

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Audit Committee agree the proposed Code of Corporate Governance, which will then form a basis for the Annual Governance Statement in 2008/09 and beyond;
- 1.2 That, if agreed, the committee note that the Code of Corporate Governance will be considered by the Special Committee (Constitution Review) for inclusion in the Council's Constitution;

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 25 September 2008 – The Audit Committee agreed the Council's first Annual Governance Statement for the year 2007/08.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Under the Council's Corporate Plan for 2008/09 to 2011/12, one of the corporate priorities is 'More Choice, Better Value' and a key objective within this priority is 'enhancing and further developing corporate governance'. Improvements to the Annual Governance Statement and the Council's Constitution meet this objective.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 As having a Code of Corporate Governance is advocated by CIPFA/SOLACE's "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" guidance and framework, not having one could lead to the Council being assessed less favourably.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 All the means by which the Council will meet the requirements of the Code shall operate in accordance with the Council's equalities and diversity responsibilities.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 6.1 The Code has been developed within existing resources and will not require further resources to maintain it.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

- 7.1 Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (amended 2006) required a local authority to conduct a review at least once a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and publish a statement on internal control (SIC) each year with the authority's financial statements. The requirement for an authority to produce a SIC was replaced with effect from 2007/08 by a requirement to prepare an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).
- 7.2 A Code of Corporate Governance is not required as part of the AGS but is recommended by the guidance designated as 'proper practice' by the Department for Communities and Local Government. This being the

CIPFA/SOLACE framework, revised and re-issued in 2007, entitled “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government”.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

8.1 The terms of reference of the Audit Committee include,

- “to monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance in the Council”; and
- “to oversee the production of the authority’s Annual Governance Statement and to recommend its adoption”; and
- “to consider the Council’s compliance with its own and other published standards and controls”.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

9.1 The AGS is the formal statement that recognises, records and publishes the authority’s governance arrangements as defined in the CIPFA/SOLACE framework. It is a statement which has now subsumed the SIC just as the SIC subsumed the statement on internal financial control from 2003/4 and reflects an increasing widening of emphasis from simply financial controls to ensuring good governance across the Council.

9.2 The Council produced its first AGS for 2007/08 and it was agreed by this committee in September 2008. Work has begun on producing the AGS for 2008/09 with the intention of improvement following the learning from the first year both within the Council and nationally.

9.3 The CIPFA/SOLACE framework places significant emphasis on six core principles of good governance. These principles have been taken from ‘The Good Governance Standard for Public Services’ (2004) developed by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services with support from the Office Public Management and CIPFA. The principles have been adapted to local government purposes for the framework.

9.4 The six core principles of good governance are:

- A - Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
- B - Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
- C - Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.
- D - Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.
- E- Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.
- F - Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

9.5 The framework and guidance set out supporting principles for each of the six core principles and requirements for satisfying these. The framework then states in a section entitled 'The Principles of Good Governance – Application' that:

“To achieve good governance, each authority should be able to demonstrate that it is complying with the core and supporting principles contained in the framework and should therefore develop and maintain a local code of governance appropriate to its circumstances comprising the requirements for best practice outlined...”

9.6 Thus this report proposes a Barnet Code of Corporate Governance (see appendix A). This code comprises the core and supporting principles as well as the requirements from the framework, together with how the Council meets the requirements. The intention is that this Code will only require periodic and not annual review. The AGS can be viewed as being in part an assessment of how, and to what extent, the Council is fulfilling the Code that we have set.

9.7 Once a Code is agreed by this committee the Special Committee (Constitution Review) will be asked to make a recommendation to the Council as to whether the Code of Corporate Governance should be included in the Constitution (Part 5).

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 CIPFA/SOLACE “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government” guidance and framework.

BARNET CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Annual Governance Statement

As with all Local Authorities, the Council operates through a governance framework. This is an inter-related system that brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes. This operates across the Council but the Council has a Corporate Governance Directorate with a stated aim *“to promote the highest standards of conduct, accountability and transparency in the way the Council and its partnerships operate”*.

The governance framework must conform to principles of good governance and this Code of Corporate Governance aims to demonstrate how the Council does this.

The Council concurs with view that “Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and, ultimately, good outcomes for citizens and service users. Good governance enables an authority to pursue its vision effectively as well as underpinning that vision with mechanisms for control and management of risk...and governance arrangements should not only be sound but also be seen to be sound.”¹

This Code has been drafted in line with the CIPFA/SOLACE guidance documents “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government” and is based on the six core principles taken from the Good Governance Standard for Public Services (2004). These were developed by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services with support from the Office for Public Management and CIPFA and adapted for local government purposes.

