant engagement and renter's right charter were important aspects but had not been within the scope of work commissioned from PRD. These aspects would be referred to Council Officers for consideration during further engagement on the new strategy.
- 3.147 Generation Rent's work with five local authorities to investigate best practice models for communicating with private renters had identified that renters

were aware that they had rights but did not know the specifics of those rights. They did not know if or how the Council could support them to seek redress or understand the Council's enforcement role. Generation Rent had researched and developed a private tenant engagement charter to enable a local authority to use its data to engage and communicate with private renters. London Borough of Newham had one of the largest populations of private renters in the UK, with over 70,000 households in this sector, and its data hub informed the Council of where the private renters lived. Many local authorities had landlord forums which could be linked with a programme of engaging renters through events, awareness weeks and advice on accessible websites. Generation Rent's relevant research documentation was circulated to the Panel and relevant service officers.

- 3.148 All evidence had suggested that rents were increasing before the rise in interest rates and energy costs, presumably from supply and demand of the housing situation.

Panel Conclusions:

- New homes complied with safety and net zero ambitions but it was equally important to ensure that the Council's existing housing stock was also regenerated appropriately to comply with the ambitions and make it safe for everyone.
- The Council should consider developing a tenant's rights charter as private rental was presently the most dominant sector in this borough and seek to increase tenants' awareness of their rights through a revamped website and other relevant communication channels.

No.	Recommendation
R8	Ealing Council should review all its existing housing stock and regenerate it accordingly to ensure that it was safe for everyone.
R9	Private rental of housing was presently the most dominant sector in the borough so Ealing Council should consider developing a tenant's rights charter and increase tenants' awareness of their rights through a revamped website and other relevant communication channels.

BROADWAY LIVING DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

- 3.149 Gordon Cooper (Principal Project Manager, Broadway Living) presented an overview of the Broadway Living Development Guide 2021 (BLDG):
- 3.150 BLDG, containing guidance and aspirational standards for the project team and each Broadway Living development, had been compiled in collaboration with various Council services including Regeneration, Planning, Asset Management and external partners such as Pollard Thomas Edwards Architects (PTE) and NHS. PTE specialised in sustainability, research and innovation.
- 3.151 BLDG was a live document that responded to changing events, housing industry trends and legislation. It sat alongside and was compatible with several external (GLA standards, building regulations and fire safety) and internal (specifications, employer's requirements and residence manuals)

documentation. It included concerns and issues around tall buildings. The service acknowledged that not every project could comply with every aspect.

- 3.152 The guide was aligned to the Council's three overall objectives of creating good quality jobs, tackling climate crisis and fighting inequality. It had a strong emphasis on home and supported healthy lifestyles.
- 3.153 BLDG's three core objectives were sustainability, healthy homes and affordable homes. The document had four chapters and 22 design areas. Two key aspects for new developments included healthy homes and strong communities & social interaction.
- 3.154 The healthy homes aspect covered healthy internal living spaces; healthy outdoor spaces; healthy streets; ecology and biodiversity; clean air; and space standards. All future homes were built to a passivhaus standard which entailed an airtight building, low energy design, maximising passive solar gain, and high levels of insulation. Healthy internal living spaces meant having good quality daylight and sunlight in homes; window design positioning and orientation; minimum external noise transmission and pollution. A passivhaus did not necessarily have smaller windows. It had smaller windows for rooms such as bathrooms and kitchens on north, north-east and north-west facing elevations. Bigger windows were mainly installed in the principal reception rooms and bedrooms. There was a balance in getting the quality of daylight in a house so measures such as installation of shades on some windows to prevent overheating would be implemented. Large panels for windows and doors were mainly used in buildings of three or fewer storeys as concrete frames were used in larger schemes. The Council was not prescriptive because off-site manufactured steel or timber frames and traditional methods could be used to build a passivhaus.
- 3.155 Many of the Council's housing sites were in quite hostile locations such as busy roads, backing onto railways and Heathrow Airport flight path. The Council aimed to use natural materials where practical including eco-friendly water-based paints; exposed brickwork, slate and timber. The design of external spaces in developments needed to be health inclusive and include a range of formal and informal spaces to encourage social integration of the community. The healthy street principles sought car-free areas within developments and promotion of active transport. Improvement of the biodiversity and ecology of the neighbourhood included having living walls; ponds; native plants and trees; and encourage wildlife. The Council adhered to the GLA space standards and an additional 50% above minimum internal storage space. The balconies would be larger and have screening to enable external drying of washing.
- 3.156 The stronger communities and social interaction aspect would have building places for people to rest and interact inside/outside the homes. This would include communal entrances and seating; enhanced public realm; safe homes and surroundings. Where possible, residents would be involved in the design, particularly in regeneration schemes, to empower them and instil

a sense of ownership and control. Resident satisfaction would be measured through post occupancy feedback after nine months and used to make improvements. The Council wanted to include future flexibility in the designs to enable residents to stay in their homes as their needs or family makeup changed.

