

Corporate Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16

Foreword

In an era of unprecedented financial challenges, I am committed to the future success of Barnet and its residents. This Corporate Plan provides a clear direction for the years ahead - recognising that growth, managed responsibly, is the key to the future prosperity of the borough.

In 2010, the Government set out plans to bring down the country's huge deficit by reducing spending on public services by £81 billion up to 2015. For Barnet, this means we need to make savings of £72.5 million between 2011 and 2015. The Government has been clear that this era of austerity will continue into the future, at least until 2018.

Councils up and down the country are facing up to the reality of less money and rising demand, making difficult decisions about spending and services. Here in Barnet, we are well placed to successfully negotiate these challenging times. By planning early and making changes to how we provide services we have avoided 'slash and burn' savings. 90 per cent of our savings are expected to come from efficiency savings, rather than cutting valued front line services. We can deliver excellent services with less money. Our recent survey of residents shows that the majority of Barnet residents feel positive about their local area and think council services are improving.

2013 marks an important year for the council. We are setting a new direction through this Corporate Plan, putting clear emphasis on creating the **right environment for economic growth** across the borough. Alongside a focus on growth, we are clear about the continuing need to **support families and individuals that need it**, whilst doing more to promote independence. Finally, we will continue to work with residents, businesses and local organisations to maintain the unique character of the borough and make this a place **where people want to live, work and study**. We are moving in the right direction, with 88 per cent of residents saying they are satisfied with their local area as a place to live.

Achieving growth and future success means delivering the major growth and regeneration schemes we have planned in areas such as Colindale, Grahame Park, Stonegrove and Dollis Valley - schemes which will not only create new homes and local jobs but will revitalise communities and secure Barnet's future as a place where people continue to want to live and work.

As we prepare for the future, we will continue to be innovative: Finding new ways to encourage families and individuals to look after their health and stay independent; investing £65 million in new primary school places; providing £2 million over the next two years to provide early intervention support to 900 vulnerable or troubled families – finding better solutions for communities and families – and avoiding higher costs to the taxpayer.

This is a tough economic climate for residents and I want the Council to play its part in helping people through this time. That is why we have frozen Council Tax for the past three years and why we will freeze it again for the next two years.

Yours,

Cllr Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

Barnet today

An attractive and successful London borough where people want to live

Barnet is a successful, attractive and enterprising borough. It is a large diverse place, made up of suburban communities as well as 20 town centres and Brent Cross, one of south-east England's largest retail locations.

We are proud that Barnet is seen as an attractive and green borough, with over 200 parks and open spaces. Residents' appreciate the local character of Barnet, with 88 per cent of residents satisfied with their local area as a place to live and satisfaction rising. Barnet is also recognised as a great place to bring up children, with Barnet's schools rated the second best in the country by Ofsted.

A growing and diverse borough

Barnet is the second most populous borough in London, with 366,400 residents and 146 different languages spoken in our schools. It is a place of growth, with an extra 41,600 people expected to live in the borough over the next five years, with the greatest growth concentrated in the west. To prepare for the challenges this brings, we need to start planning now.

We also expect to see growth at both ends of the age spectrum. By 2018 there will be:

- over 28 per cent more adults over the age of 90; and
- 18 per cent more children aged between five and twelve.

Over the past ten years Barnet has become more diverse – 36 per cent of people now identify themselves as Black or minority ethnic and the fastest growing ethnic group in the borough is the Asian community. Barnet is also home to the country's largest Jewish community, and remains a place where people have positive relationships in the community: 83 per cent of residents agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in Barnet.

The success of Barnet and importance of London in the national economy bring pressures as well as opportunities, with increasing demand for school places, housing and services – as well as the ongoing challenges of supporting our most vulnerable residents and an aging population.

An enterprising place

Despite the tough economic climate, households in Barnet remain relatively prosperous, with average household income 5.4 per cent above the London average. The borough is well equipped to support enterprise and growth in the future, with more than 40 per cent of the population educated to degree level.

However, there are variations in different parts of the borough and household incomes have been increasing at a slower rate than the rest of London. There are pockets of deprivation, notably around the western boundary's 'A5 corridor' and in some of our local housing estates. As Barnet continues to grow and evolve in coming years, a key opportunity is to use the regeneration of deprived areas to create employment opportunities and reinvigorate communities. The council will need to continue to work with community groups and other organisations to tackle local problems and improve the lives of residents – learning from the experience of schemes such as Community Coaches.

