

Meeting of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet

TO BE HELD ON

TUESDAY 20TH OCTOBER, 2020 AT 7.00 PM

VENUE

VIRTUAL MEETING:

LINK TO VIRTUAL MEETING: <https://bit.ly/3lr8UEK>

AGENDA



ASSURANCE GROUP

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Agenda and Timetable
Tuesday 20th October, 2020

Item	Subject	Timing	Page Nos
	Part 1 - Statutory formalities/Announcements (15 minutes)	7.00pm - 7.15pm	
1.	Apologies for absence		
2.	Elect a Member to preside if the Mayor is absent		
3.	Prayer		
4.	Declarations of Interest		
5.	Minutes of the last meeting		5 - 8
6.	Official announcements		
7.	Any business remaining from last meeting		
	Part 2 - Question Time (30 minutes)	7.15pm – 7.45pm	
8.	Questions to the Leader (and Committee Chairmen if he/she has delegated)		To Follow
	Part 3 - Statutory Council Business (60 minutes)	7.45pm – 8.45pm	
9.	Petitions for Debate (20 minutes)		
10.	Reports from the Leader		
11.	Reports from Committees		
11.1	Report of the Audit Committee - Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2019-20		9 - 28
11.2	Report of the Constitution and General Purposes		To follow

	Committee - Constitution Review		
11.3	Report of the Constitution and General Purposes Committee - Area Planning Committees and the Boundary Review		To follow
12.	Reports of Officers	7.45pm - 9.30pm	
12.1	Report of the Director of Finance & Section 151 Officers - Flexible Use of Capital Receipts		To follow
12.2	Report of the Monitoring Officer - Calculation of Political Balance (Proportionality)		To follow
12.3	Report of Head of Governance - Appointments to Committees		To follow
12.4	Report of Head of Governance - Appointments to Outside Bodies		To follow
13.	Questions to Council Representatives on Outside Bodies		
	Break (15 minutes)	8.45pm – 9.00pm	
	Part 4 – Business for Debate (45 minutes)		
14.	Motions (45 minutes)	9.00pm – 9.45pm	
14.1	Administration Motion in the name of Cllr Daniel Thomas - A Motion of Gratitude		29 - 30
14.2	Opposition Motion in the name of Cllr Ross Houston - Stop overdevelopment in Barnet		31 - 32
14.3	Joint Motion in the name of Cllr Dan Thomas and Cllr Barry Rawlings - Adopting a Barnet-wide definition of Islamophobia		33 - 34
14.4	Administration Motion in the name of Cllr Weedensanz - Adopting the IHRA Definition Examples		35 - 36

14.5	Liberal Democrat Motion in the name of Cllr Gabriel Rozenberg - Standing up for local control of the planning process		37 - 38
15.	Motions for Adjournment		

Andrew Charlwood, Head of Governance
2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

Minutes

OF THE MEETING OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET

held virtually, on 23 July 2020

AGENDA ITEM 5

PRESENT:-

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Caroline Stock)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Lachhya Bahadur Gurung)

Councillors:

Golnar Bokaei	Jennifer Grocock	Tim Roberts
Jess Brayne	Rohit Grover	Gabriel Rozenberg
Felix Byers	John Hart	Lisa Rutter
Anne Clarke	Ross Houston	Shimon Ryde
Alison Cornelius	Anne Hutton	Gill Sargeant
Pauline Coakley Webb	Laithe Jajeh	Alan Schneiderman
Melvin Cohen	David Longstaff	Mark Shooter
Sara Conway	John Marshall	Elliot Simberg
Jo Cooper	Kath McGuirk	Thomas Smith
Geof Cooke	Arjun Mittra	Stephen Sowerby
Richard Cornelius	Alison Moore	Julian Teare
Saira Don	Ammar Naqvi	Daniel Thomas
Val Duschinsky	Nagus Narenthira	Reuben Thompstone
Paul Edwards	Charlie O-Macauley	Sarah Wardle
Claire Farrier	Alex Prager	Roberto Weeden-Sanz
Anthony Finn	Wendy Prentice	Laurie Williams
Nizza Fluss	Sachin Rajput	Peter Zinkin
Linda Freedman	Barry Rawlings	Zakia Zubairi
Brian Gordon	Danny Rich	
Eva Greenspan	Helene Richman	

