

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEETING</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND LIBRARIES COMMITTEE</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DATE AND TIME</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">WEDNESDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER, 2020</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AT 7.00 PM</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>VENUE</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">VIRTUAL MEETING: PLEASE JOIN AT THIS LINK: https://bit.ly/3b5BhVi</p>

**TO: MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND LIBRARIES COMMITTEE
(Quorum 3)**

Chairman: Cllr Reuben Thompstone

Vice Chairman: Cllr Roberto Weeden-Sanz

Councillors

Roberto Weeden-Sanz

Charlie O-Macauley

Reema Patel

Sara Conway

Lachhya Bahadur Gurung

Jennifer Grocock

Danny Rich

Brian Gordon

Helene Richman

In line with the Constitution's Public Participation and Engagement Rules, requests to submit public questions must be submitted by 10AM on the third working day before the date of the committee meeting. Therefore, the deadline for this meeting is **Friday 11 September at 10AM**. Requests must be submitted to Tracy Scollin Tel 020 8359 2315 tracy.scollin@barnet.gov.uk

**You are requested to attend the above meeting for which an agenda is attached.
Andrew Charlwood – Head of Governance**

Governance Services contact: Tracy Scollin Tel 020 8359 2315

Media Relations Contact: Tristan Garrick 020 8359 2454

ASSURANCE GROUP

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	Minutes of last meeting	3 - 12
2.	Absence of Members (If any)	
3.	Declaration of Members' Disclosable Pecuniary interests and Non Pecuniary interests (If any)	
4.	Report of the Monitoring Officer (If any)	
5.	Public Comments and Questions (If any)	
6.	Members' Items (If any)	
7.	Recovery Plan Report	13 - 22
8.	Armed Forces Covenant Update	23 - 32
9.	Equalities Policy Draft Consultation To follow	
10.	Annual Equalities Report 2019-20 To follow	
11.	Forward Plan To follow	
12.	Any item(s) the Chairman decides are urgent	

Decisions of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee

5 March 2020

Members Present:-

AGENDA ITEM 1

Councillor Reuben Thompstone (Chairman)
Councillor Roberto Weeden-Sanz (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Nagus Narenthira (substitute)
Cllr Sara Conway
Cllr Brian Gordon
Cllr Helen Richman
Cllr Lachhya Bahadur Gurung

Apologies for Absence

Cllr Charlie O-Macauley

Cllr Reema Patel
Cllr Danny Rich

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS (IF ANY)

Apologies were received from Cllr Danny Rich, Cllr Reema Patel and Cllr O-Macauley. Cllr O-Macauley was substituted by Cllr Nagus Narenthira.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS (IF ANY)

Cllr Conway declared an interest under Item 7, noting that she is a Member of the Jewish Volunteering Networks Advisory Board.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

Item 7 – Future Direction of the Community Participation Strategy

A question from Barbara Jacobson and an officer's response were published prior to the meeting. Ms Jacobson was invited to the table to ask a supplementary question.

Question: 'How do the Resident Forums which do not relate to the issues discussed at the Theme Committees replace the type of feedback previously allowed at Theme Committees and actually involve residents in decision making?'

The Chairman responded that Resident Forums were not intended to provide the same function as Theme Committees. To facilitate questions and comments in a fair way amongst residents Barnet's Public Participation Rules had been changed by Full Council. Resident Forums were held so that residents could raise a variety of issues.

Item 8 – Independent Evaluation of the Library Service

A question from Emily Burnham and an officer's response were published prior to the meeting. Ms Burnham was invited to the table to ask a supplementary question.

Question: The report states that Barnet Council has saved £1.1 million. Can you confirm this figure does not include the cost of security guards at unstaffed libraries?

The Head of Library Services responded: the cost of security guards is not part of the libraries' budget so this is not included.

A question from Cherry Sewell and an officer's response were published prior to the meeting. Ms Sewell was invited to the table to ask a supplementary question.

Question: Have you known since 2016 that you would not be able to rent out commercial space at South Friern Library? If not, when did you find out that it was too expensive to convert and could not be let out?

The Head of Library Services responded that this was a matter for the Estates Team and was not within the remit of the Library Service. However, the decision not to make a hard division of the space did not preclude it being let out.

A written comment was received from Keith Martin. This was published prior to the meeting, and noted.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

7. INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE LIBRARY SERVICE

The Chairman announced that he would vary the agenda order due to the residents attending for the item on the library service.

He invited Mr Eric Bohl, Director, Activist Group to the table to speak to his presentation on its independent review of Barnet's library service. Mr Bohl commented that the four main areas of the findings were outlined in the report:

- Vision and strategy
- Infrastructure: IT and buildings
- Service offer and take-up
- Budgets and staffing

Mr Bohl stated that Barnet Council had requested an honest appraisal. Activist had carried out a consultation, conducted mystery shopping and tours of the libraries, completed a CIPFA study and discussed the libraries with a large number of people. Mr Bohl summarised the key points of the report:

- In line with many other library services around the country, due to financial constraints staffing hours had had to be reduced in Barnet's libraries. Barnet had a gap in its volunteering provision and this had exacerbated the impact of the reduction in staffing hours on users.
- Another criticism in the report was that Barnet could have a better understanding of the libraries as an asset.
- Activist was impressed by the Library Service's clarity of vision.
- The interiors were dull and interior space was insufficient, with noise and poor signage being reported as problems.
- Opening times of toilets seemed to be a barrier for users.
- Technology, particularly visitor account issues, was a problem.
- It had been difficult to access sufficient data to assess performance fully.
- There had been teething problems with Self Service Opening (SSO) and SSO was not popular with users. The age limit was a barrier for young people and many parents supported lowering the age limit.
- Library Managers and staff were held in high esteem by residents whom Activist had spoken to and were a credit to Barnet Council.