- 3.157 The BLDG aspirational standards aimed to deliver high quality, sustainable, inclusive, healthy, affordable homes for the borough's diverse residents. Ealing Council aimed to set a standard for affordable homes that it and the residents could be proud of in years to come and other boroughs to follow.

BUILDING SAFETY

- 3.158 Stephen Rizzo (Assistant Director for Building Control) provided an update on building safety and highlighted that:
- 3.159 The government was developing new legislation and operating procedures for local authorities regarding building safety. Building safety had been identified as an area of transition which may have an impact on the delivery of new homes.
- 3.160 The new legislation and operating rules followed the publication of Dame Judith Hackitt's Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety which had been commissioned by the government after the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy in 2017. The changes would consider her recommendations for reform of the construction industry.
- 3.161 The legislation and guidance was not enacted fully so the construction industry and Council would be in a transitional state until all legislation had been written and implemented.
- 3.162 The changes included new legislation for building and fire safety, increased regulation of construction, construction professionals, Councils and construction products.
- 3.163 A new regulatory body, the Building Safety Regulator, was being established within the Health and Safety Executive. The new regulator's role would be to oversee the safety and standards of all buildings and building work. It would hold local authorities accountable to the new higher safety standards in their roles as landlords, developers and regulatory bodies.
- 3.164 The changes were far-reaching and the legislation would have a major impact on the way in which the Council operated, procured and delivered its buildings.
- 3.165 Ealing Council was in a robust position to accommodate these changes and its processes were being developed continuously in tandem with the publication of new legislation. The Council would remain a flexible and learning organisation during the transition period.

- 3.166 The new legislation was anticipated to make residents safe and feel safe in their homes through a more regulated construction industry. The timeline for delivery of genuinely affordable homes between design commencement and occupation was likely to be longer than currently experienced. Homes built for this market sale would be similarly affected. There may be additional associated costs but the Council was expected to become more efficient in tackling these as it progressed with the new legislation.
- 3.167 Ealing Council would continue to develop and work with the regulator and legislators in implementing the regulations to ensure that all properties were safe and residents felt safe.
- 3.168 In changing operating procedures, affected Council departments had adopted ways to examine existing and new buildings in relation to the new legislative requirements. In some cases, this had entailed the creation of entire new departments and sections within departments. For example, building regulation surveyors within the Environment and Sustainability department had been involved in all building work to ensure that it met the new standards.
- 3.169 The existing higher risk taller residential buildings had to be registered with the regulator. The regulator would inspect these buildings at regular intervals, presumably every five years. The Council's building management would have all the information prepared for the regulator. The Council was working to these operating procedures and would have a full safety case written for all its taller buildings. There had been no changes to what made a building unsafe. If the regulator found a public or private sector taller building requiring measures that needed to take place then he would raise these with the principal accountable person who would have to ensure that everything was rectified before the building was certified as safe.
- 3.170 The existing and new legislation covered all buildings, new and existing, and all building work. Ealing Council had self-referred itself to the Regulator of Social Housing in February 2022 for a potential breach of the Home Standard as there was a potential for serious detriment to Council tenants. The regulator had found that the Council had no assurance of compliance with statutory health and safety requirements across a range of areas such as fire, gas, electrical, asbestos and water safety or evidence of monitoring any remedial works relating to these areas. The Council had entered into a voluntary undertaking with the regulator to take appropriate action to comply with existing legislation. This process was ending as all the gas, electrics and buildings had been tested. The Council had undertaken various audits and worked closely with Ark Consultancy who would do a report to ensure that these problems did not recur. The new legislation was progressive to enable the regulator to understand what had occurred and act accordingly. The Council was presently registering all its taller buildings with the regulator, setting up building safety committees, and providing information about Council blocks for the residents through noticeboards to enable them to understand how they were being kept safe. All new residential high rise buildings taller than 18 metres (nine storeys or less depending on the height of each storey) were required to have two staircases.

