

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEETING</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOUSING AND GROWTH COMMITTEE</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DATE AND TIME</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">TUESDAY 24TH NOVEMBER, 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</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LINK TO MEETING: https://bit.ly/3jgNj0D</p>

TO: MEMBERS OF HOUSING AND GROWTH COMMITTEE (Quorum 3)

Chairman: Councillor Richard Cornelius,
Vice Chairman: Councillor Sarah Wardle

Councillors

Cllr Sara Conway	Cllr Kath McGuirk	Cllr Daniel Thomas
Cllr Paul Edwards	Cllr Alex Prager	Cllr Peter Zinkin
Cllr Ross Houston	Cllr Thomas Smith	

Substitute Members

Cllr Anne Clarke	Cllr Nizza Fluss	Cllr Laithe Jajeh
Cllr Geof Cooke	Cllr Rohit Grover	Cllr Alison Moore

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 Thursday 19th at 10AM. Requests must be submitted to governanceservice@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: abigail.Lewis@barnet.gov.uk
Media Relations Contact: Tristan Garrick 020 8359 2454

ASSURANCE GROUP

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22.	Brent Cross Update - EXEMPT report - TO FOLLOW	
23.	ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT	

Decisions of the Housing and Growth Committee

14 September 2020

Members Present:-

AGENDA ITEM 1

Councillor Richard Cornelius (Chairman)

Councillor Sarah Wardle (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Sara Conway

Councillor Paul Edwards

Councillor Ross Houston

Councillor Kath McGuirk

Councillor Alex Prager

Councillor Thomas Smith

Councillor Daniel Thomas

Councillor Peter Zinkin

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Growth Committee held on 6 July 2020 be approved as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

None.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor Houston declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Item 9 by virtue of being a Council appointed member of the Barnet Group Board.

Councillor McGuirk declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 7 and 8, by virtue of being an employee at John Lewis.

Councillor Wardle declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 10 by virtue of her employer acting on behalf of community fibre, however as the wayleave works do not favour one party over the other, the Councillor believes this to be a non-pecuniary interest.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

Mr Dix asked a supplementary question in relation to item 7.

Ms Thomas asked a supplementary question in relation to item 7 and item 8.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

7. ANNUAL REGENERATION REPORT UPDATE

The Chairman introduced the Annual Regeneration report which updated the Committee on the current context for growth and regeneration, regeneration scheme challenges, scheme progress and scheme achievements.

Following consideration of the item, Councillor Conway put forward the following amendments to the officer's recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Houston.

That the Committee agrees to establish a multi-agency task force with a public health and resident-centred approach to regeneration and delivering services to our estates which will ensure sustained progress on improving health and wellbeing, environmental cleanliness and community safety. In the short-term the task force should:

- a. For Grahame Park: prioritise fixing the security doors, making dangerous pathways and pavements safe, and clearing up litter and fly-tipping
- b. For Grahame Park: ensure the Partnership Board meets regularly to discuss ongoing issues and action-plan
- c. For secure and non-secure tenants across estates: ensure the Committee receives an update at the next meeting on their status
- d. For West Hendon: ensure the Committee receives an update at the next meeting on the safety of the Marsh Drive building and decant date
- e. Ensure the Committee receives the report on dealing with estates and engagement that was agreed at a previous meeting

The Committee unanimously agreed to approve amendments a-e, in addition to the officer's recommendations as outlined in the report.

The votes were recorded as follows:

For	10
Against	0
Abstain	

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED that:

- The Committee notes the 2019/20 Annual Regeneration report.
- That the Committee delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive to make any non-material changes to the attached Annual Regeneration Report.
- That the Committee agrees the following to be actioned by officers:
 - a. For Grahame Park: prioritise fixing the security doors, making dangerous pathways and pavements safe, and clearing up litter and fly-tipping
 - b. For Grahame Park: ensure the Partnership Board meets regularly to discuss ongoing issues and action-plan
 - c. For secure and non-secure tenants across estates: ensure the Committee receives an update at the next meeting on their status
 - d. For West Hendon: ensure the Committee receives an update at the next meeting on the safety of the Marsh Drive building and decant date
 - e. Ensure the Committee receives the report on dealing with estates and engagement that was agreed at a previous meeting.

8. BRENT CROSS CRICKLEWOOD UPDATE

The Chairman introduced the report which provided an update on the Brent Cross Regeneration Scheme since the Committee meeting on the 6th July.

In relation to recommendation 4 of the report, Members requested that the Committee were provided with a time-line as to how long the Council had before the further funding was required for the GRIP 3 design stage. Members asked that officers provide information on sources of funding that could be used.

Following discussion Councillor Houston moved an amendment to the recommendations as follows, 'That the Council should lobby the Government to secure the passive provision funding of £1.4m in time for the relevant design stage', which was seconded by the Leader.

The Committee unanimously agreed the amendment to the recommendation.

The Chairman moved to vote on the recommendations as outlined in the report, including Councillor Houston's additional recommendation.

The votes were recorded as follows:

For	10
Against	0
Abstain	0

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Committee noted the progress update across the scheme since the last report to the committee on 6 July 2020;
- 2) That the Committee delegated authority to the Finance Director to finalise the heads of terms and legal agreements with BXS JVLP in relation to plot 25 as set out in paragraph 1.18 of this report acting in the best interests of the council.
- 3) That the Committee authorised the Deputy Chief Executive to procure the necessary resources to co-ordinate construction logistics and security arrangements across the regeneration area as explained in paragraphs 1.43 of this report.
- 4) That the Committee noted the council has progressed the WLO design integration study to Network Rail GRIP 3 design stage and that further funding is required to continue the design and physical works at this time as explained in paragraph 1.33 to 1.39 of this report.
- 5) That the Committee agreed that the Council should lobby Government to secure the passive provision funding of £1.4m in time for the relevant design stage.

9. FIRE SAFETY - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Chairman introduced the report which provided an update of the progress made since January 2019 with the Council's response to the Grenfell Tower fire disaster, including the delivery of the programme to replace at risk cladding, as well as related improvements to fire safety across Council blocks as instructed by the Committee. The report also provided an update on completed reviews of all other housing stock considered as potentially at risk.

Members asked officers whether the government was moving towards a conclusion on the programme to replace at risk cladding. The Deputy Chief Executive said that officers could not speak on behalf of the government, but could provide an update on the position in Barnet. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that all buildings in the borough that had cladding had now been replaced. The Council was still resolving disputes with managers and builders where agreement had not yet been reached and were working closely with MHCLG, to ensure Barnet used the powers sitting within the environmental health team to progress the programme as quickly as possible.

Councillor Edwards put forward a motion to add the following amendment to the recommendations 'That the Committee Lobbies Government to give a commitment to fund cladding works where there is no agreement to do this, for example in some housing association and private blocks, to ensure residents are safe and have certainty about their homes'.

The Chairman recommended that the Leader be asked to Lobby the Government, rather than the Committee, as this was something that would be done at a political level and would be more effective. The Committee agreed.

Councillor Houston asked that the Committee receive an update on the result of the bidding for funding from the government building safety fund. He also asked that officers urgently chased those landlords, where information was still outstanding, as a matter of urgency. The Chairman agreed.

Following further discussion on the report, the Chairman moved to vote on the officer's recommendations outlined in the report.

The votes were recorded as follows:

For	10
Against	0
Abstain	0

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED that:

- 1. The Committee noted the progress to date with high priority fire safety works and the actions of Barnet Homes to ensure the safety of residents.**
- 2. The Committee noted the progress in relation to properties directly owned by Registered Providers, and also that a few particular sites require ongoing monitoring of negotiations to resolve liability and responsibilities where this has been less clear; the priority remains to ensure the safety of residents.**
- 3. The Committee noted ongoing work to identify fire risk within the private sector stock and the currently limited response to fire safety information requests from several landowners. It also notes the request from the Minister for Fire Safety to review current enforcement activities and potentially take further action as appropriate.**

10. ENABLING INVESTMENT IN DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The Assistant Director of Growth introduced the report which proposed an approach to working with broadband service providers to accelerate investment in high speed digital infrastructure across the borough and improve the opportunity to roll out 5G for residents and business. The proposed approach involves the development of a wayleave framework agreement, replacing the numerous and individually negotiated wayleaves that currently need to be agreed before any installation of new fibre infrastructure can take place. The approach would directly help address barriers to digital inclusion, enable job creation, boost economic resilience and improve access to online services.

Councillor Conway requested more detailed work be carried out on digital inclusion and asked that conversations take place with the organisations that had raised this as an issue with Members. Councillor Conway also asked that officers considered interim measures for the next 6 months, in case of a second lockdown, to ensure those in need could access the internet. The Deputy Chief Executive agreed that work to improve digital inclusion would continue and also highlighted that the Adult Social Care team had been very active in giving their older clients access support through the internet, giving those who might be socially isolated, access to the internet and teaching them how to use it.

Following discussion of the item the Chairman moved to the vote on the officer's recommendations.

The votes were recorded as follows:

For	10
Against	0
Abstain	0

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED that:

1. The Committee noted the ongoing work to remove barriers to investment in improved digital connectivity and to support digital inclusion; and confirms support for the principles set out in paragraph 1.11 that will inform the detailed legal arrangements and implementation of improved broadband infrastructure.

2. The Committee delegated authority to the Director of Growth to finalise the terms of and enter into overarching commercial agreements for the implementation of improved broadband infrastructure.

3. The Committee delegated authority to the Director of Growth to finalise the terms of and enter into individual wayleave agreements with operators for the implementation of improved broadband infrastructure.

11. POST-DECISION SCRUTINY - RENT RELIEF POLICY DPR

The Chairman introduced the report which outlined the rent relief policy that had been introduced in response to the pandemic and authorised via delegated powers report in consultation with the Chairman of the Housing and Growth Committee. In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Urgency Committee on the 27th April 2020 provided delegation to Chief Officers (in consultation with the relevant Committee Chairmen) to take decisions on business-critical matters normally reserved to theme committees. The Committee resolved that any and all such decisions taken, including his one, would be reported back to the Committee for post-decision scrutiny.

Councillor McGuirk moved an amendment to the officer's recommendations outlined in the report as follows,

'1. That the Committee receives a report at the next meeting on the actual situation in our high streets for local businesses.

2. That the Committee agrees to allow officers to extend rent relief on a case by case basis, if needed, to sustain tenancies

3. That the Council's approach to rent relief forms a continuous part of the town centre strategy and recovery planning.'

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to add the following recommendations:

1. That the Committee receives an update at the next meeting on the actual situation in local high streets for local business.

2. That the Committee notes that officers have the power to extend the rent relief on a case by case basis, if needed, to sustain tenancies.

The Chairman then moved to vote on the officer's recommendations as outlined in the report, including the additional agreed recommendations.

The votes were recorded as follows:

For	10
Against	0
Abstain	0

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED:

- 1. To note the decisions taken by Chief Officers via delegated powers in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic or related matters.
- 2. That the Committee receives an update at the next meeting on the actual situation in local high streets for local business.
- 3.. That the Committee noted that officers have the power to extend the rent relief on a case by case basis, if needed, to sustain tenancies.

12. RECOVERY PLAN

The Chairman introduced the recovery plan report which provided an update on progress across a number of core themes under the workstream: Town Centres; Employment and Skills and Homelessness.

Councillor Houston put forward a number of amendments to be added to the recommendations.

1. That the Committee receives a report at its next meeting updating on rough sleeping
2. That the Committee lobbies Government to ensure the ban on evictions during the pandemic continues except when proven anti-social behaviour or in cases of domestic abuse when the perpetrator is a co-tenant.
3. That the Committee considers using CiL funding to increase cycle hangars - as other Boroughs like Camden have done
4. That the Committee instructs officers to meet with local businesses to work out what they need to get them through a second lock-down, and ensure they discuss business rates and rent relief, and what grants/support are available to help keep them going, and report back to Committee
5. That the Committee instructs officers to identify where the opportunities for growth are for our Town Centres and engage with local businesses and stakeholder groups like the North Finchley Partnership Board to plan what actions are needed.
6. That the Committee engage with the local faith and community groups, and volunteers that normally run the winter night shelter together to develop an alternative plan for support this winter.
7. That the Committee receives a briefing by email before the next meeting on the impact to Barnet of the Government's 'Planning for the Future' document
8. That the Committee requests that Policy & Resources Committee submits a robust response to the Government's 'Planning for the Future' consultation which should raise Barnet's concerns about the proposals.

Following discussion of these amendments the committee unanimously agreed the following:

1. To receive an update on rough sleeping at the next meeting, which would be contained within the recovery plan report.
2. That the Committee receives a report on the ban on evictions during the pandemic, which would include information about good practice observed by social housing providers in Barnet and that if lobbying was appropriate, the Committee could discuss alongside the paper the best way forward.
3. That the Committee recommends the Area Committee and Environment Committee consider using CIL funding to increase cycle hangers, although the Committee noted this was not for the remit of the Housing and Growth Committee and no formal referral could take place.

4. That the Committee noted that officers are meeting with local business to work out what they need to get them through a second lock-down and that an update on this would be provided within the recovery plan report.
5. That the recovery report would include an identification of opportunities for growth within Town Centres.
6. That the Committee noted that engagement with local faith and community groups was happening and that the Council would work with volunteers that normally run the winter night shelters and that an update on this work would be highlighted in the recovery plan report.
7. The Leader agreed for the report on the impact to Barnet of the Government's 'Planning for the Future' document to be shared with the Committee.
8. That the Committee noted that the Leader had raised Barnet's concerns around the context of the some of the proposals within the 'Planning for the Future' consultation and that the government were listening and taking into consideration all concerns raised by Councils.

The Chairman then moved to vote on the recommendations as outlined in the report, in addition to the amendments.

The votes were recorded as follows:

For	10
Against	0
Abstain	0

The Committee unanimously RESOLVED:

1. The Committee noted the report, including the proposed expenditure of approved funds on support measures for town centres, as summarised in paragraph 5.2.
2. That the Committee receives an update on rough sleeping at the next meeting, which would be contained within the recovery plan report.
3. That the Committee receives a report on the ban on evictions during the pandemic, which would include information about good practice observed by social housing providers in Barnet and that if lobbying was appropriate, the Committee could discuss alongside the paper the best way forward.
4. That the Committee recommends the Area Committee and Environment Committee consider using CIL funding to increase cycle hangers, although the Committee noted this was not for the remit of the Housing and Growth Committee and no formal referral could take place.
5. That the Committee noted that officers are meeting with local business to work out what they need to get them through a second lock-down and that an update on this would be provided within the recovery plan report.
6. That the recovery report would include an identification of opportunities for growth within Town Centres.
7. That the Committee noted that engagement with local faith and community groups was happening and that the Council would work with volunteers that normally run the winter night shelters and that an update on this work would be highlighted in the recovery plan report.
8. The Leader agreed for the report on the impact to Barnet of the Government's 'Planning for the Future' document to be shared with the Committee.
9. That the Committee noted that the Leader had raised Barnet's concerns around the context of the some of the proposals within the 'Planning for the Future' consultation and that the government were listening and taking into consideration all concerns raised by Councils.

13. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

14. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 20.32.



Housing and Growth Committee

24th November 2020

Title

Member's Items

Cllr Sara Conway – Forum of RSL's in Barnet

Cllr Ross Houston – Town centres and enterprise

Cllr Kath McGuirk – North Finchley Regeneration

Cllr Paul Edwards – Evictions and housing support

Report of

Head of Governance

Wards

All Wards

Status

Public

Urgent

No

Key

No

Enclosures

None

Officer Contact Details

Abigail Lewis, 020 8359 4369, Abigail.Lewis@barnet.gov.uk

Summary

. The Committee is requested to consider the item and give instruction to Officers.

Officers Recommendation

That the Housing and Growth Committee's instructions in relation to these Member's Items are requested.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Members of the Committee have requested that the items tabled below are submitted to the Housing and Growth Committee for considering and determination. The Housing and Growth Committee are requested to provide instructions to Officers of the Council as recommended.

Cllr Sara Conway	Forum of RSL's in Barnet We are now in a second lockdown, albeit with different restrictions, but once again people are being asked to spend as much time as possible at home. Further lockdowns and circuit-breakers may follow for some time. Given all the ongoing issues regarding fire safety, cladding and building / estate management across the Borough, I ask that Committee establishes a forum or mechanism for cross-party members of the committee to meet RSLs and raise community safety and other priority issues directly with them and report back to this committee.
Cllr Ross Houston	Town Centres and enterprise I request the Committee receives an update on work to build back better and greener in our town centres and support local enterprise during and following the pandemic. In particular I would like the Committee to be advised what additional measures the Council is undertaking, over and above any national initiatives, to sustain hard hit businesses in our town centres and high streets. Some businesses have been disproportionately hit by the Covid-19 lockdown and slow recoveries. Many people are wary of visiting businesses such as hairdressers when restrictions ease - the National Hair & Beauty Federation warned 30 per cent of beauty sector businesses could face permanent closure if there were a second lockdown, which we are now in. We have already seen closures in Ballards Lane.
Cllr Kath McGuirk	North Finchley Regeneration I request that the Committee is given an update on the proposed North Finchley Regeneration Scheme. Are there any plans to establish the agreed partnership board? It would be good to at least

	start getting the input of local businesses, residents and organisations into possible future plans.
Cllr Paul Edwards	Evictions and Housing support I request that the Committee receives an update on housing support during the pandemic, including impact of recent housing benefit changes on people in receipt, rent arrears in the social rented sector across Barnet and evictions overall.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 No recommendations have been made. The Committee are therefore requested to give consideration and provide instruction.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 N/A

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Post decision implementation will depend on the decision taken by the Committee.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 As and when issues raised through a Member's Item are progressed, they will need to be evaluated against the Corporate Plan and other relevant policies.

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

- 5.2.1 None in the context of this report.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 A Member (including Members appointed as substitutes by Council) will be permitted to have one matter only (with no sub-items) on the agenda for a meeting of a committee or Sub-Committee on which s/he serves. The matter must be relevant to the terms of reference of the committee.
- 5.3.2 The referral of a motion from Full Council to a committee will not count as a Member's Item for the purposes of this rule.

5.4 Risk Management

5.4.1 None in the context of this report.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity


5.5.1 Members' Items allow Members of a Committee to bring a wide range of issues to the attention of a Committee in accordance with the Council's Constitution. All of these issues must be considered for their equalities and diversity implications.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

5.6.1 None in the context of this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Email received on the 12th November 2020 from Political Assistant.

	<p style="text-align: right;">AGENDA ITEM 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Housing & Growth Committee 24 November 2020</p>
Title	COVID-19: Recovery Plan – Thriving
Report of	Chairman of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	Yes
Key	Yes
Enclosures	None
Officer Contact Details	<p>Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive, cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Susan Curran, Head of Housing and Regeneration, susan.curran@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Jamie Robinson, Head of Business, Employment & Skills, Jamie.robinson@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Elliot Sweetman, Group Director, Operations & Property, The Barnet Group, Elliott.sweetman@barnethomes.org</p>

Summary
Housing and Growth Committee is the lead committee for the Thriving workstream of the council's Recovery Plan. This report provides an update to Committee on progress across a

number of core themes under the workstream: Town Centres; Employment and Skills; Digital Connectivity and Homelessness.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the Committee note 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 900,000 cases and 45,000 deaths nationally, and the restrictions put in place have led to challenges relating to economic growth, employment, education and mental health.
- 1.2 The report to Committee on 14 September 2020 set out the programme of recovery planning in response to challenges facing the council, the borough and its residents. The programme is split into five workstreams which are based around the cross-cutting themes of the council's emerging Corporate Plan. The themes are:
 1. Thriving
 2. Family Friendly
 3. Healthy
 4. Clean, Safe and Well Run
 5. Prevention

This report provides an update to Housing and Growth Committee on the Thriving workstream, including, town centres schemes, business engagement, skills and jobs and digital connectivity. It also provides an update on items requested by the committee, including the ban on evictions, support to businesses in town centres in light of the second lockdown, and rough sleeping.

Town Centres

- 1.3 As highlighted in the Growth Strategy that was approved by Housing and Growth Committee in January, Barnet's town centres already faced a number of challenges prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. These included changes in the retail sector and consumer habits, a lack of diversity in the local offer, increasing numbers of vacant units, fragmented ownership and traffic-dominated environments. Covid-19, and the associated lockdowns, have undoubtedly caused an acceleration of this decline but new patterns and opportunities have also emerged. These include people commuting less and living and working more locally. The fragmented ownerships within town centres also allow for a diverse range of retail unit sizes which offers some potential for start-up businesses and pop up / meanwhile uses.

1.4 In order to continue to respond effectively to the pandemic, officers continue to take a cross cutting approach to the recovery response, this includes reviewing data, such as footfall and vacancy rates to obtain an understanding of the impacts on town centres. The report to Committee in September report set out a number of key workstreams and activities, an update on these is provided below:

- **Town Centre Operations** –The council is continuing to support social distancing on the high street in accordance with the changes of government public health guidance to ensure our town centres remain safe to visit and to work in.
- **Cycling in Town Centres** – Following the update provided in the report to Committee in September 2020, works have started onsite at the end of September to deliver the temporary, light segregated cycle lane along the A1000 between the boundary with LB Haringey to just south of North Finchley Town Centre. The installation of this cycle lane is expected to be completed in early November. Following completion, the council will to monitor and evaluate the impact of the measure.
- **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods & School Streets** – This workstream is focused on supporting social distancing requirements outside Barnet schools to ensure that children can return safely. Following securing funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) nine school streets have been implemented across the borough to ensure children are able to return to school safely. Following the success of the scheme, the council has secured an additional £30,000 from the DFT to support the delivery of further school streets at 3 schools in Colindale – Blessed Dominic, St James and Saracens school. Work is underway to implement these now.
- **Communications** – This workstream ensures that there is a joined-up approach to communication with key stakeholders. The council is continuing to provide regular communication with high street businesses to inform them of relevant public health messaging, upcoming changes around government messaging and signposting them towards potential funding and grants available to support business. Recent initiatives include informing businesses of their obligation to use the test and trace app, leaflet drops around the Tier 2 restrictions and providing case studies of best practice for hairdressers and restaurants on social media.

The council is preparing a second phase of the high-profile ‘Discover Barnet: Shop Safely, Shop Local campaign’. The campaign encourages the public to support local town centres while observing Covid-secure measures.

According to campaign data, the first phase reached at least half of Barnet’s population, who were exposed to the campaign message 1-5 times. There were more than 200,000 engagements – that is people ‘liking’, ‘sharing’ or commenting on the campaign’s digital case studies. This far exceeded expectations, having at least twice the level of audience impact as previous largescale LBB campaigns. Anecdotally, the effectiveness has been attributed to the hyper-local targeting and the quality of the case studies used to promote the message. The intention is to reach these people and more in the second phase of the campaign.

- **Funding and grants** – There have been no recent grants made available for the council to bid for. A decision on the £1.3million bid to Transport for London / Department for Transport COVID-19 Emergency Active Travel Fund – Tranche

Two is still awaited. As indicated in the report to Committee on 14 September 2020, it is important to note that current – and likely future – funding from government to support Covid-19 recovery is generally focused on ‘shovel ready’ projects, i.e. those that are fully scoped and can be delivered within a relatively short space of time.

1.5 Update on additional town centre projects to support recovery and long-term strategic objectives

- **Pilot New Markets** – Due to issues arising around the tightening of restrictions with COVID-19 there has been a delay to the programme for the pilot of the three new Markets as set out in the previous paper within Finchley Central, Golders Green and North Finchley to February 2021. A large reason for this delay was around trader confidence in investing in new equipment at this uncertain time. In response the council is working with the operator to host trader workshops with potential new and existing traders over the month of November. This opportunity will be advertised via the council’s social media channels, via our CTN bulletin, Middlesex University and the Arts Depot.
- **Temporary Streetspace Fund** – Since launching the initiative in late August the Council have received 25 successful applications from Barnet Businesses and have completed the installation of 25 temporary barriers and parklets to create a safe, attractive and enclosed space for these businesses to trade from. Officers continue to support businesses to activate their spaces and will monitor the impact this funding has for the businesses. The application for this fund has now closed, however the council has set up an expression of interest page to allow further businesses to inform us of their ongoing demand so the Council continue to support businesses and will be keeping a list to consider hosting a second round in the new year. In the meantime, if other businesses apply, they will be directed towards accessing a temporary license for a three-month period. Following the expiry of the licence, businesses will be able to apply for a renewal.

Update on what local businesses need to get them through a second lockdown

- 1.6 Since the beginning of the pandemic, the prospect of a second wave of COVID-19 has been understood. With the recent news of the second lockdown businesses across the country will again be significantly impacted over the coming months.
- 1.7 The council will continue to support businesses to make sure our town centres remain safe and accessible spaces to visit. Social distancing measures already implemented will continue to be reviewed and further actions to ensure people are able to maintain social distancing whilst visiting our town centres will be considered. Another barrier for many wanting to visit and dwell in the town centre, especially vulnerable, families and elderly residents, is the concern around access to public conveniences in our Town Centres. The council is currently developing a Community Toilet Scheme that aims to pilot an initiative to work with businesses through an incentivised model to encourage them to open their businesses as a publicly accessible convenience during hours of operation.

- 1.8 During the first lockdown the council offered three months relief to its commercial tenants. A total rent relief of £271,470.60 was requested by tenants. A further period of rent relief is being considered.
- 1.9 The relevant provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 apply to the vast majority of commercial leases, but not most leases for terms of less than six months. They prevent landlords from taking any action to forfeit for non-payment of rents or other sums, including service charges and insurance rent, from 26 March until 31 December 2020. This period may yet be extended further. The Act provides that in any existing proceedings begun before 26 March there can be no order for possession before 31 December.
- 1.10 Despite sections 82 and 83, of the Act forfeiture by peaceable re-entry would still be available to a landlord for breaches unrelated to non-payment of rent or other sums due.
- 1.11 The Government have stated that after the second lockdown has ended, the Tier system will be reintroduced. As local lockdowns can be announced with very little warning, it is important to be well-informed. The council will continue to deliver business communications in a timely manner, utilising the online platform, internal mailing lists, letters, leaflets and engage in person with the ground teams made up of enforcement officers and town centre volunteers.
- 1.12 The second lockdown will impact the hospitality sector within the town centre which was already expected to work at reduced capacities of up to 50% and at reduced hours (closing by 10pm) as part of the Tier 2 restrictions. Beyond second lockdown, there is an opportunity to look to grow initiatives such as the Temporary Street Licensing and Temporary Streetspace Fund to help these businesses to continue to be able to trade outdoors where possible.
- 1.13 During the first lockdown there was a new demand for local deliveries from local retailers on the high street, this unlocked new opportunities for businesses to not only continue trading but also to reinvent their offer. This new demand to make last mile deliveries has been challenging for SME businesses required to fit the delivery around daily operation. The council are exploring this opportunity and aim to pilot an initiative to zero-emissions last mile delivery service to support businesses to sell their products locally.
- 1.14 To help understand the impact of COVID 19 on Barnet's town centres and to help inform new priorities and initiatives, footfall data is being procured, and trends in vacancy rates are being reviewed.