The core principles are as follows:

- (A) Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
- (B) Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
- (C) Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.
- (D) Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.
- (E) Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.
- (F) Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

¹ CIPFA/SOLACE – Delivering Good Governance in Local Government:: Framework

'Governance' is defined many ways but for these purposes as, "how local government bodies ensure that they are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

The Council's Code of Corporate Governance can be viewed as being embodied in various policies, procedures and other documents. These are reviewed biennially as part of the Council's Ethical Governance Assessment within the following categories.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Information • Annual Governance Statement • Audit • Committees - Specific Governance • Complaints Framework • Constitution • Consultation • Corporate Plan • Counter Fraud Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic Services • Human Resources • Member Guidance • Partnership Arrangements • Registers of Interests • Risk Management & Emergency Planning • Senior Officer arrangements • Training
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The Code provides a summary of how, through these policies, procedures and documents, the Council complies with the core and supporting principles within the "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" framework. Compliance is regularly tested through means including but not limited the internally conducted Ethical Governance Assessment and the audit plan. The Ethical Governance Assessment findings, in particular, can be referenced for more detailed information such as how and when the various elements of the Code of Corporate Governance are reviewed.

The following table identifies the supporting principles and the requirements associated with them and, most importantly, the means through which the Council achieves these.

Principle A – Community Focus and Vision		
The Council will focus on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and create and implement a vision for the local area.		
Supporting Principles	Requirements	How the Council meets the Requirements
exercise strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating the authority's purpose and vision and its intended outcomes for citizens and service users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and promote the authority's purpose and vision • Review on a regular basis the authority's vision for the local area and its implications for the authority's governance arrangements • Ensure that partnerships are underpinned by a common vision of their work that is understood and agreed by all partners • Publish an annual report on a timely basis to communicate the authority's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy based on the needs/requirements of the residents and promoting the Council's vision and report on planned activities also communicated through a variety of mechanisms; • Annual refresh of the Corporate Plan and the three year Sustainable Community Action plan (including this years Local Area Agreement (LAA)) and the flexibility to update these plans where necessary; • Partnership arrangements are consistent; • Corporate Plan Annual Report and Community Strategy action plan performance reported on Barnet Online.
ensure that users receive a high quality of service whether directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide how the quality of service for users is to be measured and make sure that the information needed to review service quality effectively and regularly is available • Put in place effective arrangements to identify and deal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy contain clear and effective arrangements for defining how the quality of service is to be measured and for identifying and addressing any failure in service delivery; • FirstStat (where services present and are challenged by Officers across the council), Finance and Policy Review meetings and Member Challenge Events are mechanisms for monitoring and challenging performance

	with failure in service delivery	<p>around delivery of the Corporate Plan. The Sustainable Community Strategy Action Plan is monitored and challenged through the Local Strategic Partnership;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council wide appraisal process also supports performance management with guidance emphasising the need to link appraisal objectives to Corporate Plan priorities and objectives; • A de-centralised complaints process contributes to service delivery with all complaints, comments and compliments logged on one system and categorised in line with Local Government guidance.
ensure that the authority makes best use of resources and that tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide how value for money is to be measured and make sure that the authority or partnership has the information needed to review value for money and performance effectively. Measure the environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corporate Plan includes a clear definition of how value-for-money will be measured; • Responsibility for addressing value-for-money delivery is clearly allocated to Officers with the necessary skills and clear guidance is available; • The Council's External Audit arrangements are a key part of the process to review value for money and performance. • The Council's Internal Audit arrangements, including the Internal Audit Code of Practice based on CIPFA guidance, the Internal Audit Charter also helps ensure the authority makes the best use of resources through efficient performance.
<p>Principle B – Functions and Roles</p> <p>Members and officers will work together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.</p>		
Supporting Principles	Requirements	How the Council meets the Requirements
ensure effective leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out a clear statement of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution defines roles and responsibilities of the