The report recommended:

- There should be more investment in interior design and exterior signage.
- The root cause of the IT problems should be investigated and if suppliers had failed in their provision they should be made to fix issues.
- Piloting keeping toilets open during SSO hours.
- Piloting a phased reduction in age limit for younger people.
- The Book Fund is at its limit and further reductions could cause a downward spiral of the service.
- PCs were used extensively and were being replaced as they should be.
- There was an extensive programme of events for children and young adults which was rare in comparison to many library services.
- Staffed opening hours are very low and this has an impact on the sense of security for many people. It would be helpful to extend the staffed opening hours, with an increase in employees or volunteers. Activist was impressed by the commitment of the staff and volunteers running the Partnership Libraries. However, volunteering in Barnet was bottom in the CIPFA comparison group and the strategy to date around volunteering had been weak. Volunteering had to be set up and coordinated as a project by staff. There should be a long-term volunteering plan with dedicated volunteer coordinator posts.
- Book borrowing had fallen, but due to problems with the data, visitor numbers were not known.
- Some Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were needed to see how service changes have an impact on use of the libraries.
- The capital programme should be completed with investment in signage and interiors.
- If additional resources can be found, additional staffing should be provided to coordinate a volunteering plan as this could mitigate the impact on users.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bohl for the report. The Chairman invited Cllr Conway to meet with himself and officers to consider a formal response to the report, outside the meeting.

Members were invited to ask questions.

Question: A Member asked how volunteering could be increased and whether such an ambitious strategy is achievable.

Mr Bohl responded that with some local authorities it had not been feasible. It was easy to underestimate the amount of work involved in setting up volunteering. However the London Borough of Merton, which has some characteristics similar to Barnet, has extensive volunteering in its libraries, making up 1/3 of staff presence. He stated that the strategy for Barnet looked achievable since so much had already been implemented but more resource would be needed.

A Member asked what could be done to encourage volunteering.

The Head of Library Services responded that difficult choices had been made around resources and it had been decided that the Partnership Libraries would be the initial focus. These were now running well so attention could be focused on the volunteering programme. Some SSO volunteers had already been recruited.

A Member asked whether the actual number of visitors was much higher than suggested in the report.

Mr Bohl stated that the visitor count was likely to be much higher than detailed in the report as the figures were incomplete. The Head of Library Services noted that current calculations suggested around 901,850 visitors.

A Member asked what training had been provided for volunteers and whether they felt prepared to carry out their duties? The Head of Library Services reported that all volunteers received varied training including safeguarding, data protection and specific training to their role.

A Member enquired how different areas of Barnet might be disproportionately disadvantaged by the age limit. In Colindale many children did not have home IT at home compared to more affluent areas.

Mr Bohl responded that there appears to be a greater impact on young people, and a more negative impact on some than others. The report recommended piloting a reduced age limit for entry although national guidance suggested that the current age limit in Barnet is appropriate. This would need careful consideration.

A Member asked how volunteers were recruited. The Head of Library Services noted that advertisements were placed in libraries, on the Barnet website and social media. In the past Community Barnet had worked with the libraries to recruit volunteers. A Member suggested that training/qualifications be used to make volunteering more attractive.

A Member asked whether volunteers were DBS checked. If the age limit is reduced there is a safeguarding concern. The Head of Library Services responded that checks were the same as those for staff but there were strict rules on DBS checks on SSO volunteers and staff.

Cllr Conway declared that she is a member of the Jewish Volunteering Networks Advisory Board (JVNAB) and has worked a lot in the charity sector. She thanked the Save Barnet Libraries Campaign and Unison for their support and thanked officers for discussing the report with her. She expressed concern that Barnet may not be meeting its statutory duty in terms of staffing. Volunteers were very helpful where appropriate but there should not be too much reliance on them. The JVNAB is ready and keen to support volunteering and a phased programme was needed.

A Member commented that for safeguarding reasons alone staffing hours should be extended and appropriate DBS checks should be made. The Head of Library Services reported that she was guided by human resources (HR) on DBS checking and was by law unable to carry out DBS checks on volunteers. Volunteers were supervised by members of staff who were DBS checked and she continued to take instruction from HR.

Cllr Conway noted that the Committee had received a list from the Estates Team of leasing of commercial spaces in libraries. She expressed concern that some spaces that had not been let out could have been used by the community.

A Member reported that Burnt Oak Library is the hub of the community, has one of the highest visitor counts, and desperately needed refurbishment.

Cllr Conway tabled the following amendments to the recommendations provided in the Evaluation Report:

Recommendation 3: That the Committee notes the report findings including that the “reduction in staffed opening hours has gone too far”, and that unstaffed opening “deters many library users” and excludes young people and people with disabilities.

Recommendation 4: That the Committee agrees that staffed opening hours should be increased and instructs officers to bring back proposals to the next meeting.

