



Housing and Growth Committee

17 January 2022

Title	Housing and Growth Priorities Update
Report of	Councillor Ross Houston, Chair of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A – Rough Sleepers Briefing Note
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Summary

This report provides an update on delivery of the priorities of Housing and Growth Committee. This includes:

- Quality Homes
- Town Centres and the Local Economy

Officers Recommendations

That the Committee notes the report.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 The council has a number of priorities that Housing and Growth Committee is responsible for, either in whole or in part. The council has a number of priorities that

Housing and Growth Committee is responsible for, either in whole or in part. Some of the topics covered are also within the remit of other committees but some of the objectives can be furthered via property owned by the Council and property policies within the remit of this Committee.

- Quality Homes: Ensuring housing in the borough meets the needs of residents, is sustainable and that new developments are brought forward in partnership with residents. This includes:
 - Delivering more genuinely affordable homes, while respecting the outer-London suburban character of the borough;
 - Working to ensure that new development is net zero carbon by 2030, minimising carbon emissions during construction and offsetting remaining emissions as appropriate;
 - Delivering healthy homes by working to eliminate fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency and water efficiency;
 - Supporting private tenants through licensing and a private tenants' rights character;
 - Ensuring regeneration benefits existing residents first and foremost.
- Town Centres and Local Economy: supporting Barnet's town centres and the local economy. This includes:
 - Ensuring town centre regeneration is supported by residents and businesses;
 - Promoting a shop local/buy local culture;
 - Working with local businesses and education providers to develop the skills needed in the green economy and to build a local network of suppliers;
 - Encouraging creative and digital industries;
 - Helping people get back into work;
 - Promoting digital connectivity and inclusion.
- A better Barnet: Support communities to be even happier, healthier and to make sure everyone is able to get the most out of life.
- Climate Change and Biodiversity: Future proofing our borough, putting sustainability at the heart of everything the council does. This includes:
 - Achieving net zero carbon in Barnet by 2042, and for the council by 2030 at the latest;
 - Ensuring that the council's long-term transport strategy improves road safety and encourages walking and cycling.

- 1.2 This report provides an update on delivery of key workstreams that are a priority for the Committee.
- 1.3 A new Corporate Plan is in development focusing on the priorities of People, Places and Planet. Future updates to Committee will reflect emerging themes and priorities of the Corporate Plan.

Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 1.4 A broader update on progress with Barnet's Sustainability Strategy, including formation of a Citizens Assembly on Climate Change and Biodiversity, was presented to Environment and Climate Change Committee on 21 November 2022. The report can be accessed at [Committee Report \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/committees/environment-and-climate-change/committees-reports).
- 1.5 Barnet Council successfully attracted funding from the Local Authority Treescapes Fund (LATF) and the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (WCAF) to support increased tree planting in the borough. So far, 75 out of 85 trees have been planted in Watling Estate, with completion planned for early in the New Year. This will provide benefits such as improved air quality, ecological diversity, habitat creation and improvements to the character of the borough, benefitting communities and increasing local pride. WCAF funds will enable the council's Tree Team to expand their activities.

Housing and buildings

- 1.6 Barnet's carbon baseline identifies the majority of emissions come from stationary energy sources, largely buildings, with almost two-thirds of these relating to residential buildings.
- 1.7 Dealing with this challenge requires retrofitting existing buildings to improve their efficiency, remove/ reduce fossil fuel usage and meet future standards. The council has been delivering an initial retrofit programme to its social housing, supported by Government grants. Following the completion of the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Phase 2 Scheme in September 2022, a £9m bid has also been submitted by officers in November under Round Two of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund which, if successful, will deliver 'fabric first' insulation measures to up to 238 social homes.
- 1.8 The council has a further role to help address and target incidences of fuel poverty, with almost one in ten households in Barnet, living in fuel poverty, largely in the private sector. This is being exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis. Targeted work is therefore ongoing to engage with the sector to support residents living in fuel poverty as part of the programme, including by supporting residents to secure grants to retrofit private homes. To improve this process, officers are preparing for the launch of the BarNET-ZERO campaign in January 2023, which will provide clear guidance and recommendations to how residents can receive support and make their homes energy efficient.
- 1.9 Organisationally, the largest source of emissions comes from council owned buildings through its use of utilities such as heating, electricity, water and fugitive emissions. Much has been done already to ensure that our corporate assets are more energy efficient, particularly through the RE:FIT Programme and Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