Identification of opportunities for growth within town centres

- 1.15 The Growth Strategy, which was adopted in January 2020, sets out the ambitions for growth in town centres and acknowledges that changes in the retail sector and the wider economy mean town centres need to change in order to survive. COVID-19 has accelerated the need to diversify the mix of uses in town centres, encouraging footfall throughout the day and evening. Town centres will still remain retail centres, albeit on a reduced scale, but should have a far wider range of service provision, including recreation

and leisure, food and entertainment, as well as much improved office space, new housing covering all tenures, health and community facilities, arts and culture provision.

Skills and Jobs

- 1.16 Responding to the unprecedented skills and employment impacts of COVID-19 is a high priority in Barnet, as is the case with other boroughs. We know that many individuals and households have had their working lives disrupted by the pandemic and that this has the potential to have a lasting impact on communities.
- 1.17 The number of Universal Credit claimants in Barnet in September 2020 was 18,800. This is three times higher than in September 2019 (5,805 claimants)¹. In part, the forecast increases are due to the number of residents that have been placed on furlough, now standing at 61,000², a significant increase on the previously reported figure of 48,500.
- 1.18 The council has recruited a dedicated Welfare, Employment and Skills Manager to lead on employment initiatives for local residents and to coordinate and streamline activity across the borough. Key workstreams already underway include:
 - Launch of a new Jobs Portal on the council website³, signposting to a range of employment and skills support and other useful advice for local residents. It also directs users to the council's jobs site.
 - Delivery of the JETS (Job Entry Targeted Support) programme, a £238 million UK government initiative dedicated to supporting those left jobless due to Covid-19. The programme provides a 'light touch' employment support offer to anyone of working age, over 18, who has been in receipt of benefits for at least 13 weeks. Support includes specialist advice on how people can move into growing sectors, as well as CV and interview coaching. In West London, JETS is being delivered by The Shaw Trust with the BOOST Project responsible for delivery in Barnet. The programme launched in October and the first 47 referrals are now being processed. Council Economic Development staff are in close contact with Shaw Trust and BOOST as the programme develops.
 - Supporting delivery of the government's Kickstart programme which offers young people under 25 to access six-month, paid work experience with local employers. The programme is now going live with opportunities available from mid-November. The council has committed to offering 30 placements itself, is referring local businesses to intermediary organisations that can help them to secure recruits and is exploring opportunities to support the voluntary sector specifically to participate in the scheme.

Supporting homelessness reduction

¹ https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157261/subreports/cc_time_series/report.aspx?

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-statistics-august-2020/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-statistics-august-2020>

³ <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-information-and-advice/employment-skills-and-financial-help-covid-19-0>

1.19 A commitment to homelessness reduction is a core part of both the Healthy and Thriving workstreams of the council's Recovery Plan. Officers are focused on ensuring that the needs of the borough's rough sleepers are assessed and that ongoing housing solutions can be found to meet these. There are a number of strands to this work, as follows.

- **Rough sleepers** – Barnet currently accommodates 130 rough sleepers. All have been individually assessed and their health and support needs captured. As would be expected, in some cases there are challenges with engagement which makes planning their next steps more difficult, however Barnet Homes have already successfully placed 22 rough sleepers into suitable private rented sector accommodation. All of those placed into accommodation are provided with appropriate floating support arrangements.

Barnet Homes' outreach teams are reporting on average 2-3 new rough sleepers per week which is much lower than during the lock down period and it is assessed that there are 14 rough sleepers currently still on the streets in Barnet. Those 14 are generally already known to services and are particularly difficult to engage with, however efforts to do so continue.

Barnet Homes submitted a bid to the governments £105m Next Steps Accommodation Programme to provide support to those rough sleepers already accommodated and has been awarded £1.04m from this fund. This will pay towards temporary accommodation costs, additional floating support resources and assisting with incentives to landlords. Barnet Homes has also been successful in their bid to the GLA Rough Sleeper Accommodation Pathway fund, securing £1.95m to support the purchase of 15 studio properties into their subsidiary Opendoor Homes. These studios will be used to house only rough sleepers. Barnet Homes are still awaiting the outcome of a third funding bid which was to Public Health England for £250k to provide drug and alcohol support to rough sleepers with complex needs.

The North London Housing Partnership of which Barnet is a member was also successful in a bid to the Next Steps Accommodation Programme to set up a New to the Streets Service and European Economic Area (EEA) national hub. The accommodation will be located in student halls in the borough and will provide support to new rough sleepers across the sub region. Clients to the service will have their needs assessed before being referred on to their originating borough. The EEA national hub will help to get "work ready" rough sleepers into employment and therefore eligible for further assistance.

On 5th November, MHCLG launched the 'Protect Programme', with a further £15 million allocated to support the ongoing efforts to provide accommodation for rough sleepers during the pandemic, and in particular help areas that need additional support most during the restrictions and throughout winter. Barnet Homes await more detail on the programme, including the process for submitting funding bids.

- **Supporting those who do not qualify for public assistance** – Assistance continues to be provided via Citizens Advice and Homeless Action in Barnet (HAB) to help EEA nationals who do not qualify for public assistance to seek settled status. Barnet Homes also has employment support specifically for EEA nationals to

enable some rough sleepers to get into work and then become eligible for further support.

Non-EEA nationals who are eligible for Legal Aid are being referred to immigration solicitors for advice and support. There is also now the EEA national hub highlighted above which our rough sleeper team can refer into.

- **Preventing a return to homelessness** – Barnet has moved away from the use of commercial hotels and has been extending placements in the current units of accommodation into the next year. The Next Steps Accommodation Programme funding is providing further support roles to help sustain rough sleepers in accommodation and help to move them on into the private rented sector. In addition, HAB and Together in Barnet (TiB) continue to provide support and deliver food to help safeguard the wellbeing of rough sleepers.
- **Planning beyond current funding arrangements** – Barnet Homes, Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS, Public Health, Adult Social Care and Homeless Action in Barnet (HAB) are working together to complete a needs assessment to inform the accommodation and support needs of Barnet's rough sleeper cohort. A mixture of accommodation options will be required including private rented accommodation with both floating support and more intensive wrap around support together with a limited amount of high support accommodation for those with complex needs. The high need cases have been referred into mental health services and options for pathways for these vulnerable adults are being discussed across services. Barnet Homes also has government funding to develop a Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub and the current rough sleeper hostel in Friern Barnet Road is being refurbished to deliver this service. The service should be starting in the new year and will have dedicated support and a night-time concierge service for rough sleepers.
- **The role of night shelters during Covid-19 restrictions** – Barnet Homes, HAB and Together In Barnet (TiB) meet weekly to discuss operational issues around supporting rough sleepers, including how a night shelter may be provided during the colder months. Recently published government guidance for providers of night shelters is clear in that a location for shelters should be fixed rather than the revolving night shelters that TiB have previously offered. Night shelter provision is however critically important for those rough sleepers who have no recourse to assistance or those who can't access support because they are not deemed vulnerable under the homeless legislation. TiB is currently working on a proposal to place ten self-contained pods in the grounds of Trinity Church and is being supported by Public Health and Barnet Homes in their bid to the Homeless Winter Transformation Fund. The volunteers at HAB and TiB continue to provide invaluable support with delivering food parcels and other options for supporting rough sleepers are being discussed in weekly operational meetings.

Ban on evictions

- 1.20 Since the beginning of the COVID-19 lockdown arrangements, Barnet Homes have employed an approach of providing additional support to tenants experiencing difficulties paying their rent. This involves working with tenants on a case by case basis to ensure that where arrears do exist sensible payment plans are in place, access to welfare benefits and

employment support are maximised and communication with residents remains frequent and through a range of channels. Importantly, no council tenants have been evicted for non-payment of rent since the national lock-down began.

- 1.21 In line with government directives, Barnet Homes ceased the serving of legal notices relating to rent arrears between March and June 2020. From the beginning of July 2020, legal notices have been served on a case by case basis with service manager approval. The purpose of sending these notices is to remind tenants who have not engaged with the income service to do so, in order that appropriate support and/or arrangements to pay can be put into place.

The Barnet Homes collection procedure considers two main factors:

- 1: A tenant's ability to pay
- 2: A tenant's commitment to doing so

Ability to pay

- 1.22 Customers falling into arrears fall into one of three groups, according to their ability to pay. First there are those who have the money to pay when they fall into arrears and are still in a position to pay if attempts to negotiate a reasonable payment plan are exhausted. At the other extreme are tenants who simply do not have the money to pay. In between is a third group, those who are able to pay when they fall into arrears but, as a result of a change in circumstances, they can no longer afford to do so when we are at the later stages of the collection process.
- 1.23 Those customers who are unable to pay due to a change in their circumstances will receive the required support from Barnet Homes and referrals to the appropriate internal and external agencies for additional support. Sustainable payment plans are agreed on a case by case basis. All customers who have been severely impacted by Covid-19 and are currently at court or legal stage will receive the required support with a view of sustaining the tenancy. We will then review the cases on a case by case basis before considering any legal action.

Commitment to pay

- 1.24 The situation with regard to the commitment to pay is more diverse. The majority of people who fall into rent arrears generally have every intention to pay on time, but simply lack the money to do so. These include people on low incomes who face unexpected expenditure; people who have had a sudden substantial fall in income leaving them unable to meet all their commitments; and people with personal considerations such as mental health issues which impair their ability to manage their finances.
- 1.25 Those customers who are not willing to pay but are able to pay can be categorised as "won't pay". These customers will receive the same support as described above but if the rent arrears increase, appropriate action will be taken in line with the rent recovery process and the Pre-action protocol. Barnet Homes will still continue to contact customers and provide the required support and attempt different mediums of contact in order to do so.
- 1.26 An income analytics tool is used to prioritise cases which may require more support or casework including case monitoring meetings.

- 1.27 The primary objective for Barnet Homes will continue to be to maximise income, reduce debt and sustain tenancies by adopting a supportive and holistic approach to income management.

New guidance and Direction

- 1.28 The court service has now set a new Practice Direction PD-55C, which came into force from 20 September 2020 until March 2021 inclusive. This direction sets guidance on issuing possession claims exploring the impact of COVID-19. For any claims brought before 3 August 2020 for which re-listing is sought, a reactivation notice is required to be filed and served.
- 1.29 Although Barnet Homes are preparing for relisting cases for possession, it will be a long process before court hearing dates are granted. As a national lockdown commenced on 5 November no evictions will take place for the foreseeable future.
- 1.30 The Government has also asked for no evictions to take place during the Christmas period which has been defined as 11 December 2020 until 11 January 2021 inclusive. There will be a limited list of exemptions to the pause in evictions during this period.
- 1.31 The Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers (RPs) which sets out further detail on how other Registered Providers have been responding to the ban on evictions.

Anticipating future increases in homelessness

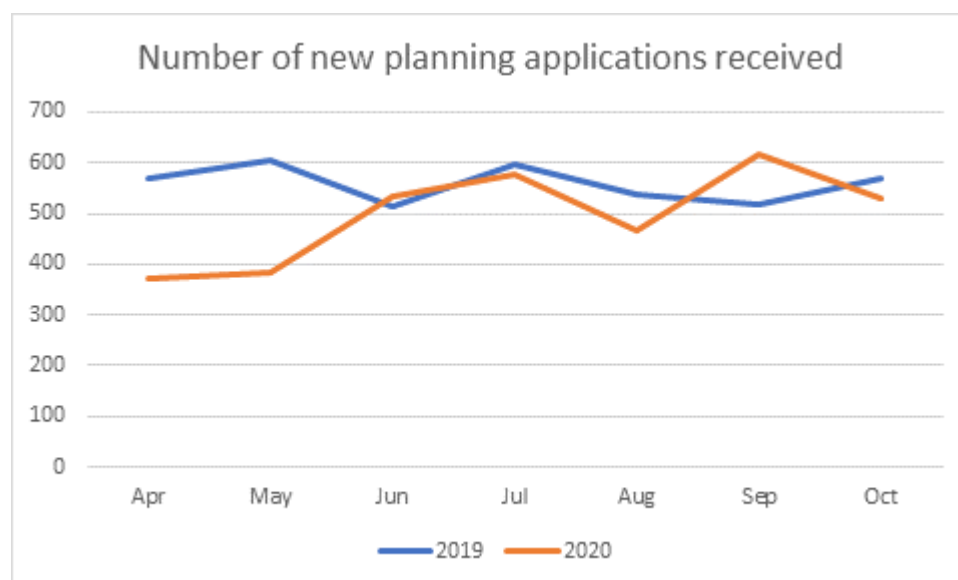
- 1.32 It is difficult to gauge the future impact of the pandemic on homelessness and whether landlords will take immediate steps to commence eviction proceedings, once they are able to. Landlords deciding to evict tenants not only face long delays due to the back log of cases already in the court system, but also the costs of eviction proceedings and the associated reletting process. There is likely to be an impact from new administration and regulation for both courts and landlords and the likely errors and delays these will cause, as well as the added complications of remote hearings all add to the uncertainty. In these circumstances and with no indication of the courts increasing capacity to hold more hearings, there is unlikely to be a significant increase in evictions from the courts in the near future.
- 1.33 Barnet Homes provides a tenancy sustainment service as well as the BOOST project, which delivers employment and benefit support services to help households facing difficulties. These interventions will help to reduce homelessness demand. Barnet Homes has specialised officers working with tenants in the PRS and landlords to support them with any concerns or issues they may face. Early intervention is key to preventing homelessness and Barnet Homes will be working with partners to ensure that information is available and accessible and that there are clear pathways for residents that need support.
- 1.34 Barnet Homes is working closely with the council's Business, Employment and Skills Team to ensure that the BOOST offer is tailored to meet the cohorts with greatest need. BOOST offers engagement and advice including triage and referrals to partners, youth employment and careers, mental health support, welfare benefits advice and access to Discretionary Housing Payments. The wide range of partners linked to BOOST allows for expanded services and increased capacity, for example, clients can be referred to Twining if they

have more serious mental health needs and support to sustain work. These partners include, Citizens Advice Bureau, Work and Health Programme, Twining Enterprise, Change Grow Live Barnet, Volunteer Barnet, Debt Free London and National Careers Service.

Barnet's Housing Market

- 1.35 In terms of the housing market more broadly, there is evidence from Rightmove that, despite uncertainty associated with COVID-19, house prices have risen slightly on average across the borough over the twelve months to October 2020. This is supported by official government data that shows a 0.3% increase in property prices over the twelve months to June 2020[1]. It should be noted that this rise is against a national context of lower overall activity in the housing market in terms of both new properties coming on to market and the volume of sales.
- 1.36 In October 2020, Property Industry Eye reported that there has been a surge in demand for properties in outer London. Research from Rightmove shows a trend in recent months for people selling up in the inner London zones and moving further out.
- 1.37 This picture is consistent with planning data from Barnet, with strong demand for pre-application discussions from developers over the summer and autumn, suggesting a longer-term confidence in the local housing market. This is reinforced by figure one below, which shows the volume of planning applications received by the council between June and October 2020 was comparable with the same months a year earlier:

Figure 1: New planning applications received 2019 and 2020



- 1.38 Analysis of commuter lines in London shows that further out you go by zone the greater the increase in year-on-year demand, according to Rightmove. Northern locations of the Northern line are performing more strongly than the southern locations, and there is a clear dip in demand for home buying along the zone 1 stations.

- 1.39 Property market statistics will be monitored as part of the recovery programme, forming part of a suite of economic indicators being gathered on a regular basis from December 2020.

Digital connectivity programme

- 1.40 The digital connectivity programme has continued at pace through Q2 with the preparation of the Wayleave Framework documentation noted in the Enabling Digital Infrastructure report to Housing and Growth Committee in September 2020. The delivery of pilot phases for fibre broadband rollout programmes is expected to begin from January/February 2021. A clearer position of the number of homes that could be connected across the borough should be available early in 2021 following further discussions with providers.
- 1.41 Focused work around Digital Inclusion has also begun to be further explored since the September Committee and this has identified that, in addition to the social value commitments (free or low-cost connections and digital skills training programmes) secured through the wayleave agreements, there are several potential further means of unlocking affordable connectivity and digital skills support services for digitally excluded residents. We are seeking useful data from suppliers relating to the extent of take-up of the currently available low-cost broadband services (such as BT Basic and Virgin Essentials); in order to understand the extent to which these directly accessible benefits are meeting local need, and the remaining gap/s linked to affordability of access to digital connectivity. Opportunities for providing advertising-driven free Wi-Fi services to residents in some higher-density areas of the borough are also being explored.
- 1.42 In addition to the wayleave and Wi-Fi partnership opportunities, the council has been directly engaging with development partners and their subcontractors around their interest and potential to provide direct support for affordable connectivity to their local communities. This could involve free or low-cost household connections (via 4G dongles), together with potentially the Department of Work and Pensions match-funding support for IT equipment where households do not have the devices to enable them to effectively access support services and work.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 As noted, the council is taking a comprehensive, cross-service approach to Covid-19 recovery. All measures and interventions set out above directly support the borough's Recovery Plan, as approved by Policy and Resources Committee on 17 June 2020.
- 2.2 Additionally, all measures outlined in this report align with council strategy and priorities, for example, as set out in the Corporate Plan, 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 The council could opt not to support economic recovery throughout the Covid-19 emergency. This would, however, see the failure of many more Barnet companies, leading to deeper and longer-lasting social and economic impacts within the borough than would

otherwise be the case. It would also likely have a negative impact on council revenue streams through Business Rates.

- 3.2 The council could opt not to support those facing or experiencing unemployment or homelessness. However, as noted, this would lead to long-term consequences and impacts on households, mental health and demand for public sector services.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following Committee, officers will continue to support economic recovery as part of the council-wide Recovery Framework. Any individual decisions and actions will be taken by Housing and Growth Committee, the Chairman and Senior Officer in line with the relevant scheme of delegation.
- 4.2 In town centres, officers will continue to develop and deliver initiatives set out in the report, drawing on approved resources within the Town Centres Capital Fund and other funds such as Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy where possible. As part of this, officers will continue to scope the future pipeline of projects to ensure that we are in a more favourable position to access external grant funding.
- 4.3 Officers will assess the impact of projects throughout project delivery. Evaluation of proposed interventions will be used to inform the future vision for town centres which addresses the long-term issues and trends in line with the Growth Strategy.
- 4.4 Following Committee, officers will continue to maintain regular communication with relevant stakeholder groups – notably businesses, Members and residents – in accordance with the programme of work.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1 The council's response to Covid-19 and its impacts on businesses directly support objectives in the Corporate Plan 2024, particularly "Supporting local businesses to thrive", as well as objectives set out in the Growth Strategy 2020-30 and the Long-Term Transport Strategy.
- 5.2 Proposals outlined in this report also support adopted council policy and strategies for individual town centres. Finchley Central, Golders Green and North Finchley Town Centres are among Barnet's seven main town centres, as set out in the Entrepreneurial Barnet Strategy. All three have Town Centre Spatial Planning Guidance and/or adopted Town Centre Strategies that identify the locations proposed as key opportunities for market trading. These strategies and plans have been developed in consultation with residents, traders, and other key stakeholder and community groups in town centres.

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

- 5.3 The report to Housing and Growth Committee in September 2020 set some of the committed expenditure for town centre projects. Plans are being developed for expenditure of the remaining Town Centre Capital Funds.
- 5.4 The council will procure service contractor(s) in accordance with Barnet's Procurement Procedures, its Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 to support the delivery of all associated capital works identified in this report.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 Where there are financial implications or decisions associated with recovery activities, these will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The delivery of recovery actions in support of business will be undertaken within the existing capacity and resources of the council.

Social Value

- 5.7 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

- 5.8 The council's Constitution, Article 7.5 Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, sets out the functions of the Housing and Growth Committee:
- Responsibility for housing matters including strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, commissioning of environmental health functions for private sector housing, regeneration strategy and oversee major regeneration schemes, asset management, employment strategy, business support and engagement.
 - To receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services, under the remit of the Committee.
- 5.9 Any procurement activity will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 as applicable; any procurement exercise will also be subject to the EU Treaty principles of equal treatment, fairness and non-discrimination. If the council chooses to use an existing Framework Agreement to appoint a contractor to deliver the services, it must comply with the requirements of the Framework Agreement. In accordance with Rule 5.4 of the Contract Procedure Rules, before entering into a call-off contract under a Framework Agreement due diligence checks must be carried out to demonstrate that the Council can lawfully

access the Framework Agreement and that it is fit for purpose and provides value for money.

Risk Management

- 5.10 The council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. Strategic and operational risks are being reviewed in light of our response to Covid-19 and priorities for recovery and the new Corporate Plan. Managing risk will be an essential part of programme management and will be used to inform key decisions relating to economic recovery.
- 5.11 There is a risk that there will be resistance from the community with regards to some proposals in town centres. All work identified in this report builds directly on priorities already identified through strategies that have been consulted on and the Council has allowed for ongoing community and stakeholder engagement throughout the delivery of these projects.

Equalities and Diversity

- 5.12 The Equality 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.
- 5.13 Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- 5.14 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) on a case-by-case basis to fully appraise the impacts associated with any proposed course of action.

Corporate Parenting

- 5.15 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 be considered as specific plans for recovery are further developed.

Consultation and Engagement

- 5.16 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.

- 5.17 In addition to the consultation set out in the report to Committee on 14 September 2020 a series of engagement activities have been undertaken to support the Finchley Central Square project. This has included:
- the establishment of a new community working group
 - online surveys which have generated over 150 responses
 - consultation with over 130 people at pop-up market stall on Saturday 10 October
 - a project mailing list of over 245 local groups, businesses and individuals
- 5.18 To support the community's ability to engage during the pandemic, the project has also launched a new project website to provide project updates and a platform to host ongoing online consultation activities. A Town Centre Business Directory has been integrated into the website that currently hosts thirty-one businesses located within Finchley Central. The council continues to promote these platforms utilising the boroughs social media platforms and project specific platforms and so far, have reached an audience to date of over 7500 people.

Insight

- 5.18 There is an opportunity in the recovery phase to significantly improve the way in which we use data, insight and analysis to drive decision making and service delivery.
- 5.19 Officers are currently in the process of establishing a cross-service insight approach that will enable this to happen. At present council-wide insight requirements are being mapped and questions of each service in order to structure further insight and data analysis.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

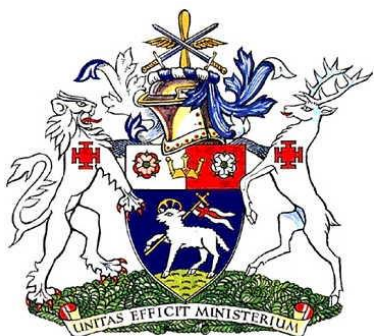
- 6.1 Urgency Committee, 27 April 2020: Approval of Emergency Decisions and Delegation to Chief Officers
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s58641/Urgency%20Committee%20-%20Emergency%20Decisions%20Final.pdf>
- 6.2 Policy & Resources Committee, 17 June 2020: Covid-19 Recovery Planning
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s58985/Covid-19%20Recovery%20Planning.pdf>
- 6.2 Council Budget 2018/19 Financial Forward Plan and Capital Programme, Appendix E2 Capital Programme by Delivery Unit:
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s45350/Appendix%20E2%20-%20Capital%20Programme%20by%20Delivery%20Unit.pdf>
- 6.3 Town Centres in Barnet (approved at Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee, March 2015):
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s21967/Town%20Centres%20in%20Barnet.pdf>
- 6.4 Town Centre Capital projects and update on Finchley Central Housing Infrastructure Fund project (approved at Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee September 2018):

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=9764&Ver=4>

- 6.5 Growth Strategy (Housing and Growth Committee, 27 January 2020):
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s52934/Growth%20Strategy.pdf>
- 6.6 Golders Green Town Centre Strategy (Housing and Growth Committee, 27 January 2020):
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s57507/Golders%20Green%20Town%20Centre%20Strategy%20and%20update%20on%20Finchley%20Central%20Housing%20Infrastructure%20Fund.pdf>
- 6.7 Finchley Central Town Centre Strategy (Housing and Growth Committee):
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s43517/Appendix%20%20%20Finchley%20Central%20Town%20Centre%20Strategy.pdf>
- 6.8 Temporary Strategy for Street Trade Licensing and Town Centre Streetspace Fund, Delegated Powers Report:
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7503>
- 6.9 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>

Covid1

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Housing and Growth Committee

25 November 2020

Title	Business Planning 2020-25
Report of	Chairman of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix A – Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Savings Proposals for Committee Appendix B - Fees & Charges
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Summary

A Business Planning report was agreed by Policy and Resources Committee on 24th September 2020 outlining the council's updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2024/25 and the future financial challenges facing the council.

P&R Committee also agreed the process whereby Theme Committees will consider the response to this challenge in November, by considering savings proposals to balance council's budget (the same process as used in previous years). The paper set out the estimated savings requirements across Theme Committees for the period 2020-25.

Since then and taking account of the emerging national and local situation with the Covid pandemic, work has continued on the MTFS as a whole and specifically the budget for 2021/22. There is currently a shortfall in savings for 2021/22 £5.618m.

The approved savings for 2020/21 have also been reviewed for deliverability and any implications for future years.

This report asks the Committee to agree to the revenue savings proposals brought forward and service pressure identified, and also to approve changes to Fees and Charges. The outcomes of all theme committee discussions will go forward as recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee in December 2020.

Officers Recommendations

- 1) That the Housing and Growth Committee consider the MTFS proposals that relate to the committee as set out in Appendix A after having considered the initial equalities impacts and refer these recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee for decision.**
- 2) That the Committee notes the changes to the fees and charges 2021/22 set out in Appendix B that will be included in the budget proposals submitted to Policy and Resources Committee for recommendation to and for final approval by Full Council.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 Executive Summary

1.1.1 This report is required as part of the council's annual business planning process.

1.1.2 The Committee's approval is requested for:

- Savings proposals within its authority so they can then be recommended to Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee to set a balanced budget for 2021/22 and contribute to the MTFS savings 2021/22 – 2022/25
- Proposed changes to Fees and Charges which will be included in the budget proposals submitted to Policy and Resources Committee.

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 Background to 2021/22 Business Planning

2.1.1 The council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget for the coming financial year and uses the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to estimate the budget position for the following three years. Savings proposals for future years should be identified via an ongoing process and proposed to Committee. Savings proposals for all years are proposed through Theme committees, then P&R Committee, and finally to Full Council in March for approval.