<p>throughout the authority and be clear about executive and non-executive functions and of the roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function</p>	<p>respective roles and responsibilities of the Executive and of Executive Members individually and the authority's approach towards putting this into practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of other authority members, members generally and of senior officers 	<p>Executive and individual Executive members;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution defines the roles and responsibilities of all Council Committees.
<p>ensure that a constructive working relationship exists between authority members and officers and that the responsibilities of authority members and officers are carried out to a high standard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine a scheme of delegation and reserve powers within the constitution, including a formal schedule of those matters specifically reserved for the collective decision of the authority, taking account of relevant legislation, and ensure that it is monitored and updated when required • Make a Chief Executive responsible and accountable to the authority for all aspects of operational management • Develop protocols to ensure that the leader and chief executive negotiate their respective roles early in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job descriptions and the clearly define the roles and responsibilities of senior officers; • Article 12 of the Constitution sets out the functions of the Council's statutory Officers and protocols are disseminated in the organisation • Proper Officer arrangements are established; • A scheme of delegation exists in the Constitution and separately in certain Service Areas (based on the Constitution) to ensure the appropriate exercise of powers in the Council; • Member/Officer protocols in the Constitution ensure effective communication between Members and Officers, including the Leader and the Chief Executive.

	<p>objectives is maintained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a senior officer (the S151 officer) responsible to the authority for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal financial control • Make a senior officer (usually the monitoring officer) responsible to the authority for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with 	
<p>ensure relationships between the authority and the public are clear so that each knows what to expect of the other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop protocols to ensure effective communication between members and officers in their respective roles • Set out the terms and conditions for the remuneration of members and officers and an effective structure for managing the process, including an effective remuneration panel • Ensure that effective mechanisms exist to monitor service delivery • Ensure that the organisation's vision, strategic plans, priorities and targets are developed through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate employment policies are in followed including the Joint National Council for Chief Executives, Joint National Council for Chief Officers, National Joint Council for Local Government Services as well as Local Agreements; • The appraisal process, various meeting forums, one to one sessions focussing on delivery issues and progress and Programme and Project Boards addressing the delivery of projects are all effective mechanisms to monitor service delivery; • The vision and priorities within the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy are developed in consultation with the community and are communicated (disseminated) to ensure that both the public and Council officers are aware of Council obligations under the vision;

	<p>robust mechanisms, and in consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders, and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When working in partnership, ensure that members are clear about their roles and responsibilities both individually and collectively in relation to the partnership and to the authority • When working in partnership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensure that there is clarity about the legal status of the partnership ○ ensure that representatives of organisations both understand and make clear to all other parties the extent of their authority to bind their organisation to partner decisions 	<p>aware of Council obligations under the vision;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership guidance refers to the importance of defining roles and responsibilities for partner members and outlining the need for clarifying the legal status of the partnership.
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Principle C – Values and Standards of Conduct

The Council will promote values for the authority and demonstrate the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

Supporting Principles	Requirements	How the Council meets the Requirements
ensure authority members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the authority's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution contains codes of conduct and

<p>and officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance</p>	<p>leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that standards of conduct and personal behaviour expected of members and staff, of work between members and staff and between the authority, its partners and the community are defined and communicated through codes of conduct and protocols • Put in place arrangements to ensure that members and employees of the authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice 	<p>protocols for members and officers, there is an embedded appraisal process, a corporate complaints process and an anti-fraud and corruption policy;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a counter fraud framework meeting statutory requirements and according with best practice guidelines. This framework includes the whistle-blowing Policy, Fraud Policy, Prosecution Policy RIPA Policy as well as an annual report to the Audit Committee and an annual work plan; • The Code of Conduct for Members provides effective arrangements for ensuring that Members are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interests, which are implemented through training and the existence of processes to obtain details of personal interests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Director of Corporate Governance compiles the Register of Interests and conducts a mid-term review; ○ all Council and Committee meetings have declaration of interests as a standard agenda item; ○ registered and declared interests are publicly available; ○ the arrangements for registration and declaration of interests includes gifts and hospitality; • The Code of Conduct for Officers sets out arrangements for ensuring that Officers are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest and includes the registration of interests; • Officer Expenses Procedures encompass statutory requirements and best practice with records kept as part of standard accounting procedures;
<p>ensure that organisational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codes of Conduct for Members and Officers, which are

<p>values are put into practice and are effective</p>	<p>values including leadership values both for the organisation and staff reflecting public expectations, and communicate these with members, staff, the community and partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place arrangements to ensure that systems and processes are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards, and monitor their continuing effectiveness in practice • Develop and maintain an effective standards committee • Use the organisation's shared values to act as a guide for decision making and as a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the authority • In pursuing the vision of a partnership, agree a set of values against which decision making and actions can be judged. Such values must be demonstrated by partners' behaviour both individually and collectively 	<p>publicly available facilitate the development and maintenance of shared values reflecting public expectations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Standards Committee operates in line with a clear terms of reference, with members have received training and who are monitored/advised, where necessary, by the Governance Manager and the Monitoring Officer; • There are person specifications for Independent Members of the Standards Committee as a key aspect of ensuring its effectiveness. • There is an annual report to the Council on the activities of the Standards Committee further to its annual work programme; • Decision making practices are publicly available and include decision-making principles supporting high standards of conduct; • Processes for reporting complaints relating to Member conduct to the Standards Committee are clearly set out on Barnet Online.
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Principle D – Decision-making