- 1.10 Further retrofitting activities across corporate buildings are also being progressed. The council secured funding from Phase 3 of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) and works commenced in August 2022 to install options such as air source heat pumps heat pumps, photovoltaic panels and LED lights at 18 schools and Family Services buildings across the borough. A funding application has also been submitted for the next phase of the scheme, with the outcome expected February 2023.
- 1.11 In addition, officers have defined a ‘fabric first’ project to retrofit all corporate buildings to achieve net zero by 2030. A £10m initial phase has been authorised and scoped for 11 sites to produce costed options, with the completion of SBEM surveys. Funding has also been secured from the Prevention Fund to support a ‘deep’ retrofit of a school caretakers home to at least EPC-B, with works due for completion Spring 2023.
- 1.12 Work is continuing with development partners to ensure they are working towards the highest building standards, to ensure both new build housing and supporting infrastructure meet the council’s net zero targets. All on-site Barnet Homes developments have transitioned to delivering sustainable heating systems, including air source and communal heat pumps. All schemes in design stages target Passivhaus principles for sustainable development.

Renewable Energy

- 1.13 There is an immediate requirement for the council to use and generate sustainable energy, mitigate climate change and to help deliver the nascent Sustainability Strategy as one of the most effective means to deliver carbon savings.
- 1.14 The council’s energy is currently sourced through a framework contract, which supplies the Barnet corporate estate, as well as several other public sector buildings within Barnet, such as schools, libraries and community centres, with a ‘grid mix’ of electricity and gas – meaning the fuel sources are currently not 100% Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) renewable. Officers are reviewing options around switching towards a Green Energy supplier to further reduce the council’s carbon footprint, whilst delivering a return on investment.
- 1.15 Alongside this, officers are also looking into opportunities to enter into a Private Power Agreement (PPA), both as a partner initiative with other London boroughs, and directly through a smaller-scale agreement. If successfully procured, the PPA will not only provide accredited renewable power for council assets but also ensure that additional renewable energy capacity is added to the grid.
- 1.16 The council is working sub-regionally with the West London Alliance (WLA) to develop a Local Area Energy Plan, due to come forward over the coming months, which will baseline current energy demand and usage, and help the council plan for future scenarios based upon planned growth. As part of this project, officers are working to co-ordinate current and future constraints on the heat network, whilst also exploring options to take forward future outputs to inform a detailed boroughwide energy masterplan with commercial partners following the agreement to install a new district heating network at Brent Cross.

Delivering Quality Homes

- 1.17 The council is developing a programme to deliver 1,000 affordable homes at 50% market rent or less. Viability remains a challenge given restrictions on available grants and rising costs, however a number of delivery models are being explored. An update paper on the 1000 homes priority is also on the agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on 17th January.

Regeneration Programme

- 1.18 Delivery of the Brent Cross Town programme is fundamental to achieving Barnet's Growth Strategy. An update report on the programme is also on the agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on 17th January.
- 1.19 Key updates on other regeneration schemes include:
- *Grahame Park:* Wates is continuing to progress the construction of Plot A (comprising 209 homes, including 60 social rent/London Affordable Rent and 149 shared ownership). Completion remains on target for early 2024. Planning for decanting of the Concourse blocks is underway with vacant possession forecast in 2024. The Reserved Matters Application for Plots K and H was approved by Strategic Planning Committee on 15th December (<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=703&MId=11139&Ver=4>). A Small Projects Improvement Plan is in development addressing, among other issues, vacant shops on the Concourse, improvements to public realm, improved signage and festive lighting.
 - *West Hendon:* Officers continue to work with Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing to review planned delivery arrangements for West Hendon Community Hub – specifically development costs and the project overheads with a view to agreeing a plan in January 2023. Barratts will make the planning submission for the Additional Unit Scheme in January 2023. Negotiations between the developer and the works contractor around the public realm and highway works are close to resolution and a start has been made on some enabling works. A start on the key elements of the work is anticipated mid-2023. Officers are working with Barratts and local businesses to expedite a programme of improvements in advance of these major works. A leaflet and drop-in sessions are also planned for the New Year.
 - *Dollis Valley:* Phase 3 of Dollis Valley has completed with the exception of four social housing homes for existing residents living at Dollis Valley. These are due to complete in January 2023. Discussions on progressing Phase 4 are due to begin in the coming months following the recent acquisition in November 2022 of Countryside Partnerships (Countryside) by Vistry Group (Vistry). Phase 4 will deliver 100 new homes of which 60 will be for private sale, 34 for social rent and six for intermediate.
 - *Granville Road:* Works over the last few months have focussed on the infrastructure works to provide all the necessary services to the new homes and