- 3.171 The Acting Strategic Director for Housing and Environment had already highlighted the challenges within the housing revenue account and business plan to Members. The priorities were building safety, managing the estate, ensuring that the properties could be relet, and zero carbon retrofits. The fitting of new kitchens, bathrooms and windows would be done from any surplus funds. Since last year, building safety had been the top priority for the next three years. Ealing Council had invested £1.8M on a new Housing Building Safety team and £9.5M to catch up on all building work that had not been done over the past years to ensure the safety of tenants. Another £6M had been allocated to the current capital programme. Funds were less of an issue presently than acquiring skilled and trained people as every local authority was trying to do the same activities. Ealing had undertaken a massive recruitment exercise recently and extended its team of three permanent staff to 36 to undertake the required work. The new staff, comprising of some highly experienced people from London Fire Brigade and Peabody Group, would have to be trained to understand this borough. In addition to technical expertise, the staff development programme would address effective liaison with residents.
- 3.172 The housing service had recruited apprentices at various levels. Apprentices were offered degrees or transitional degrees if they did not have one or had a non-qualifying degree. It took seven years to train as a regulator within the fire safety and building safety field. The service had targeted young people through the Children's Services for take-up of these career opportunities within the Council.
- 3.173 The new building safety legislation would come into effect from 1 October 2023 with a transitional period from October 2023 to March 2024, providing everyone an opportunity to sort everything by then. Part of the legislation was already effective which is why the Council was presently registering its taller buildings with the regulator.
- 3.174 The new building safety legislation would apply to privately and publicly owned taller buildings, both having the same regulator and standards. For lower rise buildings, buildings regulations which came under the regulator would still be overseen by the building safety regulator although the building regulations may be inspected by the local authority or a private sector building inspector – as was the case presently. The Council's own private rented property licensing scheme had enabled the identification of these properties and interventions taken where necessary.
- 3.175 The "beds in sheds" was a big problem across the borough which the planning enforcement team was actively trying to combat. The Council was applying various tools such as Google Maps to help identify unlawful and unlicensed dwellings and undertake appropriate enforcement action.
- 3.176 The golden thread of building information such as its components, plans and specifications for a new higher rise building would be an electronic database held by the owner. The owner's building would appoint a principal accountable person who would have the control and funding to rectify and

manage that building properly. The product information would have to be updated after any alteration to the building. The regulations also required the information to be put in public domain to enable tenants and leaseholders to access it. The Council's buildings information would be maintained electronically on its website. Paper versions of the building information would be put on information boards within the blocks and made available at local housing hubs. The same requirements also applied to existing buildings but the Council had limited insight into how the old buildings were built, giving rise to some grey areas for which the regulator would allow a sufficient margin of error to enable a better provision of safety. A majority of the Council's buildings had been surveyed. The survey indicated how these had been built, performed normally and in the event of an emergency. The Council's taller buildings were mostly built from traditional brick so there was less external cladding to contend with as a result. Ealing Council planned to remove all waste chutes from its higher buildings because these could create potential fire tunnels and relocate bins to outside the blocks. This exercise would not be completed by October 2023 but measures would be implemented to make the buildings safer.

Panel Conclusions:

- The Panel acknowledged that the Council was actively working to make all its buildings safe but a lot more still needed to be done over the next few years to achieve full compliance with the new standards.
- Members concluded that a future scrutiny panel considering housing matters should review the Council's progress in implementing the new building safety regulations; enforcement of unauthorised developments in the borough; and adequacy of staffing resources within the housing department to ensure that all the buildings were safe and residents felt safe in their homes.

No.	Recommendation
R10	A future Scrutiny Panel looking at housing matters should review the progress in implementation of the new Building Safety Act in Council buildings after the transitional period ended in March 2024.
R11	A future Scrutiny Panel looking at housing matters should review safety of people within unauthorised developments such as "beds in sheds" and assess whether the Planning Enforcement Service was adequately resourced to undertake this boroughwide enforcement activity.
R12	The Council should actively encourage more apprenticeships within the building safety services to ensure that sufficient and adequately trained personnel was in place to tackle all the challenges in future years.