Recommendation 5: That the Committee should also agree and instruct officers to implement at least the following key recommendations from the report:

- ‘A review of space in the “busiest” library buildings.
- Increase the media fund (for books etc) in line with inflation.
- Review the extent of budget reductions and explore the scope of additional investment in the service given the relative decline in the take up of the service”.
- Independently investigate the lack of visitor data working with relevant partners like Capita.
- Introduce regular monitoring by the Committee to “identify the ongoing impact of the transformation programme”.

Recommendation 5: That the Committee instructs officers to include a standing item at every CLLC meeting on the library programme, including a focus on the key issues of staffing and insufficient study space.

Recommendation 6: That the Committee requests that the Housing and Growth Committee regularly updates its members on the progress of commercial hire of library spaces and expenditure on security staff, commits to including library provision (including study space and accessible toilets) in regeneration plans; and looks at key buildings failings and proper refurbishment of current sites.

The Chairman responded that the decision on a standing item for Housing and Growth Committee could only be made by the Chairman of that Committee. He asked that Cllr Conway withdraw her recommendations and that the matters be considered with Cllr Conway outside the meeting as part of the response to the report.

Cllr Conway raised an alternative motion that the matters above be discussed at the next CLLC meeting. The Chairman suggested that the alternative motion be withdrawn to allow officers sufficient time to consider the report thoroughly. He noted that he would be happy to meet with Cllr Conway and officers prior to the June meeting to consider a way forward.

A Member asked whether any incentives for volunteers had been put in place. The Head of Library Services responded that in the past there had been an annual volunteer celebration event with certificates provided and agreed that schemes such as this should be reintroduced.

A Member asked how toilets with disabled access could be improved and whether DBS checks could be reconsidered as volunteers would come into contact with vulnerable adults and children. The Head of Library Services agreed to revisit the matter of DBS checks with HR.

A Member noted that a volunteer cannot replace a professional and staffing levels remained a concern. She recommended that this be discussed with professional librarians to find a way forward.

A Member asked for clarification on how volunteers were vetted. The Head of Library Services noted that they were interviewed and all volunteers in the Partnership Libraries are DBS checked. The scheme was currently small scale and she would learn from Merton and others to improve the recruitment process. Adequate protocols were in place.

The Chairman moved to the recommendations in the report. He noted that Cllr Conway agreed to withdraw the amendments and that these would be considered as part of the Committee's response to the report.

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED to consider the findings and recommendations of the independent report.

8. FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

The CEO commented that the Community Participation Strategy offered opportunities to strengthen the voluntary sector in Barnet including recruiting more volunteers. The report on the libraries offered an important starting point to focus on opportunities in other areas such as litter picking and adult social care.

The Deputy Head of Strategy reported that annual updates on the Community Participation Strategy were provided to CLLC and an update would follow in November 2020. The latest update coincided with some changes and provided an opportunity to rethink current progress and to inform future work with residents. From March to November there would be a process of stakeholder engagement to explore some of workstreams identified in the report with a focus on stronger local networks.

The Deputy Head of Strategy noted that Councillors were an important element of the strategy, particularly in their role as Ward Members as they can ensure residents' views are fed back.

A Member noted that Barnet has a multi-racial population and it was important to not pressurise residents who would be keen to retain their separate identities, though they could still get along with each other. The Deputy Head of Strategy acknowledged this adding that it is a strength with faith communities providing key hubs in Barnet.

The CEO agreed, adding that there was huge strength and faith and multi-faith groups but the Council did not wish to impose too much control. It would have a coordinating and support role and there may be areas that the Council is not aware of but could provide support to.

A Member asked whether a register of community groups was available. Also, it was important to avoid them duplicating work. It was also not clear where funding was available. The litter picking volunteers operated in Colindale twice per month but street cleaning was a Council duty and they were not receiving help from the Council and could be overburdened, without support from officers.

The Chairman noted that he did not feel that there was anything negative about residents willing to do some litter picking. The Council is fulfilling its statutory duty but residents were taking responsibility for their area. The Deputy Head of Strategy noted that the strategy aimed to celebrate civic pride. The Barnet Community Directory had previously listed community groups online but this had not been comprehensive. Work would begin on a single database.

The Strategy Officer commented that for the past eight months the team had been supporting, promoting and celebrating the work of the litter picking groups. Many volunteers were involved in other areas also, such as schools, and reported feeling that they are part of the bigger picture in Barnet. Schools were also keen to take part in community work. The Strategy Team is working with the Barnet Federation of GPs to develop a directory of services that will provide the Council with information on groups that are under the radar. Social prescribing link workers could do social prescribing to these groups also, to reduce social isolation.

A Member noted that it would be helpful to have a framework around interfaith work to help people of different faiths communicate with one another.

A Member noted that it was important to create a sense of community in the large regeneration areas such as Colindale. Some areas were encountering problems such as Belle Vue Estate with almost no community engagement.

A Member noted that it was a concern that children were joining in with the litter picking, considering safeguarding issues. For example, used needles had been found during a recent litter pick. Also there could be too much pressure and over-reliance on the community to pick up other people's rubbish. In some areas the same residents were left with the burden of litter picking and civic resilience needed to be developed with cross-borough volunteering.