link these into the existing services. In the coming months, parts of the development will begin to be completed with the landscaping and public realm and then a phased completion of the homes. Marketing has already begun for the shared ownership and proactive marketing for the other properties will begin in Spring 2023. Regular meetings will continue with GERA (Granville Road Estate Residents Association) with the opportunity for site walkabouts to engage with residents on progress. The scheme is expected to complete in Summer 2024.

Barnet Homes development programme

- 1.20 The development programmes delivered through Barnet Homes continue to progress with full business cases approved at November Housing and Growth Committee for schemes at Broadfields, Coppetts Road and The Grange. Works will commence on site by March 2023 in order to secure a GLA grant of £6.5m. The schemes will deliver 65 new council homes at London Affordable Rent. A further scheme at Little Strand started on site with gas infrastructure works ahead of the demolition of existing bungalows and pram sheds in January 2023. Schemes at Fosters Estate and Stag House continue to progress on site with 268 new homes being delivered, including 126 extra care homes. All these schemes are supported by GLA grant funding.
- 1.21 Barnet Homes, working as the development agent on behalf of Barnet Council, achieved approval of the outline business case of the north-eastern part of Grahame Park Estate at November Housing and Growth Committee. Current forecasts are that the first phase of the scheme will produce circa 505 new homes (subject to planning), of which 50% will be affordable. Barnet Homes will now be further developing the design with a view to making a planning application in 2024. Alongside this the delivery structure, decant strategy and financial appraisal will be developed.

Opendoor Homes development programme

- 1.22 The Opendoor Homes programme of 341 homes for affordable rent continues to progress with 281 units now completed. The remainder are expected to be completed by late Spring 2023. The mixed tenure scheme at Hermitage Lane completed in November 2022, delivering 40% affordable homes including 15 at London Affordable Rent and six shared ownership. The next proposed scheme is at Whitings and Moxon Street with public consultation taking place during December 2022. It is anticipated that the Outline Business Case will be brought to Housing and Growth Committee in March 2023, delivering around 60 new homes.

Acquisitions programme

- 1.23 Alongside development, Barnet Homes undertakes a significant acquisitions programme to meet housing need within the borough. In November 2021 the council/Barnet Homes secured an additional £3.9m of GLA grant to buy back council homes sold under Right to Buy legislation. This funding is being used to purchase 60 homes by March 2023 with the purchase of a further 60 homes funded by Right to Buy receipts. By the end of November 2022, 31 properties had been acquired under the GLA grant part of the programme.
- 1.24 The Opendoor Homes programme has seen 196 homes purchased to date (out of a target of 500). The programme completed its 200-home review at this committee in

October 2022 and officers are seeking to ensure the continuation of the programme in a difficult economic environment in respect of interest rates in particular.

Rough Sleepers

- 1.25 Following a request from Housing and Growth Committee at the October meeting. Appendix A provides a detailed update on how rough sleepers are supported in Barnet, as well as key issues and challenges in supporting rough sleepers.
- 1.26 This year, Barnet's spotlight street count took place from midnight on Thursday 17th November into the morning of Friday 18th November. The Rough Sleeper Team covered most of the borough on this night. Barnet reported a figure of eight rough sleepers in 2022 – and this figure has been verified by Homeless Link. This single night estimate only reflects individuals where Barnet Homes had robust evidence of rough sleeping in the borough on the chosen single night. The 'real' number of rough sleepers is likely to be higher than the estimate, but the same methodology is used each year and the annual snapshot is a good indicator of trends in rough sleeping. The 2022 figure compares favourably with previous years. 13 people were reported rough sleeping in 2021, and 24 people were reported rough sleeping in 2018 and 2019.
- 1.27 Funding under the Governments Rough Sleeping Initiative has been confirmed for the next three years at £3,068,144 and this will continue to fund the Rough Sleeper Team and Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub. Additionally, in July 2021, Barnet Homes were awarded £5.4 million to deliver 55 homes under the Mayor's Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP). RSAP properties are let on an assured shorthold tenancy basis for 2 years. Floating support will be in place for the duration of the tenancy and Housing Needs Officers manage the move on process as the end of tenancies near.