2.1.2 Between 2010/11 to 2020/21, the council successfully identified savings proposals totalling c.£191m. In early March 2020, Full Council were presented and approved an estimated budget gap of £36.830m between 2021/22 to 2024/25. Accompanying this were savings proposals of £17.572m.

2.2 Approach to MTFS 2021-25

2.2.1 In June 2020, P&R Committee were presented with an update on the impacts of Covid and an introduction to the 2021/22 to 2024/25 MTFS process. A more detailed update on the MTFS was presented to September P&R committee with a revised budget gap and proposed savings identified to date. That report also included a recommendation for saving proposals to be presented to the relevant Theme committees in November for consideration.

2.2.2 Due to the challenges facing the council's services arising from the pandemic, and the uncertainty in the future trajectory of key budget areas (e.g. adult social care demand, on and off street parking, and the local economic outlook) a modified approach for the MTFS for 2021/22 to 2024/25 was proposed in October 2020. This will:

- a. Defer decisions on long-term funding for service pressures in 2021/22 until the likely future requirement is known with more certainty. Short term funding sources can be used (such as appropriate earmarked resources) until longer-term service needs are clearer;
- b. Prioritise finalising savings proposals to balance the revised 2021/22 budget gap;
- c. Continue, where possible, to identify and progress savings initiatives for 2022/23 to 2024/25.

2.2.3 In a situation of considerable uncertainty, this approach will prioritise balancing the 2021/22 budget with robust savings proposals without losing sight of the medium term financial outlook to 2024/25.

2.3 MTFS November Summary

2.3.1 As at November, the estimated budget gap between 2021/22 to 2024/25 is now £52.984m. Taking this revised budget gap with proposed savings to date, the shortfall to balancing 2021/22 and 2022/23 to 2024/25 is set out in the table below.

MTFS Summary	2021/22 £'m	2022/23 £'m	2023/24 £'m	2024/25 £'m	Total £'m
September Policy and Resources Budget Gap	27.272	18.017	9.961	6.035	61.285
Further revisions to the budget and service pressures since September	(12.192)	1.410	0.086	2.395	(8.301)
Revised Budget Gap at November	15.080	19.427	10.047	8.430	52.984
Savings Identified to date	(11.190)	(8.748)	(9.646)	(7.718)	(37.302)
Shortfall / (Surplus) to Balanced Budget	3.890	10.679	0.401	0.712	15.682

2.4 Committee Context

2.4.1 In January 2020, Housing and Growth Committee approved the council's Growth Strategy which responds to expected economic, social and environmental trends to 2030, including a significantly growing and aging local population, changes in the employment market and how we work, how we use our high streets, as well as environmental concerns. It recognises that more people will be working flexibly, and many will live in town centres with easier access to transport, shops, services, and leisure facilities.

2.4.2 The Growth Strategy sets out to address three key principles:

- Shape changes to places to secure healthy, resilient and cohesive communities; including focusing resources on the people and places identified as most in need of support and investment.
- Ensure sustainable development increases housing supply, invests in our local economy, and delivers infrastructure to address the needs of a changing population; including homes people can afford.
- Capitalise on development to ensure the benefits of growth are maximised for our residents; while helping the council to meet its savings targets.

2.4.3 While aligning with the council's Corporate Plan, the Growth Strategy, the Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Strategy work together to define the priorities in relation to housing, growth, development and regeneration.

2.4.4 This year has seen unprecedented challenges with the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns increasing demand for some services and preventing

others from operating at full capacity. More detail on recovery planning is set out in section 2.8 of this report.

2.4.5 In March and April, many of the onsite activities across the regeneration and development programmes paused for a period of time and although sites have been operational since the summer, they are unable to work at full capacity while following Covid-19 health and safety protocols. This could lead to delays in housing delivery.

2.4.6 COVID-19 has presented additional 2020/21 pressures relevant to this committee estimated (as at P7) at £3.403m in the general fund and £1.382m in the HRA. Of this, just £1.468m has been allocated to the authority in the form.

2.5 In year (2020/21) Management

2.5.1 Of the £2.836m savings taken from the 2020/21 (current year) base budget, just £1.829m is achievable, leaving a pressure of £1.007m. This is either fully mitigated in future years, is offset by a future year growth bid, or is a one-off undeliverable saving with no future impact. These unachievable savings are set out below:

Description of saving			
	Unachievable (in-year Pressure)	Ongoing Pressure	Comment
	£000	Y/N	
Moving from Barnet House to new offices in Colindale has created the opportunity to generate income from sub-letting Barnet House.	203	N	No commercial tenant realised; however, exiting lease on Barnet House will make a saving. This unachievable saving in 2020/21 will be offset from the saving offered in 2021/22
Increased income for full year of rent or hire fees for new lettings agreed part way through 19/20	77	N	Offered as part of the one-off supplier relief in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the original saving was put forward as £0.343m
Commercial property acquisitions for improved place shaping and to meet other strategic in-borough objectives, resulting in incidental income.	337	Y	Not achievable as cannot meet the hurdle rate without taking unreasonable risk. Options are being explored to re-categorise in future years and achieve through a PRS vehicle.
500 additional acquisitions of properties for use as affordable temporary accommodation by Open Door Homes supported by Loan from Council, as a cheaper alternative to existing temporary arrangements which utilise the private rented sector. Savings also enhanced by premium of 1.24% interest on loans	34	N	The acquisition of properties has slowed down during the pandemic

Description of saving			
	Unachievable (in-year Pressure)	Ongoing Pressure	Comment
	£000	Y/N	
made by the council to Open Door Homes.			
Transfer of 156 properties acquired by Council for use as affordable temporary accommodation to Open Door Homes. Savings achieved by charging premium of 1.24% interest on loans made by the council to Open Door Homes.	(80)	N	The savings generated have been reprofiled
Trickle transfer of 950 council homes to Open Door Homes. Savings achieved as Open Door Homes will pay an annual premium to the council for each property and make use of the asset base to fund the building of more affordable homes.	300	Y	The income generation proposal is no longer achievable due to a GLA decision and will not be taken forward. The ongoing pressure shall be mitigated by reviewing existing budgets
The proposal would see an additional 300 affordable homes acquired in Greater London through a lease and sale back model funded privately and ownership shall revert back to the council at lease expiry. Properties would be let with rents set at Local Housing Allowance rates. Provision of this affordable supply would result in increased temporary accommodation cost avoidance.	136	Y	This proposal, despite being put forward for 2020/21, is still being reviewed for approval noting the risks attached with any sale and leaseback deal. This is not achievable in 2020/21 and will remain an ongoing budget pressure unless agreed in the following financial year.

2.6 Housing and Growth Committee Savings

2.6.1 All proposed savings over the four financial years of the MTFS identified within the Committee's area of responsibility can be seen in Appendix A – MTFS Proposed Savings for 21/22. This totals £10.803m and is broken down as follows: £3.655m 2021/22, £2.009m 2022/23, £2.604m 2023/24, £2.535m 2024/25. They are broadly summarised below:

Efficiency Savings from exiting the leases for Barnet House and North London Business Park Building 2, and from reviewing energy contracts. These should all be achievable.

Growth and income. Additional income will be generated by renting out space in existing buildings on formal leases and on an ad-hoc room hire basis. Further additional income may be generated through rent reviews. The main risks to deliverability is around the changing market conditions and particularly the market for commercial office space in the wake of Covid-19.

New housing development. The council's housing delivery targets will substantially grow the Council Tax base if delivery is realised in a timely manner. The delivery of new affordable homes by Barnet Homes and Opendoor Homes also results in increased temporary accommodation cost avoidance and other revenue income from on-lending and dividend payments. The main risks to the deliverability of the savings proposals for 2021/22 relate to delays on site due to Covid-19 health and safety requirements and the potential impact of Brexit on the supply chain. New housing developments are also proposed on the sites of Watling Car Park, Bunns Lane Car Park and Northway/Fairway which will new revenue income from 2023/24, subject to the approval of business cases by Committee in the coming year. Rent will also be generated from new developments in Hendon.

2.6.2 Appendix A lists all proposed pressure funding and growth bids over the four financial years of the MTFS, this totals £3.451m and is broken down as follows: £1.814m 2021/22, £1.121m 2022/23, £0.516m 2023/24.

2.6.3 The net impact of the MTFS four-year savings plan is a budget reduction of £7.352m to 2024/25, taking into account both the savings and the pressures being proposed as appendices to this report. The baseline net reduction of £7.352m does not consider the effect of any inflationary (pay or non-pay) items.

2.7 Fees & Charges

2.7.1 Fees and charges are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the costs of chargeable services are covered, and the council is achieving value for money.

2.7.2 A number of fees and charges are being proposed for amendment that fall under the remit of this committee and will be included in the proposals submitted to Policy and Resources Committee. The vast majority are proposed to be kept at 2020/21 levels, either in line with statute or as a management decision. All fees and charges are listed in Appendix B.

Private Sector Housing Enforcement Team in Re

2.7.3 The Private Sector Housing fees and charges have been increased by inflation.

HRA leaseholder services

2.7.4 There are changes to fees and charges relating to HRA leaseholder services this year as set out in Appendix B.

Hendon Town Hall / Colindale office

- 2.7.5 There are no changes to fees and charges in relation to Hendon Town Hall and Colindale office this year

Land Charges

- 2.7.6 The Land Charges fees and charges have been increased by inflation.

Strategic Planning and Regeneration

- 2.7.7 The fees and charges in relation to Strategic Planning and Regeneration have been increased by inflation.

2.8 Recovery Plan

- 2.8.1 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 300,000 cases and 40,000 deaths nationally, while the lockdown that was required to save lives has led to challenges relating to the economic growth, employment, education and mental health.
- 2.8.2 The report to Housing and Growth Committee on 14 September 2020 set out the programme of recovery planning in response to challenges facing the council, the borough and its residents. The programme is split into five workstreams which are based around the cross-cutting themes of the council's emerging Corporate Plan. The themes are:
1. Thriving
 2. Family Friendly
 3. Healthy
 4. Clean, Safe and Well Run
 5. Prevention
- 2.8.3 Promoting equalities and diversity are important aspects of each of these themes.
- 2.8.4 Housing and Growth Committee is the lead committee for the Thriving workstream, which incorporates on: Housing and Development; Businesses and Town Centres; Employment and Skills; Infrastructure; and Climate Change.
- 2.8.5 In the immediate term, the workstream has focused on supporting town centre businesses by opening up public realm, managing space between different travel modes, queues and pavement trading; re-starting construction; stepping up existing employment, welfare support, and skills programmes; maintaining regular communication with businesses and networks, facilitating B2B support;

ensuring safe re-opening of places of worship. Over the longer term the workstream will prioritise developing the councils thinking on the future role of high streets given changes in retail and that more people will be working from, or closer to, home; understanding long-term impacts on the development of housing, commercial space and infrastructure, land use, and the economy, and supporting the emergence of new businesses and sectors including the low-carbon economy.

- 2.8.6 An update report setting out progress against the workstream was noted by Housing and Growth Committee on the 14 September 2020 and a follow up report is also on the agenda of Housing and Growth Committee on 24 November.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Local Government continues to face significant reductions in funding and increased demand for services, as set out in the above context. These challenges require longer term, robust financial and strategic planning and the recommendations in this report support this.
- 3.2 By law, the council is required to set a balanced budget. These proposals are the best way of doing that by meeting financial requirement and delivering outcomes and ambitions for Barnet.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 4.1 The alternative option is not to approve the MTFS. This, however, is not considered to be good practice and may expose the council to the risk of not achieving the savings targets or being able to set a balanced budget. There is a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget and submit budget returns to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

5. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 If the Housing and Growth Committee approves the recommendations made by this report, then the savings proposals will be referred to Policy and Resources Committee on 8th December 2020 as part of the council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Public consultation on the MTFS will commence in December.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

6.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 6.1.1 This report supports the council's corporate priorities as expressed through the Corporate Plan for 2019-24 which sets out our vision and strategy for the next 5 years. This includes the **outcomes** we want to achieve for the borough, the

priorities we will focus limited resources on, and our **approach** for how we will deliver this.

6.1.2 Our 3 outcomes for the borough focus on place, people and communities:

- a pleasant, well maintained borough that we protect and invest in
- our residents live happy, healthy, independent lives with the most vulnerable protected
- safe and strong communities where people get along well

6.1.3 The approach for delivering on this is underpinned by four strands; ensuring residents get a fair deal, maximising on opportunities, sharing responsibilities with the community and partners, and working effectively and efficiently.

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

6.2.1 The Housing and Growth Committee savings programme will enable the council to meet its savings target as set out in the MTFS. These budgets will be formally agreed each year, and individual proposals will be subject to appropriate consultation and equality impact assessments where necessary. For this reason, the proposals are subject to change.

6.3 **Social Value**

6.3.1 None applicable to this report, however 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. The Barnet living wage is an example of where the council has considered its social value powers.

6.4 **Legal and Constitutional References**

6.4.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that: “without prejudice to section 111, every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs”. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, relates to the subsidiary powers of local authorities.

6.4.2 Section 31A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires billing authorities to calculate their council tax requirements in accordance with the prescribed requirements of that section. This requires consideration of the authority’s estimated revenue expenditure for the year in order to perform its functions, allowances for contingencies in accordance with proper practices, financial reserves and amounts required to be transferred from general fund to collection fund.

- 6.4.3 Local authorities owe a fiduciary duty to council tax payers, which means it must consider the prudent use of resources, including control of expenditure, financial prudence in the short and long term, the need to strike a fair balance between the interests of council tax payers and ratepayers and the community's interest in adequate and efficient services and the need to act in good faith in relation to compliance with statutory duties and exercising statutory powers.
- 6.4.4 Pursuant to Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended) local authorities are under a duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Under the statutory guidance, authorities should consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. Authorities also have a statutory duty to consider social value for services above specified procurement thresholds at the pre-procurement stage.
- 6.4.5 These savings proposals are to be referred to Policy and Resources Committee. They will then be subject to consultation and a cumulative equality impact assessment before being referred on to Council so that Council may set the Council Tax, being mindful of any equality impacts and consultation responses.
- 6.4.6 The Council's Constitution (Article 7, Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships) sets out the responsibilities of all council Committees. The responsibilities of the Housing and Growth Committee can be found here:
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s47983/08Article7CommitteesForumsWorkingGroupsandPartnerships.doc.pdf>.
 Responsibilities include:
- 1) Housing matters including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, commissioning of environmental health functions for private sector housing.
 - 2) Regeneration strategy and oversee major regeneration schemes, asset management, employment strategy, business support and engagement
 - 3) To submit to the Policy and Resources Committee proposals relating to the Committee's budget for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable.
 - 4) To make recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee on issues relating to the budget for the Committee, including virements or underspends and overspends on the budget. 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.
 - 5) To receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.
- 6.4.7 The Council's Constitution- Article 7.5- Terms of Reference- Responsibility for Functions states that the remit of the Policy and Resources Committee includes responsibility for strategic policy, capital and revenue budget including all fees and charges and Medium-Term financial strategy and corporate plan to full council.

6.4.8 The council's Financial Regulations can be found at: <http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s46515/17FinancialRegulations.doc.pdf>

6.4.9 Councils constitution Article 17- Financial Regulations – section 2.3.6: Changes to fees and charges should be included in the budget proposals submitted by theme Committees or the relevant committee to the Policy and Resources Committee. The budget recommended by Policy and Resources Committee to Full Council will incorporate the latest projection of income from fees and charges. Full Council will approve all fees and charges as part of the budget report.

6.4.10 Some of the proposals, relate to savings resulting from operational decisions being made in a different way and are therefore estimated savings. The saving is therefore an indicative saving and its deliverability will be dependent on a number of factors. As part of the budget setting process, Policy and Resources Committee will consider the need for an appropriate contingency to cover any savings that are indicative and may not be met due to operational decisions. Some of the proposals in the MTFS relate to proposals that are at a very early stage. These proposals will be subject to further business planning and decision making to test whether they can be delivered and what the impact of such a proposal will be. These proposals will be considered in further detail during future business planning reports.

6.4.11 All proposals emerging from the business planning process will need to be considered in terms of the council's legal powers and obligations (including, specifically, the public-sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010).

6.4.12 In line with *Hemming v Westminster*, the council has a Fee 1 and Fee 2 for HMO Licences. Fee 1, the application fee, relates solely to the cost of authorisation procedures (ie, the costs associated with reviewing an application and granting / refusing a licence). Following a successful application, licence applicants are subsequently charged a Fee 2, which is a fee relating to the costs of administering and enforcing the relevant licensing framework.

6.4.13 Local authorities have a variety of powers to charge for specific statutory services set out in statute. The Local Government Act 2003 also provides a power to trade and a power to charge for discretionary services, the latter on a cost recovery basis. Discretionary services are those that a local authority is permitted to provide under statute but is not obliged to do so. The power to charge for discretionary services is not available to local authorities if there is a statutory duty to provide the service or if there is a specific power to charge for it or if there is a prohibition on charging for the service.

6.4.14 Additionally, the Localism Act 2011 provides local authorities with a general power of competence that confers on them the power to charge for services but again subject to conditions/limitations similar to those noted above.

6.4.15 Where authorities have a duty to provide a statutory service free of charge to a certain standard, no charge can be made for delivery to that standard, however delivery beyond that point may constitute a discretionary service for which a charge could be made.

6.4.16 There is a variety of legislation permitting charging for different services, some of which sets prescribed fees and charges (or the range of charges for a given service), and others which allow a discretion to determine the charge based on recovering the costs of providing the service.

6.5 Risk Management

6.5.1 The Council has taken steps to improve its risk management processes by integrating the management of financial and other risks facing the organisation. The allocation of an amount to contingency is a step to mitigate the pressures that had yet to be quantified during the budget setting process.

6.5.2 The allocation of budgets from contingency seeks to mitigate financial risks which have materialised.

6.5.3 The fees proposed within this report are based on recovery of costs incurred by the council. Efforts have been made to limit the charge increases given the current financial pressures on landlords and consideration has been given to the charges adversely affecting demand for the services as well as the need to recoup the cost of providing the service. There will nonetheless remain an element of reputational risk and challenge.

6.6 Equalities and Diversity

6.6.1 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the decision making of the council.

6.6.2 Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The Equality Act 2010 and the Public-Sector Equality Duty require elected Members to satisfy themselves that equality considerations are integrated into day-to-day business and that all proposals emerging from the business planning process have taken into consideration the impact, if any, on any protected group and what mitigating factors can be put in place. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

6.6.3 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 6.6.4 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 6.6.5 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 6.6.6 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- Tackle prejudice, and
 - Promote understanding.
- 6.6.7 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race,
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
 - Marriage and Civil partnership
- 6.6.8 This is set out in the council's Equalities Policy together with our strategic Equalities Objective - as set out in the Corporate Plan - that citizens will be treated equally with understanding and respect; have equal opportunities and receive quality services provided to best value principles.
- 6.6.9 Progress against the performance measures we use is published on our website at:
- <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity>

- 6.6.10 Where there are changes to service delivery or changes to staff, these will impact on individuals in different ways. However, at each stage of the process, the council will conduct an equalities impact assessment (EIA) where appropriate to ensure that where persons are impacted, proper measures are considered to mitigate the effect as far as possible and so far as lawfully required and appropriate. Those affected by any changes resulting from any of the proposals will be engaged, as set out in Appendix A under 'Consultation'. Where necessary, proposals will not be implemented or agreed until members have fully considered the equality impacts and responses to any consultation.
- 6.6.11 The revenue savings sheet shown at Appendix A indicates that an equalities impact assessment has been carried out for 6 savings proposals.
- 6.6.12 All human resources implications will be managed in accordance with the Council's Managing Organisational Change policy, which supports the Council's Human Resources Strategy and meets statutory equalities duties and current employment legislation.
- 6.6.13 The proposed fees and charges have been reviewed against the protected characteristics and it is considered that there will not be any specific adverse impact on any of the groups.
- 6.6.14 It is considered that HMO licensing and housing enforcement action requiring the improvement of accommodation has an overall positive impact for landlords, tenants, residents and businesses by virtue of the potential improvement to the quality and management of accommodation in the borough.
- 6.6.15 In addition, there are potential benefits arising from the increased choice of high quality, well-managed affordable housing.

6.7 Corporate Parenting

- 6.7.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. The outcomes and priorities in the refreshed Corporate Plan, Barnet 2024, reflect the council's commitment to the Corporate Parenting duty to ensure the most vulnerable are protected and the needs of children are considered in everything that the council does. To this end, great attention has been paid to the needs of children in care and care leavers when approaching business planning, to ensure decisions are made through the lens of what a reasonable parent would do for their own child.
- 6.7.2 The Council, in setting its budget, has considered the Corporate Parenting Principles both in terms of savings and investment proposals. The Council proposals have sought to protect front-line social work and services to children in care and care leavers and in some cases, has invested in them.

6.8 Consultation and Engagement

- 6.8.1 As a matter of public law, the duty to consult with regards to proposals to vary, reduce or withdraw services will arise in four circumstances:
- where there is a statutory requirement in the relevant legislative framework
 - where the practice has been to consult, or, where a policy document states the council will consult, then the council must comply with its own practice or policy
 - exceptionally, where the matter is so important that there is a legitimate expectation of consultation
 - Where consultation is required to complete an equalities impact assessment, to comply with other duties, for example Equality Act duties.
 - to enable the council to comply with its best values duties
- 6.8.2 Regardless of whether the council has a duty to consult, if it chooses to consult, such consultation must be carried out fairly. In general, a consultation can only be considered as proper consultation if:
- comments are genuinely invited at the formative stage
 - the consultation documents include sufficient reasons for the proposal to allow those being consulted to be properly informed and to give an informed response
 - there is adequate time given to the consultees to consider the proposals
 - there is a mechanism for feeding back the comments and those comments are considered by the decision-maker / decision-making body when making a final decision
 - the degree of specificity with which, in fairness, the public authority should conduct its consultation exercise may be influenced by the identity of those whom it is consulting
 - where relevant and appropriate, the consultation is clear on the reasons why and extent to which alternatives and discarded options have been discarded. The more intrusive the decision, the more likely it is to attract a higher level of procedural fairness.
- 6.8.3 The council will perform a budget consultation during December 2019 through to January 2020. This consultation will cover any proposals to increase council tax and fees and charges together with seeking views on the council's budget overall.
- 6.8.4 In terms of service specific consultations, the council has a duty to consult with residents and service users in a number of different situations including proposals to significantly vary, reduce or withdraw services. Consultation is also needed in other circumstances, for example to identify the impact of proposals or to assist with complying with the council's equality duties. Service specific consultations will take place where necessary in line with timescales for any changes to be implemented.
- 6.8.5 If when council sets the budget envelope some service specific consultations have not been completed then Council will allow a contingency so that decision

makers may make alternative decisions should there be undesirable equalities impacts.

- 6.8.6 Where appropriate, separate service specific consultations have already taken place for the 2020/21 savings and a link to the report presenting findings of the consultation is provided within the MTFS spreadsheet (Appendix A). For savings in relation to specific development schemes, consultation will be brought forward as an integral part of the development programme.