2013: A year of change

Financial Strategy

Our plans for the future are underpinned by strong financial management. Our effective management of finances allows us to not only meet current needs but emerge to future challenges. In response to further austerity, we have a three year financial strategy setting out how we will balance the books. Over the next three years the council is proposing savings of around £54.5 million. Of the total savings identified, 90 per cent will be from efficiencies, eight per cent from service reductions and two per cent is related to increases in income.

Despite financial challenges, we are determined to support residents. We are freezing Council Tax and will look for opportunities to invest funding to deliver priorities. Last year residents asked that we support the local economy, particularly finding ways to help young people to get into work. As a result, the council invested an additional £1 million to support young people into employment, as well as an additional £3.5 million in the borough's transport network. This has had positive effects, reducing the overall number of young people who are not in employment and training and improving roads in Barnet.

The council plans to build on this approach by focusing on creating the right environment for growth across the borough. Economic growth, managed in a responsible way, is essential for ensuring that Barnet remains a place where people want to live and where opportunities exist for all. Growth in the local economy also gives the council a means of responding to future financial challenges. With central government funding continuing to reduce, local growth becomes ever more important.

Councils have been delegated more powers and financial control through funding reforms – particularly the localisation of business rates and the New Homes Bonus – the Localism Act and changes to planning powers. These reforms create an incentive to focus on growth and development as a means of helping to mitigate the financial and social challenges we face.

Our approach to change

There are clear challenges ahead. To play our part in supporting the borough's future success, the council needs to change and adapt. We will use a mixed economy to provide services in the future – always securing the best value for the taxpayer. We will ask fundamental questions: Is the service necessary? What form should it take? Who is best placed to provide this service?

The council can only live within its means and continue to deliver the quality of services that residents expect by providing services in a different way, through new service partnerships and shared service arrangements. This is the year that we put in place contracts for 'back office' services, such as estates management and HR, and customer facing services, such as planning and building control, we are able to create an assured, stable future for these functions whilst at the same time guaranteeing significant savings through more efficient delivery. Our change programme will deliver guaranteed savings of £121 million by the end of the decade, which would otherwise need to be found from children's and adult social care budgets.

Delivering the Plan

Progress against this Plan will be reported to Cabinet Resources Committee each quarter. This Plan will be underpinned by service plans for key council functions to translate our priorities into actions. Funding will be set aside to deliver the priorities in this Plan and we will complete a 'spending review' to identify areas for future savings and where we can invest to get the best results.

We will continue to keep a tight rein on our finances and provide quarterly reports on how we are managing the business – and our new contracts – to ensure even better value for money for tax payers.

Our focus for coming years

Strategic objectives

Barnet Council will work with local partners to:

1. Create the right environment to promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough.

2. Support families and individuals that need it – promoting independence, learning and well-being.

3. Improve the satisfaction of residents and businesses with the London Borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study.

This is a year of transition and we have selected a new set of performance targets for 2013/14 to reflect our new direction for the year ahead. We will provide an annual report to demonstrate progress against the delivery of these priorities, outcomes and targets.

In 2013, we will deliver this, by focussing our efforts on these outcomes:

- 1: To maintain a well designed, attractive and accessible place, with sustainable infrastructure across the borough.
- 2: To maintain the right environment for a strong and diverse local economy.
- 3: To create better life chances for children and young people across the borough.
- 4: To sustain a strong partnership with the local NHS, so that families and individuals can maintain and improve their physical and mental health.
- 5: To promote a healthy, active, independent and informed over 55 population in the borough so that Barnet is a place that encourages and supports residents to age well.
- 6: To promote family and community well being and encourage engaged, cohesive and safe communities.

Priority outcomes

1: To maintain a well-designed, attractive and accessible place, with sustainable infrastructure across the borough.

Barnet is renowned as an attractive borough, one of the greenest suburbs in the capital with over 36 per cent of the borough designated as green belt. It is a place where people want to live and work: almost 9 out of 10 Barnet residents are satisfied with their local area. In delivering regeneration, we will ensure that this is not to the detriment of maintaining Barnet as a green borough.

How we will make this happen

- We will continue to **maintain and improve the borough's parks and green spaces for residents to enjoy**. But we are determined to do more than this. Encouraging residents to use parks and green spaces as a place for physical activity, entertainment, play and to enjoy nature - will help residents to improve their health, well-being and encourage a sense of community.
- A priority for the council is to improve the street cleansing service. We will introduce a number of **measures to increase satisfaction** including a new localised service and introduction of the '**Adopt a Street**' scheme. The scheme **encourages local volunteers** to improve and care for their area by carrying out extra work which will make their neighbourhoods look more attractive.
- The future success of the borough depends on **effective transport networks**. Improving the condition of roads and pavements is a top priority for residents – and for the council. Last year, an £3.5 million was invested in road resurfacing and improvements to pavements. With less funding, we will use a range of options to repair and maintain roads to get the best value for money, and take measures to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.
- Barnet's waste and recycling service is highly regarded, with 82% of residents satisfied with the service. We have **committed to providing a weekly bin collection**. By adding weekly food waste collection and a mixed recycling collection in October 2013, we aim to make it **easier for residents to recycle, reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill and cutting costs**.