Tenants in Private Rented Accommodation

- 1.28 Barnet is continuing to see high levels of demand from private sector tenants. In Q3 2022/23 (year to date), 18.4% of applicants for housing assistance have approached as a result of a Section 21 notice¹. In Q2 2022/23, private rented sector landlords in Barnet issued 105 claims for court possession and 138 claims have been issued in Q3 2022/23 (year to date). These court claims are now translating to increased repossessions, with 52 repossessions in Q2 2022/23 and 29 repossessions in Q3 2022/23 (year to date).² April 2022 to November 2022 has seen a total of 2,098 applicants' approach for housing assistance – a 17% increase on the same period in the previous year. 58% of applications from April to November 2022 have been from single applicants.
- 1.29 Barnet Homes has developed contingency plans to increase homelessness prevention activities as required and a contingency budget is held by the council for

¹ Section 21 enables private landlords to repossess their properties from assured shorthold tenants without having to establish fault on the part of the tenant. It is sometimes referred to as the 'no-fault' grounds for eviction. A section 21 eviction notice starts the legal process to end an assured shorthold tenancy. A section 21 eviction notice period must be at least 2 months and a landlord can only apply to court after the notice period set in the section 21 notice ends. Tenants are entitled to stay past the notice period given in the section 21 notice. If tenants stay in the property past the notice period, they will then be evicted through court action.

² [Mortgage and Landlord Possession Statistics: data visualisation tool \(mojanalytics.xyz\)](https://mojanalytics.xyz/mortgage-and-landlord-possession-statistics)

this purpose. The current cost of living crisis could see demand increase and the recent spotlight on mould and damp could also add to this. Given the significant challenges with supply the focus will remain on prevention, particularly supporting customers to remain in their current accommodation wherever possible. Barnet Homes are exploring opportunities for effective partnership with the Private Sector Team in Barnet Council to support landlords to address issues in their properties with tenants remaining in their properties, where appropriate.

- 1.30 While Barnet Homes provides a tenancy sustainment service, BOOST delivers employment, skills, finance and benefit support services to help those households facing difficulties. BOOST provides free and accessible support for any resident of Barnet.

Barnet Households in Temporary Accommodation

- 1.31 2,104 households reside in temporary accommodation (TA), against a target of 2,350. November's figure is a slight increase on the 2,076 households in TA in September – which represented the lowest number in TA for more than 10 years. Procurement of TA has continued to be challenging due to limited supply of private rented properties, so the use of hotels continues. In Q2 2022/23, there was a 60% drop in TA procurement compared to the same period last year (30 units vs. 12 units). Across the North London sub-region, it is rarely possible to procure TA within the agreed-upon PAN-London rates. As such, Barnet Homes (and our North London peers) often need to pay above these rates to procure TA units.³

Refugees

- 1.32 Barnet Homes has had significant challenges in procuring properties for the Afghan households that the council has pledged to accommodate. Two families were provided with three months of assistance, and this support has since ended and two of the families will continue to receive assistance and support for three more years. Barnet Council has pledged to accept more Afghan families into the project; however, many Afghan families have large household compositions, and it is difficult to procure large properties within Barnet for these families.
- 1.33 It is estimated that there are 683 sponsors in Barnet for the Homes for Ukraine scheme, and 886 guests have arrived. The Homes for Ukraine Team are now contacting every sponsor and guest to ensure that the data provided by Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Home Office is accurate. Barnet Homes has taken 71 homeless applications from Ukrainian refugees, with 15 households currently in TA and 24 households housed in settled accommodation.