6.9 **Insight**

- 6.9.1 None in the context of this report

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 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>

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Line Ref	Department	Corporate Plan Document	Theme	Area/Topic	Impact Assessment				Equalities Impact				
					Consultation (How are we consulting on this proposal)	Impact on Service Delivery	Impact on Customer Satisfaction	All published EqIAs are online at: https://barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments	(3,655)	(2,099)	(2,604)	(2,535)	(16,803)
									2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
G&CS1	Growth and Corporate Services	Workstream A: The Way We Work II	Housing & Growth	Regeneration and development schemes across the borough are projecting an increase in Council Tax over the MTF5. This increase is above current baseline projections and can therefore be used to reduce savings targets for other theme commitments.	No service specific consultation required	This proposal will generate additional income for the Council and is not expected to impact on service delivery.	This proposal is not expected to have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	This proposal is not expected to have an adverse equalities impact.	(500)	(500)	(500)	0	(1,500)
G&CS10	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	The delivery of 52 homes on Hermitage Lane, of which 15 will be affordable and available for letting to Barnet housing applicants. The council has approved the investment of £1m, of which £0.25m is already committed. Provision of this affordable supply would result in increased temporary accommodation cost avoidance.	Service specific consultation has been undertaken on the scheme as it has been developed. Further service specific consultation will be undertaken if required.	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed, which indicated there were no expected negative impacts. This will kept under review as the specific proposals develop. Link: https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments	0	0	(31)	(32)	(63)
G&CS11	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	The delivery of 250 homes across 3 schemes. Units will be funded through Housing Revenue Account borrowing and delivered in 2023/24 and 2024/25. Provision of this affordable supply would result in increased temporary accommodation cost avoidance and a general fund benefit.	Service specific consultation will be undertaken if required.	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed, which indicated there were no expected negative impacts. This will kept under review as the specific proposals develop. Link: https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments	0	0	(173)	(350)	(524)
G&CS12	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	The delivery of 40 affordable homes on one or more car park sites. All car parks will remain in operation. Units will be built on podium developments above existing car park facilities. The development is proposed to be privately funded by an investment fund. Units will be leased back to the council and ownership of units reverting to the council at the expiration of a long-term lease. Provision of this affordable supply would result in less cost due to not having to incur costs in providing extensive temporary accommodation.	Service specific consultation will be undertaken on the schemes at appropriate times in the design and planning process.	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed, which indicated there were no expected negative impacts. This will kept under review as the specific proposals develop. Link: https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments	0	0	(27)	(56)	(82)
G&CS2	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 4: Clean, Safe & Well Run	Housing & Growth	Increased rent from potential development (Hendon Campus)	Planning consultation will be undertaken by prospective developers	This proposal will generate additional income for the Council and is not expected to impact on service delivery.	This proposal is not expected to have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	This proposal is not expected to have an adverse equalities impact.	0	0	0	(1,832)	(1,832)
G&CS24	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Energy cost reductions through contract review	Service specific consultation will be undertaken if required once the proposals have been developed in full.	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be conducted once the proposals have been developed in full.	0	(150)	0	0	(150)
G&CS28	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Solar panels on roofs of commercial buildings roofs - either to sell energy back to grid, or opportunity cost on existing council energy bills.	Service specific consultation will be undertaken if required and on a case by case basis as properties are purchased and if they have a change of use	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be conducted once the proposals have been developed in full.	0	(100)	(100)	0	(200)
G&CS3	Growth and Corporate Services	Workstream A: The Way We Work II	Housing & Growth	Commercial property acquisitions which will benefit local communities and help meet other strategic in-borough objectives, resulting in incidental income.	No service specific consultation required	This proposal will generate additional income for the Council and is not expected to impact on service delivery.	This proposal is not expected to have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be conducted once the proposals have been developed in full.	0	(500)	0	0	(500)
G&CS4	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	500 additional acquisitions of properties for use as affordable temporary accommodation by Open Door Homes supported by Loan from Council, as a cheaper alternative to existing temporary arrangements which utilise the private rented sector. Savings also enhanced by premium of 1.24% interest on loans made by the council to Open Door Homes.	There was an opportunity to comment on our vision and plans for housing and homelessness over the next five years through the Housing and Homelessness Strategy consultations that took place in 2019: https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/Housing_Homeless_and_Ro ugh_Sleeping No service specific consultation required	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed, which indicated there were no expected negative impacts. This will kept under review as the specific proposals develop. Link: https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments	(121)	(116)	(147)	(102)	(485)
G&CS5	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Transfer of 156 properties acquired by Council for use as affordable temporary accommodation to Open Door Homes. Savings achieved by charging premium of 1.24% interest on loans made by the council to Open Door Homes.	There was an opportunity to comment on our plans through the Housing and Homelessness Strategy consultations that took place in 2019: https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/Housing_Homeless_and_Ro ugh_Sleeping . Service specific consultation will be undertaken on the scheme at appropriate times in the design, planning and development process.	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed, which indicated there were no expected negative impacts. This will kept under review as the specific proposals develop. Link: https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments	(220)	35	40	42	(104)
G&CS6	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Additional 72 homes for affordable rent built by Open Door Homes. Savings Achieved as these homes will provide a cheaper alternative to temporary accommodation and Open Door Homes will pay an premium to the council for each property.	There was an opportunity to comment on our vision and plans for housing and homelessness over the next five years through the Housing and Homelessness Strategy consultations https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/Housing_Homeless_and_Ro ugh_Sleeping . Service specific consultation will be undertaken with residents living on affected estates.	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An equality impact assessment HAS been completed. This will kept under review as the specific proposals develop.	0	(22)	(79)	0	(101)
G&CS7	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Build 87 new council homes for rent on top of existing council housing blocks. Savings achieved as these homes will provide a cheaper alternative to temporary accommodation.	There was an opportunity to comment on our vision and plans for housing and homelessness over the next five years through the Housing and Homelessness Strategy consultations that took place in 2019: https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/Housing_Homeless_and_Ro ugh_Sleeping .	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	Satisfaction of existing residents living in blocks could be affected, who will be consulted as specific proposals develop.	An equality impact assessment HAS been completed. This will kept under review as the specific proposals develop. Link: https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments	0	(103)	(120)	(7)	(231)
G&CS9	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	An additional 300 affordable homes acquired in Greater London through a lease and sale back model funded privately and ownership shall revert back to the council at lease expiry. Properties would be let with rents set at Local Housing Allowance rates. Provision of this affordable supply would result in increased temporary accommodation cost avoidance.	No service specific consultation required	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An equality impact assessment HAS been completed. This will kept under review as the specific proposals develop. Link: https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments	(331)	(312)	(203)	(57)	(903)
G&CS33	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Barnet House (a council office) - saving of all running costs once the lease is extinguished on 31 October 2020	No service specific consultation required	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An EqIA is not required.	(1,500)	0	0	0	(1,500)
G&CS34	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Saving of the remaining residual budget for North London Business Park building 2 (a former council office) following the exit from the lease	No service specific consultation required	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An EqIA is not required.	(300)	0	0	0	(300)
G&CS35	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Additional revenue from housing development at Burns Lane Car Park	Service specific consultation will be undertaken as part of the design and development of the scheme.	This proposal will generate additional income for the council and is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	Satisfaction of existing users of the car park could be affected, who will be consulted as specific proposals develop.	An equalities impact assessment will be prepared as part of the full business case	0	0	(500)	(50)	(550)
G&CS36	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Additional revenue from housing development at Watling Car Park	Service specific consultation will be undertaken as part of the design and development of the scheme.	This proposal will generate additional income for the council and is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	Satisfaction of existing users of the car park could be affected, who will be consulted as specific proposals develop.	An equalities impact assessment will be prepared as part of the full business case	0	0	(600)	(60)	(660)
G&CS37	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Additional revenue from housing development at Northway / Fairway	Service specific consultation will be undertaken as part of the design and development of the scheme.	This proposal will generate additional income for the council and is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	Satisfaction of neighbours of the site could be affected, who will be consulted as specific proposals develop.	An equalities impact assessment will be prepared as part of the full business case	0	0	(93)	(20)	(113)
G&CS38	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Additional income from the existing commercial portfolio, including new lettings and rent reviews	Service specific consultation will be undertaken as required	This proposal will generate additional income for the council and is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An EqIA is not required.	(90)	(50)	0	(10)	(150)
G&CS39	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Income received from renting floor space in Colindale Office	Service specific consultation will be undertaken as required.	This proposal will generate additional income for the council and is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An EqIA is not required.	(75)	(75)	0	0	(150)
G&CS40	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Income received as dividends on completed affordable homes delivered by OpenDoor Homes	Service specific consultation has been undertaken on the schemes as part of the planning process.	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An EqIA is not required.	(398)	(116)	(71)	0	(585)
G&CS41	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 1: Thriving	Housing & Growth	Review of The Barnet Group Contract Change Notices	Service specific consultation will be undertaken as required.	This saving is not anticipated to impact on service delivery.	This saving will not have an adverse impact on customer satisfaction.	An EqIA is not required.	(120)	0	0	0	(120)

						1,814	1,121	516	0	3,451
Low Ref	Department	Corporate Plan Outcome	Theme	Description	Cost/Unit	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Growth31	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 4: Clean, Safe & Well Run	Housing & Growth	Housing General Fund - increase in demand for Temporary Accommodation	Growth31: Housing General Fund - increase in demand for Temporary Accommodation	0	755	500	0	1,255
Growth35	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 4: Clean, Safe & Well Run	Housing & Growth	Unfunded structural estates pressures, including Oakleigh Road Depot	Growth35: Unfunded structural estates pressures, including Oakleigh Road Depot	1,664	0	0	0	1,664
Growth36	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 4: Clean, Safe & Well Run	Housing & Growth	Increase in corporate property routine repairs	Growth36: Increase in cyclical repairs	150	0	0	0	150
Growth38	Growth and Corporate Services	Outcome 4: Clean, Safe & Well Run	Housing & Growth	Growth required for Saving G&CS2	Growth38: Growth required for Saving G&CS2	0	366	16	0	382



Housing & Growth Committee

AGENDA ITEM 9

24 November 2020

Title

Hermitage Lane Development Project Full Business Case

Report of

Chairman of the Housing & Growth Committee

Wards

Childs Hill

Status

Public with accompanying exempt report

Exempt from publication in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 on account that it contains (i) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para. 3) and (ii) information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings (para. 5).

Urgent

No

Key

Yes

Enclosures

Appendix 1 - Site plan of Property

Accompanying Exempt report

Officer Contact Details

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Meera Bedi , Head of Development (New Build) , Barnet Homes meera.bedi@barnethomes.org

Summary

The Council has been exploring alternative delivery options for its development pipeline, at ARG September 2018 the case was agreed for appointing the Barnet Group as its development partner, exploring options through Opendoor Homes and utilising other methods.

The Council approved the strategic principle for Opendoor Homes (ODH) to become its preferred partner for the development of a number of its 'mixed tenure' sites including Hermitage Lane at the September 2018 ARG Committee.

Opendoor Homes was instructed to act as development agent to progress the design and delivery proposals for the site and a budget of £250,000 was approved at P&R Committee in December 2018 to enable it to do so.

Hermitage Lane was identified by the council as a site within Tranche 1 which also included Moxon Street, Whitings and Broadfields. In January 2020 the Housing and Growth Committee agreed to dispose of Broadfields but the remaining three sites are to be developed by The Barnet Group with approval from this Committee for the Full Business Case on a site by site basis.

The Hermitage Lane site is located in the Childs Hill ward, occupies approx. 0.25 hectares and currently comprises of commercial space with 2 x residential flats above and 4 x residential bungalows. All the buildings are vacant and in a poor state of repair.

Hermitage Lane is located north of Hampstead. The site lies just to the east of Finchley Road and has good public transport with two stations within 15 minutes' walk. The site is also opposite the green space at Elm Park and Hampstead Heath is nearby.

To support and progress the scheme, a third-party commercial developer was selected by ODH to lead and fund the preparation of a mixed tenure planning application for the redevelopment of the site. The intention was for the developer to become ODH's development and construction partner for the project, subject to agreeing appropriate commercial terms and satisfying governance, financial and risk management processes.

The scheme received a resolution to grant planning approval in October 2019 followed by the granting of full planning permission when the s106 agreement was completed in August 2020.

In February 2020, a Chief Officer's Report approved the budget of c. £1.5m to underwrite a programme of design work, site survey and investigations plus legal due diligence under a Pre-Contract Service Agreement in the sum of c. £1.5m. Subsequently it was agreed by LBB officers that this did not need to go to Policy and Resources Committee for ratification at that time as the sum could be accommodated within reserves and Council officers's agreed that it would go to Policy and Resources Committee if the underwritten sums were required.

The structure of the delivery model and key commercial principles were endorsed at the Gateway Review held on 29 October 2020 with LBB Commissioning officers. Draft Heads of Terms between LBB and ODH will be prepared immediately after Committee as the project is approved. That will form the basis of legal documents to be finalised between LBB and ODH.

Separately, ODH has progressed terms and legal negotiations in respect of the legal documents between ODH and the Developer.

This report seeks approval of the recommendations set out below and included in the Full Business Case to deliver 52 new homes, approving the sale of the site from the Council to ODH and a simultaneous Development Lease Agreement between ODH and The Developer.

Officers Recommendations

That the Housing and Growth Committee:

- 1. Note and approve the Full Business Case at Appendix 2**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Director of Growth to appoint an external independent valuer to carry out an independent valuation of the land shown edged in red on the site plan at Appendix 1 (“Property”)**
- 3. Delegate authority to the Director of Growth (in consultation with the Chairman of Housing & Growth Committee) to negotiate and agree, acting in the best interests of the Council, heads of terms with TBG Open Door Limited (‘ODH’) for the sale of the Property from the Council to ODH, upon the best commercial terms that can be obtained and delegate authority to use such of the general consents available for the disposal of the Property and, where required, to apply for consent to dispose from the Secretary of State.**
- 4. Subject to the valuation referred to above supporting the proposed sale price, delegate authority to the Director of Growth (in consultation with the Chairman of Housing & Growth Committee) to enter into and conclude all required documentation and do all acts and things necessary, acting in the best interests of the Council, to effect the sale of the Property from the Council to ODH upon the agreed terms.**
- 5. That authority is delegated to the Council’s Section 151 Officer, in consultation with HB Public Law and other professional advisors as appropriate, to agree the legal documentation to support the loan to ODH, including the Loan Agreement.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 This report sets out the preferred way forward for the development of the Hermitage Lane site.
- 1.2 The Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee (ARG) approved at its meeting on 9 July 2014, the approach to, and the principles underpinning, the creation of a development pipeline on Council owned land.
- 1.3 The Council’s Housing Strategy 2019-2024 sets out the intent to deliver homes that people can afford by increasing housing supply, regeneration and growth. The strategy sets out how a continuing pipeline of developing on council land will secure a range of tenures, including mixed tenure housing with affordable homes funded by private sales, new affordable homes to rent, extra care and wheelchair accessible homes to reduce demand for care, and private housing for rent.
- 1.4 The Strategy for development of housing on council land and acquiring new homes, January 2020, sets out the benefits and opportunities of working with Opendoor Homes

(ODH) to deliver additional new homes at a time when the capacity of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is constrained by other investment commitments. Section 5 of the report states that 'the council will continue to work with Opendoor Homes, with a focus on mixed tenure' as we are presenting at Hermitage Lane.

- 1.5 The Outline Business Case was presented to the Assets Regeneration & Growth Committee in September 2018 noting that the preferred development option would be presented to Committee within the Full Business Case.
- 1.6 This report notes that many assets owned by the Council do not currently maximise the potential of the land upon which they are built. Such assets generally offer the potential for redevelopment of the land to provide a mix of uses on site.
- 1.7 The Council is committed to deliver its housing targets set out in the Adopted Local Plan 2012.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Barnet has the largest population of any London Borough with 394,400 residents. The figure is expected to grow to 452,000 by 2036. With a third of the borough designated green belt, Barnet Council has to be innovative in how new homes can be built in the borough.
- 2.2 The Council's Housing Strategy 2019-2024 identifies that delivering more homes that people can afford is a key priority. The recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment showed a need to provide at least 3,060 new homes a year, to accommodate an expected 16% population growth by 2041.
- 2.3 MHCLG published figures show Barnet delivered just under 2,000 homes per annum over the past three years; 82% of its current target. To deliver an increase in housing completions requires the Council and wider public sector to increase its own pipeline of housing delivery. To that end the Council is reviewing its assets to consider all suitable sites for redevelopment potential.
- 2.4 In terms of affordability, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic strong demand has resulted in average house prices increasing to 15 times the median household income for Barnet. The delivery of new affordable rented homes, funded in a variety of ways, including mixed tenure development, will ensure the Council's estate is used to help meet the Housing Strategy objective - this is to prevent and tackle homelessness by reducing the use of temporary accommodation, to help meet Housing Committee savings targets.
- 2.5 The draft Local Plan (2021-2036) sets out the vision for growth and development in the borough and the delivery of 32,200 new homes and 20,000 new jobs by 2030. The Regeneration Strategy builds on this, articulating the Council's approach to delivering growth and focusing on the places that need intervention. The strategy creates a framework to inform future decision-making, and is accompanied by a Delivery Plan. This will set out how the council will direct future investment, the approach to securing funding and how we will form strategic partnerships.
- 2.6 The key project aims are to:

- Maximise the development potential of the site.
- Increase the supply of new housing.
- Delivering a low risk, mixed tenure scheme that retains the freehold asset within the wider LBB 'family'.
- Provide a range of housing options to Barnet residents including Market Sale, Barnet Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership.
- Provide a capital receipt to the Council.
- Deliver an annual homelessness dividend to the Council from affordable rented units.
- Achieve a high quality development in compliance with local planning policies including the provision of 40% affordable housing.
- Optimise the use of scarce land resources and improve the physical environment.
- Attain greater control of outcomes.
- Manage and maintain the whole scheme on completion.
- Optimise the use of and deploy the resources and capacity of organisations within the Barnet Group.

2.7 A resolution to grant planning permission was achieved in October 2019 and the accompanying section 106 agreement was completed in August 2020. The consented scheme consists of 31 x Market Sale units, 15 x Affordable Rent units and 6 x Shared Ownership units.

2.8 Four of the affordable rented units will be wheelchair standard compliant, meeting the objective in the Council's Housing Strategy of providing housing to support vulnerable people.

2.9 Agreement has been reached with the Council's valuation team on the consideration for the transfer of the site to ODH subject to an independent external validating valuation. At the same time, terms have been agreed between ODH and the Developer on the development lease agreement to fund the delivery of the scheme.

2.10 See Exempt report.

3. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

3.1 **Do nothing**

An alternative option is to **do nothing**, but it would limit the Council's ability to deliver much needed affordable housing. The site is currently vacant and the buildings are in a poor state of repair. The Council receives no revenue from the site and if left, it will attract squatters and anti-social behaviour thereby incurring ongoing security costs and negative publicity for the Council.

3.2 **Do minimum**

The **minimum** option would be to sell the site on the open market. This may achieve a slightly higher capital receipt, depending on market conditions, and would carry no

development risk. However, there is no guarantee that the site would be developed for housing and thus the Council may fail to contribute to the strategic objective of securing new housing supply. Moreover, even if the site were developed for housing, a private developer may seek to reduce the affordable housing offer.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 An independent valuation will be instructed, to confirm that the agreement between the Council and ODH is a market value transaction in accordance with section 32 of the Housing Act 1985 and the General Disposal Consents 2013.
- 4.2 Exchange contracts with ODH and complete the transfer of the site from the Council to ODH.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Corporate Plan 2019-2024 sets out the aim to ensure Barnet is a pleasant, well maintained borough that is protected and invested in by:
 - a) Ensuring decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet residents, that will be delivered by increasing supply to ensure greater housing choice for residents and delivering new affordable housing, including new homes, on Council owned land
 - b) Responsible delivery of our major regeneration schemes to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the borough - delivered by working with The Barnet Group to deliver housing on smaller sites across the borough.
- 5.1.2 The Corporate Plan further sets out how the council will deliver these ambitions within financial constraints by ensuring that taxpayers' money goes as far as it can through adhering to the following key principles:
 - a) A fair deal - by delivering the services that matter most and making decisions to prioritise our limited resources alongside providing value for money for the taxpayer by ensuring we are transparent in how we operate.
 - b) Maximising opportunity - by taking a commercial approach to generating income, and looking for new opportunities to generate revenue from our estate, alongside capitalising on opportunities from responsible growth and development to boost the local economy.
- 5.1.3 The draft London Plan and draft Local Plan recognise the need to deliver more housing

in the Borough. The council's Housing Strategy 2019-2024 continues to emphasise that delivering more homes that people can afford is a key priority and sets out how the council will deal with a number of challenges including high prices, a shortage of affordable housing and the potential threats to the qualities that make the Borough attractive.

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

Finance

5.2.1 See Exempt report

5.2.2 See Exempt report

5.2.3 See Exempt report

5.2.4 The Developer will fund the construction of the development and take responsibility for marketing the flats for sale along with associated financial risk.

5.2.5 The construction costs proposed by the Developer have been checked by a Chartered surveyor from a Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors registered construction consultancy who will remain ODH's cost consultants throughout the project. The cost consultant has verified the construction costs represent value for money in the current market.

5.2.6 See Exempt report

5.3 Social Value

5.3.1 The development will provide a range of new housing opportunities, with 21 new homes for Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership.

5.3.2 The main contractor will be required to provide opportunities for employment, training and apprenticeships for local people and use local suppliers where appropriate.

5.3.3 A high quality new residential building will improve the street scene and local environments for residents.

5.4 Staffing

5.4.1 Hermitage Lane is located next to Hermitage Court which is an estate managed by Barnet Homes so there will be efficiencies in the delivery of housing management and maintenance services with two schemes in close proximity.

5.5 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.5.1 Council Constitution Article 7.5 states that the remit of the Housing and Growth Committee includes responsibility for regeneration strategy and oversight of major regeneration schemes, asset management, employment strategy, business support and engagement.
- 5.5.2 The Council Constitution, Article 10 Table A states that Housing and Growth Committee is responsible for authorising all acquisitions and disposals over £500,000.
- 5.5.3 The Council has a range of powers including the general power of competence under Section 1 of Chapter 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals can do subject to any specific restrictions contained in legislation and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which provides that a local authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or is incidental to, the discharge of its functions.
- 5.5.4 The Council has power under section 32 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) to dispose of HRA land with prior consent from the Secretary of State. Where the disposal is at market value, consent is given under Consent A3.1.1 of the General Disposal Consents (2013) (as amended) and no express application to the Secretary of State is required. However, in this particular instance Consent A3.1.1 does not apply as the local authority owns an interest in ODH.
- 5.5.5 Under the General Disposal Consents 2013, Consent A3.2 the council may dispose of vacant land upon any terms. 'Vacant' for this purpose means that (i) any former dwellings on the land have been demolished when the transfer takes place or (ii) any such dwellings are no longer fit for human habitation and are due to be demolished. Before contracting to sell the Property to ODH, the council must satisfy itself that this general consent applies, or else an application for express ministerial consent will be required.
- 5.5.6 If the delivery option for the proposed development includes a loan/grant from the council then under State Aid rules, in order to avoid the distortion of competition and trade within the European Union, the council should ensure that no advantage results from funding that is granted on a selective basis to any organisations. It is essential that all legislation concerning State Aid is observed, and in particular such loans should be at normal commercial rates. Moreover, if there is any element of loan/grant from the council then Sections 24 and 25 of Local Government Act 1988 Act (if privately let accommodation is to be provided) apply. These provisions may require an express ministerial consent, unless it can be shown that one of the General Consents applies.
- 5.5.7 Procurement of public works and services contracts over the relevant value thresholds must observe the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, to include the placing of OJEU notices where such contracts are not drawn down from a compliant framework. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires the Council to consider whether it can achieve an improvement to the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area as part of the procurement of these services. If so, the social value objectives identified must be written into the procurement process. All of this must be achieved with regard to value for money and in a way that is compliant with existing public procurement law. "Social value" objectives can include: the creation of employment, apprenticeship and training opportunities for local people; and trading opportunities for local businesses and the third sector through contract delivery.

5.6 Risk Management

- 5.6.1 The main business and service risks associated with the potential scope for this project are noted below.

Design

- 5.6.2 There is a risk that the design is not fit for purpose. To mitigate this risk, the project team have undertaken an extensive design process that maximises the development potential of the site and delivers a policy-compliant scheme. Client departments, including Housing Management and Property Services, have been consulted to ensure the completed scheme will meet the needs of residents. The project team have drawn on the design and construction experience of the Developer in delivering this type of mixed tenure scheme. The scheme design standards meet all the Council's policy requirements as well as the Mayor's London Design Guide and Secure by Design.

Planning consent

We have ensured that the scheme is policy compliant on the tenure mix and for space standards, parking requirements and design. We have ensured this by paying for pre-planning meetings with the planning department so that their advice and comments can be followed; and through the use of planning consultants to ensure all standards are being met.

Title matters and third-party rights

- 5.6.3 There is a risk that title matters or third-party rights may prevent or delay development. To mitigate this, legal teams representing ODH, the Developer and the Council are working to review all title matters and rights.

Site assembly

- 5.6.4 There is a risk that the financial offer from ODH does not represent a best value transaction in accordance with section 32 of the Housing Act 1985 and the General Disposal Consents 2013. The offer has been thoroughly assessed by CSG Estates, who confirm that it does, but an independent valuation will be commissioned for verification.

Programme and cost

- 5.6.5 There is a risk of prolongation costs if start on site is delayed. To mitigate against this, a pre-contract services agreement (PCSA) has been entered into, allowing the Developer to undertake detailed survey and site investigation work which will allow an immediate start on site.
- 5.6.6 There is a risk that construction costs increase post-contract. The development agreement places this risk with the Developer.

- 5.6.7 Contingency figures have been allowed in the budget to cover potential additional costs which may be apparent following demolition of the existing building. For example, asbestos in the ground.
- 5.6.8 In addition, we have ensured that the programme takes into account any further issues regarding Covid 19 and these will be included in the Development Agreement between ODH and the Developer.

Sales

- 5.6.9 The Developer will take the sales and marketing risk on all the Market Sale units.
- 5.6.10 ODH has some sales risk associated with the 6 x Shared Ownership units. Independent advice has been obtained on sales values and sensitivity analysis exercises undertaken. In addition, a review of Shared Ownership opportunities in a 2-mile radius of the site indicates there is a limited supply which will strengthen demand and support values.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council must have due regard to the need to:
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without;
 - c) promote good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without.

The 'protected characteristics' referred to are; age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regards to eliminating discrimination.

- 5.7.2 The Council is committed to improving the quality of life for all, and wider participation in the economic, educational, cultural, social, and community life in the Borough.
- 5.7.3 The development of Hermitage Lane will make a significant contribution to the provision of additional high-quality housing in the Borough including needed affordable rented housing and opportunities for first time buyers through the offer of shared-ownership flats. The development will generate training and employment opportunities for Barnet residents.

5.8 See Exempt report

- 5.8.1 At this stage, the proposal does not raise any issues under the Council's Equalities Policy and does not have a bearing on the Council's ability to demonstrate that it has paid due regard to equalities as required by the legislation. No immediate equality impacts are anticipated because of this proposal.

5.9 Corporate Parenting

- 5.9.1 Barnet Council have a small number of care leavers in temporary accommodation. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is therefore a corporate parenting issue.

5.10 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.10.1 Consultation took place during the early design stages and the statutory consultation during the planning application. The Developer will provide a Residents Liaison Officer to lead on consultation and engagement during the construction process and will be supported by the Community Engagement team at Opendoor Homes.

5.11 Insight

- 5.11.1 The Council's Housing Strategy and emerging Local Plan respond to evidence such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other needs assessments that have identified a need for increased housing delivery. Barnet has 393,000 residents and this figure is expected to grow by 76,000 over the next 25 years, an increase of 19%.

- 5.11.2 The delivery of new affordable rented homes will help to meet the objective in the Council's Housing Strategy to prevent and tackle homelessness, by reducing the use of temporary accommodation. There are currently more than 2,700 households living in temporary accommodation which presents significant budgetary pressures for the Council.

- 5.11.3 Barnet's Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises the importance of access to good quality housing in maintaining well-being in the Community.