HOUSING SERVICES – THE EXTERNAL OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

- 3.177 Nick Sedgwick (Associate Director, Ark Consultancy) updated the Panel on the current and near future operating environment for management of Ealing Council's housing stock:
- 3.178 Ark Consultancy had supported the Council's Housing Service on building safety issues, its work with the Regulator of Social Housing, and a range of improvement plans over the past year.
- 3.179 The government's policy impacting on the operations of local authorities had been driven by some recent high profile news stories. Examples included poor quality social housing provision by some local authorities and housing associations; Grenfell Tower fire tragedy and inquiry; and the regulator's action against some Councils on building safety issues such as damp and mould in homes.
- 3.180 Landlords would also have to take appropriate action to ensure that their properties were safe for tenants. The government minister and Housing Ombudsman were also undertaking action in naming and shaming rogue landlords. The government had recently imposed a 7% rent cap for social landlords which was still a significant increase for residents and would impact on their affordability.
- 3.181 After the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy, the government had actively engaged with residents of social housing and published a Social Housing White Paper (SHWP) in November 2020. SHWP set an agenda for changing the approach to regulating consumer standards; tenant satisfaction measures; transparency of information to enable residents to understand the way services were provided; building safety; tackling of domestic abuse and loneliness; supporting residents' physical and mental health; and introduction of pet-friendly policies.
- 3.182 In November 2021, the Regulator of Social Housing had published its principles and approach to reshaping consumer regulation. A local authority would have to provide more data returns to the regulator including its performance in delivering housing services. The regulator would conduct desk-top reviews, reactive engagement with social landlords and onsite inspections. A local authority had to be prepared for an inspection and demonstrate how residents had been engaged in the way things were being done.
- 3.183 The updated consumer regulation had six consumer regulatory standards – Safety: the landlords' safety responsibilities including within the home and communal areas; Quality: quality of the home, communal spaces, and services to tenants; Neighbourhood: the landlord's role, working with other agencies, contributing to the wellbeing of neighbourhoods in which tenants lived, including tackling antisocial behaviour; Engagement and Accountability: engagement between landlords and tenants, including how complaints were handled and landlords' accountability to tenants, including treating them with fairness and respect; Tenancy: requirements on landlords

for tenancies, including allocations policies and opportunities for tenants to move.

- 3.184 The reshaping consumer regulation also had tenant satisfaction measures aiming to give more focus to what was important to residents. Larger landlords, such as local authorities, would have to conduct annual satisfaction surveys of residents to collect 12 wide-ranging satisfaction measures including for overall satisfaction, repairs, maintenance, safety, communal areas and antisocial behaviour. This would be a challenging exercise for many landlords who had not undertaken satisfaction surveys for quite some time. A recent tenant satisfaction survey conducted by a northern local authority had achieved a 42% overall satisfaction rate and many other landlords were likely to see similar levels of tenant satisfaction. The Council would have to report on 10 further standards on how well it completed the building safety checks including gas, fire, asbestos, water, lift, number of complaints received, and number of antisocial behaviour cases. This information must be available to residents.
- 3.185 The Housing Ombudsman was increasingly active in ensuring that Councils were dealing with complaints and applied a coordinated approach with the Regulator of Social Housing on any failings. The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code was published in July 2020.
- 3.186 Some issues that Ealing Council could concentrate on over the next few years included satisfaction levels as these would highlight the strengths and weaknesses of its housing services; building safety; resident engagement which had lapsed during the COVID-19 pandemic; best use of stock; quality of homes; transparency; neighbourhoods; and proof against standards.
- 3.187 Details of the new consumer standards were expected to be published imminently. The technical guidance for the tenant satisfaction measures which had to be implemented now was published in March 2023.
- 3.188 Landlords with a stock of over 10,000 housing units were required to undertake an annual tenant satisfaction survey (often referred to as a "star" survey) and smaller landlords were required to conduct them less frequently.
- 3.189 Ealing Council had last conducted a star survey in 2014 and was due to undertake one in November 2023. The requirement for a star survey had stopped so Ealing was not unusual in not undertaking these regularly. The Council had conducted other community surveys that included more general questions to tenants and leaseholders such as how they felt about living on their estates, how well the Council was doing, and listening to their views. The Council had some good past information on satisfaction levels with repairs.
- 3.190 The Council monitored housing complaints closely although it had not performed very well for a while with some historical cases. Ealing Council was median in receiving judgments on housing complaints compared to other local authorities. A new team had recently been established to deal with complaints and these were being dealt with more efficiently since.