Homelessness Prevention Grant consultation

- 1.34 The Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) has consulted on a new allocation methodology for Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG). The new methodology would apply to grant funding for 2023/24. In December it was confirmed that Barnet would receive a 1.1% (£60k) increase in funding for 2023/24.

Town Centres and Local Economy

³ [Temporary accommodation at crisis point \(smith-institute.org.uk\)](https://www.smith-institute.org.uk)

Helping residents – especially young people – into work

- 1.35 Latest NOMIS statistics show that there were 195,700 Barnet residents in employment (71.3%); slightly lower than the UK average of 75.5%. 37,700 (12.5%) Barnet residents are self-employed, more than the UK average of 9.2%. 11,240 (4.4%) of residents are claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), compared to the London average of 4.7%.
- 1.36 Between April and November 2022 BOOST and BELS supported 335 residents into employment, whilst Shaw Trust programmes moved another 426 into work. The total of Barnet residents reported as starting work including progressions into employment with local developers is 849.
- 1.37 Updates on Employment and Skills Activity this period -
- Street Scene Recruitment - Following the second BOOST session in November, 5 residents were offered the opportunity for work trials, and we await an update on outcomes and potential for conversion to jobs.
 - Construction and S106 - A large number of job opportunities in construction have been generated by our developments in this period. These have included jobs and apprenticeships as Groundworkers, Shuttering Carpenters, Steel Fixers, Traffic Marshalls, and Crane Supervisors and include the first opportunities from Midgard at Brent Cross. Two Formwork apprenticeships have been offered to BOOST clients and they are being supported to obtain their CSCS cards prior to starting on site. Unfortunately, despite connecting employers with our brokerage network, very few CVs have been put forward for the other opportunities and plans to address this will be launched in the new year.
 - Film and TV Sector – We have partnered with Middlesex University to bid for research funding for Local Policy Innovation Partnership (LPIP) funding to the UKRI (United Kingdom Research Innovation). Our project focuses on the Film, Television and Multimedia sector in North London and if successful, will connect local policy, business, and partners to provide research, evidence, data, and expertise to take advantage of opportunities.
 - BOOST are preparing a 3-year plan which will go to Policy & Resources Committee for approval in February 2023.
 - BELS continue to work with asylum seekers in three hotels in Barnet and commissioned ESOL from Barnet and Southgate College, through the summer. However, there is no funded programme available for over 19s now until next year so BELS have met with groups of asylum seekers and are seeking funding for the programme with the college through AEB.
 - BELS hosted a careers fair at Middlesex University in October which was attended by 40 providers including Barnet and Southgate College. Close to 1000

young people aged 14-18 years attended from more than 18 local schools including special schools.

Digital Inclusion and Connectivity

- 1.38 The council has continued to secure and deliver digital broadband infrastructure investment during 2022, with the following outcomes over the half of the year
- The gigabit broadband programme continued with Community Fibre confirming live fibre connections to over 55% of the Barnet Homes stock.
 - Deployments are continuing from 'Open Infra' and 'Hampstead Fibre' to deliver across their target areas, and plans are emerging for further investment across the borough.
 - A total of 9 Community Centres have now been provided with new Fibre broadband connections for free by Community Fibre.
- 1.39 The WLA 'Digital Investment and Inclusion' programme continued with several key projects and programmes getting underway in 2022-23:
- *Fibre West*: Our delivery partner, BT Plc. Have finished their survey of all the borough's CCTV sites and have now commenced the installation phase of delivering the project. They are also surveying our other council owned sites such as libraries and Children Services centre, and reviewing the viability of bringing these locations forward by a year from 2024 into 2023.
 - *Cellular Connectivity (4G/5G)*: A platform provider has been appointed and the council has been working with the other WLA London Boroughs as part of a working group to agree processes for engaging and transacting with mobile operators via the asset management platform. This grant funded pilot will end in March 2023.
- 1.40 Work has continued to ensure delivery of agreed Social Value commitments to support wider digital inclusion outcomes, including:
- *Barnet Digital Skills Triage Pilot*: designed to support front line staff to determine digital need and to triage using a digital exclusion basis. The 8-week pilot ran from 14th September – 9th November 2022. 70 residents were interviewed and agreed to be contacted by an external evaluator, with the external evaluator currently completing resident 'call back' interviews to understand local digital inclusion needs.
 - *Community Fibre*: 12 months free of charge fibre broadband is available to eligible residents. A mailshot of 250 residents generated seven responses, with a mailshot to 5000 residents scheduled for January 2023.
 - *Digital Skills Workshops*: West Hendon Hub will start delivering digital skills workshops in January 2023. Chipping Barnet Foodbank started delivering digital skills sessions in November 2022, which have had a really positive impact on the local community. Over 400 residents have received digital skills support from BOOST between March 2022 – December 2022.