- 5.11.4 Lack of affordable housing is highlighted in Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) as one of the top three concerns identified by local residents in the Residents' Perception Survey.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

ASSETS REGENERATION AND GROWTH COMMITTEE , 24 JULY 2017

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g9337/Public%20reports%20pack%2024th-Jul-2017%2019.00%20Housing%20and%20Growth%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

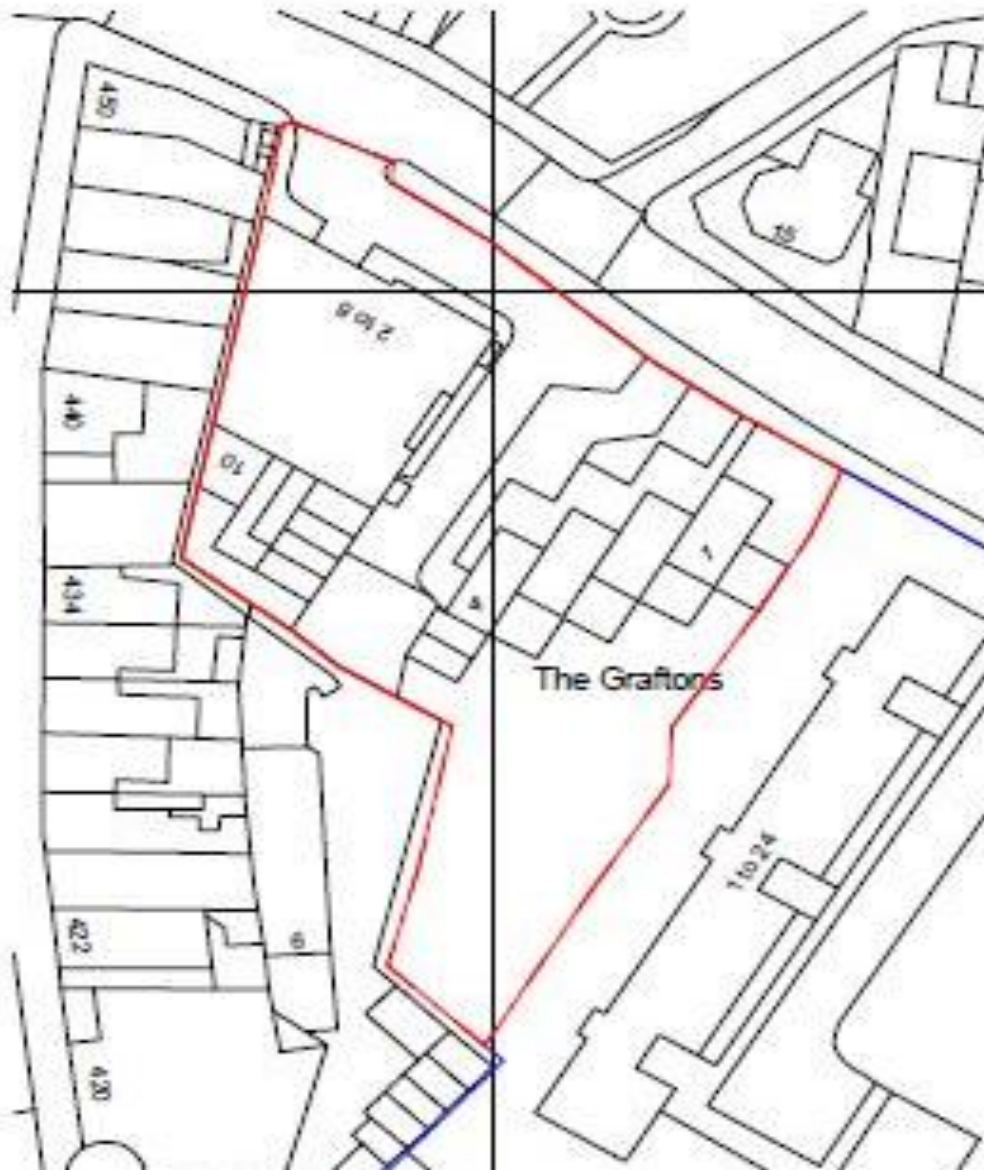
ASSETS REGENERATION AND GROWTH COMMITTEE, 17 SEPTEMBER 2018

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g9764/Public%20reports%20pack%2017th-Sep-2018%2019.00%20Housing%20and%20Growth%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

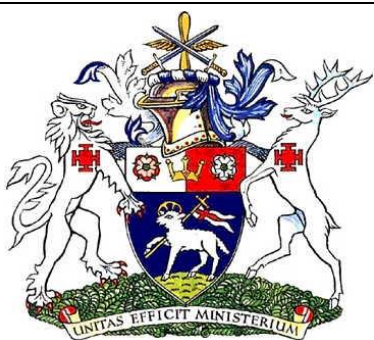
PLANNING COMMITTEE, 10 OCTOBER 2019:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s55571/18-4674-FUL%20-10%20Hermitage%20Lane.pdf>

Appendix 1 – Hermitage Lane Red Line plan



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HOUSING & GROWTH COMMITTEE

24 November 2020

Title	Update on the revitalisation of North Finchley Town Centre
Report of	Chairman of the Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	West Finchley, Woodhouse
Status	Public
Urgent	Non-urgent
Key	Non-key
Enclosures	None
Officer Contact Details	Jamie Robinson Head of Economic Development jamie.robinson@barnet.gov.uk

Summary

Since 2016, the council has been working with developer Joseph Partners to progress ambitious plans for revitalising North Finchley Town Centre, one of Barnet's largest town centres. The council entered into an exclusive arrangement with Joseph Partners, developed a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide redevelopment and subsequently entered into legal agreements to support planning and site acquisition.

Over the past two years, Joseph Partners and partner U+I Group have invested significant resources in identifying an economically viable approach to development. This has been extremely challenging given the high number of ownerships within the town centre and the associated level of complexity and risk. The Covid-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the challenge, ultimately resulting in U+I Group terminating its involvement in the scheme in May 2020.

Despite this setback and the ongoing uncertainty caused by the pandemic, Joseph Partners has continued to scope and refine proposals and has now secured a new development partner, Regal London.

This report provides an update on proposals for redevelopment of North Finchley Town Centre, informs Committee of the decision by Joseph Partners to partner with Regal London in taking development forward and seeks permission to extend relevant deadlines to enable development while accounting for ongoing uncertainty in the construction sector and wider economy.

The report also provides an update on local community engagement, including convening of the proposed North Finchley Partnership Board.

Officers Recommendations

That the Housing and Growth Committee:

- 1. Notes the progress that has been made with proposals for the redevelopment of North Finchley Town Centre.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of Committee, after having taken appropriate legal and financial advice, to complete a deed of variation and/or supplemental agreement with Future High Street (North Finchley) Limited or another legal vehicle or structure between Regal London/a group company of theirs and Joseph Partners, to a) substitute Regal London/a group company of theirs for U and I (Projects) Limited as funder in the Site Assembly Agreement and Land Agreement and b) extend key developer deadlines to 31 December 2021, including that for submission of an outline planning application.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Committee, to renew the exclusivity arrangement with Joseph Partners in the Site Assembly Agreement and Land Agreement, setting a termination deadline of 31 December 2021 after having taken legal advice.**
- 4. Notes proposals for community consultation and engagement, including the establishment of the North Finchley Partnership Board.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1** Even before the current pandemic, the challenges faced by British high streets were both widespread and well documented. Traditional anchors, such as banks, clothes shops and pubs have closed hundreds of outlets in recent years, affecting both independents and chain stores alike. In many cases, they have been replaced by services and ‘experiences’ – nail salons, hairdressers, barber shops, etc. – but the closures have also contributed to the growing number of vacant units in town centres and high streets.
- 1.2** These changes are the result of a complex mixture of factors, including the growth of online shopping, shifting patterns of consumer demand, increases in commercial rents and other business costs, and wider economic conditions.

- 1.3 With more retail floorspace than any other London borough, Barnet has not been immune to these forces. At the start of the year, the borough's retail vacancy rate was double that for outer London – as high as 15% in some locations. In addition to retail, offices and other employment sites in town centres have also been in decline, with much of the stock dating back to the 1960s and 1970s and in need of significant investment. Overall, Barnet's high streets do not reflect the relative prosperity, entrepreneurialism or aspirations of local residents.
- 1.4 Covid-19 has exacerbated the situation considerably. Repeated lockdowns, strict requirements for managing social distancing in shops and other businesses and lower footfall have all contributed to the most challenging outlook for the retail sector in decades. This is having an immediate impact on town centre businesses but also has the potential to leave increased vacancy rates, an over-supply of certain land uses as well as permanent changes in shopping habits.
- 1.5 It is in this context that the council has been working with developer Joseph Partners over the past several years to progress ambitious plans for revitalising North Finchley Town Centre. At the core of the proposals are the goals of:
- Redefining the high street by defining the sustainable core of the area through research, analysis and local consultation;
 - Establishing a context for change, involving comprehensive regeneration either through acquisition, or by agreement with existing landowners;
 - Curating occupancy of the core high street, better supporting existing tenants and bringing in new ones, and utilising landlord control to incorporate flexible lease terms to encourage attractive and sustainable occupancy;
 - Intensifying and repurposing the town centre periphery to provide additional housing, integrating high-quality residential uses into the upper parts of retained shopping areas, and providing the ability to carry out significant public realm improvements.
- 1.6 This is an ambitious scheme to address structural challenges at the heart of the town centre. The concept of intervening in a major way in high streets, to create sustainable leisure, retail and community provision as well as a significant number of new homes, is extraordinary. To the council's knowledge, it has not been achieved, nor even attempted, elsewhere in the UK. It is, however, clear that transformational change on our high streets will be needed more than ever in a post-Covid world.
- 1.7 Set out below is the timeline of key actions and events that have taken place to move the scheme forward or which have otherwise impacted proposals:
- April 2017 – Barnet Council and Joseph Partners enter into exclusive two-year Preliminary Agreement.
 - February 2018 – adoption of North Finchley Town Centre Framework Supplementary Planning Document following extensive local consultation.

- September 2018 – Joseph Partners brings on development partner U+I Group to back development, commencing detailed work on scheme viability.
- March 2019 – Barnet Council, Joseph Partners and U+I Group submit Expression of Interest to UK government's Future High Streets Fund, which was ultimately unsuccessful.
- April 2019 – one-year extension of Preliminary Agreement activated.
- July 2019 – Site Assembly Agreement and Land Agreement finalised and entered into with Joseph Partners and U+I Group, committing development partners, among other things, to submitting overall masterplan and detailed Phase 1 planning application by 31 December 2020.
- Summer/Autumn 2019 – continued planning for North Finchley Partnership Board and associated community engagement activities.
- March 2020 – first UK national lockdown as result of Covid-19 pandemic.
- April 2020 – expiration of exclusivity clause .
- May 2020 – U+I Group steps back from involvement in North Finchley and ends their participation in the Land Agreement and Site Assembly Agreement.
- November 2020 – Joseph Partners agrees Heads of Terms with Regal London to bring forward the redevelopment of North Finchley Town Centre.

1.8 According to the terms of the legal agreements, the right to choose a development funder/partner is a decision that rests with Joseph Partners. Council approval is required but is not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed. In practice, Joseph Partners has kept council officers informed and updated on discussions with prospective partners and has sought to ensure that the selected partner, Regal London, has a track record, approach and ethos that is entirely consistent with the ambition of delivering mixed-use regeneration in partnership with communities.

1.9 The alternative funder will be required to confirm that they take on the funder's responsibilities in the Land Agreement and the Site Assembly Agreement. The Site Assembly Agreement ends unless such is completed, and the council may end the Land Agreement where an alternative funder approved by them is not provided within three months of withdrawal of the original funder, U+I. Additionally, any future commercial arrangements with Regal London or its subsidiaries will be subject to the council's normal due diligence procedures.

1.10 The economy has suffered a significant impact as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. This has affected investors' outlook in terms of financial risk and led to a high degree of uncertainty in future residential and commercial values. In order to progress the much-needed regeneration of North Finchley and to deliver a sustainable future over the long-term, this report recommends that Housing and Growth Committee delegate to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Committee:

- Consideration of the due diligence to be carried out in relation to Regal London;
- Subject to due diligence checks, approval to defer the deadline set out in the Site Assembly Agreement and Land Agreement for development partners to submit a first planning application, also until 31 December 2021;

- Approval and conclusion of an agreement to further extend the exclusivity arrangement with Joseph Partners until 31 December 2021 to align with the above planning deadline.
- 1.11 In the current economic climate, these recommendations are considered reasonable if development partners are to make genuine progress in delivering the community's and the council's ambitions for North Finchley.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 As noted, the council and its development partners have been progressing a complex scheme at a time of unprecedented economic uncertainty. In order to mitigate risk to all parties, while also seeking to deliver the wholesale revitalisation of North Finchley and not just individual 'favourable' land parcels, the proposed approach is as follows:
- The Developer would proceed to apply for planning permission for a material Phase 1 scheme, as a whole, in accordance with the Agreements on or before 31 December 2021.
 - As a minimum, the planning application would be subject to the normal planning processes, including local consultation.
 - Following achievement of a Satisfactory Planning Permission for the whole of Phase 1, the Developer would commence in earnest with the development of an initial sub-phase utilising one site that is large enough to start regeneration within the SPD area, but which does not require a CPO or complex site assembly. There is only one such site at present: Lodge Lane Car Park.
 - As well as delivering new car parking, the development of this sub-phase would contain a minimum of 35% affordable homes and make a material contribution to the council's affordable housing needs.
 - Subject to the financial security conditions in the existing Site Assembly Agreement and in conjunction with the developer and legal advisors, the council will commence the CPO process and site assembly for the remaining Phase 1 sites.
- 2.2 Delivery of the first sub-phase would provide an initial, and likely modest, financial return to the developer but the process of obtaining a Satisfactory Planning Permission for the whole of Phase 1 (including the Lodge Lane Car Park sub-phase) would be of considerable benefit to the larger regeneration programme and the overall financial viability of the project.
- 2.3 In parallel to progressing the planning application for Phase 1 and the development of the Lodge Lane Car Park sub-phase, there are a number of other significant steps that would be taken to advance the wider regeneration goals. Council officers will work with development partners, Transport for London and other key stakeholders to:
- Address the poor traffic conditions around the 'Island Site' between Ballards Lane and the A1000.

- Deliver public transport and active travel improvements on the High Road, in line with the borough's Long-Term Transport Strategy, including considering the relocation of the North Finchley bus depot.
- Prepare and deliver a second stage of the Phase 1 CPO process (the first stage has already been undertaken) to enable a request to Government for a date for a public inquiry.
- Commence a process for entering into active joint venture/purchase negotiations with major landowners in order to advance site assembly of the rest of Phase 1 as soon as possible.
- Engage with Government on potential financial support for housing delivery.

Community consultation and engagement

- 2.4 A commitment to robust and authentic community engagement has been a fundamental element of the plans for North Finchley from the start. In developing the SPD, the council went above and beyond statutory requirements in ensuring that local businesses, residents and others had ample opportunities to make their voices heard, resulting in considerable support for the overall aims of the project.
- 2.5 In adopting the SPD, Committee mandated the formation of a North Finchley Partnership Board to ensure that a high level of engagement and accountability would be maintained throughout any development. In response, officers worked with specialist communications consultants to develop an engagement plan, including a variety of materials aimed at raising awareness of potential development of the town centre, to elicit views on its future from within the community and to promote opportunities for local people to get involved in the North Finchley Partnership Board. To date, this engagement plan has not been activated initially due to the lack of a viable scheme to progress and, latterly, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.6 In the meantime, council officers have been in frequent communication with interested residents and other groups to keep them apprised of timings, while recognising the level of anticipation within the community.
- 2.7 As noted below, a key next step is to commence recruitment to the North Finchley Partnership Board, which will be done through virtual means if not in person.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Town centres are important sites of economic, employment, services and community activity and therefore, a key part of the council's approach to the economy and regeneration.
- 3.2 The council could opt not to intervene in the development of town centres at all, however this would be a missed opportunity to capitalise on developer and other council interventions.
- 3.3 The council could opt to leave town centre renewal entirely to the market, cease the arrangement with Joseph Partners and take only a reactive approach that responds to individual planning applications, licensing and other decisions as they come forward. However, this approach could result in dis-jointed interventions that do not sufficiently respond to the scale and opportunity in taking a more strategic approach to North Finchley Town Centre.
- 3.4 The council could choose to do nothing, and not consider ways of revitalising North Finchley. This is not recommended as it would result in the further decline of the town centre, affecting residents, businesses and visitors, and would also result in a missed opportunity to deliver new homes. As stated previously, the current approach of working with Joseph Partners is being pursued due to the lack of demonstrable market interest from other parties.
- 3.5 Having considered the alternatives, the proposed approach of partnering with Joseph Partners and Regal London to continue progressing the comprehensive revitalisation of one of Barnet's most significant town centres should be considered an innovative one.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Next steps comprise the following:
 - Recruit to and hold the first meeting of the North Finchley Partnership Board;
 - Undertake due diligence in relation to Regal London prior to completion of variation/supplemental agreement;
 - Completion of a deed of variation and/or supplemental agreement with Joseph Partners and Regal London;
 - Coordinate establishment of a Project Board (with equal representation by/on behalf of the council and developers) which will be responsible for those elements of the development relating to public realm, public amenities and other elements of the town centre;
 - Obtain a counsel's opinion as to the likelihood of success of making a CPO if this route is required;
 - Further report to Housing and Growth Committee on valuations ensuring best consideration and approving disposals, as required;
- 4.2 Should Joseph Partners and Regal London not be able to identify a viable development scheme that matches the level of ambition set out in the SPD then

officers will consult with Members on appropriate alternative scenarios for community engagement and development.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1 Supporting thriving town centres, and small businesses in particular, has long been a strategic priority of the council and was endorsed again recently through the adoption of the Growth Strategy 2020-30 by Housing and Growth Committee.
- 5.2 Within the Growth Strategy, the Town Centre offer specifically outlines the council's commitment to providing additional support to actively market and promote opportunities to developers when dealing with main Town Centres.
- 5.3 The Growth Strategy directly supports delivery of the Corporate Plan, Barnet 2024, particularly the goals of promoting responsible growth within the borough, encouraging development and success, revitalising communities whilst protecting what residents love about the borough.
- 5.4 The Housing Strategy 2015-25 highlights the role of purpose-built private rented sector housing located within or around town centres in addressing housing needs, as well as supporting labour mobility.

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

- 5.5 The adoption of the recommendations will result in no additional cost to the council as the cost of additional resources will be recovered from Joseph Partners and Regal London through a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) that will be entered into by Re (on behalf of the council) and development partners. The Site Assembly Agreement allows for the recovery of further costs incurred by the council, which will be agreed in advance and recovered on a regular basis. Statutory planning functions will continue to be delivered through the 'business as usual' Re contract.
- 5.6 Progressing the Site Assembly Agreement and Land Agreement will clearly have implications for council property but the agreements are intended to optimise value for money for the council.
- 5.7 At this stage there are no anticipated implications for IT.
- 5.8 Sustainability considerations will be addressed through any development proposals and assessed as part of the normal planning process. The council will also seek to ensure that the future development of North Finchley Town Centre contributes to the goals of the Long-Term Transport Strategy and other relevant policy.

Social Value

- 5.9 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires people who commission public services to consider how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.
- 5.10 Social benefits will principally be secured through opportunities to increase housing delivery (including affordable housing), widen the range of leisure, cultural and commercial activities and improvements to the public realm. These activities will help to make North Finchley a more attractive destination.

Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.11 All proposals emerging from this report must be considered in terms of the Council's legal powers and obligations, including its overarching statutory duties such as the Public Sector Equality Duty. Legal advice has been taken throughout this project on the agreements, the planning documents and the structure of the project.
- 5.12 The Council's Constitution, Article 7.5, Responsibility for Functions, states that the Housing and Growth Committee is responsible for asset management, regeneration strategy and overseeing major regeneration schemes and receiving reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

Risk Management

- 5.13 There is a risk that satisfactory planning permission may not be obtained, which is being mitigated through extensive consultation between the council and development partners.
- 5.14 Underpinning the risk identified above is the risk of resistance to any proposed development by local community members and others. This has been mitigated by ensuring that residents and businesses were fully consulted on the SPD and will be addressed further through the formation of the North Finchley Partnership Board.
- 5.15 All projects will identify project-related risks and escalate these as and when this is appropriate. Town Centre projects can be complex as a result of the different uses, landlords and services on our high street. Council officers have recognised the need to have dedicated resource to manage the capital delivery of projects and propose to bring in additional capacity for this purpose.

Equalities and Diversity

- 5.16 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the decision-making of the council.
- 5.17 Decision-makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties, and are not duties to secure a particular outcome.

- 5.18 It is important that the decision-maker has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:
- 5.19 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5.20 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard to the need to:
- a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 5.21 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 5.22 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard to the need to:
- a) Tackle prejudice, and
 - b) Promote understanding.
- 5.23 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race

- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

- 5.24 The project will have positive benefits for the community and will give improved access to the facilities in the area. An equality impact assessment will be carried out as the scheme progresses.

Corporate Parenting

- 5.25 There are no direct links between the council's corporate parenting function and this project.

Consultation and Engagement

- 5.26 As previously noted, extensive community consultation was undertaken in the development of the North Finchley SPD and there will be significant opportunities for residents to engage with the programme through the North Finchley Partnership Board and other means.

Insight

- 5.27 Insight data informs the development of all town centre strategies, including data related to town centre vacancy rates, indices of multiple deprivation and footfall measurement. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the council has been updating its data and insight capabilities which will inform future planning for the revitalisation of North Finchley.

1. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Growth Strategy (draft June 2019):

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s52934/Growth%20Strategy.pdf>

Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee November 2018

Agenda item 7: North Finchley Town Centre Development – update

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=9482&Ver=4>

Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee March 2018

Agenda item 7: North Finchley Town Centre Development

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=9083&Ver=4>

Policy and Resources Committee February 2018

Agenda item 7: North Finchley Town Centre Framework Supplementary Planning Document

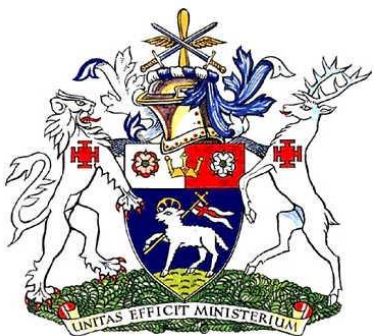
(SPD)

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=692&MId=8742&Ver=4>

Policy and Resources Committee December 2016

Agenda item 8: North Finchley Town Centre Area Framework

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=692&MId=8731&Ver=4>



Housing and Growth Committee

AGENDA ITEM 12

24 November 2020

Title	Council housing update
Report of	Chairman - Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Non-key
Officer Contact Details	<p>Stephen McDonald- Director of Growth - 020 8359 2172, stephen.mcdonald@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Elliott Sweetman – Group Director of Operations and Property, The Barnet Group – 0208 359 5261 Elliott.Sweetman@barnethomes.org</p>

Summary

At the request of the committee, this paper updates the committee on the status of decanting the properties in Marsh Drive on the West Hendon Estate and the subsequent rehousing of residents in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

It also updates the committee as to the status of other council tenants on Grahame Park and Dollis Valley regeneration estates and provides information regarding the approach Barnet Homes takes to resident engagement and involvement more broadly across Council housing estates.

Recommendations

That the committee:

1. Notes the progress made with the decanting of the properties in Marsh Drive on the West Hendon Estate and the subsequent rehousing of residents as appropriate in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.
2. Notes the longstop date of February 2021 agreed with Cadent to have Marsh Drive fully decanted
3. Notes the status of tenants on the Grahame Park and Dollis Valley Estates
4. Notes the significant investment being delivered to improve the condition and safety of the homes on the Grahame Park estate

5. Notes the approach taken by Barnet Homes to community engagement and involvement across Council housing estates

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 Marsh Drive, West Hendon Estate

- 1.2 The regeneration of West Hendon is making good progress. The regeneration scheme will replace existing properties which are of a low quality construction and hard to maintain within the West Hendon estate, with new mixed tenure housing constructed to modern standards. The Scheme will deliver 2,194 new residential units - a net gain of 1,545 on the existing site and will increase the overall levels of affordable housing on the estate. These will be delivered over a 17 year period, with all new homes expected to complete by 2028/29. The scheme includes improved pedestrian and public transport links, an enhanced Town Centre and a new community hub and is delivered by the Barratt Metropolitan Limited Liability Partnership (BMLLP) – a Joint Venture between Barratt Homes and Metropolitan Housing Trust.
- 1.3 Construction started in 2011 with 851 new homes built to date, of which 250 are affordable housing. In addition, 1,118sqm of commercial floorspace has been created at ground level of the latest development phase close to Hendon Broadway. In Autumn 2019, construction started on the next phase of development (Phase 4) which will deliver 611 residential units (418 private and 193 affordable) with completion expected in 2023.
- 1.4 The 232 homes at Marsh Drive were earmarked for the final phases of the development and are not currently intended for demolition until 2022. However, the Housing and Growth Committee received a report on West Hendon in January 2020 and agreed that tenants and leaseholders at Marsh Drive should be rehoused by October 2020, some 18 months earlier than planned. This decision took into account a number of factors such as the condition of the homes and blocks in general and a requirement from gas network distributor Cadent that because of risks associated with the large panel system construction of these properties, that the piped gas would need to be removed if it were planned to keep the properties in use beyond this date.
- 1.5 The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a number of challenges in achieving the October 2020 timescale due to a slowing down of the number of council and housing association homes being made available. This has in part, been as a result of construction programmes being delayed and in part due to a reluctance of people wanting to move from their existing homes during the pandemic. Additionally, the governments ban on evictions has presented restrictions in accessing the court system should the need arise as part of the decanting process.
- 1.6 Barnet Homes therefore reached an agreement with Cadent in April 2020 for an alternative longstop date for the decanting of all homes in Marsh Drive, that being February 2021. This agreement was reached on the basis that Barnet Homes would continue with the precautionary risk mitigation measures agreed

with Cadent and would use all best endeavours to decant the block as quickly as possible.

- 1.7 Positively, progress in relation to the rehousing programme has been good to date despite the challenges posed by the pandemic and a summary of the position as at 30 October 2020 is contained in the table below:

Tenure	Total	Rehoused	Found own accommodation / other	Have been made an offer of housing	Awaiting an offer
Non-secure	122	103	5	13	1
Secure	25	19	2	3	1

- 1.8 As reported to the committee in January 2020, the housing needs of each household have been assessed in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy which places people in bands based on their circumstances. This is done at a point in time, following their Housing Needs Assessment. The key objectives of this Allocations Scheme are to:

- Provide a fair and transparent system by which people are prioritised for social housing
- Help those most in housing need
- Promote the development of sustainable mixed communities
- Encourage residents to access employment and training
- Recognise residents who make a contribution to a local community
- Make the best use of Barnet's social housing
- Make efficient use of our resources and those of our partner Registered Social Landlords

- 1.9 Barnet Homes have endeavoured to provide options for rehousing the residents of Marsh Drive within the borough wherever possible. The table below shows a summary of the type and location of rehousing:

Tenure at Marsh Drive	Total Number at Marsh Drive	Found own accommodation / other	Rehoused or made an offer of social housing in Barnet	Rehoused on council regeneration estate	Rehoused / offered long term temporary accommodation in Barnet	Rehoused / offered long term temporary accommodation outside of Barnet
Non-secure tenants	122	5	99	2	13	3
Secure tenants	25	2	22 (1 remaining)			

2.0 Leaseholders

- 2.1 Of the 52 leasehold interests originally on Marsh Drive, 5 owner occupied properties remain to be acquired. Should private deals not be concluded, these will vest to the Council under CPO3 on 18th November. Of the owner-occupied properties likely to vest, there are 4 which present a risk that the

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leaseholders will remain in-situ post-vesting. Efforts are ongoing to help those leaseholders find housing solutions. Investor owned properties vested to the Council on 19th October. Of the properties that vested, 5 still have private tenants in occupation. Barnet Homes are working with these tenants to help them find new homes.

3.0 Management and Security

3.1 Barnet Homes continue to deploy full time estate caretaking, property guardian and security resources on the estate and this will continue until all properties are vacated and the blocks handed over to Barratt Metropolitan Limited Liability Partnership. As properties become vacant safety and security works are carried out to each property and Barnet Homes continue to liaise closely with Cadent to enable them to decommission individual gas risers to blocks as and when they become completely vacant, thereby reducing any risks associated with the gas supply further.

3.2 Barnet Homes continue their regular dialogue with the Residents Association and through regular estate wide resident newsletters and have maintained responsive to the needs of residents throughout the rehousing period.