- 3.191 The focus on housing repairs was important and there needed to be a responsive, very good, high quality, cost-effective housing repair service. The Council was demobilising its current inefficient repairs contractor, MCP, and mobilising a new contractor, Wates Group. Previously, the Council had multiple contracts that sought the lowest cost option which was not the right solution for housing provision. Value for money was attained by paying the right amount for a good service and it was anticipated that this would be achieved with the new contractor. This approach was also expected to increase tenant satisfaction levels. Ealing's level of antisocial behaviour on the estates was less compared to some other local authorities due to a good Community Safety team. The current standard of Council homes was quite good. The Council had recognised that some of its estates, such as Golf Links and Copley Close, simply did not work so it had embarked on an ambitious estate renewal programme to put this right. The Council was prepared to take difficult decisions about the standards of repair to its housing stock. Fewer repairs were done on homes during the pandemic but catch-up repairs work had commenced last year in installing new kitchens, bathrooms, windows and external improvements. £48M had been spent on housing repairs in the current year.
- 3.192 The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on many people's mental health and wellbeing. The regeneration work at Copley Estate was in progress but significant improvements had been made to the public realm and community spaces were now being activated. The Council's leadership team recognised the need for communal spaces in housing estates to bring people together as a community, helping to reduce loneliness and improve wellbeing. Activating and empowering communities was vital as many Council tenants were some of the most vulnerable people in local communities. The Council's financial inclusion advisors were providing financial, physical and emotional support to get people out of their homes into good well-paid local jobs and other meaningful activities.
- 3.193 The leasehold debate had been going on for a long time and it was anticipated that the government might consider various existing reports on this issue. There were numerous leaseholds in existence presently so the debate was likely to continue. Extra protections and more transparency of information for leaseholders was expected. The government sought to boost other types of tenures as a leaseholder was still a tenant with a very long tenancy. It was looking to change existing leaseholds to a common hold whereby residents jointly owned the freeholds and appointed managing agents, giving them more power within that relationship. The government appeared to be retracting from this action but more detail was needed to understand the exact proposals in the leasehold reform.

HOUSING OPTIONS AND HOMELESSNESS

- 3.194 Darren Henaghan updated the Panel on some challenges faced by the Council's housing services:
- 3.195 Ealing Council had responsibilities as a landlord for about 10,000 properties comprising of tenancies and nearly 6,500 leaseholds.

- 3.196 Some factors that had impacted on the housing services included the government's reaction to the last financial crisis in 2008 of quantitative easing and artificially low interest rates on borrowing; government policy on private rented sector, housing benefit and taxation system; rising cost of living; and the Bank of England's decision to compact inflation by raising interest rates.
- 3.197 Almost half the houses in the borough were presently privately rented mainly because the government had addressed the affordability gap through housing benefit to enable people to remain here.
- 3.198 The average annual household wages in the borough were approximately £38,000. Individuals needed to earn about £80,000 annually plus a 25% deposit to be able to afford a one-bedroom flat in the borough and the increasing interest rates was making this more prohibitive. The private rental market was becoming increasingly unprofitable for landlords due to various adverse factors such as changes to the taxation system not allowing them to write off mortgage interest payments against their income. Many private small and large institutional landlords were selling their properties as the rental yield was 1.8%-2.1% whilst mortgage interest rates were at 4% and rising. The government had frozen housing benefit at about £1,800 per month and with increased rents many people within the private rental sector were unable to afford the additional payments so were turning to the local authority for support.
- 3.199 A large landlord was seeking back 180 properties that Ealing Council used for temporary accommodation through court action which would further reduce the supply of temporary homes for residents. The rents were going up further because the Council was bidding against other people for a limited number of properties.
- 3.200 Clearsprings, a Home Office contractor, was buying all available hotel bedrooms and other similar settings in London to house asylum seekers awaiting assessments. This situation further exacerbated the efforts of local authorities in providing homelessness support to their residents.
- 3.201 The Council had secured some housing stock through long-term deals with landlords in the borough. It also had a scheme for buying back previous right to buy property and had to pay much more for these properties that initially belonged to the Council. There was a limited supply of 3-5 bedroom homes in the borough and it was uneconomical for the Council to acquire the available ones due to the high rents so it had to look further afield in other places to source sizeable homes for larger families.
- 3.202 The Council was running out of solutions to meet the increasing demand for rehousing residents due to the present complex and difficult economic situation.
- 3.203 Ealing Council had been buying private properties successfully for several years through the open market, within the borough and other boroughs such

as Hounslow and Slough, to use as temporary accommodation. The Council was now mainly buying outside the borough to enable it to match the government funding received for this purpose. The Portfolio Holder for Good Growth and New Housing was keen to purchase more private properties and the Council had recently bought Aspect House comprising of 39 homes within the Old Oak Housing Development Area in North Acton.