- *Community Centres:* Hope Corner, in Underhill, received a free fibre broadband connection in November, which will make a huge difference to digital exclusion in the local community. Hope Corner are working with the Barnet Get Online Network to embed digital skills training into the centre.
- *Barnet Council refurbished laptop scheme:* Hope Corner and Chipping Barnet Foodbank also benefit from a supply of Barnet Council refurbished laptops to help staff to support residents as well as to loan laptops to residents who may not have the equipment to search for employment, benefits, healthcare and training. Age UK benefited from 120 laptops to support the 'Get Active, Get Connected' over 55s project.
- *BOOST* is a new 'Good Things Foundation Online Centre' and will commence distributing SIM cards to local residents in 2023.
- *The Barnet Get Online Network:* Provides a central forum for Barnet digital inclusion discussion. Set up in September 2021, currently has 97 members made up from Housing, NHS, Youth, Libraries, Education, Citizens Advice, Foodbanks and more.

Business Support

1.41 This year, the council launched a business support programme of approximately £1.5M to help almost 1000 high street and micro-businesses across the borough. Funded mostly through the government's Additional Restrictions Grants, these schemes are aimed at companies that have been negatively affected by Covid-19 and will provide business owners and their employees with vital new skills, knowledge and confidence to help them bounce back. They include:

- *Employee Skills programme with Barnet & Southgate College:* Short courses to improve business compliance and standards such as health and safety, food and hygiene, first aid and English language in the workplace. 65 out of target of 75 businesses supported. Finishes in January 2023.
- *Micro-Business Growth programme with Middlesex University:* Business needs research (500 companies surveyed), business masterclasses to help owners scale their company and plan for future growth, such as business growth planning, sales, finance and digital marketing, and graduate placements. 72 out of target 100 businesses undertook training and 15 graduate placements with businesses started, with 30 more planned for January to February 2023. Finishes in March 2023
- *Construction Supply Chain project with MTW Consultants:* This project provides training and expert guidance on winning bids for Barnet's local suppliers, with opportunities to meet buyers and developers. Its goal is to retain more investment inside the borough. To date, 50 out of target 50 businesses engaged. Finishes in March 2024.
- *Town Centre Business Support Programme:* Focused specifically on Burnt Oak, West Hendon, Finchley Central and North Finchley town centres, the project includes health checks, one-to-one advice, business skills workshops, town centre websites and business directories and briefings with key business-facing services

such as Business Rates and Licencing. In total, 483 businesses have been engaged out of target of approximately 700. Finishes in June 2023.

- 1.42 In total, since March 2022, almost 800 businesses have so far been supported by Barnet's business support programme.
- 1.43 Additionally, the council has started a new internal programme to link different business-facing teams. The aim is to streamline services so that local companies can interact with the council through a simplified entry point. Business-facing teams will benefit from sharing data to generate a single view of Barnet's businesses and their needs.