4.0 Grahame Park and Dollis Valley Estates

4.1 At its September 2020 meeting the committee requested an update regarding the status of council tenants on other regeneration estates in the borough. Below is a table which shows a summary by estate of the number of tenants and leaseholders on Dollis Valley and Grahame Park Estates:

Estate	Secure Tenants	Non-secure tenants
Grahame Park Estate	367	574
Dollis Valley Estate	180	106

4.2 As has been the case at West Hendon and other phases of estate regeneration decanting previously, secure tenants who reside in homes which are scheduled for future demolition as part of regeneration plans are provided with an offer of a new home within the regenerated area of the estate. Non-secure tenants are assessed in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy which places people in bands based on their circumstances. This is done at a point in time, following their Housing Needs Assessment. The process of decanting generally commences around 18 months prior to the scheduled vacant possession date for the dwellings in question. This significant amount of time is required to ensure all housing needs assessments can be completed, necessary support provided to or signposted for residents as required and allows ample time to source appropriate forms of alternative accommodation.

4.3 In recognition of the significant period left to run on the Grahame Park estate regeneration scheme, the council through Barnet Homes is investing £32m in improving the existing homes on the estate. This investment includes H&S/compliance related measures such as upgrading the electrical rising mains to blocks, asbestos removal, rewiring of homes and fire safety works. It

also includes the replacement and/or installation of secure controlled entrance systems to the largest blocks on the estate along with a range of other anti-social behaviour preventative security measures. Additionally, general refurbishment works to blocks and homes such as roof, window, kitchen and bathroom replacements will be completed over a 3 year programme.

- 4.4 Barnet Homes are working closely with a range of council services, the Police, Notting Hill Genesis and voluntary and community sector organisations to ensure that the existing estate is provided with adequate levels of investment, service and support to achieve the ultimate aims of the estate regeneration scheme.

5.0 Barnet Homes Resident Engagement/Involvement

- 5.1 Barnet Homes generally take a centralised approach to customer involvement and scrutiny through our Performance Advisory Group (PAG) and Resident Support Group. These groups consist exclusively of tenant and leaseholder customers of Barnet Homes. Their role is primarily to provide a robust customer scrutiny function to ensure that the 'voice of residents' is adequately represented in relation to the delivery of the Barnet Homes' services they receive and to also provide input and direction regarding strategic decisions taken by Barnet Homes regarding customer services. The PAG have been instrumental in shaping the Barnet Homes Customer Experience Programme and were strong advocates of the recent insourcing of the Barnet Homes Repairs and Gas Service.

- 5.2 In recognition of the need to further enhance the role of residents in the governance of Barnet Homes, the TBG Board recently voted in favour of creating a Resident Board reporting directly into the Barnet Homes and TBG Boards. The Chair of the Resident Board will also be a member of the Barnet Homes and TBG Boards so as to ensure that there is a strong link between the boards and that the 'residents voice' is well represented in terms of oversight, scrutiny and strategic decision making.

- 5.3 There is also support provided in a localised manner for the creation and ongoing development of resident's associations and smaller local groups throughout the borough and we work closely with partners such as Colindale Communities Trust, Barnet Community Project, The Hope of Childs Hill, Burnt Oak Women's Group and resident's associations such as Granville Estate Residents Association amongst many others.

- 5.4 TBG have a Community Engagement Strategy which includes 3 themes:

1. Customer Involvement and Scrutiny – Barnet Homes, Open Door Homes and Your Choice
2. Community Engagement – Local need & environment
3. Community Development – VCS, youth, health and wellbeing, addressing poverty

- 5.5 The government published a Social Housing Green Paper in August 2018 and they have recently announced in Parliament that the Social Housing White

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Paper will be published later this year. The aim of the paper will be to ensure a new fairer deal for social housing residents. TBG will use this opportunity to review their Community Engagement Strategy which will include consulting with residents, the council, partners and the VCS.

6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Following the committee's January 2020 decision to decant Marsh Drive by October 2020, Barnet Homes have made good progress with that process despite significant challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst every effort has been made to decant Marsh Drive within the original timescale, this has not been possible for reasons outside of any control and this has been acknowledged by Cadent with the agreement of a February 2021 longstop date.
- 6.2 Following the committee's January 2020 decision to invest £32m to improve the homes on the Grahame Park estate, Barnet Homes are projecting expenditure of £5m in the 2020/21 financial year on this programme despite the limiting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 7.1 Improvements could have been carried out at the blocks on Marsh Drive and the piped gas could be removed and the heating in all properties updated, but this would have been prohibitively expensive in light of the previously planned demolition of the block in 2022. Any new heating system would be operational for an estimated 18 months before the blocks were demolished, during which time the Council would also be seeking to reduce the number of residents occupying the blocks ahead of the redevelopment.
- 7.2 A decision could have been taken not to invest in the homes on Grahame Park estate, however given the current condition of the stock and the length of time over which much of the estate will remain occupied for, this was not recommended.

8.0 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 8.1 At West Hendon, Barnet Homes will continue to rehouse the remaining residents and secure the blocks up to the point that the site can be handed over to Barratt Metropolitan Limited Liability Partnership.
- 8.2 Barnet Homes will continue to deliver the £32m stock investment programme on the Grahame Park estate and its work with a range of council services, the Police, Notting Hill Genesis and voluntary and community sector organisations to ensure that the existing estate is provided with adequate levels of

investment, service and support to achieve the ultimate aims of the estate regeneration scheme.

- 8.3 TBG will undertake a review and update of the TBG Community Engagement Strategy following the government publishing the Social Housing White Paper.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 9.1 The regeneration of the West Hendon, Grahame Park and Dollis Valley Estates supports the Council's Corporate Plan 2024 which states our three outcomes for the borough focus on place, people and communities:

- A pleasant, well maintained borough that we protect and invest in
- Our residents live happy, healthy, independent lives with the most vulnerable protected
- Safe and strong communities where people get along well.

- 9.2 Under a pleasant, well maintained borough that we protect and invest in, the priorities are:

- ensuring decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet residents
- investing in community facilities to support a growing population, such as schools and leisure centres
- responsible delivery of our major regeneration schemes to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the borough.

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

- 10.1 There are no direct resource implications arising out of this report.

11. Social Value

- 11.1 There are no specific social value considerations arising out of this report.

12. Legal and Constitutional References

- 12.1 The Council's Constitution, Article 7.5 responsibility for function, states the functions of the Housing and Growth Committee, includes responsibility for regeneration schemes and asset management as well as housing strategy and social housing. The Committee also has responsibility to receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

13. Risk Management

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- 13.1 As set out in the report to ARG on 27 November 2017 and 14 June 2018, the existing Regeneration Strategy was approved by Cabinet in 2011 and sets out the existing regeneration programme that is now underway. A new Growth Strategy was drafted in 2019 and consulted upon which provides an agreed strategic direction for the council's role in growth and regeneration.
- 13.2 A number of remaining blocks at Marsh Drive, which under the regeneration scheme are not due for demolition until 2022, have been deteriorating, and in some cases had fallen below a standard that was acceptable. To mitigate any potential risks outlined in earlier sections of this report the Council will re-house all Marsh Drive residents by the longstop date of February 2021.

14. Equalities and Diversity

- 14.1 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the Council's decision-making process. Decision makers should have due regard to the public-sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited on each of the proposals as they are developed. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that Policy and Resources Committee, or the officer decision maker if the decision is delegated to them, has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public-sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- 14.2 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: 13 (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 14.3 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 14.4 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 14.5 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who
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share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) Tackle prejudice, and (b) Promote understanding.

- 14.6 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

- 14.7 The Housing Allocations Policy was subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment. No changes to this policy are proposed.

15. Corporate Parenting

- 15.1 The Housing Allocations scheme gives priority to care leavers, foster carers, and providers of Supported Living.

16. Consultation and Engagement

- 16.1 The West Hendon Regeneration Partnership Board brings together key stakeholders involved in the regeneration of the West Hendon Estate and includes representatives from the Council, Barnet Homes, Metropolitan Housing Trust, Barratt London, West Hendon residents, community representatives and local Councillors. The Partnership Board meets regularly to discuss matters relating to development and regeneration activities on the estate and are supported by an Independent Resident Advisor.
- 16.2 Further to this, senior officers from the Council and Barnet Homes have met with West Hendon residents over the last 12 months to listen to and respond to any concerns they have.
- 16.3 The Grahame Park Regeneration Partnership Board brings together key stakeholders involved in the regeneration of the Grahame Park Estate and includes representatives from the Council, Barnet Homes, Notting Hill Genesis, Grahame Park residents, community representatives and local Councillors. The Partnership Board recommenced meetings in October 2020 and will continue meeting regularly to discuss matters relating to development and regeneration activities on the estate and are supported by an Independent Resident Advisor.

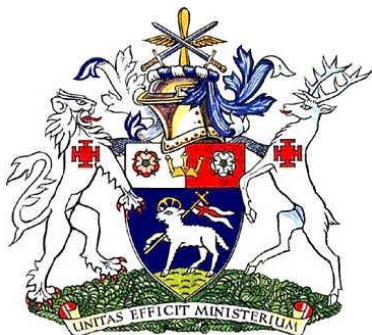
17. Insight

17.1 No specific insight data has been used in this report.

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 Relevant previous decisions are listed in the table below.

Housing and Growth Committee – January 2020	West Hendon estate regeneration and non-secure tenants on regeneration estates	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/document/s/s57396/West%20Hendon%20estate%20regeneration%20and%20non-secure%20tenants%20on%20regeneration%20estates.pdf
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Housing and Growth Committee

AGENDA ITEM 14

24 November 2020

Title	Fire Safety – progress update
Report of	Chairman of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A – Fire Safety Briefing update Appendix B – Action Plan Tracker
Officer Contact Details	<p>Adam Driscoll, Commissioning Lead - Growth. 020 8359 4922 – Adam.Driscoll@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Elliot Sweetman, Group Director of Operations and Property, Barnet Homes. 020 8359 5261 – Elliott.Sweetman@barnethomes.org</p> <p>Belinda Livesey, Group Manager, Environmental Health, Re 020 8359 7438 - Belinda.Livesey@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Helen Philips, Affordable Housing Liaison Officer, Re 020 8359 4861 - Helen.Phillips@Barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Michael Keown, Building Control Manager, Re 020 8359 4879 - Michael.Keown@Barnet.gov.uk</p>

Summary

This report is to provide an update on the progress of fire safety works within the borough since the last report to Housing and Growth Committee, submitted to the 14 September 2020 meeting. It notes the progress of private sector blocks towards securing the funding to enable remedial works to take place.

Officers Recommendations

- 1. That the Committee notes the updates since the previous report.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Reports have previously been made to Housing and Growth Committee with the most recent report in September 2020 noting the progress of Barnet Homes with high priority fire safety works as well as the expanded programme of work. It also noted progress by Registered Providers, together with coordination work on behalf of government to identify unsafe cladding in the private sector.

NATIONAL CONTEXT UPDATES

- 1.2 On 4th June 2020 the government launched its £1 billion building safety fund to help address one of the barriers to progression of remedial action, and the registration process for applying to this fund ended on 31st July 2020.
- 1.3 Of the two private sector blocks where funding was sought, each have provided updates:
 - One block has confirmed that grant funding has been secured.
 - The other block was initially unsuccessful with their bid but have secured a revised recommended tender for necessary remedial works and are making a further application to the government for funds (both ACM and non-ACM).
- 1.4 There are no further updates in terms of the national context since the September report.

KEY LOCAL CONTEXT UPDATES

- 1.5 Full details of the local context are set out in Appendix A, with progress against the defined action plan set out in Appendix B.
- 1.6 The programme of remedial works planned by the council is continuing for those properties where the council is responsible for improvements. The only key update to the programme to report this quarter is that the completion of the High Priority Works, referenced in Appendix A paragraph 3.3, have been pushed back to Q3 2020 due to

ongoing access and material sourcing (COVID-19 related) delays. Appendix A also notes progress towards other milestones including the sprinkler works progression to tender stage, and completion of a further 210 surveys relating to works to low and medium rise properties. Lastly, the number of buildings likely to be 'in scope' for new fire safety regulations has reduced slightly to 22 blocks.

- 1.7 Works to remedy Registered Social Landlord (RSL)-owned blocks that were due for completion in September have been confirmed as complete in one case and due for completion by end of November in the second case. Subject to such confirmation, that leaves just the one further site, held through a lease, where responsibility for remediation sits with the freeholder.
- 1.8 There are three private sector blocks where remedial action is being monitored and following initial investigation the landowners have put in place interim safety measures. Assessment and enforcement in relation to these blocks have been coordinated with the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) to ensure they are clear about their responsibilities and the actions required to deliver permanent fire safety measures. The council continues to coordinate with MHCLG around intended start and completion dates for the remedial works, and as noted in paragraph 1.2, necessary funding has been secured or sought to resolve issues in relation to two blocks.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The council needs to ensure the safety of residents living in Barnet by delivering either directly or indirectly the fire safety works programme.
- 2.2 Engagement with landowners of housing stock outside of the council's control continues to be a mixed picture but for the key sites, works are being pursued and in some cases are now expected to soon get underway; however if the commitments made to date are not met, then enforcement will take place.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 This is an update to the September 2020 report.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The council will continue to coordinate delivery of the agreed action plan in Appendix B.
- 4.2 Barnet Homes will continue to progress the council's programme of works to improve fire safety within its own stock.
- 4.3 The council will continue to update MHCLG and will proceed to arrange enforcement action to ensure compliance and remediation where required.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 This paper is an update to the September 2020 Report.

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

- 5.2.1 There are no changes to resources since the September 2020 report.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 There are no changes to social value considerations since the September 2020 report.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 The council's Constitution Article 7.5 Responsibility for Functions, states that the Housing and Growth Committee is responsible for housing matters including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, together with the commissioning of environmental health functions for private sector housing.
- 5.4.2 The Housing Act 2004 (sections 3 and 4) require local authorities to keep the housing conditions in their area under review and to inspect the same if it considers a category 1 or 2 hazard (as defined by the Act) exists and gives powers to intervene where they consider housing conditions to be in breach of the same.

5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 There are no changes to risk management since the September 2020 report.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 There are no changes to compliance with the equalities and diversity duties since the September 2020 report.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 There are no changes to the relationship to corporate parenting since the September 2020 report

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 There are no changes to consultation and engagement since the September 2020 report.

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 There are no changes to insight since the September 2020 report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Housing and Growth Committee – 14th September 2020 – Item 9: Fire Safety – progress update
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=10226&Ver=4>

6.2 Housing Committee - 1 April 2019 – Item 8: Housing Strategy.
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s51891/Housing%20Strategy.pdf>

6.3 Housing Committee – 14th January 2019 – Item 10: Fire Safety – progress update
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50421/Fire%20Safety%20progress%20update.pdf>

6.4 Housing Committee 21st June 2018 – Item 8 – Fire Safety Update
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9486&Ver=4>

6.5 Housing Committee 23rd October 2017 – Item 9 – Fire Safety Update
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9237&Ver=4>

6.6 Housing Committee 26th June 2017 – Item 7 – Response to Grenfell Tower Fire
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9236&Ver=4>

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Appendix A – November 2020 Housing and Growth Committee

Fire safety and the council's response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy

1 Introduction

This report provides a progress update on Fire Safety issues in Barnet, including progress with the agreed package of fire safety improvement works for council properties managed by Barnet Homes, together with activity in relation to relevant Registered Provider and Private Sector housing stock.

2 Building a Safer Future (Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Bill)

- 2.1 Building a Safer Future is a government-led initiative in response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy. It is a framework within which the shortcomings identified in the post-Grenfell review of Building Regulation and Fire Safety can be addressed. These shortcomings include the way high-rise residential buildings are built and managed. Building a Safer Future (BSF) is also intended to deal with situations where residents may raise concerns about the safety of their buildings which they may feel are not taken seriously by their landlord.
- 2.2 Two key pieces of legislation support this initiative – the Building Safety Bill and the Fire Safety Bill. Both Bills have been delayed due to COVID-19, are currently out for consultation and are due to be passed in early 2021 with implementation expected around 6 months thereafter.
- 2.3 The Building Safety Bill will set out to create a new regulator for fire safety under the responsibility of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It will be responsible for 'high risk' / 'in-scope' buildings (e.g. residential blocks over 18m, but other criteria may be defined through subsequent statutory instruments).
- 2.4 The Fire Safety Bill will amend the Fire Safety Order 2005 to clarify that the responsible person or duty-holder for multi-occupied, residential buildings must manage and reduce the risk of fire for:
- the structure and external walls, including cladding, balconies and windows
 - entrance doors to individual flats that open into common parts
- This clarification will empower fire and rescue services to take enforcement action and hold building owners to account if they are not compliant.
- 2.5 This means an expert Building Safety Manager will need to be appointed for each block, a regular inspection regime put in place for fire doors, as well as wider reinforcement of better management and increased accountability, as detailed in the Hackitt report.
- 2.6 The new regulatory framework is designed to make building safety issues transparent to all parties involved and reinforce responsibilities. This includes a role for residents in keeping their buildings safe for themselves and their neighbours. The buildings in scope are currently those 18m or higher.

- 2.7 Following the consultation and the formal introduction of the bills, it is inevitable that there will be additional requirements for other enhanced aspects of building and fire safety and ongoing management of our buildings and the wider housing stock within the borough. It is therefore likely that additional costs and responsibilities will be identified as this process continues.

3 Council Housing

- 3.1 The fire safety delivery programme for council housing stock is progressing well following a period of re-programming to incorporate all elements of the investment programme approved by committee:

Item	Cost
Granville Road cladding removal, recladding and associated costs	£5,922,900
Category 1 High Priority works	£9,220,433
Additional fire safety works to high rise buildings (Category 2 and 3a works)	£12,656,667
Installation of sprinklers to High Rise blocks with 2 stairwells	£3,220,000
Installation of sprinklers to sheltered housing blocks	£2,330,000
Installation of sprinklers to hostels	£150,000
Works to low and medium rise blocks (Inc. undertaking of type 3 FRA's and any urgent arising works)	£7,900,000
Replacement of composite fire doors	£10,500,000
Total	£51,900,000

Progress on fire safety measures to date:

- 3.2 **Granville Road Recladding** - complete.
- 3.3 **Category 1 High Priority Works** - Good progress including communal areas of high-rise blocks (Whitefields, Grahame Park and Silk House & Shoelands). However, recent delays caused by COVID-19 impeded access to properties and sourcing of materials, mainly affecting Grahame Park, Silk House & Shoelands where completion dates have now moved back to Q3 2020/21.
- 3.4 **Additional fire safety works (category 2 and 3a)** - Works at Longford Court only saw minor disruption due to COVID-19; communal elements continued without the need to access homes. After a later than planned start, works at Prospect and Norfolk tower blocks in East Finchley have progressed well in Q2 with an aim to catch up lost time over the coming months.
- 3.5 **Installation of sprinklers to blocks of flats with 10 or more floors and 2 or more stairwells** - These are still scheduled for 2020/21 and 2021/22; including the three tower blocks at Granville Road, where work was due to commence in July 2020. Due to a higher than usual number of queries from leaseholders

regarding the scope of the works, a decision was taken to delay the works to allow additional time for resident consultation including with the estate's residents' association. This has now progressed to tender stage with works now scheduled to commence in Q4 2020.

- 3.6 **Installation of sprinklers to sheltered housing blocks and hostels** - Most works are scheduled for 2022/23 and 2023/24, however consideration is being given to accelerating the installation at certain schemes where other disruptive works are scheduled as part of the wider capital investment programme. This applies to sheltered housing at Vale Court and the hostel at Friern Barnet Road.
- 3.7 There are delays at Vale Court due to Covid-19; with resident safety and shielding against Covid-19 prioritised over implementation of the works. These fire safety works are now scheduled to complete in Q3.
- 3.8 At St John's sheltered housing block, incorporation of fire safety works into the wider project that includes a new heating system and electrical upgrades was due to commence in late April 2020, however prospective tenderers are unable to attend site to review the works; the tender period was extended to July 2020, with works onsite due to commence in November 2020.
- 3.9 **Works to low and medium rise blocks (incl. Type 3 Fire Risk Assessments and any urgent arising works)** - Expert consultants are undertaking in depth FRAs and any urgent works actioned as a priority, with other observations forming part of a longer term planned programme of improvements. The survey work was halted in March 2020 due to COVID-19. Almost 525 surveys have been undertaken now with the remainder (approx. 530) scheduled for completion in Q3.
- 3.10 **Replacement of composite fire doors** – There are 5000 “glass reinforced polyester” (GRP) composite fire doors installed in homes managed by Barnet Homes. Updated risk assessments informed the proposed replacement programme and discussions with the contractors who supplied and fitted the doors. Agreement has been reached with the contractor that faulty doors will be replaced at the contractor's expense and liability resolved through independent adjudication when the work is finished. Work on this programme is ongoing.
- 3.11 Barnet Homes also continue to work with leaseholders whose flat front entrance doors do not meet the required standard but belong to the leaseholder rather than the council pursuant to Deeds of Variation. These doors will also require replacement to ensure the integrity of the fire safety strategy for each block.
- 3.12 **Whitefields Estate - tower block cladding system** – The three blocks (Clare, Norden and Whyhcote Point), fitted with High-Pressure Laminate (HPL) are due to be demolished in 2023. After expert advice the cladding and non-combustible insulation backing is deemed safe. A programme of work to improve the front doors to flats and fire alarm warning systems is underway and due for completion in December 2020.
- 3.13 **Willow House Fire** - Works are underway and the project progressed well until issues with the integrity of the block and beam flooring surfaced. Consultants

have investigated the issues and specified remedial works which are nearing completion. The project as a whole is expected to complete ahead of the end of the calendar year.

- 3.14 **Large Panel System buildings** - Surveys for such works are complex and invasive, requiring tenants to be decanted as concrete must be removed to allow visual inspection alongside calculations to assess structural integrity against an internal gas explosion. The gas distributor, Cadent, sought reassurance from Barnet Homes that LPS buildings are safe to retain piped gas – and therefore a set of precautionary risk mitigation measures for blocks at Marsh Drive, Dollis Valley, and Silk House & Shoelands has been implemented.
- 3.15 As the recommendation for next steps at Silk House sought the removal of the piped gas supply to the block, the gas supply to all properties was disconnected in June 2019 and replacement communal heating installed. With no gas supply, Cadent no longer have concerns about the building, but Barnet Homes have taken additional precautionary measures to prevent accidental loading by not permitting portable gas heaters in high rise buildings. Tenancy audits ensure portable gas appliances are not being used.
- 3.16 Surveys were completed for Marsh Drive and blocks in Dollis Valley that confirm they do not meet the required standard. It was therefore agreed with Cadent to work towards the decant of Marsh Drive, and piped gas decommissioning at relevant Dollis Valley blocks, by October 2020. This agreement is based on Barnet Homes having implemented safety measures that include installing gas safety monitoring equipment in each flat, removal of gas appliances and monthly safety checks of the gas boilers. As properties are vacated through the rehousing process all internal gas installations are being safely isolated.
- 3.17 Cadent have acknowledged COVID-19 impacts and agreed the potential for extension to February 2021 for decanting Marsh Drive; although both parties have agreed to endeavour to achieve the October 2020 timescale. Significant progress with decanting at Marsh Drive means Cadent are now able to carry out partial decommissioning (approx. 60%) of the piped gas supply by November. At the Dollis Valley blocks, where decant is phased over five years, a new electric heating system is currently being installed. The power network distribution operator UKPN have recently advised that they cannot achieve the original deadline of October 2020 due to what they cite as COVID-19 related impacts. A revised timescale of January 2021 has been agreed with UKPN and Cadent are aware.
- 3.18 **Responding to changing legislation** - Barnet Homes are assessing how the new requirements of the Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Bill will impact on the council housing stock in Barnet. It is currently expected that 22 buildings will be considered 'in-scope' within the Barnet Homes stock. One area of change for example will be maintaining digital records of building components and evidencing competence of all parties involved in the building and management process. The impact of the measures and changes is likely to

increase the cost of the fire safety programme and the committee will be updated when the extent of the impacts is clearer.

4 Registered Providers

- 4.1 Of three RPs with confirmed ACM cladding on blocks, works at one are now complete, on another the cladding has been replaced and the replacement of insulation in the final block is due to complete in November 2020, delays are due to Covid-19. This RP is now looking into further work to remove all combustible material from the balconies in order that EWS1 certification can be provided to residents.
- 4.2 In addition, the further provider with a block held through a lease, has an up to date fire risk assessment and the freeholder is responsible for replacing the cladding. The owner of the building has recently confirmed they plan to replace the cladding with fibre cement panels. The owners have been liaising with the council's building control team and have applied to MHCLG for funding to meet the replacement costs of the cladding. A waking watch continues to be in place at this site.
- 4.3 Impacts of the changes to building and fire safety regulations are being reviewed by the sector. Ongoing engagement and partnership working arrangements with the sector will ensure that all RSLs keep the council updated on assessment measures they are putting into place and findings in relation to these changing responsibilities.

5 Private Sector buildings (residential and commercial)

- 5.1 There continues to be two privately owned blocks higher than 18 metres with failed ACM cladding that the council's building control team are in touch with; both have confirmed plans to replace the cladding and have advised that they have requested funding from the Government to assist with replacement. In one case they have seen funding approved and therefore works are due to start in November. In the other case a revised tender for works will enable a new bid for funding from government following a previously unsuccessful application.
- 5.2 An additional high-rise block, identified and inspected in September 2019, was served with an Improvement Notice by the Fire Authority. It was also inspected by Barnet and the LGA's Joint Inspection Team (JIT), who reported back to the building owners and the Fire Authority. Following liaison with the council and the Fire Authority, extensive work has been completed to the block and therefore the Fire Authority have confirmed their initial notice has been complied with. A revised Fire Risk Assessment has been undertaken and follow-up works planned. The council have obtained legal advice to inform its determination whether to take any action under the Housing Act 2004. Works have started to replace the ACM cladding.

- 5.3 Following wider concerns about the safety of some non-ACM systems, the Government requested a further exercise to identify external wall covering on all buildings higher than 18 metres in their area. The review by building control officers was completed. The council has written to landowners/landlords to seek further information, to identify the type of insulation used for each building and any external features such as balconies, where required, to update the national dataset. The initial exercise completed in May 2020; although the council still needs information back from about half of the landowners/landowners deemed 'in-scope' and is continuing to chase them for information. Work continues with the Government and Fire Authority to ensure the ongoing safety of residents.

Appendix B - Barnet Council Fire Safety Action Plan – November 2020

The table below captures only actions that remain ongoing at the time fire safety was last reported to the committee, together with any new actions that have arisen.

Action	Status	Notes
Undertake high priority works identified in surveys	Ongoing	High priority works are close to completion, access to some properties and sourcing of materials due to COVID 19 has caused delays.
Work with Government and RPs to ensure actions to address any fire safety concerns are addressed	Ongoing	2 RPs with blocks with ACM panels that failed tests have completed the remedial works or are close to completing. One further 'leased' building still requires remedial action.
Liaison with owners of blocks with failed ACM Cladding	Ongoing	The council is awaiting confirmation of the result of a revised funding application for government funding for one block and has received confirmation of funding for another that has enabled remedial work to commence from November 2020.
Actions from fire risk assessments for commercial units beneath residential	Ongoing	All retailers have been contacted to confirm works required. Enforcement action will be taken where appropriate. Several of the buildings where remedial action is required have retail units at the ground floor.
Implement the requirements of the Building Safety and Fire Safety Bills.	Ongoing	Review revised requirements of the council and other landowners to ensure measures are in place to deliver full compliance.