The Council will take informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk

Supporting Principles	Requirements	How the Council meets the Requirements
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<p>be rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and listen and act on the outcome of constructive scrutiny</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain an effective scrutiny function which encourages constructive challenge and enhances the authority's performance overall and that of any organisation for which it is responsible • Develop and maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based • Put in place arrangements to safeguard members and employees against conflicts of interest and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice • Develop and maintain an effective audit committee (or equivalent) which is independent of the executive and scrutiny functions or make other appropriate arrangements for the discharge of the functions of such a committee • Ensure that effective, transparent and accessible arrangements are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reviewed scrutiny function ensures constructive challenge through the various Overview and Scrutiny Committees (with committee roles defined in the Constitution) including the call-in process; • Report-writing guidance and templates are used by all Officers writing reports; • The Corporate Plan includes performance measures and targets in relation to Scrutiny; • The corporate performance-monitoring processes related to the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy (see above) scrutinise performance and address weaknesses in delivery; • An Audit Committee, independent of Executive and Scrutiny functions, with a clear terms of reference, cross-party membership and Members who have received the necessary training in this role, has and exercises the power to challenge officers responsible for audit areas where assurance levels have not improved to satisfactory; • A de-centralised complaints process contributes to informed decision-making; • The Corporate Complaints Policy ensures consistent and effective complaints handling across the Council.
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	in place for dealing with complaints	
have good quality information, advice and support to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that those making decisions whether for the authority or the partnership are provided with information that is fit for the purpose - relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications • Ensure that proper professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making and used appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making protocols are publicly available and set out the criteria on which decisions are based; • The Forward Plan and minutes of meetings are publicly available and provide records of decisions planned and taken; • Clearance processes ensure that decisions are based on correct (fit for purpose) information and that information is available for timely review, including the availability and recording of legal and financial advice.
ensure that an effective risk management system is in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the authority, with members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their jobs • Ensure that effective arrangements for whistle-blowing are in place to which officers, staff and all those contracting with or appointed by the authority have access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Risk Management Strategy informed by best practice and both service and corporate risk registers ensure that risk management processes are embedded in the culture of the authority; • There is a Business Continuity Framework and toolkit with Business Continuity Plans regularly reviewed to enable efficient continuation of service through incidents; • There is a generic major incident plan to fulfil the responsibilities to have appropriate arrangements in place in case of significant national or local incidents; • A whistle-blowing policy is available to officers.
use their legal powers to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively recognise the limits of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers and members operate lawfully through the

<p>the full benefit of the citizens and communities in their area</p>	<p>lawful activity placed on the authority by, for example, the ultra vires doctrine but also strive to utilise its powers to the full benefit of the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the limits of lawful action and observe both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on the authority by public law • Observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon the authority, as well as the requirements of general law, and in particular to integrate the key principles of good administrative law - rationality, legality and natural justice - into its procedures and decision making processes 	<p>existence of mechanisms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ decision-making through the Monitoring Officer role (identifying and addressing non-compliance with statute); ○ the Internal Audit function and Corporate Anti-fraud function ensure compliance with relevant statute e.g. Social Care legislation in Children’s Service and Adult Social Services (supported by an embedded Council wide appraisal process to identify such training needs in relation to compliance with statute where necessary).
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Principle E – Capacity and Capability

The Council will develop the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.

Supporting Principles	Requirements	How the Council meets the Requirements
<p>make sure that members and officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for members and officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Training, including induction training and specific training in relation to certain committees is provided and this includes non-councillor members of committees; • Officers advise Members as required in addition to specific guidance being provided at induction and on