- 3.204 While the Council was decanting tenants during estate renewal, it used some of the empty properties for temporary accommodation of residents. It was currently using about 320 such homes mainly in Havelock Estate and High Lane Estate through various approaches. The properties that were vacant early and in a reasonably fit state were refurbished for about £20,000 which was recoverable through rent over 5-6 years. It was not feasible to refurbish vacant properties that were likely to be demolished within a year or so of the decant.
- 3.205 Most landlords leaving the sector in the borough had cited reduced profit margins and low capital value for their properties, not the Council’s selective licensing scheme as they had been regulated before and already paid fees to be inspected. The Council recognised that there were some very good private landlords and some rogue landlords in the borough but the safety of all residents was paramount. The broader landlord licensing scheme which had come into effect from 1 January 2023 was due to be reviewed after a year and the findings would be considered going forward.
- 3.206 Most landlords had been selling their properties through the private open market or auction houses mainly when their current mortgage products were ending. Institutional investors were mostly selling when they had to refinance properties once their bond scheme finished.

Panel Conclusions:

- The Panel concluded that appropriate information from the Council’s selective licensing scheme should be published to inform prospective renters whether a property was licensed and safe to rent.

No.	Recommendation
R13	The Council should publish appropriate information from the selective licensing scheme on its website to inform prospective private renters whether a property was properly licensed and safe to rent.

4.0 **MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE**

4.1 The tables below show the Panel membership and attendance at meetings and site visits.

Membership and Attendance at Panel Meetings

<i>Name</i>	<i>Total Possible</i>	<i>Actual Attendance</i>	<i>Apologies Received</i>
<u>Councillors</u>			
Cllr Chris Summers (Chair)	4	3	1
Cllr Gregory Stafford (Vice Chair)	4	4	-
Cllr Rima Baaklini	4	4	-
Cllr Gary Busuttil	4	3	1
Cllr Harbhajan Kaur Dheer	4	4	-
Cllr Blerina Hashani	4	4	-
Cllr Ian Kingston	4	4	-
Cllr Faduma Mohamed	4	3	-
Cllr Ben Wesson	4	4	-
<u>Co-optee</u>			
Ms Alicia Kennedy (Director, Generation Rent)	4	2	2
<u>Substitutes and Other Councillors</u>			
<u>Meeting 2:</u>			
- Councillor Gary Malcolm substituted for Councillor Gary Busuttil			
<u>External Witnesses</u>			
- Mr Philip Church (Director of Land and Partnerships, Peabody Group)			
- Mr Tim Preston (Assistant Director of Land and Planning, Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing)			
- Mr Oliver Bulleid (Executive Director, London Community Land Trust)			
- Mr Chris Paddock (Director, Partnering Regeneration Development Ltd)			
- Mr Nick Sedgwick (Associate Director, Ark Consultancy)			

Service Officers

- Sandra Fryer (Strategic Director Economy)
- Philip Browne (Director of Housing Development)
- David Baptiste (Head of Housing Development)
- Jamie Burns (Assistant Director Housing Commissioning)
- Andy Berridge (Head of Construction)
- Firas Al-Sheikh (Finance Manager)
- Jessica Tamayao (Assistant Director Strategic Property)
- Elaine Dorricott (Development Programme Manager)
- Adam Towle (Head of New Business)
- David Colley (Head of Housing Regeneration)
- Simeon Abraham (Housing Regeneration Manager)
- Samuel Cuthbert (Principal Planner)
- Lisa Watson (Housing Policy and Strategy Manager)
- Jack Dempsey (Head of Allocations and Accommodation)
- Gordon Cooper (Principal Project Manager, Broadway Living)
- Stephen Rizzo (Assistant Director for Building Control)
- Darren Henaghan (Acting Strategic Director for Housing and Environment)

Attendance at Site Visits

Site Visited	Member Attendance
<p>1. Copley Estate Hanwell 12.00noon-2.00pm Tuesday 28 February 2023</p>	<p>- Cllr Chris Summers (Chair)</p>

Copley Estate, Hanwell



5.0 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

5.1 **Useful Papers**

Ealing Council's Constitution, available at [Council constitution | Council constitution | Ealing Council](#)

Scrutiny Panel 4 – 2022/2023: Genuinely Affordable Homes – Work Programme, Agendas, Minutes and Reports available at [Committee details - Scrutiny Panel 4 - 2022/23: Genuinely Affordable Homes \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme, Agendas, Minutes and Reports available at [Committee details - Overview and Scrutiny Committee \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

Current agendas and reports are available at [Committees \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