The CEO responded that Barnet Council had recognised that more could be done around street cleansing; he also did not wish to stifle the enthusiasm and civic pride of residents who were willing to volunteer. Barnet had provided an extra £500,000 for street

cleansing this municipal year and in the upcoming budget could look to add more. Fly tipping was a large and growing issue in the Borough and the Council was trying to respond to this. Other London Boroughs were facing similar issues.

A Member commented that Residents' Forums had a reduced number of attendees compared to years ago. It was important to engage different groups. Also residents may congregate on the Borough's boundaries so it may be worth focusing on religious groups and other organisations, mosques etc just outside the Borough when considering engagement.

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED to note the plans to develop a new Community Participation Strategy.

9. Q3 19/20 DELIVERY PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chairman introduced the report.

A Member stated that she would not rate Barnet as 'good' for environmental crime. A KPI was needed and much more action.

A Member noted that there needed to be a better link on major issues from Ward Councillors on community safety to help to escalate issues at partnership level.

Cllr Conway asked the following:

- Whether 101 calls only, or also online reporting, was included in the ASB calls.
- Why was Barnet rated 'good' for hate crime, if it had only achieved 3 out of 7?
- Where are the 9 reporting centres? These were not well publicised.

The Director of Assurance would respond after the meeting and would circulate this to the Committee.

Action: Director of Assurance

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED to note the Quarter 3 2019/20 Delivery Plan Performance Report.

10. REFRESH OF ANNUAL DELIVERY PLANS FOR 2020/21

The Chairman introduced the report.

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED to approve the Annual Delivery Plan for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix A.

11. COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received the Forward Plan.

Cllr Conway requested the following:

- Coronavirus to be a standing item at CLLC or whichever Committee this would be appropriate as this is a community safety issue.
- The BCU item to be discussed at the next meeting.

- Environmental crime to be discussed at the next meeting.
- That the impact of regeneration on community cohesion and community safety be discussed by CLLC.
- At the last meeting of Safer Communities Partnership Board, there was a presentation from the London Fire Brigade about housing and fires, and the work the LFB is doing. It would be helpful to discuss this at CLLC in relation to some of the estates where concerns had been raised about how people were being housed.

The Chairman noted that these would be considered individually outside the meeting. Cllr Conway could forward further information if she wished and he would discuss this with officers to find appropriate committees and reports for those issues.

Cllr Gordon commented that there should be a focus on hate crime at a meeting of CLLC. The Chairman asked Cllr Gordon to put together a Member's Item.

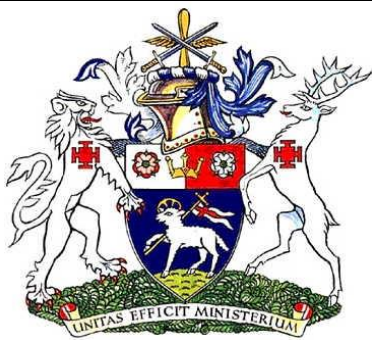
The Committee RESOLVED to note the Forward Plan.

12. ANY ITEM(S) THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 9.01 pm

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Community Leadership and Libraries Committee AGENDA ITEM 7 **16 September 2020**

Title	Recovery Plan Report
Report of	Councillor Reuben Thompstone
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	None
Officer Contact Details	Clair Green, Director of Assurance, 020 8359 7791, Clair.Green@Barnet.gov.uk

Summary

This report provides an update on the council's Recovery Planning Programme in response to the Covid-19 pandemic for the areas that this committee is responsible for. These are community engagement, community safety and libraries, which each feed into different workstreams as part of the overall programme.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the committee note the work already undertaken in regard to the council's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic for the service areas that the committee is responsible.
2. That the committee note the continuing work on recovery planning for the service areas that it is responsible for, including any next steps outlined within the report.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

Background context

- 1.1 The Covid-19 pandemic provides an extremely challenging situation for Barnet, its residents and the wider borough. The pandemic itself has been responsible for over 330,000 cases and 41,000 deaths nationally, while the subsequent lockdown that was required to save lives has led to challenges relating to the economy and mental health.
- 1.2 In response to the pandemic, the council had to focus on critical services, including a number of new services to directly respond to the needs of residents. As lockdown restrictions eased, the council then moved to focusing on recovery, initially around a framework of deciding which services to restore in their previous form, which to retain from the lockdown and which to re-invent by bringing back in a new way. A programme of recovery planning has been set up to co-ordinate this process and deal with the challenges that recovery will bring for the council, the borough and its residents. The programme is split into 4 workstreams which are based around the cross-cutting themes of our emerging Corporate Plan and 2 additional cross-cutting workstreams. Each theme has at least one sponsor from the Council's Management Team and at least one workstream lead, a senior officer responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the workstream. The themes are:
 1. Thriving
 2. Family Friendly
 3. Healthy
 4. Clean, Safe and Well Run
 5. Prevention
 6. The Way We Work
- 1.3 This committee will contribute to a number of these workstreams. Community Safety contributes to the Clean, Safe and Well Run workstream, while work on libraries will feed into the Family Friendly workstream. Work on community engagement and engagement with voluntary and community sector partners feeds into The Way We Work Programme.
- 1.4 There will also be a focus on equalities within each workstream in line with the public-sector equality duty as outlined below at paragraph 5.6. – 5.8. This will look at inequalities across the council, its services and its communities. Each workstream will outline its approach to equalities, seeking to identify and address any impacts on equality groups.
- 1.5 The following sections provide updates on each of the services that the committee is responsible for, in the context of the programme workstream that they feed into:

The Way We Work – Community Engagement

- 1.6 The community response to Covid-19 saw some highly effective models of partnership working between the council, VCS and health partners. It also generated an increase in resident involvement through formal and informal volunteering. The council is now working to consolidate some of these approaches and increase opportunities for residents to get involved in their local communities. This will be set out in the forthcoming update to the Community Participation Strategy.