How we measure success
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increase residents' satisfaction with their local area as a place to live above 88 per cent2. Make safe 90 per cent of intervention level potholes reported by members of the public within 48 hours3. Completion of work on all roads and footpaths identified for resurfacing and maintenance work4. a) Increase the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting to 40 per cent b) Maintain overall satisfaction levels for the recycling and refuse service (80 per cent)5. Launch 10 new 'Adopt a place' community schemes at different locations within the borough6. Increased usage of paid for parking bays and car parks in Town Centres

Case study: Local resident groups lead way to improve their local green spaces

Securing the future of Barnet's green spaces for future generations to enjoy is a responsibility both for the council and for the residents that use them. Local residents' groups, working with the council, are making improvements to their local play spaces. Seven play areas across the borough have benefited from investment of nearly £720,000, of which £220,000 comes directly from the council, with a further £260,000, of grant funding achieved by the Council with resident support. Finally, resident groups such as the Friends of Mill Hill Park and Lyttelton Playing Fields Redevelopment Committee raised over £240,000, which has seen the complete re-development of these two sites. Other play areas that have been improved include Friary Park, Riverside Walk, Windsor Open Space, Princes Park and Edgwarebury Park. Having local residents involved in the improvement of their parks and green spaces adds those extra touches which improve visitor's experiences and encourage them to return.

2: To maintain the right environment for a strong and diverse local economy.

As we look to the future, the council is committed to creating the environment for growth in the local economy. Investment in regeneration and development is an essential driver for growth, creating jobs, reinvigorating communities and improving living standards. We have four priorities: regenerating priority areas; improving skills and employment opportunities; engaging with businesses; and providing infrastructure to support growth.

How we will make this happen

- We will deliver a local Growth Strategy, based upon the delivery of seven major regeneration schemes across the borough, which will **create more than 3,000 new homes and over 450 new jobs over the next 5 years.**
- A successful local business sector will make the greatest contribution to growth in the local area. There are a number of steps that we will take **to better understand and work with local businesses** - working with Middlesex University to analyse opportunities for growth and appointing an employee to spearhead our work with local businesses, kick-starting a set of business engagement events; and creating opportunities for Barnet businesses through our supply chain.
- A highly **skilled workforce** is an essential building block for growth and one of the key assets in the borough. We have already invested £1 million in a targeted package of support to unemployed 16 - 24 year olds, creating 325 workplace and training opportunities, and will continue to support local young people into work.
- The future success of the borough and its residents will be based on having a skilled workforce. We benefit from having Barnet and Southgate College and Middlesex University in the borough, and we will work with these providers to **encourage young people to learn and gain skills for future employment.**

How we measure success

7. Increasing business satisfaction with Barnet as a place to do business to 50 per cent
8. Support business survival in the borough, with 1.5 per cent increase in new businesses created and decrease of net loss by 50 units
9. a) Reduce the number of households placed in emergency accommodation to 500
b) Reduce the average length of time spent by households in short-term nightly purchased accommodation to 26 week
10. Complete 184 new affordable homes
11. Bring 100 empty properties back into use

Case study: Stonegrove/Spur Grove – investing in regeneration, supporting employment

The £230m regeneration of the Stonegrove and Spur Road Estates in Edgware will create a revitalised, attractive and vibrant new neighbourhood. The original mix of low and medium rise blocks, constructed in the 1950s and 60s is being replaced with nearly 1,000 new homes. The development will provide for a range of household sizes to appeal to single occupiers, couples and families.

Just under a third of the new homes built will be for rent, half for private sale, and the remainder will be for low-cost home ownership. Alongside the regeneration of housing, there will be new roads, improvements to local play facilities and investment in community facilities with a new community hall, church and church buildings. The new community facilities will be run by a Community Trust. This project also gives the opportunity to make a tangible investment in skills and employment opportunities. The work is now well advanced, with completion scheduled for 2018.

3: To create better life chances for children and young people across the borough

We believe all children and young people in Barnet should have the opportunity to achieve their potential, to enable them to become successful adults. We are determined that the significant achievements of Barnet's young people continue in the future. We will invest £65 million to provide additional primary school places to meet demand and provide targeted support for young people who most need it.