5.2 **Useful Websites**

- Ealing Council – www.ealing.gov.uk
- Broadway Living Registered Provider Ltd – [Home - Broadway Living](#)
- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny – [Home - Centre for Governance and Scrutiny \(cfgs.org.uk\)](#)
- Government Services and Information – www.gov.uk
- Local Government Association – [Home | Local Government Association](#)
- Greater London Authority – [Home page \(london.gov.uk\)](#)
- Generation Rent – [Generation Rent](#)
- Peabody Group – [Peabody housing association | About us | London | Peabody \(peabodygroup.org.uk\)](#)
- Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing – [Welcome - Metropolitan Thames Valley \(mtvh.co.uk\)](#)
- London Community Land Trust – [Home | London CLT](#)
- Partnering Regeneration Development Ltd – [PRD \(prdweb.co.uk\)](#)
- Ark Consultancy – [ARK Consultancy - Helping you deliver the high quality homes residents deserve](#)

5.3 **Further Information**

For further information about Scrutiny Panel 4 – 2022/2023: Genuinely Affordable Homes please contact:

Harjeet Bains
Scrutiny Review Officer
Ealing Council
Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk
Tel: 020-8825 7120

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation
R1	The direct email addresses for referral of housing casework to registered providers such as Peabody Group and Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing regarding their properties in the borough should be provided to all Councillors.
R2	Ealing Council should consider producing an ongoing five-year plan for the delivery of genuinely affordable homes rather than just for an election cycle of four years.
R3	Ealing Council should consider the feasibility of allocating a certain percentage of housing within Section 106 developments to Community Land Trusts to enable community-led housing to be built on the sites.
R4	Ealing Council should ensure that all social housing providers within the borough undertake regular checks on their housing stock to maintain decent homes standards.
R5	Ealing Council should ensure that all new homes were sustainable with minimum negative impact on the environment. This meant energy efficiency, avoiding environmental toxins, responsible use of materials and resources, and having a positive physical/psychological impact on its inhabitants.
R6	The Council should regularly assess the financial risks for the proposed housing developments in the borough to mitigate any adverse impacts in achieving the set genuinely affordable homes targets.
R7	Ealing Council should ensure that there was an increased proportion of bigger properties in new developments within the borough to rehouse larger families on the housing waiting list.
R8	Ealing Council should review all its existing housing stock and regenerate it accordingly to ensure that it was safe for everyone.
R9	Private rental of housing was presently the most dominant sector in the borough so Ealing Council should consider developing a tenant's rights charter and increase tenants' awareness of their rights through a revamped website and other relevant communication channels.
R10	A future Scrutiny Panel looking at housing matters should review the progress in implementation of the new Building Safety Act in Council buildings after the transitional period ended in March 2024.
R11	A future Scrutiny Panel looking at housing matters should review safety of people within unauthorised developments such as "beds in sheds" and assess whether the Planning Enforcement Service was adequately resourced to undertake this boroughwide enforcement activity.
R12	The Council should actively encourage more apprenticeships within the building safety services to ensure that sufficient and adequately trained personnel was in place to tackle all the challenges in future years.
R13	The Council should publish appropriate information from the selective licensing scheme on its website to inform prospective private renters whether a property was properly licensed and safe to rent.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS WITH OFFICER COMMENTS

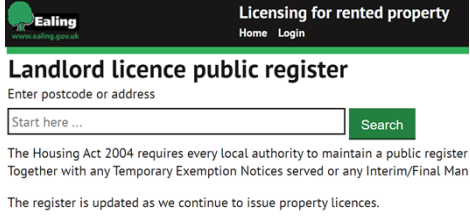
Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
R1	The direct email addresses for referral of housing casework to registered providers such as Peabody Group and Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing regarding their properties in the borough should be provided to all Councillors.	<u>Jamie Burns (Assistant Director of Housing Commissioning and Strategy)</u> Agreed.	Accept
R2	Ealing Council should consider producing an ongoing five-year plan for the delivery of genuinely affordable homes rather than just for an election cycle of four years.	<u>Peter George (Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability)</u> Agreed.	Accept
R3	Ealing Council should consider the feasibility of allocating a certain percentage of housing within Section 106 developments to Community Land Trusts to enable community-led housing to be built on the sites.	<u>Peter George (Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability)</u> This is not an appropriate use of S106 given the geographic restrictive nature of S106.	Reject
R4	Ealing Council should ensure that all social housing providers within the borough undertake regular checks on their housing stock to maintain decent homes standards.	<u>Peter George (Strategic Director Economy and Sustainability)</u> Not our responsibility it's the regulator.	Reject
R5	Ealing Council should ensure that all new homes were sustainable with minimum negative impact on the environment. This meant energy efficiency, avoiding environmental toxins, responsible use of materials and resources, and having a positive physical/psychological impact on its inhabitants.	<u>Peter George (Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability)</u> Local Plan Reg 19 will include stronger climate change policies which will be used by development management planning officers to determine planning applications so this one is agreed.	Accept
R6	The Council should regularly assess the financial risks for the proposed housing developments in the borough to mitigate any adverse impacts in achieving the set genuinely affordable homes	<u>Peter George (Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability)</u> Agreed – this should take place	Accept

Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including Any Resource and Legal Implications)	Recommended Cabinet Response (Accept/Reject)
	targets.	at the Housing Delivery Board chaired by the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability.	
R7	Ealing Council should ensure that there was an increased proportion of bigger properties in new developments within the borough to rehouse larger families on the housing waiting list.	<u>Jamie Burns (Assistant Director of Housing Commissioning and Strategy)</u> Agreed.	Accept
R8	Ealing Council should review all its existing housing stock and regenerate it accordingly to ensure that it was safe for everyone.	<u>Jamie Burns (Assistant Director of Housing Commissioning and Strategy)</u> Agreed. A full Stock Condition Survey (SCS) will be undertaken 2023-2026 – this will look at communal areas and individual properties with a view to revising the medium and long term delivery plans for the Asset Management Strategy. We have a full programme of Building Safety compliance activities in place and this is closely monitoring to ensure that performance is maintained to ensure our stock is safe. All over 18m buildings have been registered as required by the Building Safety Act 2022. The outcome of this will determine the level of financial investment	Accept

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		needed to ensure our stock meets the current decent homes, consumer and safety standards.	
R9	Private rental of housing was presently the most dominant sector in the borough so Ealing Council should consider developing a tenant's rights charter and increase tenants' awareness of their rights through a revamped website and other relevant communication channels.	<p><u>Joe Blanchard (Head of Environmental Health & Trading Standards)</u> We will deliver 10 renters' rights workshops in the borough in 2024 to improve awareness of the rights of renters and to establish what kind of Private Renters Association renters would want to see and what communications platforms would be of most use to them.</p> <p>We will educate renters on their rights by writing to every tenant living in a licensed property in the Borough in 2024 to inform them of their rights in different languages.</p>	Accept
R10	A future Scrutiny Panel looking at housing matters should review the progress in implementation of the new Building Safety Act in Council buildings after the transitional period ended in March 2024.	<p><u>Councillor Miriam Rice (Chair, Scrutiny Panel 1 – 2023/2024: Housing and Environment)</u> The final meeting of the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Panel is on 7 March 2024 and so this item might be better considered</p>	Accept

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		in the next municipal year should the directorate continue to be part of the scrutiny programme in 2024-25. The Housing and Environment Scrutiny Panel is considering relevant matters to building safety throughout the work programme.	
R11	A future Scrutiny Panel looking at housing matters should review safety of people within unauthorised developments such as “beds in sheds” and assess whether the Planning Enforcement Service was adequately resourced to undertake this boroughwide enforcement activity.	<u>Councillor Miriam Rice (Chair, Scrutiny Panel 1 – 2023/2024: Housing and Environment)</u> Regulatory matters including staffing, training and financial resourcing were extensively explored during the meeting of 29 June 2023 of the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Panel. Whilst the matter of beds in sheds is not specifically in the work programme, it may be noted during the meeting of 7 March 2024 when property licencing and houses of multiple occupation are on the work programme for discussion.	Accept
R12	The Council should actively encourage more apprenticeships within the building safety services to ensure that sufficient and adequately trained personnel was in place to tackle all the challenges in future years.	<u>Dawn Kent-Payne (Assistant Director Housing Asset Management)</u> Two roles for apprentices have	Accept

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		<p>been created in the new Building Safety Team and we are currently working on the recruitment process to fill these posts. We will work with local colleges to offer these opportunities to potential candidates and capacity within the team has been identified to manage and mentor the successful candidates with a view to succession planning for the future. These are technical roles and the successful candidates will be supported to pursue appropriate qualifications.</p>	
R13	<p>The Council should publish appropriate information from the selective licensing scheme on its website to inform prospective private renters whether a property was properly licensed and safe to rent.</p>	<p><u>Joe Blanchard (Head of Environmental Health & Trading Standards)</u> As well as extensive information on our property licensing webpages for both landlords and tenants we host an online Property Licence Register so anyone can search for a property to find out its licensing status or what licence may be required.</p>	Accept

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		 <p>The screenshot shows the Ealing Council website for 'Licensing for rented property'. It features a search bar for the 'Landlord licence public register' with the prompt 'Enter postcode or address' and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there is explanatory text: 'The Housing Act 2004 requires every local authority to maintain a public register Together with any Temporary Exemption Notices served or any Interim/Final Man' and 'The register is updated as we continue to issue property licences.'</p>	

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