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the statutory officers have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understood throughout the authority 	<p>Members' correspondence for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The informal Member Development Panel (one member for each party), supported by Democratic Services assesses skills required by Members and identifies, advises on and promotes Member training and development; • The Workforce Development Plan incorporates a training policy for Officers, including induction training, is available.
<p>develop the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluate their performance, as individuals and as a group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the skills required by Members and Officers and make a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively • Develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance, including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed • Ensure that effective arrangements are put in place for reviewing the performance of the Executive as a whole and of individual members and agreeing an action plan which might, for example, aim to address any training or development needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The corporate appraisal process (with appraisals recorded and monitored) is the main basis for identifying and addressing training needs, including addressing the skill and support requirements of the statutory officers; • Training in relation to an Officer's area of responsibility is given and for financial and other cross-cutting systems with training needs assessed at appraisals; • The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Operational practices ensure the performance of the Executive.
<p>encourage new talent for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that effective arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives from the community engage with the

<p>membership of the authority so that best use can be made of individuals' skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal</p>	<p>are in place designed to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that career structures are in place for members and officers to encourage participation and development 	<p>work of the Council through various structures such as the Citizen's Panel, the Resident's Forums and consultation surveys conducted corporately and at service level;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Remuneration Strategy includes career progression guidelines; • The Talent Management Strategy encourages Officer participation and development.
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Principal F – Accountability

The Council will engage with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

Supporting Principles	Requirements	How the Council meets the Requirements
<p>exercise leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders, including partnerships, and develops constructive accountability relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make clear to itself, all staff and the community to whom it is accountable and for what • Consider those institutional stakeholders to whom the authority is accountable and assess the effectiveness of the relationships and any changes required • Produce an annual report on the activity of the scrutiny function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sustainable Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan have been disseminated resulting in a clear understanding by staff and the community as to what the Council is accountable for and to whom; • The Local Strategic Partnership Terms of Reference are based on best practice and guidance and LSP arrangements apply as far as possible to all its sub-partnerships; • Various performance management structures scrutinise the effectiveness of relationships with partners, monitor delivery, identify and address concerns and report outcomes publicly; • The Use of Resources requirements are met using the performance indicators from the Corporate Plan; • An Overview and Scrutiny annual report to the Council

		and available to the public, sets out planned activity and outcomes of scrutiny functions.
<p>take an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public to ensure effective and appropriate service delivery whether directly by the authority, in partnership or by commissioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure clear channels of communication are in place with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, and put in place monitoring arrangements and ensure that they operate effectively • Hold meetings in public unless there are good reasons for confidentiality • Ensure that arrangements are in place to enable the authority to engage with all sections of the community effectively. These arrangements should recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish explicit processes for dealing with these competing demands • Establish a clear policy on the types of issues they will meaningfully consult on or engage with the public and service users about including a feedback mechanism for those consultees to demonstrate what has changed as a result 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents Forums, corporate and local consultation exercises, ‘Leader Listens sessions, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and initiatives to engage specific groups are examples of a variety of consultation and engagement mechanisms to engage with all sections of the Community. • Consultations are conducted with residents, Members and staff utilising best practice principles including the Market Research Code of Practice; • The Annual Residents survey on the place and council services is conducted with a representative sample of residents of the borough; • There is a Citizen’s Panel which consists of 1250 residents representative of the borough often used for service specific consultations; • Corporate publications (including Barnet First), the ‘Barnet Online’ Website, electronic news letters, controlled media pitches and campaigns to target specific areas are clear channels of communication with the public (both at corporate and at service level); • Council and committee meetings are held entirely in public and their reports and minutes are public unless confidentiality is specifically required in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution; • Partnership arrangements for consultation are in line with and refer to consultation guidance; • There is an annual report of outcomes and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On an annual basis, publish a performance plan giving information on the authority's vision, strategy, plans and financial statements as well as information about its outcomes, achievements and the satisfaction of service users in the previous period • Ensure that the authority as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and its staff and ensure that it has made a commitment to openness and transparency in all its dealings, including partnerships, subject only to the need to preserve confidentiality in those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so 	<p>achievements in relation to the Council's vision to Council and therefore public;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is open and accessible to the public through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the above processes for communicating vision and outcomes to the public; ○ the complaints process available to the public, ○ the publicly available Constitution, which sets out a commitment to openness and transparency and defines processes for public participation at Committee meetings; ○ various projects to improve public accessibility. • The Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme ensure openness and accessibility as well as compliance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. • The Data Protection Policy, Records Retention and Disposal Scheme and Fair Processing Notice ensure that confidentiality is preserved properly and appropriately; • The Partnership Register records all sub partnerships and groups reporting to the Local Strategic Partnership.
<p>make best use of human resources by taking an active and planned approach to meet responsibility to staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain a clear policy on how staff and their representatives are consulted and involved in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are clear policies for consultation with staff and their representatives.