How we will make this happen

- Working with families during the early years of a child's life can have a positive impact for the future. We aim to identify and support vulnerable families, using children's centres to **support those with the greatest need and work preventatively with those on the cusp of becoming vulnerable** or at risk.
- Our schools are among the best in the country. To give our children the best start, we will invest £65 million sites over the next few years to provide additional permanent primary school places, aiming to **expand successful schools to encourage future success** and build new schools in areas of growth - such as a building a new primary school in Colindale.
- Our aim is to **identify young people who are most at risk of not achieving their potential** early on - including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and vulnerable children including those in care. We will offer **personalised support** to enable these young people to achieve better life outcomes and close the gap with their peers.
- Ensuring 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 is vital. We will work to speed up the adoption process and ensure that they have a stable, loving home as early as possible—increasing the proportion that are adopted or placed permanently through another route.

How we measure success

12. Barnet is among the top 10 per cent nationally for children achieving the early learning goals (as measured by the average point score)
13. Increase the number of early years places available for eligible two year olds from 350 to 700
14. Increase the percentage of children making two levels progress of in English between Key Stages 1 and 2 to 93 per cent
15. Barnet is among the top 10 per cent nationally for young people achieving 5 or more GCSEs A*-C (or equivalent) including English and Maths
16. Reduce the average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted to 639 days (based on 2010 – 2013 rolling data)

4: To sustain a strong partnership with the local NHS, so that families and individuals can maintain and improve their physical and mental health

Our strong belief is that preventing ill health is better than cure. We want all Barnet's residents to live as healthily and independently as possible. That's why we are taking steps to give every child in Barnet the best possible start to live a healthy life, and encouraging people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. We recognise that when people need extra support or treatment, it helps them to get back up on their feet as soon as possible.

How we will make this happen

- Getting children and young families off to make a **good start towards a healthy life** by focussing on the health needs of women during pregnancy, working with more schools to help children stay fit and finding new ways to reduce risk-taking by children - such as drinking and smoking.
- To support greater wellbeing in the community, we will work with the local NHS particularly with Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group and Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust to improve mental health services and reduce the stigma of mental illness.
- We will work with the local NHS to encourage people to **keep well** by increasing the availability of health and lifestyle checks for those aged between 40 and 74, and promoting better use of green space and leisure facilities to increase physical activity.
- We will also work with our local NHS partners to develop new integrated responses to the health and social care needs of residents through the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing strategy and the health and social care integration programme.

How we measure success
<p>17. Reducing the prevalence of smoking in pregnancy rate to below the London average</p> <p>18. Reduce the rate of obesity in children, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Reducing the proportion of children aged 4 to 5 classified as overweight or obese to 20.5 per cent (remaining below the London average)b) Reducing the proportion of children aged 10 to 11 classified as overweight or obese to 33 per cent (London average) <p>19. Increase the number of eligible people who receive an NHS Health Check to 7,200</p> <p>20. Increase the percentage of schoolchildren who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum</p>

5: To promote a healthy, active, independent and informed over 55 population in the borough so that Barnet is a place that encourages and supports residents to age well

We will support people in Barnet to live longer and healthier lives, and to live independently in their own homes. We will encourage an active, healthy and independent population, both for younger adults of working age who receive support, and to take steps to support residents to age well. There are a number of things we will do to achieve this, for instance making sure a wide range of information about social care and health services is easily available, giving users of services choice and control over the decisions that affect them, working closely with the NHS, and supporting those with a caring role when they need it most.

How we will make this happen

- Supporting people over 55 and their families to live full, independent lives by giving easy **access to information** about healthy behaviours and lifestyles. We will do this by making sure you can always find the information you need when you contact the council by phone, using the internet, or face to face, and by targeting the information we give so that it is received by the people who need it most.
- Our aim is to give all users of adult social care services **choice and control** over the services they receive and the decisions that affect them. We will do this by supporting eligible users of social care services to take **personal budgets**, and to spend them in a way that benefits them the most, enabling them to decide the support they receive.
- We recognise that older people may find themselves being admitted to hospital, and that when this happens it is important that **health and social care services work together seamlessly to help them to recover**. We will work with the NHS to ensure that more support is in place early on, to prevent admissions where possible, and that the right support is in place when people leave hospital to enable people to return to their own homes.
- We recognise the vital importance of **carers** in supporting older people to retain their independence, health and dignity. We will continue to work with the Carers Forum to ensure that their views inform the decisions we make, and will provide advice, information and tailored support to the carers to enable them to sustain their caring role.

