

	<p align="center">Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee</p> <p align="center">29 July 2014</p>
<p align="right">Title</p>	<p>Business planning</p>
<p align="right">Report of</p>	<p>Strategic Director for Communities</p>
<p align="right">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p align="right">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p align="right">Enclosures</p>	<p>Appendix A - Call for Evidence Executive Summary</p>
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Summary

The Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee has agreed to develop a five-year Commissioning Plan and savings proposals by December 2014. This report seeks to support the Committee as it begins to address this task, setting out suggested outcomes for the Commissioning Plan and identifying the major challenges for which this Committee will need to make commissioning decisions over the coming five years.

Recommendations

That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee note this report and consider the outcomes and challenges outlined below as they inform the development of the Commissioning Plan.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 On 23rd June 2014 the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee noted the savings target allocated by the Policy and Resources Committee and agreed to complete a Commissioning Plan and savings proposals by December 2014. This report seeks to support the Committee as it begins to address this task, setting out suggested outcomes for the Commissioning Plan and identifying the major challenges for which this Committee will need to make commissioning decisions over the coming five years.

Outcomes

- 1.2 There are a number of sources that can help inform the commissioning priorities of the Committee. Local sources such as the Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People's Plan have been used, alongside national policy documents to inform the initial list presented below.

Priority	Key Outcomes
Safeguarding	<p>Children and young people are safe in their homes, schools and around the borough, with an ability to develop healthy relationships with others.</p> <p>When children are at risk, by intervening early the Council will improve outcomes for children, young people and families, enabling them to thrive.</p>
Education	<p>Excellent school standards result in all children achieving their best, being safe and happy and able to progress to become successful adults.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every child attends a good or outstanding school, as judged by Ofsted.• The attainment and progress of children in Barnet schools is within the top 10% nationally.• The progress of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils is accelerated in order to close the gap between them and their peers.

<p>Health & emotional well-being</p>	<p>Children and young people are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.</p> <p>Every child in Barnet has a great start in life, with the security and safety to grow in a nurturing environment.</p> <p>Childhood in Barnet is safe and fun, with lots of opportunities to grow and develop through education, leisure and play.</p> <p>Children and young people feel supported to achieve and engage, while developing their identities and resilience.</p>
<p>Preparation for adulthood</p>	<p>Young people are ambitious for their futures, ready for employment and contribute positively to society.</p> <p>Young people with special educational needs or disabilities and their families are able to plan for their future and enable growth.</p>
<p>Parenting</p>	<p>All parents and carers are able to develop high quality relationships with their children, establishing effective boundaries and support physical and emotional well-being.</p>
<p>Libraries</p>	<p>Children benefit from reading, literacy and learning opportunities.</p> <p>Adults benefit from reading, learning opportunities and easy access to the wider world of knowledge and information.</p> <p>A range of outcomes are achieved by community groups through community spaces, access and resources.</p>

Challenges

1.3 There are a range of strategic challenges that need to be addressed in the Commissioning Plan to ensure that children, young people and families are provided with the best possible support from the Council over the remainder of the decade, and beyond. The Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee will be required to take decisions on approaches to address each of these challenges. The largest of these are summarised below:

Early intervention & prevention

1.4 Early intervention and prevention activities provide an evidence-based, cost-effective way to keeping children and adults well, independent and safe throughout their lives. Barnet Council has championed early intervention and prevention and backed this up with financial investment. The Council has

helped shape the Troubled Families initiative at a national level and is active in the further development of the programme. Over three hundred families in Barnet have been 'turned around' as part of the scheme.

- 1.5 To date the Council can evidence that there has been £5m of cost avoidance for the Barnet system through effective early intervention. This cost avoidance has not resulted in a reduction to the children's social care budget but is helping to avoid significant cost pressures. Positive outcomes have been shown for hundreds of families through independent evaluation by Action for Children.
- 1.6 The Committee will need to determine the level of resource invested in early intervention & prevention and how best to target this resource. An early intervention & prevention strategy will need to be agreed, that should consider future local options for the troubled families programme.
- 1.7 The early years review has identified opportunities to improve early identification and support in early years to reduce the number of families and young people with needs requiring support from the family focus team and social care level interventions.