Clean, Safe and Well Run – Community Safety

- 1.7 Covid-19 has seen a rise in the volume of Domestic Abuse (DA) reports. Financial stress and unemployment are likely to have exacerbated this. Tackling DA presents demand on other services, e.g. children's social services and homelessness. In response we have implemented a four-fold increase in the frequency of our Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Panel Meetings. As a result, there is now a faster turnaround between referral of complex DA cases and multi-agency risk review and actions at the MARAC. The DA MARAC carries out a multi-agency risk assessment and puts risk reduction plans in place. Over the last three months approximately 10 cases are being referred into the DA MARAC each week.
- 1.8 Unlike some crime types, the volume of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) calls to police did not reduce during the lockdown. While a substantial proportion of the ASB calls received during this period were related to allegations of breaches of the Covid-19 social distancing regulations, the calls also included matters such as neighbour disputes. The Community Safety MARAC panel has been working to deliver a co-ordinated multi-agency response for victims of repeat and high risk ASB. The panel is implementing action plans for approximately 6 to 10 such cases per month.
- 1.9 We have introduced a Serious Adult Violence Panel to help enhance the multi-agency response and set of interventions available for adults (18+) considered at risk of involvement in serious violence. Since the commencing in May 2020 the panel has coordinated the delivery of enhanced interventions in over 30 cases.
- 1.10 Our Integrated Offender Management Programme is working delivering bespoke interventions to reduce re-offending – this has worked with over 100 of Barnet's most prolific offenders in last 12 months.
- 1.11 The Barnet Prevent Strategy continues to provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from violent extremism. This includes coordinating the multi-agency Barnet Channel Panel. Channel is a voluntary programme which focuses on providing support and early intervention to safeguard children and adults identified as being at risk of being drawn into terrorism or extremism. This acts by identifying the individuals at risk, assessing the nature and extent of that risk, and developing the most appropriate support

plan for the individuals concerned. In addition, the Prevent Action Plan outlines the statutory duty to provide training to ensure that Barnet Safeguarding and Partnership staff can recognise signs that an individual may be vulnerable to being radicalised, and able to respond appropriately to reduce that risk.

- 1.12 Securing grant funding from the Home Office Safer Streets Scheme. The Council's Community Safety Team, together with the Met Police Designing Out Crime Team have been successful in bidding for and securing funding from the Home Office Safer Streets grant. As a result, a total of £301,162 has been secured to fund designing out crime prevention measures focused on reducing burglary in the vicinity of Hendon Park NW4 (including Park View Road NW4).
- 1.13 Over the short and long term, this location has suffered from a higher rate of residential burglary than average. The funding secured through this successful bid will provide an opportunity to push down the crime rate and help improve the safety and security of residents living in this area. The money will go towards measures (which will be informed by the recommendations of the Police Designing Out Crime specialists) proven to cut crime by enhancing the physical security of the built environment.

Family Friendly – Libraries

- 1.14 During lockdown, the Library Service extended and developed its online offer, issuing a total of 189,014 electronic resources (e-books, e-Audiobooks, e-magazines, newspapers and comics) up to the end of August. An email homework enquiry line was established to support families educating children at home and the School Libraries Resources Service supported teachers with a regular e-newsletter containing links to key literacy and learning resources.
- 1.15 A range of online activities were developed for children and families including digital rhymetimes and craft events, attracting a total of 24,521 views. Over the summer holidays the service has delivered a digital version of the annual Summer Reading Challenge – The Silly Squad.
- 1.16 In line with the easing of lockdown restrictions, a Select and Collect service was developed through which residents could request library items to then be collected at the library door. This system was introduced on 22 June at the four Core Plus libraries (Chipping Barnet, Colindale, Edgware, Finchley Church End) and has since been rolled out to a further four libraries (Childs Hill, Hendon, North Finchley and South Friern). At the end of September the scheme will be pushed out to the remaining Core and Partnership libraries and to the Mobile Library.
- 1.17 On 15 June, the Home Library Service resumed deliveries of library resources to housebound residents.

- 1.18 Computer use has been re-introduced to the Core Plus libraries, with residents able to pre-book a PC at selected times. Computers have been re-sited to ensure social distancing is maintained and are cleaned between each use. Additional safety measures introduced to libraries include the provision of hand sanitising stations, the removal of furniture, quarantine of 72 hours for all returned items and restrictions on the numbers entering each building. It is also mandatory to wear a face covering when visiting a library and all sites are part of the NHS Test and Trace system.
- 1.19 The next phases of recovery will re-introduce controlled browsing in selected libraries and some socially distanced on-site activities and hall hire.