How we measure success
<p>21. Increasing the percentage of eligible adult social care customers receiving self-directed support to 75 per cent</p> <p>22. Increasing the percentage (and number) of eligible adult social care customers receiving direct payments to 30% (1075 customers)</p> <p>23. Increasing the number of carers who receive support services (TBC)</p> <p>24. Reducing the number of younger adults (18 - 64) in residential and nursing care by 5 per cent each year</p> <p>25. Increasing the percentage of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into re-enablement/rehabilitation services to 88.5 per cent</p> <p>26. Increasing overall satisfaction of people who use adult social care services with their care and support by one per cent (to 89 per cent, based on 2010/11 baseline)</p> <p>27. Increasing the percentage of adult social care service users who say their services have made them feel safe and secure by two per cent (to 62 per cent based on 2010/11 baseline)</p>

6: To promote family and community well-being and encourage engaged, cohesive and safe communities

Barnet is a place where people get on together. 83 per cent of residents agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together and more than half of Barnet's residents think that people pull together to improve their local area. Our aim is to build on the strong sense of community in Barnet to encourage wellbeing, to act early when giving support to the most vulnerable or at risk. We will continue to support the work of the police to address anti-social behaviour and crime.

How we will make this happen

- We want children and young people who are in care or have special educational needs to have a **positive transition into adulthood**. We will put the appropriate support in place to help them to achieve their potential and live lives that are as independent and fulfilling as possible. If young people need to transition to Adult Social Care in their journey to adulthood, we will work with families and communities to make this as seamless and positive as possible.
- Children and young people who have chaotic lives at home need early support to help minimise the impact of these difficulties on their development and later lives. **Identifying and addressing needs at an early stage can help to prevent the later difficulties** that they may experience. We aim to ensure that children and young people receive the right support at the right time, so that problems are addressed well before reaching 'crisis point'. Working with our partners we will intervene early with families and individuals to **prevent bigger problems** later in life including crime, anti-social behaviour, truancy and unemployment.
- One of our most important duties is to **safeguard children and vulnerable adults at risk of harm**. We will continue to strengthen our approach to safeguarding, working with the Police to fully implement a multi-agency safeguarding hub.
- We recognise that in order to break the cycle of crime additional specialist support may be needed to help some offenders reintegrate into society. The successful **'Community Coaches' volunteer scheme** will be expanded to include working with individuals who are at risk of criminal behaviour, supporting them to achieve their goals and reduce their drain on public resources.

How we measure success

28. Improving outcomes among vulnerable groups:
 - a. Reduce the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stage 2 (Level 4+ in both English & Maths) to 14 per cent
 - b. Increase the percentage of looked after children making the expected level of progress in English between Key Stages 2 and 4, to 35 per cent
29. Decrease the number of referrals to social care to 368 per 10,000 of the under 18 population
30. Reduce the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 to 17
31. Increase in community confidence in police and the local authority dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour (target 78 per cent)
32. Achieve a reduction in adult reoffending for those under probation supervision or young offenders in education, training or employment (to 7.5 per cent)
33. Reduced level of domestic burglary to 24.80 per 1,000 households

Equalities

The council's Constitution sets out how we operate as an organisation, how decisions are made and the procedures that need to be followed to ensure it is efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

In last year's Corporate Plan, the council published its Strategic Equalities Objective, which reflects what is enshrined in our constitution and embedded across the culture of the organisation. Our commitment is that citizens will be treated equally, with understanding and respect; have equal opportunity with other citizens; and receive quality services provided to Best Value principles. This is our strategic objective.

We will monitor how we are performing against this objective, through a variety of measures including community cohesion and reducing disadvantage.

Our approach to equalities is embedded in the decisions we make as an organisation and is fully integrated into the council's business planning process. The council's established approach to assessing the equality analysis of outcomes to changes in policy functions and activities supports this. We have adopted a model of disability that recognises that people are often disabled by their environment and other people's attitudes. Policies, functions and activities are analysed for their equalities impacts and risks. These considerations will provide factual and specific information and assess the impact of those facts on different groups of people, including disabled people.

To collect this evidence the council has designed two equality assessment processes: An internally-facing employee Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) which assesses the personnel changes of the organisation at key milestones; and an externally-facing EIA focusing on the Council as a deliverer/provider of public services.

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- An internally-facing employee Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) which assesses the personnel changes of the organisation at key milestones; and
- An externally-facing EIA focusing on the council as a service provider and asks the following questions:

- are there differential service outcomes for different communities? If so, what measures will be put in place to re-dress these differences?
- what will be the impact of the delivery of any proposed new services or functions on satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents?
- does the proposal enhance Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live?
- will members of Barnet's diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?
- how will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities?
- how have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal?
- how have any comments influenced the final proposal?