Town Centres

- 1.44 Officers from a range of services are working together to support Barnet's town centres and high streets, helping them to recover from the effects of the pandemic. The council is undertaking a review of the approach to town centres and developing a new strategy in line with the Administration's priorities. This has sustainability at its heart, alongside working in partnership with town teams and engaging local businesses, residents and community groups.
- 1.45 Key updates include:
- *Edgware*: The Partnership Board formed with Ballymore, Transport for London, Middlesex University and local businesses has continued to develop plans for the town centre, including high street activations, new murals and artwork and other creative approaches to place-making. Officers have progressed interventions to support a cleaner, and safer, town centre, including new lighting installations in trees, installed in October 2022 and are exploring commissioning a specialist consultant to work with the community to deliver a series of art installations and events to celebrate the centenary of the town centre in 2023. Officers are working procure a multi-disciplinary design team to prepare designs for public realm improvements to Station Road, prioritising active travel, sustainability and community activation. Feasibility testing is also underway for a Business Improvement District (see separate agenda item). The council has commenced enforcement action in relation to the Railway Hotel, a Grade II Listed Building.
 - *Burnt Oak*: Community engagement on the public realm improvements (approved at Housing and Growth Committee, September 2021) has commenced. The consultant team has completed Stage 1 analysis and is working with the local community, initially through the existing Community Steering Group which has recently been formalised into the Partnership Board. In addition, the creative place-making scheme has started to deliver initiatives, including a new mural on the railway bridge on Watling Avenue and new lighting throughout the town centre. Officers are working to ensure that all relevant activities are coordinated and integrated across Burnt Oak, including the public realm works, development of Watling Car Park, improvements to community facilities and interventions in nearby parks.
 - *Cricklewood*: The feasibility study for the site at 164-168 Cricklewood Broadway has completed initial analysis, suggesting that the site is well-suited to new

landscaping, planting, seating and small-scale commercial activity (see separate agenda item).

- *Golders Green*: The council has appointed a multi-disciplinary design team to engage the community and develop designs for public realm improvements in line with the adopted Golders Green Town Centre Strategy. Community engagement sessions are underway to inform the proposals. A new Town Team is being convened to ensure that businesses and residents are meaningfully engaged and to help animate future public realm improvements.
- *Finchley Central*: The council has continued to progress the Finchley Square project, incorporating 5,500 sqm of new public realm, accessibility, cycle, pedestrian and traffic improvements, new tree planting and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and a new community/civic space. Unfortunately, the initial approach to procurement was set back in November, when no valid tenders were received to carry out the works. Officers have redesigned the approach and will be going back out to tender in January. This does, however, mean that there will be a delay to the start on site date. Meanwhile, arts, community and cultural events have continued to be organised and held by the Finchley Central Town Team, including a recent arts market. The council will be delivering a public art project alongside the public realm construction at the start of 2023.
- *North Finchley*: The council is continuing to develop Cultural Placemaking Interventions for the town centre and will be piloting improvements to 1,200sqm of public realm to unlock future improvements identified in the SPD. This was prioritised by the community following a series of engagement activities with businesses and community groups. The Public Realm Design Framework is progressing with further engagement and community workshops held in November to define the vision and design principles to underpin the framework. The North Finchley Partnership Board has continued to meet, bringing together members from the community, businesses and other local stakeholders, alongside the council and developer partners. Conversations are ongoing with Regal London regarding the development of a Planning Application for council-owned sites.
- *Chipping Barnet*: Officers have been focused on supporting the Chipping Barnet Town Team to deliver a Meanwhile Activation Project, identified in the Community Plan. The Town Team has led development of this project, which uses a previously vacant high street unit that now comprises a flexible workspace, micro-brewery and pop-up retail.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 All measures and interventions set out above directly support council priorities.
- 2.2 Additionally, all measures outlined in this report align with council strategy, for example, as set out in the Growth Strategy 2020-30, the Long-Term Transport Strategy, the Housing Strategy 2019-24 and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

3.1 None in the context of this report

4. Post decision implementation

4.1 Following Committee, officers will continue to maintain regular communication with relevant stakeholder groups, notable businesses, Members and residents – in accordance with the various programmes of work. Updates will also be given to other related theme committees as and when required.

5. Implications of decision

Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1 All measures and interventions set out above directly support the priorities of the council and the new administration.
- 5.2 Additionally, all measures outlined in this report align with council strategy and priorities, for example, as set out in the Growth Strategy 2020-30 the Long-Term Transport Strategy, the Housing Strategy 2019-24 and the Homelessness and Rough Sleep Strategy 2019-24.

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

- 5.3 Where there are financial implications or decisions associated with projects outlined in the Growth Strategy annual report and Work, Skills and Productivity Action Plan, these will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.4 Any procurement activity will be undertaken in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules, Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and other applicable laws.
- 5.5 Post Brexit, the State Aid rules have been replaced by the Subsidy Control Act 2022, which received Royal Assent on 28 April 2022 and which came into force on 4 January 2023.

Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.6 The council's Constitution Article 7.5 Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, sets out the functions of the Housing and Growth Committee and includes:
- Responsibility for housing matters including strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, private sector housing, regeneration strategy and oversee major regeneration schemes, asset management, economic development including employment strategy, business support and engagement and town centres.
 - To receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services, under the remit of the Committee.

Insight

5.7 In recent months, the council has significantly improved the way in which it uses data, insight and analysis to drive decision making and service delivery. A new cross-cutting data insight team has been established which is now working closely with Growth colleagues as well as others across the organisation. The activities set out in the report draw on various analyses undertaken by the Insight Team.

Social Value

5.8 Social value is a core part of the Growth Strategy and will be maximised throughout.

Risk Management

5.9 The council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. Managing risk is an essential part of programme management and will be used to inform key decisions relating to economic recovery and the delivery of the Corporate Plan.

Equalities and Diversity

5.10 The Equality Act, 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Public Bodies to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010,
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and
- foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.11 Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

5.12 The Barnet Plan and the Growth Strategy are intended to benefit all communities and groups who live, work and visit the borough, including those with protected characteristics.

5.13 Where individual decisions are required in relation to the recovery programme or Growth Strategy Delivery Plan, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure no group is disadvantaged or left behind. As required, officers will undertake Equalities Impact Assessments (EQIA) on a case-by-case basis to fully appraise the impacts associated with any proposed course of action in line with the legislation and to take into account the same so far as lawfully required.

Corporate Parenting

5.14 In line with the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in all relevant decision-making. Promoting independence is priority of the council. Barnet Homes work closely with relevant council departments to ensure that care leavers make a successful transition to independent living

Consultation and Engagement

- 5.15 A strong commitment to community engagement and empowerment is fundamental to the council's approach. Local stakeholder engagement remains a key part of project development and engagement plans will be prepared for all new town centre, housing, regeneration and development projects. Any new schemes brought forward will be subject to consultation where the council considers it appropriate, in addition to where it is legally required.

Environmental Impact

- 5.16 Sections 1.4-1.16, of this report focus on the implementation of recommendations within the manifesto of the new administration that relate to carbon emissions from buildings and sustainability

6. Background papers

- 6.1 Housing and Growth Committee, 27 January 2020, item 16: Growth Strategy
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=9931&Ver=4>
- 6.2 Housing and Growth Committee, 14 September 2020, item 12: COVID-19: Recovery Plan – Thriving,
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=10226&Ver=4>
- 6.3 Housing and Growth Committee, 25 November 2020, item 17: COVID-19: Recovery Plan – Thriving
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=10227&Ver=4>
- 6.4 Housing and Growth Committee, 25 January 2021, item 9: COVID-19 Recovery Plan,
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=10228&Ver=4>
- 6.5 Housing and Growth Committee, 14 June 2021, item 7, COVID-19: Recovery Plan – Thriving, <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s65201/COVID-19%20Recovery%20Plan%20Thriving.pdf>
- 6.6 Housing and Growth Committee, 13 September 2021, Covid-19: Recovery Plan – Thriving, Item 8,
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=10846&Ver=4>
- 6.7 Housing and Growth Committee, 16 November 2021: Thriving Update, Item 7
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=10847&Ver=4>
- 6.8 Decision - Approval of sites for connection to Fibre Breadboard using grant funding, 28 January 2022:
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=8741>
- 6.9 Housing and Growth Committee, 13 February 2022: Thriving Update, Item 11, [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Thursday 17th February, 2022, 7.00 pm | Barnet Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

- 6.10 Housing and Growth Committee, 13 June 2022: Housing and Growth Priorities update, Item 8, <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s72866/20220613HAG-HG%20Committee%20Priorities%20Update.pdf>
- 6.11 Housing and Growth Committee, 25 October 2022: Housing and Growth Priorities update, Item 8, [Committee Report \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- 6.12 Strategic Planning Committee, 15 December 22: 22/2599/RMA – Grahame Park, London, NW9 5XA (Colindale North) , Item 6, [Agenda for Strategic Planning Committee on Thursday 15th December, 2022, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)