Equalities

- 1.20 The Council has been updating its Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Policy 2020-2024, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic (and disproportionate impact on BAME communities). In this, we are embedding equalities, diversity and inclusion in each of the above themes, rather than treating the issue as a separate workstream. Community Leadership and Libraries Committee is considering the draft EDI Policy and associated Action Plan at its September meeting (16 September). Consultation will begin thereafter and subject to that, we anticipate the policy coming into effect later in 2020.
- 1.21 In partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector, the Barnet Zero Tolerance to Hate Crime project has continued engaging with communities and organizations across the borough to improve access to justice for victims of Hate Crime and to make it easier for people to report Hate Crime and get the support that they need. To date over 500 residents have signed up to become Hate Crime Reporting Champions.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The outline framework for recovery has been agreed by Policy & Resources Committee on 17 June. This outlined a cross-cutting approach to recovery, where different services would input into each workstream to encourage new ways of working within the council.
- 2.2 Community Engagement (The Way We Work), Community Safety (Clean, Safe and Well Run) and Libraries (Family Friendly) each contribute directly to a different workstream, while officers in these areas may feed into other priorities on a more informal basis.
- 2.3 The actions within each service area will help the council to recover as fully as possible from the Covid-19 pandemic and meet the needs of residents. In resuming activity only where it is safe to do so, such as in libraries, recovery work will ensure that services are restored in a responsible way, in line with government guidance.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The council could pause the next steps outlined in this report within each service area. This option could harm the recovery process in the relevant service areas, while also denying residents access to services such as libraries.
- 3.2 The recovery process within the relevant services could operate on an individual basis. Enabling services to plan and deliver recovery activities independently would undermine dependencies across services and miss out on important opportunities for more effective and integrated delivery models. This would also impact the overall council Recovery Planning Programme, as it would deny opportunities for collaborative working across the organisation.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Officers will continue to deliver activities relating to the recovery planning in line with the actions outlined in the report. This will involve continuing to resume services and re-shaping them where required. Further updates on recovery will be brought to the committee at future meetings.
- 4.2 The overall Recovery Planning Programme will continue on a cross-cutting basis, feeding into the council's Corporate Plan.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1 The Recovery Framework will directly shape the borough's emerging Corporate Plan, as a result of the cross-cutting recovery workstreams that make up the themes of the Corporate Plan.

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

- 5.2 Officers will continue to ensure the costs of Covid-19 are forecast on a robust basis. In order to regain the momentum in being a high performing organisation, financial stability must be achieved through the recovery planning process. This includes minimising the call on reserves and setting a balanced budget from 2021/22 onwards. This budget must deliver the required strategy in relation to reserves required to withstand future economic shocks.
- 5.3 Where there are financial implications or decisions associated with recovery activities, these will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The delivery of the Recovery Framework will be undertaken within the existing capacity and resources of the council.

Social Value

- 5.4 The council must take into account the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to try to maximise the social and local economic value it derives from its procurement spend. Social value is a core part of the Recovery Framework and will be maximised throughout.

Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.5 The council's Constitution, Article 7 Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, sets out the functions of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee as:
- (1) Responsibility for libraries, culture, civic events, the mayoralty, community safety, registration and nationality service
 - (2) To receive nominations and determine applications for buildings / land to be listed as an Asset of Community Value (Community Right to Bid)
 - (3) To submit to the Policy and Resources Committee proposals on the Committee's budget for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable and make recommendations on issues relating to virements, underspends or overspends. No decisions which result in amendments to the agreed budget may be made by the Committee unless and until the amendment has been agreed by Policy and Resources Committee.
 - (4) To receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.
 - (5) To recommend for approval fees and charges for those areas under the remit of the Committee.

Risk Management

- 5.6 The council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. Strategic and operational risks have been reviewed in light of our response to Covid-19 and priorities for recovery and emerging Corporate Plan. The corporate risk register is reported quarterly to Policy and Resources Committee. Managing risk is an essential part of programme management and decision-making.

Equalities and Diversity

- 5.7 The Equalities and Diversity Act, 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act, 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

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

5.9 The council's Recovery Framework is intended to benefit all communities and groups who live, work and visit the borough, including those with protected characteristics. Where individual decisions are required in relation to the recovery programme, 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) and review them in order to fully appraise the impacts associated with any proposed course of action.

Corporate Parenting

5.10 In line with the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in all decision-making. These will continue to be considered as specific plans for recovery are further developed.

Consultation and Engagement

5.11 Officers are clear that the Recovery Framework cannot be developed in isolation if it is going to be fully responsive and effective in enabling the borough to emerge stronger from the Covid-19 pandemic. Consultation with partners, service users and the wider community is critical to ensuring that our recovery activities are focused on the end user. Where required, consultation and engagement activities will be undertaken in the relevant workstream.

Insight

5.12 Insight is a central part of the council's Recovery Planning Programme, with an opportunity identified to significantly improve the way in which the council uses data, insight and analysis to drive decision making and service delivery.

5.13 Insight requirements and questions of services were mapped at the start of the Recovery Planning Programme and work will continue to develop this further.