Looked after children

- 1.8 Barnet seeks to ensure that children who enter the care system are given a good start in life, with a stable home and access to education and other support. The Council seeks the most appropriate permanence options for children and young people, and wherever possible, we enable them to remain with their families.
- 1.9 The relatively low numbers of looked after children (35.9 per 10,000 – national benchmark is 59) and children with a child protection plan in Barnet (211) have been sustained and our thresholds remain safe and consistent as evidenced through both internal and external audit reviews.
- 1.10 The Committee will need to agree the approach to providing placements for looked after children as part of the Commissioning Plan. Work is currently underway to enhance the Council's foster care offer so that foster carers can be recruited and retained to sustain placements for children with more complex needs.
- 1.11 Nationally, there is a significant gap between the educational attainment of looked after children and their peers. This is no different in Barnet and is a continued area of focus for the Council. The inequality extends to a range of whole life outcomes and the Committee will need to consider what more could be done to address these inequalities in the Commissioning Plan.

Implementation of the SEN reforms

- 1.12 The Children and Families Act has required the local authority to prepare for a range of changes including the development of single health, education &

care plans, expanded use of personal budgets, a clearly articulated and published local offer, and a strengthened focus on 0 – 25 year olds.

- 1.13 The Commissioning Plan will need to consider how these can help to significantly improve outcomes for children, young people and their families and what else could be done to achieve this. The Council has identified that it could work more effectively with adolescents with learning disabilities, their families and wider support networks to better enable growth and so reduce the on-going financial impact for the Council's adults social care budget.

Safeguarding

- 1.14 During this period of significant change and financial austerity, the Committee will need to ensure that the savings agreed as part of the business planning process will protect sufficient resources to meet the Council's thresholds for quality and safety.
- 1.15 The Commissioning Plan will need to reflect the Council's on-going commitment to ensure high quality, 'inspection ready' services are delivered across social care, youth offending and children's centres, and that safeguarding arrangements in all of these settings are effective and robust.

Mental health

- 1.16 Protecting the mental health of children and young people has been an issue of growing focus both nationally and in Barnet. The expiration of current contracts with providers of mental health services in Barnet provides an opportunity in the coming eighteen months to improve the way mental health services are commissioned by the local authority and the CCG. Any re-commissioning decisions should focus on improving outcomes for children and young people and the value for money that the Council can obtain from the services it commissions.

Education standards

- 1.17 Barnet is well known for the excellent quality of our schools and the diversity of our educational offer. Children's achievements at all key stages are among the very best in the country and a high proportion of Barnet's young people progress on to higher education.
- 1.18 The increasingly mixed economy of educational provision with a variety of academy models, the emergence of free schools and increasing delegation of responsibilities to schools has changed, and will continue to change the roles, responsibilities and relationships of partners in Barnet. It is within this context that the Committee will need to agree the education elements of the Commissioning Plan. Different models of delivery will need to be considered to ensure the local authority can have the most positive impact as the system continues to change.
- 1.19 Particular focus will need to be given to ensure that monitoring and challenge of all schools is robust and focussed to drive a rise in attainment and that

schools are challenged to raise attainment of vulnerable pupils - particularly for looked after children and those on free school meals.