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Housing & Growth Committee

AGENDA ITEM 15

24th November 2020



Title

Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers (RPs)

Report of

Chairman of Housing & Growth Committee

Wards

All

Status

Public

Urgent

No

Key

No

Enclosures

Appendix One- Barnet Annual Performance Review 2019/20

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Summary

Registered Providers (RPs) are key partners for the council in delivering on the Housing Strategy goal of increasing the housing supply, including affordable housing. As the providers of accommodation for 8900 households in the borough, RPs also have a key part to play in assisting tenants affected by welfare reforms, providing training and employment opportunities, improving health and wellbeing and providing effective landlord services and neighbourhood management. The council has completed an Annual Performance Review of the top nine developing RPs operating in the borough to obtain a view on how RPs are performing and how they have adapted their working practices as a result of COVID-19.

Officers Recommendations

1. That Committee note the Barnet Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers 2019/20 as attached in Appendix 1.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 At the meeting of 19th October 2015, the Housing Committee requested that a performance review be completed on an annual basis and reported to the Committee.
- 1.2 There are 54 RPs, managing over 8900 tenanted homes, in the borough, of which 17 have more than 100 units each, and 19 have less than 20 units each. The main RPs currently developing in Barnet are Peabody, Notting Hill Genesis, Metropolitan Thames Valley, Network Homes, One Housing Group, L&Q and Clarion. In addition to this, Barnet Homes as an Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO) manages 13,500 tenanted and leasehold homes on behalf of the council. TBG Open Door Ltd, a subsidiary of Barnet Homes, was created in 2017 delivering new homes for Barnet Residents. This review will monitor the nine main RP's currently developing in Barnet. This report does not cover a review of Barnet Homes.
- 1.3 The regulator of social housing requires all RPs to complete a statistical data return, however this has been delayed until 31st October due to COVID-19. In light of this and to relieve the additional pressure on RPs we have adjusted the requirements for RPs to respond to the Performance Review this year and have directed the questions towards how RPs have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Appendix 1 is an Annual Performance Report for 2019/20 for housing management and housing development activities. The review presents an analysis of the performance of nine large RPs that are building new affordable homes in Barnet.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The attached review highlights that RPs are providing satisfactory landlord services and have shown commitment in responding to residents needs during the pandemic. RP's have shown that they are changing their working procedures to adapt to new measures and identifying those residents requiring additional support. The council will continue to promote their services to encourage partnership working with RPs, however this year will see no face to face meetings with RP's and information sharing will largely be online. RPs continue to provide some excellent employment and training opportunities for their residents and the response to Fire Safety has been positive.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 None

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The council will continue to carry out an Annual Performance Review and take up any issues where poor performance has been identified.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

- 5.1 **Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment identifies that housing affordability is a major concern as both rents and house prices in Barnet are higher than the national average, in 2017-18 the rate of statutory homelessness in the borough was significantly higher than the national average. RPs are providing more affordable homes to help meet this demand and also assisting to address the themes in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy established to take into account the changes arising from the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 5.1.2 Barnet's Corporate Plan 2019 -24 prioritises ensuring decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet Residents. RPs developed 211 new properties last year with 16 being shared ownership homes.
- 5.1.3 Barnet's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024 highlights helping people into work and better paid employment and will see the council continue to develop its multi-agency Welfare Reform Task Force, offering employment schemes and apprenticeships on the regeneration sites with the help of our regeneration partners
- 5.1.4 The Corporate plan aims to create safe and strong communities where people get along well and focusses on tackling anti-social behaviour and environmental crime by delivering targeted multi-agency interventions., RPs are reported to attend the Councils MARAC which spearhead the work of the Safer Community partnership.
- 5.1.5 The new emerging Local Plan for Barnet will continue to prioritise the need for affordable housing, including family housing, helping people into work, health and well-being and creating safer neighbourhoods within the Thriving, Family Friendly and Healthy and Clean, Safe and Well-run themes.
- 5.1.6 A key principle of the council's Growth Strategy is to shape changes to places to secure healthy, resilient and cohesive communities. The strategy identified the need to increase the supply of housing and deliver more housing that people can afford, as well as creating job and skills development opportunities for local people, as key priorities.
- 5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**
- 5.2.1 There are no direct resource implications arising out of this report.
- 5.2.2 There has been an increase in the number of households affected by the benefit cap, this number continues to rise in 2020. This rise is due to the increase in Local Housing Allowance and the dramatic increase in Universal Credit claims since the start to the lockdown brought in as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. As at September 2020 Barnet has more than 48,500 residents in furlough, the 4th highest in London. The council through the Welfare Reform Taskforce and BOOST (a partnership between Barnet Homes, JobCentre Plus, Barnet & Southgate College to offer employment and benefit advice in Barnet) will continue to assist households affected and RPs are also working with their residents to assist.
- 5.3 **Social Value**
- 5.3.1 There are no specific social value considerations arising out of this report.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 Constitution, Article 7, Committees, Forums and Partnerships sets out the terms of reference of the Housing & Growth Committee which includes:
- Responsibility for housing matters including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, commissioning of environmental health functions for private sector housing.
 - Responsibility for regeneration strategy and oversee major regeneration schemes, asset management, employment strategy, business support and engagement.
 - To receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.
- 5.4.2 Specifically the Housing & Growth Committee may submit budget proposals to the Policy and Resources Committee relating to the Committee's budget for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable.
- 5.4.3 RPs are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), The RSH is an executive non-departmental public body of the ministry of housing, communities and local government (MCLG). The performance framework includes "Economic" standards such as governance and financial viability and value for money and "Consumer" standards such as tenant involvement and empowerment.

5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 RPs have a major role to play in accelerating housing development in Barnet and a reduced capacity for them to develop is a key risk that will impact on the council's ability to provide the new homes to meet the demand from a growing population. COVID-19 has meant that many developments were on hold until restrictions were lifted, as a result there has been delays to completions.
- 5.5.2 The Mayor of London's Affordable Housing Programme 2016 – 2021 encourages RPs to provide 90,000 homes across London. Increased housing products including London Affordable Rent (benchmarked with target rent) London Living Rent (intermediate product for households wishing to buy in 10 years) and London Shared Ownership. There are grants available for providers and developers. A total of 1585 units were agreed in the allocation programme for Barnet.
- 5.5.3 RPs should continue to work with BOOST and Taskforce to ensure that they are correctly identifying the skillset required in Barnet, so that they can tailor training accordingly.
- 5.5.4 The introduction of GDPR in 2018 affects how information can be shared with Registered Providers. Information sharing agreements have been signed with some RP's and a template is currently being finalised for each RP and the Council's website.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 Pursuant to section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ("the Act"), the council has a duty to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act, advance equality of opportunity between persons with a protected characteristic and those without, and foster good relations between persons with protected characteristics and those without.

5.6.2 The protected characteristics are age, race, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership but to a limited extent.

5.6.3 The Regulator of Social Housing requires RPs to meet the tenant involvement and empowerment standard which provides expectations over equalities.

5.6.4 RPs are key partners in the delivery of the Council's Housing Strategy 2019 to 2024. A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the Council's Housing Strategy and concluded that the overall impact of the Strategy on the protected groups from the Equality Act 2010, as well as the Barnet Fairness Agenda, is positive. This report is for information only and therefore unlikely to result in any equalities implications.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 There are no specific Corporate Parenting considerations arising out of this report.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 The following table shows how the Council and Re currently engage with and manage the performance of RPs.

Current Engagement/ Monitoring	Frequency	What's Involved	Engagement/ Performance
Annual Performance Review	Annually	Standard review issued to each larger/ developing RP. Included in this review is a meeting with various staff to talk through issues in Barnet. This year the meeting was through Teams and focused on COVID-19	Engagement and performance
Barnet Housing Association Liaison Group meeting	Annually and adhoc if required. (not planned for 2020 due to Covid-19)	All RPs in Barnet are invited, chaired by CEO of local RP. Agenda includes briefing from GLA, Welfare Reform and any other relevant items.	Engagement
Development Meetings	Minimum once per year	Individual meetings between larger developing RPs and Re to discuss current developments and future development plans in Barnet.	Engagement
General meetings/ Visits	Adhoc	Adhoc meetings and visits to RPs on partnership working over areas of mutual concern e.g. lettings	Engagement
Consultation on changes in Policy and Strategies	Adhoc	LBB consult with RPs on various policies and strategies. This can be done via liaison groups, forums and email consultation.	Engagement
Monitoring of lettings returns	Collected quarterly and recorded as an annual PI.	RPs provide details of lettings for each quarter to confirm that RPs have met nomination agreements. Results are verified.	Monitoring.
Development Data	Constantly	Re is in regular contact with each developing RP to discuss start on site	Engagement and Performance.

		dates, completion dates and monitoring the S106 affordable housing elements. Completion statistics are recorded as monthly KPI.	
Taskforce/BOOST	Regular	Taskforce consult with RPs on updates from the Taskforce or DWP via liaison groups and email consultation.	Engagement.
Community Safety MAPAC	Quarterly	Any Barnet anti-social behaviour cases that require a multi-agency approach.	Engagement

5.8 Insight

5.8.1 Insight data has not been used in this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Relevant previous papers are listed in the table below.

Housing & Growth Committee 26 November 2019	Decision Item 7 Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=9930&Ver=4
Housing Committee 1 April 2019	Decision Item 8 - Housing Strategy	Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 1st April, 2019, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee 10 October 2018	Decision Item 11 - Annual Performance review of Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing Committee on Wednesday 10th October, 2018, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee 23 October 2017	Decision Item 7 - Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 23rd October, 2017, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee 20 October 2016	Decision Item 8 - Annual Performance review of Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing Committee on Thursday 20th October, 2016, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee 19 October 2015	Decision Item 7 - Strategic engagement with Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 19th October, 2015, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee, 27 October 2014	Decision Item 9 - Housing Strategy	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=7936&Ver=4
Housing Committee. 27 April 2015	Decision item 10- Summary of Feedback Following Consultation on Draft Housing Strategy	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=7938&Ver=4

Housing Committee 29 June 2015	Decision item 7- Housing Strategy.	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/d ocuments/s24071/Housing%20 Strategt.pdf
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Barnet Annual Performance Review 2019/20

Barnet Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers.

Introduction

This review presents an analysis of the performance of Registered Providers (RPs). The report is divided into two sections. Section A looks at management performance and Section B considers development performance. The report focuses on nine developing RPs Barnet including the estate regeneration schemes in Barnet.

Background

Due to the pandemic COVID-19, the national performance submission requested by the Regulator of Social Housing has been extended to later in the year and the requirements have changed to include regular updates on response to COVID-19. To request more detailed data from each RP would cause additional work in an already challenging year. Considering this, this performance review takes a slightly different format to previous years.

For the regeneration schemes full management performance data is reported. For all other stock, management information concentrates on how each RP has responded to the implications of the virus, anti-social behaviour, welfare reform, lettings and fire safety.

In the year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 there were nine RPs with significant stock levels either currently developing or planning to develop general needs homes in Barnet.

The nine RPs and their general needs stock levels in Barnet are shown below.

Registered Provider	Number of General Needs homes in Barnet
Notting Hill Genesis (NHG)	2379
Peabody	1047
Metropolitan Thames Valley (MTV)	765
One Housing Group (OHG)	105
Clarion	261
Network Homes	364
L&Q	148
Origin	124
Home Group	579

A full breakdown of types of stock can be seen in **Appendix 1**.

In addition, we have also monitored the following Estate Regeneration Schemes in Barnet.

The three regeneration schemes in Barnet and the number of General Needs homes completed on these estates to date are shown below: -

Scheme	Registered Providers	Number of general needs homes
Grahame Park	NHG	770
West Hendon	MTV	217
Dollis Valley	L&Q	103
Total		995

There are two other regeneration schemes in Barnet which are not at the development of homes stage.

1. Granville Road (Registered Provider - One Housing Group). This scheme commenced in July 2019 and will complete by 2023 providing 46 shared ownership homes.
2. Brent Cross (Registered Provider - L&Q), L&Q will deliver 47 replacement homes for Whitefield Estate Part 1, which is estimated to be completed in Autumn 2022 and 110 replacement homes for Whitefield Estate Part 2 residents in Plot 12. This is estimated to be completed in Spring 2024. The estimated number of affordable homes to be built over the course of the next 10 to 15 years is 1293

The Performance Review

Each year the council reviews the performance of partner RPs to assess whether they can demonstrate they meet standards in management and performance, this year we are looking at how they have adapted to change through the pandemic.

For this period, (April 2019 - March 2020) the report focusses on the following areas of activity: -

Section A will focus on: -

1. Regulatory Judgements
2. Response to COVID-19
3. Nominations offered to LBB
4. Welfare Reform
5. Anti-Social Behaviour
6. Fire Safety
7. Regeneration Schemes Management Data

Section B will focus on development.

Section A: Management Performance

1. Regulatory Judgements

The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 states that the regulation function can only be exercised by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local government (MHCLG) acting through an independent Regulation Committee, this is known as the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The RSH is an executive non- departmental public body, sponsored by the MHCLG and is responsible for the regulation of social housing.

The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 sets out the statutory framework within which the RSH must operate. This framework enables the RSH to register and regulate providers of social housing. Providers of social housing registered with the RSH are known as "Registered Providers" (RPs). Only registered providers will be regulated. The Regulatory Framework includes both the regulatory standards which providers must meet, and the way in which the RSH carries out its functions.

The RSH has two objectives: an economic regulation objective and a consumer regulation objective.

There are three economic standards: -

- Governance and Financial Viability
- Value for Money
- Rent

The consumer Standards are: -

- Home
- Neighbourhood & Community
- Tenancy
- Tenant Involvement & Empowerment

The RSH review each provider and for those with more than 1000 units they also carry out periodic In-depth Assessments (IDA's).

Providers are assessed on a scale from G1/V1 to G4/V4, where G1/V1 means the provider meets the requirements and G4/V4 means the provider does not meet the requirements.

The following table shows the results summary for the regulatory judgements for the registered providers.

Registered Providers	Governance	Viability	Position of Travel since 2018/2019
Notting Hill Genesis (NHG)	G1	V2	↔
Peabody	G1	V2	↔
Metropolitan Thames Valley (MTV)	G1	V2	↔
One Housing Group (OHG)	G1	V2	↑
Network Homes	G1	V2	↔
L&Q	G1	V1	↔
Clarion	G1	V1	n/a
Origin	G1	V2	n/a
Home Group	G1	V1	n/a

Clarion, Origin and Home Group were not included in the Performance Review last year therefore we are unable to comment on the position of travel since last year.

2. Response to COVID-19

Organisations from Barnet's voluntary and community sector have worked alongside the council to deliver a coordinated community response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A community help hub was set up to let residents know how to get help and how they can get involved to help others, it also includes links to useful resources for local organisations offering support to educational activities for children.

A COVID-19 community response slack workspace was also launched, this is a social networking platform for professionals to share information and work together to support residents.

Communication was issued to all RP's regarding mental health support for residents during lockdown, A list was provided of useful resources to signpost residents or make direct referrals.

All RP's have highlighted they have made direct contact with vulnerable residents and provided assistance, Appendix 2 provides further details and a few good working practices are highlighted here.

- Welfare checks to vulnerable residents
- Identified residents who are shielding.
- Set up funds to assist residents (i.e. buying groceries)
- Referrals to outside organisations
- Set up support hubs and debt advice helplines

- Dedicated safeguarding leads and case handlers (specifically for domestic abuse)
- Assisting with food banks and free food parcels
- Online tutoring for children

The restrictions and regulations around COVID-19 has also led to permanent and temporary changes in policies. To protect tenants during lockdown the government put forward the following measures to protect renters.

- Ongoing possession proceedings were suspended from 27.3.20 to 20.9.20
- 3 months' notice before a Notice of Seeking Possession is served
- Extended notice period for tenancies

In addition, RPs have had to take additional steps around sign-ups for new properties and repairs to ensure the guidelines are adhered to.

Please refer to **Appendix 2** for further details.

3. Nominations offered to LBB

The Tenancy Standard requires that RPs contribute to Local Authority strategic housing function and sustainable communities. In Barnet, the standard nominations agreement requires associations to offer 50% of non-family accommodation and 75% of family sized accommodation (2 bedroom and above) eligible properties to council nominees. Eligible properties are newly built properties or re-let vacancies that are the result of the death of the tenant, eviction, or the household moving out of the borough.

In addition, all schemes which are funded by the council or are built on council land or have a S106 Agreement require 100% nominations in perpetuity.

London Borough of Barnet (Re) monitor and validate all lettings by RPs in the borough. There was a total of 142 lettings for family sized accommodation in 2019/20, London Borough of Barnet would be entitled to 131 of these but in fact received 133 therefore exceeding the performance indicator for this area.

4. Welfare Reform

The Welfare Reform Taskforce is a partnership working group, which brings together advisors from Barnet Homes, the London Borough of Barnet, Future Path and the Dept for Work and Pension.

They have this year seen a big financial impact on residents in Barnet. At the end of the March 2020 there were 1,620 households affected by the benefit cap. 1098 of these households were on universal credit and 522 were on Legacy benefits (child

tax credit, housing benefit, income-related employment and support allowance, income based jobseekers allowance, income support and working tax credit). This number represented a trend that has continued into 2020 of a sharp increase of benefit capped cases in Barnet. By May 2020 there were 2,545 benefit capped cases on Universal Credit alone. The biggest percentage increase in benefit capped households has been single claimants.

The large increase is due to a substantial increase in the Local Housing Allowance (rates used to calculate housing benefit for tenants renting from private landlords) by 1.7% in April 2020, the first increase in 5 years, and the dramatic increase in Universal Credit claims since the start of lockdown.

In March 2020 there were 13,948 households receiving payment of Universal Credit in Barnet. This was an increase from 9,630 in April 2019. In April 2020 this number increased to 21,023 households in Barnet on Universal Credit.

As at September 2020 the Government's Job Retention Scheme Barnet has more than 48,500 residents on furlough, the 4th highest number in London and 18th out of 376 nationally.

In summary the most significant changes in 2019/20 are as follows: -

- March Lockdown and start of COVID-19 response
- Local Housing Allowances increased across the United Kingdom for the first time in 5 years
- Council Tax minimum contribution increased from 20% to 28%
- Barnet Citizens advice is providing Universal Credit Help to Claim which started from April 2019

The task force has identified upcoming issues in 2020/21:

- Response to COVID-19:
 - Impact of end of furlough
 - Impact of ending of rent eviction holidays
 - Impact of ending suspension of Council Tax recovery
 - Possible withdrawal of increased element of UC
- Growth of Benefit Cap cases

RPs are updated on amendments and general information on welfare reform through emails and the Barnet Housing Association Liaison Group (currently reviewing options on how this group will sit in the current climate.)

The following table shows the number of residents affected by Universal Credit (UC) for each RP as at March 2020.

RP	Number of residents affected by UC
Home Group	33
L&Q	40
MTV	126

Network Homes	Unknown
NHG	411
Origin	41
Peabody	239
One Housing	unknown
Clarion	Unknown

Each RP was asked to provide details of what training or skills initiatives residents in Barnet can access and any success stories during 2019/20

Home Group

- The Home achievement programme, an accredited learning and development programme for Home tenants promoting person centred planning and opportunities to boost skills, confidence and employability

L&Q

- Employment Support service has seen one Barnet resident this year study for level 2 diploma in plumbing studies and completed an apprenticeship

MTV

- Community centre in West Hendon delivers a range of training and employment services, last year 2 employment focussed programmes delivered as well as training courses
- 87 Barnet residents participated in training with 57% gaining qualifications
- 27 Barnet residents gained employment
- 26 Barnet residents completed ESOL level 1
- 8 Barnet residents completed volunteering/work experience

Network Homes

- Offer a free employment and training service available to all residents, irrespective of tenure type or location. Residents can access the service by a direct request from our promotions of Worksmart, or by referral from colleagues. Barnet residents did not take up any services in 2019.20

Notting Hill Genesis

- Enterprise and Training officer working from Grahame park offering various experience and skills based courses and advice
- In 2019.20 supported 11 Barnet residents into employment, work club supported 31 people in Barnet, training provided to 275 Barnet residents, 21 residents registered on self-employment programme, 19 placements on Grahame Park within CCT, the LOOP and NHG

- Working closely with Barnet and Southgate College we offered 10 placements to their students in March 2019 with 6 students taking up the opportunities with an additional 8 placements provided by CCT and The Loop
- 2 Apprenticeship opportunities have been provided through partnerships within Grahame Park

Origin

- 121 support from employment and training co-ordinator, bursary scheme to cover costs to travel to work on a new job etc.
- 2 positive results for local residents to find work and new courses

Peabody

- Dedicated team specialising in offering advice and services for help with furlough scheme

One Housing Group

- Offer employment and training mostly from Camden and Tower Hamlets sites, now on-line courses and hope to see more Barnet residents take this up

Clarion

- Delivering employability support in Barnet through our Love London Working programme. Further details of activities that we have carried out over the last year are outlined below:

Activity	Number of customers
Enrolled on the Love London Working Programme	63
Formal training	47
Employment secured	17

- The Love London Working Team are actively involved in supporting London Borough of Barnet Residents, working very closely with several departments within Barnet Council and the wider Community, including; the Regeneration and Environment Team who provide support as part of a joint Job Club at the Brent Civic Centre. The Love London Working Team also continue to work with a number of educational establishments from the College of North West London, to many local Schools
- All the above are currently being facilitated via Microsoft Teams, email and telephone during the current period of lock down restrictions

5. Anti-Social Behaviour

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard require Registered Providers to keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own

clean and safe. They should work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.

The Barnet Community Safety MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment case conference) is a multi-agency meeting where stakeholders across the community safety partnership come together to discuss and resolve complex, high risk anti-social behaviour cases and includes the following members: -

- Barnet Community Safety Team
- Police
- Children's Services - Youth Offending Service, Social Care, Youth Service, Family First and a representative from schools
- Housing (Council and other Social Landlords)
- Barnet Homes
- National Probation Service (NPS) and CRC
- Victim support
- Mental Health Services

Not all RPs attend this meeting, some attend as and when they have cases to be discussed as deal with ASB inhouse with a high success rate. The case conference has been promoted further to encourage attendance.

Clarion, Origin, One Housing and Home Group have reported that the volume of ASB cases in Barnet has significantly increased since the start of COVID-19. All have seen an increase in noise nuisance and fly tipping with an increase in complaints about the use of communal outdoor space and BBQ's that are not in line with government guidelines. Clarion have since investigated and closed 33 cases, following the implementation of lockdown measures in March 2020 and currently have 8 live high-risk cases.

MTV would like to see more Police intervention regarding large social gatherings on Barnet sites, support from Adult Social Services in supporting residents who are vulnerable and require support from both Social Services and the Community Mental Health Team, this has been raised at MARAC.

Origin have some ongoing issues with drug taking/dealing in Colindale and have drug related issues at a property in East Finchley for the first time, following a recent letting in January this year.

6. Fire Safety Policy and Procedures

Fire Safety remains high on the agenda for all landlords and in June 2019 the government commenced the 'Building a Safer Future' initiative in response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy, it is about putting people's safety first in how buildings are

managed. The building Safety bill and fire Safety bill prepared to support this initiative are currently delayed due to COVID-19.

The Barnet safeguarding Adults board have reflected on four fire deaths of disabled adults in Barnet since 2017 and have established a task and finish group to assist in reducing future risks and increasing awareness to all partners. RPs have been contacted to confirm all properties have up to date fire risk assessments and information over processes in place to identify vulnerable residents who may be at risk of starting fires or not being able to escape from fires. The fire service is currently looking at training options for RPs.

Fire Risk Assessments

RP	All properties up to date FRA	Are you completing tenancy audits	Outstanding FRA works relating to cladding
Home group	Y	Y	N
L&Q	Y	N	N
MTV	Y	Y (only in fraud cases)	Y
Network	Y	Y (as a response to sub letting allegations)	N
NHG	Y	Y	Y- see note
Origin	Y	Y	Y – see note
Peabody	Y	Unknown	N
One	Unknown	Unknown	N

NB

MTV & Origin - Cladding removed and the replacement programme is slightly delayed due to COVID-19.

NHG –Initially had reported no issues of ACM cladding but have reported they are conducting further surveys on all blocks over 18 metres high as now required by the MHCLG. They have been asked to keep the council updated and progress will be reported via the Fire Safety Update report submitted to Housing & Growth Committee.

Identifying Vulnerable Residents

Each RP has been asked how they identify vulnerable residents who may be at risk of starting fires or unable to escape, this includes where Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) are in place.

Home Group

- Staff/contractors will identify and report vulnerabilities or risks when carrying out estate inspections and/or visits/works in customers' homes
- Liaise with the LFB to carry out home visits if a risk is identified and ensure to update the Fire Risk Assessment with findings
- Person centred risk assessments are carried for those customers who present a risk

L&Q

- Housing Management/Scheme Managers will attempt to conduct (subject to access) Person Centred Risk Assessments (PCRAs) to identify those residents at greater risk from fire. The actions arising out of these assessments will determine the approach needed, be it a referral to social services, discussions with the resident, or provision of protective equipment. These assessments are carried out on residents in the following instances:
 - L&Q Living Properties
 - Blocks consisting of 10 or more storeys
 - When a fire safety concern is raised about a resident by another staff member/external source
 - If the Gas team notify that the gas to a property has been capped

Metropolitan Thames Valley

- Where required MTVH has Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) and "Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan" documents in place. PEEP summaries and evacuation plans are updated regularly by Housing Officers, or Scheme Managers and summary documents secured in the Premises Information Boxes which are located on site for access by the Local Authority Fire Services
- Identify vulnerable residents during the letting stage and when necessary we undertake a personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) with the resident. If extra fire safety measures or adaptations are required, we will work the relevant agencies to secure these. Launched an organisational wide project (Building Safer Department) which is focused on taller building portfolio, one of its key aims is to ensure up to date PEEPs in place for those eligible
- Regularly communicate with residents about the importance of fire safety, for example, reminding them about the need to keep communal areas free from obstruction, general fire awareness and the residents and have a dedicated Fire Team at MTVH to ensure that resident's safety is paramount

Network Homes

- PEEPs (personal emergency evacuation plans) in place for all residents in our sheltered housing portfolio
- Currently surveying high rise properties to identify residents who may fall into this category

Notting Hill Genesis

- On the general needs side there are annual visits undertaken by Housing Officers (these are currently done over the phone due to Covid-19) and this offers an opportunity to assess if there are any vulnerability issues or areas of concern that can be acted upon. Residents can also raise concerns directly with NHG or with the Housing Officer. The fire action notices tend to include contact details for the staff member responsible for the building if the resident wants to make contact.
- On the supported housing side NHG has a number of sites and day centres. They are all directly or agency managed supported housing properties, most commonly housing those with learning disabilities but needs vary. Any new residents coming in will have information on any vulnerabilities noted. Sites may be manned, so there could be staff who can spot or notice any changes in residents if they become a fire risk. Visits to sites are regular for directly managed and all sites are subject to a formal annual onsite review, which has a particular focus on fire safety management (esp. in agency managed). NHG have recently introduced a clearer delegation of responsibilities in agency managed properties.