6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Urgency Committee, 27 April 2020: Approval of Emergency Decisions and Delegation to Chief Officers

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s58641/Urgency%20Committee%20-%20Emergency%20Decisions%20Final.pdf>

- 6.2 Policy & Resources Committee, 17 June 2020: Covid-19 Recovery Planning
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s58985/Covid-19%20Recovery%20Planning.pdf>

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	<p style="text-align: center;">Community Leadership & Libraries</p> <p style="text-align: right;">AGENDA ITEM 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">16 September 2020</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Cllr Reuben Thompstone</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Urgent</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Key</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p><i>Appendix - Updated Action Plan</i></p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>Angela Richardson, angela.richardson@barnet.gov.uk, 020 8359 2179</p>

Summary

The renewed Armed Forces Covenant was approved by Full Council on 29 October 2019. When approving the Covenant, it was agreed that the Council should work towards achieving the silver and gold Defence Employer Recognition Scheme accreditation. In November 2019 the Committee reviewed and approved the Barnet Council Action Plan aimed at delivering the requirements of the Covenant and achieving accreditation. This report is to highlight the current situation in line with the Barnet Action Plan: Renewing the covenant in the Capital.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the Committee note the revised Armed Forces Covenant has not yet been signed due to the Coronavirus lockdown
2. That Officers be instructed to continue to implement the Barnet Council Action Plan.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Committee agreed the Barnet Action Plan at their meeting on 20 November 2019. This report is needed to update the Committee on the current situation and to monitor the further delivery of the Barnet Action Plan.
- 1.2 Establish where there is need for support in the delivery of the Barnet Action Plan.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To ensure Barnet Council are fully aware of the covenant. To review policies and ensure they have been adjusted to suit the Covenant and are accessible by all through dedicated council web pages.
- 2.2 Make frontline staff, Members and other officers aware of the Covenant and how to best signpost those in need.
- 2.3 To continue to increase awareness of the Covenant within the Council and its partners, military units and service families.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 None

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The Council will continue to deliver training to services in a range of areas to enable staff to support the Armed Forces Community and be aware of their specific issues and needs.
- 4.2 The Council will work towards the resigning of the Armed Forces Covenant once Coronavirus restrictions have been lifted.
- 4.3 The Council will continue to work towards receiving the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme accreditation to attain an employer's silver then gold award once the criteria have been met.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The delivery of the Barnet Action Plan in relation to renewing the Armed Forces Covenant in Barnet would contribute to all corporate priorities and objectives.

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

- 5.2.1 Staff time from various different services will continue to be delivered within the existing budgets.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 The aim of the Community Covenant is to encourage local communities to support the Service community in their area and nurture understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 Council approved the original Covenant in 2012. Given the significant and cross-cutting nature of the Covenant, it was determined that Full Council approval was required as it is a matter which is so significant that it requires all Members to determine (Council Constitution, Article 4 (The Full Council)).
- 5.4.2 Council Constitution, Article 7 – the Community Leadership & Libraries Committee has responsibility for “...libraries, culture, civic events, the mayoralty, community safety, registration and nationality service.”

5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 If the armed forces community are not supported this could have negative impact and carries a reputational risk to the council.
- 5.5.2 If there is a low take up of training to frontline staff, Members and other officers this may impact the service delivery to the Armed Forces Community.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 Recognising the Armed Forces Community in relevant service area considerations and policies will ensure inclusion without prejudice.
- 5.6.2 The Armed Forces Covenant recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to members of the Armed Forces and their families and it establishes how they should expect to be treated. It exists to redress the disadvantages that the Armed Forces Community faces in comparison to other citizens, and to recognise sacrifices made.
- 5.6.3 In some cases this will require special consideration, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured and the bereaved. The principle behind the Covenant is that the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantage because of its military experience. The Covenant covers issues from housing and education to support after Service, and in it veterans have great importance.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

- 5.7.1 Implementing the action plan allows measures to be put in place to support the needs of children of serving Armed Forces members and their families.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.8.1 Consultation with the Project Manager for the Renewing of the Armed Forces Covenant in the Capital at a meeting held in June 2019 with Armed Forces Champion, Leader, Senior Staff and partners.
- 5.8.2 Engagement between the Barnet Armed Forces Champion and the Project Manager for the Renewing of the Armed Forces Covenant for delivery of training to upskill senior staff and frontline staff.
- 5.8.3 Council agreement of the renewing of the Covenant on 20 October 2019.
- 5.8.4 Committee approval of Barnet Action Plan 20 November 2019.
- 5.8.5 Series of Face to Face training sessions held with senior managers and line managers across relevant service areas.
- 5.8.6 Engagement between Barnet Armed Forces Champion, Project Manager for renewing of the Armed Forces Covenant, Barnet Safety Health and Welfare team and Access E-learning platform supplier to upload e-learning training package.
- 5.8.7 Introduction of E-learning training sessions to frontline staff, members and other officers.
- 5.8.8 Engagement with Middlesex University to extend e-learning training.
- 5.8.9 Engagement with the Gurkha and Nepalese community in Barnet to extend e-learning training
- 5.8.10 Engagement with London District Armed Forces Headquarters, Horseguards, to discuss the introduction of standard policies across London.