Library strategy

- 1.20 The Committee will need to review Barnet's library strategy to consider how the priority outcomes can best be met. Local authorities across the country are considering the future of local library services, and have responded to the financial challenges being faced in a variety of ways. The Committee should draw on these experiences from elsewhere when deciding on a final approach. The Committee will need to be clear on the outcomes desired and assess the various opportunities for cost reduction that are available to it.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 This report is the first step in the process of agreeing a Commissioning Plan and a set of business planning proposals. Further work needs to be done by the working groups and Council officers to inform the corporate business planning process and the report to Policy and Resources Committee on 2 December 2014.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 N/A

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Officers will work up opportunities for each of the areas set out in this paper, with the given steer of the Committee, and bring an update to the next Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee meeting on 15 September 2014.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.1.1 In addition to continued austerity, demographic change and the resulting pressure on services poses a significant challenge to the Council. The organisation is facing significant budget reductions at the same time as the population is increasing, particularly in the young and very old population cohorts. Given that nearly two thirds of the Council's budget is spent on Adult Social Care and Children's Services, this poses a particular challenge as these services are predominantly 'demand led'.
- 5.1.2 There will also be costs related to infrastructure development. The annual allocation of New Homes Bonus funding is allocated to the infrastructure reserve as a contribution towards these costs.

5.2 Legal and Constitutional References

5.2.1 All proposals emerging from the business planning process be considered in terms of the Council's legal powers and obligations (including, specifically, the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010) and, where appropriate, mechanisms put into place to ensure compliance with legal obligations and duties and to mitigate any other legal risks as far as possible.

5.2.2 Constitution, Part 3, Responsibility for Functions – Section 3

5.3 Risk Management

5.3.1 The Council has taken steps to improve its risk management processes by integrating the management of financial and other risks facing the organisation. Risk management information is reported quarterly to the Board and to Committees and is reflected, as appropriate, throughout the annual business planning process.

5.4 Equalities and Diversity

5.4.1 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the decision-making of the Council. This requires elected Members to satisfy themselves that equality considerations are integrated into day to day business and that all proposals emerging from the finance and business planning process have properly taken into consideration what impact, if any, there is on any protected group and what mitigating factors can be put in train.

5.4.2 The projected increase in the borough's population and changes in the demographic profile will be key factors that need to be considered when determining both the corporate strategy and service responses. Both of these need to also reflect the aspirations and contributions of current residents

5.4.3 Similarly, all human resources implications will be managed in accordance with the Council's Managing Organisational Change policy that supports the Council's Human Resources Strategy and meets statutory equalities duties and current employment legislation.

5.5 Consultation and Engagement

5.5.1 As proposals are developed in response to the challenges raised in this paper, an appropriate consultation and engagement plan will be developed and implemented. The work will be informed by the extensive consultation work that has been carried out already as part of the Priorities and Spending Review process.

5.5.2 Over the last twelve months the council has been reviewing its priorities and spending. To help inform the council's future long term spending plans the council commissioned the Office for Public Management (OPM), an independent research organisation, to run a comprehensive series of residents engagement activities to understand their priorities for the local area and look at how residents and organisations can support services going forward.

5.5.3 The engagement followed two phases:

Phase 1:

5.5.4 A series of resident workshops, service user and businesses focus groups last autumn.

5.5.5 The [findings](#)¹ provide a rich evidence base of residents' priorities, what residents value most, their ideas for generating income, and how local people can work together. As a result the council has been able to identify [broad themes](#)² based on residents' views and involvement which will be used to help focus the council's future long term spending plans.

Phase 2:

5.5.6 Between March and June 2014 OPM ran an online call for evidence to hear views of organisations, businesses and individual residents on the future of Barnet, how the council can ensure that public services best meet the needs of the borough, how the council can change and how organisations and individuals can play a part in meeting Barnet's challenges during this time. OPM has analysed the responses to the call for evidence on the council's behalf. This report presents the findings.

5.5.7 Evidence was sought on two main topic areas:

- Ideas on the future of public services in Barnet, and how organisations and individuals can play a role in providing some of these services.
- Ideas on how the council could be more entrepreneurial and generate more income.

5.5.8 A summary of the findings can be found in Appendix A and the full report is available at http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-for-evidence/consult_view

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee, 23 June 2014.
[Item 5 – Business Planning](#)

¹ http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-for-evidence/user_uploads/phase-1--barnet-challenge-opm-summary-report.pdf

² http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-for-evidence/user_uploads/key-themes-identified-from-the-first-phase-of-consultation.pdf