Origin

- Carry out Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans with residents who are identified as disabled on the systems. This provides residents with a plan of escape or of moving to a place of relative safety until help arrives

Peabody

- Residents in Supported Housing have individual PEEPs and person-centred fire risk assessments if required.
- Don't identify vulnerable residents in general needs properties as would have no capacity to support them to evacuate if there were a fire as there are no staff on site.
- Any resident that contacts Peabody that feels they need support is encouraged to move to more suitable accommodation where this support can be provided.

One Housing Group

- Have a fire team but unable to provide details at present

Clarion

- In supported housing schemes the 3rd Party care/support provider is responsible for identifying especially vulnerable residents, who may be at risk of starting or not being able to escape from fires. They will go onto carry out a PCFRA (person centred fire risk assessment), which Clarion may call on Barnet's resources to assist them. In sheltered schemes (LiveSmart) they also identify 'significantly vulnerable' residents and carry out a PCFRA. Knowledge of resident's

vulnerability could also be triggered via the following methods; through information being passed over, as a result of an incident occurring or through another form of intervention

- Aware that there may be residents in general needs properties that may need support/guidance to reduce the chances of a fire occurring. In general needs properties if they are made aware of a resident who is identified as 'significantly vulnerable' will carry out a PCFRA and signpost as appropriate or deal with the issues internally
- the above approach is supported by Policy & Procedures covering Supported/LiveSmart & general needs Housing

7. Regeneration Schemes

The table below shows a snap-shot of each scheme and some performance statistics to provide an overview of the management for each scheme.

Scheme	Void Turnaround (days)	Arrears (%)	% tenants very or fairly satisfied with repairs and maintenance	% tenants satisfied or very satisfied with landlord services
Grahame Park	35	4.06%	*	67%
Dollis Valley	(all used for decanting)	3.84%	67%	**
West Hendon	51***	4.5% (before HB Adjustments)	76.87%	57%

*Grahame Park – NHG have not completed repairs surveys due to COVID -19

** Dollis Valley – L&Q have not recorded tenant satisfaction with landlord services

***West Hendon - MTV have reported 51 days for routine voids – there were only 3 for the whole year that were routine voids – 30 of these days were an average for maintenance related works.

Arrears

The council has set a target of 3.30% for arrears collection; however, historically HouseMark (Housing Sector performance platform jointly owned by National Housing Federation and Chartered Institute of Housing) statistics have shown the average rent arrears for London being at least 1% higher than this. Therefore, we have satisfied with the arrears levels reported, as at present there are restrictions on arrears actions that can be taken.

Repairs

There is no generic standard for repairs reported by Registered Providers but the majority report on satisfaction levels. HouseMark have reported the average percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service as being around 75% within the London area for the last few years. Ideally, we would like to see all estates showing a higher satisfaction level.

SECTION B

Development

In 2019/20 there were 463 affordable housing completions in Barnet. The following table shows a breakdown of these completions.

Registered Provider	Scheme	Total Affordable Completions.
L&Q	Dollis Valley	32
MTV	West Hendon	78
Peabody	The Peel Centre/ Colindale Gardens	157
Network Homes	112-132 Cricklewood Lane	21
Barnet Homes/ Open Door	Various Schemes	19
Origin	Adastra House	7
Notting Hill Genesis	Elmbank	24
Metropolitan Thames Valley	Barnet & Southgate College	2
ReSI	Highbrook House B&Q 1201 High Street, Whetstone	34
Peabody	Medical Research Centre	60
Origin	Millbrook Phase 4B	29

It is important to maintain an effective partnership between the council and each developing RP to ensure schemes are run smoothly and efficiently. Regular communication is held with all developing RPs to monitor progress of each scheme.

The following table shows the current developments which are currently on site due to complete in the next 24 months. Expected completions for the year 2020/21 are 370 affordable homes, these are either predominately through the requirements of S106 schemes or a regeneration agreement. However, this target was set before COVID-19 and all developers have experienced delays due to closure of sites and delays in obtaining materials etc. The target is currently being reviewed for 2020/21.

Registered Provider	Scheme Name	Total Affordable Completions
Notting Hill Genesis	Millbrook Park Phase 4c	12
L&Q	Homebase, The Hyde NW9	120
L&Q	Medical Research Centre	130
Peabody (ready to sign)	Colindale Gardens (Peel Centre) block B	143
Open Door	Various	107
Clarion	117-125 West Hendon Broadway	43
Network Homes	Premier Place	122
One Housing Group	Granville Road	46
Clarion	Sweets Way	26
Bookbinders	Book Binders Cottages, N20	7
Origin	Millbrook Park Phase 5	26
Home Group	TFL Beechwood	35
L&Q	Millbrook Phase 9	57

L&Q

L&Q are the chosen provider for Dollis Valley. Phase 2 is completed and Phase 3 was demolished and started on site in August 2020. The Hyde is progressing and will provide a total of 257 affordable housing. L&Q are also the chosen provider for the National Institute of Medical Research and will be providing the remaining rented and shared ownership units in a phased development over the next few years. They have also commenced Phase 9 of Millbrook Park and are looking to complete this over the next year.

One Housing Group

One Housing Group is the chosen provider for Granville Road; this will provide 46 shared ownership units. They have also entered into a contract for Victoria Quarter providing 67 affordable units.

Notting Hill Genesis

Notting Hill Genesis are the Registered Provider for Grahame Park and are waiting for the revised programme to be approved by the GLA. They are on site with Millbrook Park phase 4c and are currently reviewing the completion extension dates with regard to delays due to COVID-19.

Clarion

Clarion are on site at Sweets Way where they have 26 affordable homes to deliver. They also have 43 affordable housing units completing in West Hendon Broadway which were due to complete last year, however the contractor went into voluntary administration and a new contractor commenced in August and plan to complete this year.

Metropolitan Thames Valley

In addition to the regeneration scheme at West Hendon, MTV have planning permission for a scheme at Westthorpe Gardens, Hendon which will provide 102 social rent, 43 outright sale, 34 affordable rent units for over 55's and 57 low cost home ownership properties, this scheme has experienced delays to the construction start date due to Covid-19.

Peabody

Colindale Gardens Phase 1 has completed 157 affordable housing properties, they are hoping to secure a further block at Colindale Gardens.

Network Homes

Network Homes are currently working on Premier Place which will provide 126 affordable homes by June 2022. They are interested in the Broadway, in Burnt Oak providing 100 affordable homes by 2022 and Millbrook Park phase 6 (48 units due to complete in the later stage of 2021) and 6b (27 units) due to complete early 2024.

Home Group

TFL Beechwood Avenue, N3 is on site but has suffered delays due to COVID-19, completion is now forecast to be summer 2021.

The redevelopment of Douglas Bader Park, Colindale is in the pre-application process.

Origin Housing

Origin are on site with Millbrook Park phase 5, this has been delayed to October 2020 due to COVID-19.

Appendix 1

Detailed breakdown of types of stock for each of the RPs.

	General Needs	Supported Housing	Wheelchair Units	Shared Ownership	leasehold	Other	Total	No of void units
Notting Hill Genesis	2379	146	Not recorded	1284		351	4160	52
Notting Hill Genesis – Grahame Park	770	3	Not recorded	617 (Inc. leasehold)		188	1578	14
Peabody	1047	14	4	165	90	26	1342	12
Metropolitan Thames Valley	765 plus 52 AR	81	0	100	22	26	1056	19
Metropolitan Thames Valley- West Hendon	217	0	0	20	10	36	283	5
One Housing Group	105	15	Not Recorded	13	87	10	230	8
Clarion	261	0	0	6	25	0	292	6
Network Homes	364	56	2	194	76	110	800	17
L & Q	148	0	4	14		404	570	47
L&Q - Dollis Valley	103	0	0	0	0	0	103	0
Home Group	579	0	Not Recorded	8	9	0	596	33
Origin	124	19	0	49	206	27	425	7

Appendix 2

Actions taken to support and assist residents as a result of COVID-19

Clarion

- Carried out welfare calls to check on vulnerable residents. These calls were specifically targeted at residents over 70 years old, who may also live alone.
- Residents were either signposted to a list of national services or referred to local agencies.
- Followed this up with either a door knock or contact with the Local Authority (where appropriate) and a letter.

Home Group

- Communicated with customers via the website and by making regular welfare calls.
- Completed COVID-19 questionnaires to identify which customers are shielding
- Advice on rents, benefits, Universal Credit and signposting to external agencies where required.
- Set up Home Group Fund -for those struggling to buy groceries
- Organised deferred payments for income collection
- Regular updates on their customer website, FAQ's, advice, guidance
- Referrals to Financial Inclusion Team for those struggling with finances

L&Q

- Set up a crisis response team and developed a pandemic plan to help deal with the health and business threats caused by coronavirus with the aim to keep residents informed, reassured and safe.
- Putting measures in place to make sure emergency, business-critical and health and safety related functions are maintained.
- Set up homeworking for their customer service centre
- Check that residents are feeling ok before repairs carried out and given operatives protective equipment to reduce the risk of coronavirus spreading during repairs visits
- Developed procedures to make sure that emergency repairs can be carried out, even if there is an infected person in the property
- Maintained caretaking and estate services to ensure compliance with health and safety standards
- Completed coronavirus risk assessments at all care and support schemes, and introduced increased infection control measures, including extra cleaning and hand-washing requirements
- Closed construction sites and our sales and marketing suites, though our

sales teams remained on hand and conducted all appointments via phone, email and, where possible, by virtual tour

- Set up robust finance procedures to make sure that contractors and suppliers continue to receive payment for goods and services.
- Instructed specialist income teams to support customers who may be struggling to pay their rent by putting personal payment plans in place if needed, and providing extra support for any affected by coronavirus
- Set up robust finance procedures to make sure that contractors and suppliers continue to receive payment for goods and services
- Essential fire safety-related work continued during the lockdown period. This includes inspections, remedial work already in progress, fire risk assessments and work related to gas and electrical safety
- Maintained the waking watch services, to help identify fires at an early stage, support people to evacuate and alert the emergency services
- Undertook 15,000 welfare calls to those residents identified as vulnerable

Metropolitan Thames Valley

- Proactively contacting customers who may be at greater risk to offer support. In Barnet and have spoken with 166 residents (as of 2 July) and will continue to reach out to customers, including making repeat calls where required
- Set up a Coronavirus Support Hub to refer residents who require additional support to dedicated teams. The Support Hub also tracks and monitors cases across the organisation.
- In Barnet, referred four at-risk residents through the Support Hub and continue to provide further support to many more residents via our other customer support routes
- Continuing to contact customers who have recently experienced domestic abuse to reassure them that practical help is there for anyone who needs it.
- Over 50 customers have been supported by Dedicated Safeguarding Leads and case handlers
- The support provided has included safety planning and advice, organising regularly weekly check-in calls, signposting to further support and several referrals to multi-agency groups to progress cases.
- Forged relationships with Colindale Foodbank and currently working with local residents and Councilors to apply for funding to pilot a local foodbank in West Hendon

Network Homes

- Identified households potentially containing vulnerable people, including people over the age of 70, people with a disability, and people with a health or social worker
- Each household called to check their wellbeing and to signpost to local charities and services if necessary. Any households not reached by phone received a letter containing details of local charities, and telling residents to contact Network Homes

- Residents were referred to internal welfare benefits advice team, and were considered for payments from the hardship fund
- A separate project involved wellbeing and befriending calls for residents at older persons schemes

Notting Hill Genesis

- A programme of Welfare Calls was introduced to residents aged 60+. Housing Officer's attempted to telephone all residents, to see if there was anything they could help with and whether they had support from families and friends. If no phone or email address, sent a letter outlining what NHG's approach is during lockdown
- Follow up contact arrangements were agreed with residents on an individual basis. To support this work, each team has been provided with a list of support agencies available in the boroughs and how to refer
- Diverted resources internally to provide more welfare benefits support in recognition of the increase in number of residents accessing Universal Credit
- Organised a dedicated debt advice phone number and inbox for residents with Debt Free London
- Funded Good Gym Food delivery project to provide free food parcels up to a value of £20 to residents who are vulnerable, self-isolating or unable to get out due to age or health
- Funded 'Settle' a specialist agency to support residents aged 25 or under who needed support to help them manage
- A dedicated 'Coronavirus' section was added to the website, which was kept updated across a range of subject areas
<https://www.nhg.org.uk/residents/coronavirus/>
- Tutors United English and Maths lessons went online for Grahame Park residents. NHG is a partner organisation
- Grahame Park universal youth offer are providing digital support to young people using social media to provide guidance and live streams including webinars, creative workshops, exercise classes, mentoring
- Donated to the Colindale Food Bank and Bread N Butter

Origin

- Established a team to call all elderly and vulnerable residents to see if they were okay and needed help
- Provide weekly/fortnightly call backs
- Provide help with services such as food, shopping, obtaining medicine etc either by linking residents to services in their areas or provide the service themselves
- Issued essential food vouchers for those in financial hardship and delivered food parcels to residents who were shielding or self-isolating and linked people into the financial support team if they were struggling with finances due to sudden job losses or furlough.

Specialist service for people with Autism at Speedwell Court, Barnet,

- Have a staff team that have introduced the use of PPE to enter people's flats to deliver support. Social distancing has been put in place in the office and for visits to flats
- Communicated all information on symptoms and what to do if somebody feels that they have the symptoms
- Worked with people to use on-line shopping or supported them to stand in queues for shops that are open so they observe the social distancing rules
- Have staff at the service all day and a sleep-in at night so are available 24/7 if someone has felt in distress or of having symptoms of COVID-19. To date none of the tenants have been tested positive

Retirement Housing scheme at Speedwell House

- Continued to provide Scheme manager services with social distancing
- Increased the welfare check frequency and the time spent talking with older residents to help minimise the anxiety from isolation
- Wrote to all residents to provide COVID-19 safety information and service provision information as well as putting posters up around the scheme reminding residents to wash their hands and maintain social distancing
- Closed the scheme lounge during this period and have encouraged residents to continue to use the outdoor space available where seating has been kept at minimum 2 metres apart

Peabody

- Phone calls to all residents over 70 years old in the first weeks of the lock down
- Offered support with medication delivery arrangements, food parcels, and befriending
- Surveying all residents who called the customer care line to say that they were going to struggle to pay rent
- Offered advice and services for help with the furlough scheme, applying for benefits, food assistance, medication arrangements, employment and training advice, and more
- Calling all residents who have a history of rough sleeping and, offering them the same sort of programmes of assistance, take steps to screen for safeguarding issues to refer to neighbourhood managers and the safeguarding team

**One Housing
Community Safety Team –**

- Attempted to make contact with all open and historic domestic abuse cases
- Adapted our communication methods due to perpetrators being in the home with victims
- Currently supporting 43 residents who have reported domestic abuse and 67 residents with vulnerabilities and safeguarding concerns (All stock)
- Made over 200 referrals to food banks (all stock)

- Arranged for mutual exchanges where appropriate and moved victims from home addresses
- Updated webpages offering support and have also advertised Safeguarding Campaign “Feel, Think, Act” on our website and twitter feed
- Working with a number of local policing teams across London and Berkshire in relation to injunctions and closure orders as the government has continued to place a hold on possession action

Employment and Training Team

- The Employment and Training Team have been offering daily one-hour training sessions online to all residents designed to support people’s mental and physical well-being and to improve their employability

Customer Service Centre Team – (a more general answer that is not Barnet specific but will have included residents in Barnet)

- The team have carried a calling campaign to residents asking about their general wellbeing during the lockdown
- Identified if they had any member of the household self-isolating, flagged on system and take the necessary precautions for officers attending to provide a service
- Signposting to relevant teams

Temporary or permanent changes RPs have made or plan to make as a result of COVID-19

Clarion

- Changes to arrears system notices, in line with Government Guidance Evictions have since been withdrawn and court hearings have become very limited with a number of stringent checks in place
- Identified a group of approximately 2,000 residents that have recently entered into arrears in the last 2 weeks. As these residents have not previously encountered any problems, believe these customers may have been directly affected by COVID-19. Engagement with group is ongoing
- Approach to arrears management is to make personal contact with residents, in order to establish their household circumstances and to provide guidance and support where appropriate
- Adjusted web site to provide online forms for those wishing to utilise self-service through further guidance and support
- Welfare Benefits Teams have been briefed to provide a more fluid and responsive service when issuing guidance on income maximisations and support
- Self-training for staff on government initiatives such as the employee retention scheme, enabling them to provide further contextual advice

- Moved to carrying out viewings in person. A risk assessment is carried out in first instance, with precautions being taken whilst viewings are conducted i.e. refraining from carrying out multi-viewings and also requiring only one viewer enters the property at a time, in order to view it
- Sign-ups, where possible these are carried out using Docu-sign. If a resident is unable to use this method, sign up paperwork is left inside of the property for the customer to sign, with staff being required to wait outside of the property
- Carrying out critical repairs only, followed by urgent repairs. Now resumed the booking of routine repairs
- Ceased carrying out Estate Inspections, Grounds Maintenance (unless for the purposes of urgent works such as removing trees/debris which formed a hazard) and Fire Risk Assessments (except those relating to keeping escape routes and evacuation routes clear) all of which has since resumed, in line with current guidance.

Home Group

- In process of reviewing what has worked well during COVID-19 and seeing how this can be implemented further
- Viewings and lettings, sent photographs of properties to assist in decision making to some of nominees, however the viewing and sign up process has not altered bar the use of PPE and ensuring social distancing – attending the property 20 mins ahead of the allotted appointment to ensure all doors are open, surfaces cleaned etc
- Rent arrears processes have changed, with the introduction of deferred payments, all court actions and evictions were suspended. focus has been in supporting and directing customers to apply for benefits/UC where applicable

L&Q

- No legal action if people fall behind on their rent and service charge payments at this time. However, are reminding people that they should continue to make payments as normal if they can because it helps to fund essential frontline services
- Specialist income teams are supporting customers who may be struggling to pay their rent by putting personal payment plans in place if needed and providing enhanced support for those affected by coronavirus
- Continue to offer specialist debt and welfare advice to residents through our “Pound Advice” project. (<https://poundadvice.org.uk/>). Residents using this service are on average over £1,100 better off
- Stopped all non-essential letting at the peak of the pandemic and carried out virtual viewings and signed up tenant through DocuSign
- Remain working in this way although will do accompanied viewing when residents insist or do not have the facility to view virtually

Metropolitan Thames Valley

- The relevant policies and procedures have not been formally amended, the practices have changed to reflect the impact of the crisis on tenants
- Adopted and implemented the government guidance on evictions and possession action through the courts and incorporated the changes imposed under the Coronavirus Act 2020
- Recovery action has been suspended except for the more serious breaches of tenancy/lease in cases of ASB/subletting/fraud
- Process has been agreed to facilitate access only viewings in response to COVID-19. MTVH Officers will only be in attendance to check the property in advance of viewing, enable access and secure the property once viewed. Virtual property tours have also been made available for prospective tenants where possible, although there is no requirement for them to commit to accepting an offer on this basis
- Tenancy sign-ups are being managed remotely in response to COVID-19. Docu-sign is being used to facilitate remote tenancy sign ups, with the bulk of the sign-up process being managed by telephone

Supporting customers in arrears during coronavirus:

- Evictions - will follow government guidelines with regards to eviction proceedings
- Possession proceedings - for 3 months will not commence any new court proceedings for anyone whose arrears are caused by financial hardship due to coronavirus
- Flexible repayment plans –will offer all customers (including homeowners) a delayed repayment plan up to the end of August
- Money Advice Team - All outstanding/new referrals will be completed over the phone. The team will be expanding their service to offer support to shared owners as well as tenants. Tenant Welfare Fund - the tenant welfare fund has been topped up with a significant amount of money to support customers who are suffering financial hardship due to coronavirus. This fund has been extended to shared owners as well as tenants
- Arrears letters - early stage arrears letters have been amended to be appropriate for the current situation and include a referral letter to the Money Advice Team. NSPs are being referred to the head of service for approval.

Network Homes

- Network Homes has not amended policy or procedure as yet, but have been working closely with those tenants who had court / eviction dates postponed to try and resolve their accounts without the need for further legal action.
- Will include checks for tenants who were affected by COVID-19 before proceeding with any legal action offering support from the Welfare Advice team

Notting Hill Genesis

- Introduced taking photos and videos of voids ready for letting. This allows potential new customers to pre-view the property online. In cases where

customers do not have access to do this, NHG has allocated keyworkers who have attended physical viewings, allowing the potential customer access to view the property. Sign-ups for new properties are completed on Signables which is a portal allowing officers & customers to sign documents online

- Only serve Notice of Seeking Possessions at 8 weeks arrears and any decision to issue possession proceedings is carefully considered after all other avenues have been exhausted
- Extensive support and advice arrangements in place to support people in financial difficulty as a result of the pandemic
- Even should a possession application be successful, continue to support residents to agree repayment plans and not enforce the order if the tenant is making repayments on arrears
- During the early stages of lockdown, were only offering emergency repairs. As soon as measures were relaxed, have started to offer both emergency and routine repairs. dealing with a backlog created during the lockdown
- Carrying out gas compliance checks throughout the pandemic.

Origin

- The arrears process has been amended in line with the non-statutory guidance for Landlords which was issued by the MHCLG
- Overarching approach continues to be to contact residents by phone, text, and email regardless of the level of arrears on their account. Providing advice and support and talking to them about the options available to them such as accessing government funds and/or agreeing payment arrangements specific to their individual circumstances to minimize the build-up of any debt. However, not all residents have engaged, so following the calls, emails and texts have adopted a process for non-engagement which includes the sending of a new rent arrears letter created especially for the current situation (soft approach letter) followed by a call, email and text. If at this point and again under the guidance will seek authorization from Head of Income Management and the Income Recovery Manager before serving a Notice of Seeking Possession which has a notice period of 3 months – This will continue under the Coronavirus Act until the 30 September 2020
- Whilst there are no legal obstacles to issuing possession proceedings or warrant applications have currently decided to put a hold on this action. This will be monitored and advice will be taken by solicitors on cases that were due to be actioned before lockdown
- The lettings process has changed as a result of COVID-19 and now introduced virtual lettings as a first stage before physical viewings. This has proven to be successful with a good take up since June 2020. will continue to monitor in terms of identifying any further changes that may need to be applied to maintain the effectiveness of this process
- Introduced digital signing of tenancy agreements
- Sales of shared ownership properties is also being marketed through virtual 360 imagery to limit contact with potential buyers until they have expressed an interest in proceeding with a property

Peabody

- Taking a more proactive stance to let properties and encourage people to move. This includes contacting people whose moves have been on hold and are carrying out viewings by video. If a face to face viewing is necessary staff carry out risk assessments and use the appropriate level of PPE
- Getting people to sign using DocuSign

One Housing

- Letting practices are fully adjusted in line with the Government's advice on moving home, updated 21 May 2020 Properties being let virtually
- Have a revised eligibility criteria to include COVID-19 triage, before booking any physical viewings where a virtual let has already been offered
- Following cleaning schedules before and after any physical viewings and only allowing viewings by strict appointment
- Continue to offer virtual meetings with existing tenants and have launched an online signature program for customers use
- Do not have any section 21 notices served during COVID-19, however if we should have to serve, the notice period to the tenant has been extended to 3 months
- Identified an increase in universal credit applications from market and intermediate portfolio and have adjusted the arrears process accordingly to fit this payment schedule

**London Borough of Barnet
Housing & Growth Committee
Forward Work Programme
November 2020/21**

Contact: Abigail.Lewis@barnet.gov.uk 020 8359 436

Title of Report	Overview of decision	Report Of (<i>officer</i>)	Issue Type (Non key/Key/Urgent)
25 January 2021			
Brent Cross Cricklewood Update	To receive an update on the Brent Cross Cricklewood Programme and take such decisions as are required.	Director of Growth	Key
Assets. Land and Property Transactions for Approval	Approval of Assets, Land and Property Transactions	Director of Finance	Key
Fire Safety Update	To receive progress updates in the Fire Safety Programme as agreed at Housing Committee on 23/10/17. (Elliott Sweetman to contribute to BH content)	Head of Housing Strategy	Key
CPO of Empty Properties	To approve the compulsory purchaser of empty properties.	Group Manger, Private Sector Housing	Key
Annual Rents and Service Charges Report 2021/22	To receive the report and make a determination in respect of the recommendations.	Director of Operations and Property	Key
HRA Business Plan	To receive the report and make a determination in respect of the recommendations.	Head of Housing Strategy	Key
Recovery Planning	Update on the Thriving workstream for recovery.	Deputy Chief Executive	Key

Title of Report	Overview of decision	Report Of (officer)	Issue Type (Non key/Key/Urgent)
Grahame Park North East	To note the Strategic Outline Business Case for information	Group Director, Growth and Development (Barnet Homes)	Key
Burnt Oak Broadway Top-hatting	To note and approve the Full Business Case for the delivery of the project.	Group Director, Growth and Development (Barnet Homes)	Key
22 March 2021			
Brent Cross Cricklewood Update	To receive an update on the Brent Cross Cricklewood Programme and take such decisions as are required.	Director of Growth	Key
Assets. Land and Property Transactions for Approval	Approval of Assets, Land and Property Transactions	Director of Finance	Key
Fire Safety Update	To receive progress updates in the Fire Safety Programme as agreed at Housing Committee on 23/10/17.	Housing Lead	Key
CPO of Empty Properties	To approve the compulsory purchaser of empty properties.	Head of Housing Strategy	Key
Q3 2020/21 Performance report	To receive a quarterly performance report	Head of Programmes, Performance and Risk	Non-Key

Title of Report	Overview of decision	Report Of (<i>officer</i>)	Issue Type (Non key/Key/Urgent)
Barnet Homes Annual Service Delivery Plan 2021/2022		Director of Operations and Property	Key
Growth Strategy Delivery Plan	To update the Committee on progress in delivering the Growth Strategy and to agree the updated delivery plan for 2021/22	Assistant Director Development and Economy	Key
HRA 250 Programme	To note and approve the Outline Business Case for the delivery of the project.	Group Director, Growth and Development (Barnet Homes)	Key
Grahame Park report		Director of Growth	Non-key

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

AGENDA ITEM 20

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