5.9 Insight

- 5.9.1 A review of Council Policy Best Practice document and other London Boroughs commitments to the Armed Forces Covenant.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 A guide for local authorities
- 6.2 Letter to the Leader
- 6.3 Council Policy Best Practice Document

London Borough of Barnet Action Plan: Renewing the Covenant in the Capital

Aim

To train and prepare staff to enable the Borough Council to meet its Armed Forces Covenant obligations:

Objectives

- To ensure all policies are reviewed and adjusted accordingly to deliver our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC)
- To deliver a training programme for managers and Armed Forces Champions in the Council, specifically those who have responsibility for main Covenant policy areas
- To deliver ongoing awareness training to all frontline staff and Councillors to enable them to 'ask the question' when engaging with residents
- To establish an AFC partnership meeting with relevant stakeholders
- To renew our commitment to the Armed Forces Community by re-signing the AFC

Benefits

- Public awareness of the commitment / support provided by the council to an under-represented community group (~10-15% of the population)
- Continuous Professional Development for staff
- Reduced (or at the very least, shared) burden of service provision through use of support pathways and external providers
- Improved customer satisfaction through knowledgeable customer service of how to support / signpost Armed Forces community (via training, e-learning and signposting app).
- Gain a better understanding of local demographics by staff regularly "asking the question" and recording how many of this community are accessing services.
- Improved visibility and reputation as a 'forces friendly' employer through the Employer Recognition Scheme. Gain benefits of employing service leavers and reservists.
- Use of Armed Forces Covenant Grants to support the community and reduce spending requirements on Council.
- Closer partnership working with neighbouring Boroughs and military stakeholders to potentially reduce burden of support and avoid duplication of effort on events or community initiatives.

Timeline

Date	Action	Description	Stakeholders	Comments
March 2019	Armed Forces Champion Approval	Discussion with Project Manager and Council Armed Forces Champion to look at military footprint, local need, what project can deliver and benefits to council	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion	Completed 04/04/19 AR
+ 1 week	Approval	Project approved/rejected	Council Armed Forces Champion	Approved 04/04/19
June 2019	Meet with Senior Managers to outline the proposal in more detail	Discuss in more detail how to deliver this initiative across the council. Discussions to include policy reviews, training of both senior managers and frontline staff, installation of e-learning package, establishment of partnership meetings and re-signing AFC	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Armed Forces Champion Chief Executive Officer Leader of the Council Council Policy Lead Council Training Lead Council Communications Lead	Completed 06/06/19 at Hendon Town Hall Attendance by Council AFChampion Head of Governance Head of Comms Leader of the Council Councillor AFChampion CEO – Community Barnet Rep – NHS Barnet Hosp Rep – Middx Uni Director of Customer Experience – Barnet Homes
Oct – Nov 2019	Deliver senior training	Deliver two-hour training to Armed Forces Champions, senior staff, department leads and line managers to upskill them on the AFC, the unique needs / issues of Armed Forces Community and how their staff can support.	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Armed Forces Champion Extended Leadership Team Line Management Team	Delivered on 04/11/19

Nov 2019 – April 2020 Proposed new date Nov 2020	Re-sign AFC	Organise a re-signing of AFC by council with local Military Leaders with a renewed and developed action plan in place to publicly deliver that commitment Potential to combine with presentation of ERS Award	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Armed Forces Champion Senior Management Team Mayor Partners Council Communications Lead HQ London District (Army) Local Military Units GL RFCA Local military partners / charities	On hold due to Covid 19 Lockdown
Jan 2020 Proposed new target Jan-Feb 2021	Deliver frontline staff training	Hold multiple 1-hour training events to upskill as many frontline staff as possible.	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Frontline Staff	Barnet Homes arranged but room evacuated due to fire drill – no resume due to Covid 19 Lockdown Difficulty with arrangements with Adults and Childrens services to get dates. No follow up due to Covid 19 lockdown
Mar 2020	Launch e-learning package	Install e-learning package into Learning Management System, roll out to frontline staff who interact directly with residents and then wider council staff for awareness	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London district Council Training Lead	Slightly delayed due to Covid 19 26/06/20 rolled out to Adults and Health (323) 29/06/20 rolled out to Family services (690) 30/06/20 rolled out to Members (63)

				<p>22/07/20 rolled out to Barnet Homes (48)</p> <p>10/08/20 rolled out to Communications (12)</p> <p>10/08/20 rolled out to Assurance (64)</p> <p>Total 1200 in LBB plus Gurkha Community</p>
<p>Any time</p> <p>Proposed date Nov 2019 – Only if AFC Signing takes place</p>	Review Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Status	Review status of council as an employer from Armed Forces Community. As a signatory of AFC you can self-nominate for Bronze ERS Award via Greater London Reserve Forces and Cadet Association (GL RFCA). If already held, review next steps to progress to Silver / Gold. Presentation of award to CEO / Councillors can be arranged	Council Armed Forces Champion GL RFCA	<p>Bronze award granted June 2019</p> <p>Working towards Silver – only part remaining to gain Silver award is the resigning of the covenant</p>
<p>On-going</p> <p>Propose early 2021</p>	AFC Partnership Meeting	<p>Partnership meeting to be facilitated by Project Manager to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review council commitment to AFC Understand any issues raised since start of initiative Discuss best practice with partner organisations Plan and deconflict events with local military units / neighbouring Borough Councils Build relationships for collaborative working <p>Standing agenda to be provided to ensure continuity and consistency for future meetings</p>	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Armed Forces Champion HQ London District (Army) Local Military Units Partner Organisations	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District to arrange After Covid 19
Ongoing –	Sustainable awareness	Embed e-learning package into new joiners	Council Armed Forces Champion	

First Review Jan 2021	training	routine and regular annual online training Frontline staff training package to be provided by for service heads / line managers / Armed Forces Champion to be able to deliver to staff on an ongoing basis	Council Training Lead	
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Completed

Pending

Ongoing

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