ABSENCES:

Councillor Dean Cohen Councillor Kathy Levine Councillor Reema Patel.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Dean Cohen.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

2.1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting dated 3rd March 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

3. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The worshipful the Mayor, expressed her sadness at the passing of former East Finchley Ward Councillor Andrew McNeil, who served as a Member of the Council between May 2006 and May 2012. He was the Labour Group Chief Whip and sat on the Area Environment Committee and Health & Social Care Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Kathy McGuirk and Councillor Alison Cornelius both said a few words in memory of former Councillor McNeil.

The Worshipful the Mayor also expressed her sincere condolences at the passing of Councillor O'Macauley's wife.

In memory of those who had passed away and to mark the many residents who had lost their lives to Covid-19, The Worshipful the Mayor asked Council to join her in a one-minute silence.

Following the one-minute silence, the Worshipful the Mayor also took the opportunity to thank all the Barnet Council team for working extremely hard over the last few months, to respond to Covid-19 and to keep the borough running under unprecedented and very difficult circumstances.

4. 6-MONTH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RULE

The Worshipful the Mayor introduced the report of the Monitoring Officer on the 6-Month Councillor Attendance Rule. The Worshipful the Mayor moved reception and adoption of the recommendations in the report.

On the recommendations in the report being put to the vote, the recommendations were agreed.

Votes were recorded as follows:

For	60
Against	0
Abstain	0
Absent	3
Total	60

RESOLVED that Council agreed a waiver for all members of the Authority until May 2021 should they become unable to attend a meeting of the Authority for 6 months as a result of:

- a) Illness;**
- b) Maternity, paternity, adoption or other parental leave;**
- c) Cancellation of meetings which the member would otherwise have been expected to attend; or**
- d) Problems accessing a virtual meeting which the member would otherwise be expected to attend.**

5. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF GOVERNANCE

The Head of Governance introduced the report.

The Worshipful the Mayor moved reception and adoption of the recommendations in

the report.

On the recommendations in the report being put to the vote, the recommendations were agreed.

Votes were recorded as follows:

For	60
Against	0
Abstain	0
Absent	3
Total	60

RESOLVED that:

- 1. Council approved the changes to committee appointments as set out in Appendix A.**
- 2. Council approved the Member and officer appointments to Barnet Education and Learning Service Ltd as set out in Appendix B.**
- 3. Council noted that Councillor and Non-Councillor Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies and the appointments of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor were extended until 8th September 2020.**

The meeting finished at 6.15pm.

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Council
20th October 2020

Title	Referral from Audit Committee – Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2019-20
Report of	Chairman of the Audit Committee
Wards	N/A
Status	Public
Enclosures	Annex 1 – Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2019-20
Officer Contact Details	Clair Green, Director of Assurance clair.green@barnet.gov.uk

Summary

The Constitution, Article 7 includes the following within the Audit Committee's terms of reference:

“The Audit Committee shall prepare a report to Full Council on an annual basis on its activity and effectiveness.”

The Audit Committee at the meeting on the 14th July 2020 resolved to recommend that Council note and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2019/20 as an accurate record of the outcomes and work programme for the year.

Officers Recommendation

That Council to note and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2019-20 as an accurate record of the outcomes and work programme for

the year.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 14th July 2020, the Audit Committee approved the recommendation for the Annual report of the Audit Committee to be recommended for approval to Council.
- 1.2 As minuted in the Audit Committee minutes 14th July 2020 regarding the Annual Report of the Audit Committee, it was RESOLVED that:
the Committee recommend Full Council to note and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2019-20 as an accurate record of the outcomes and work programme for the year.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 As set out in the report at Annex 1.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1.

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

- 5.2.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 The Council's Constitution Article 7 states within the Audit Committee's terms of reference that the Audit Committee shall prepare a report to Full Council on an Annual

basis on its activity and effectiveness.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1.

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 As set out in the report attached at Annex 1.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 N/A

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Audit Committee

14 July 2020

Title	Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2019-20
Report of	Chairman of the Audit Committee
Wards	N/A
Status	Public
Enclosures	Appendix A – Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2019-20
Officer Contact Details	Clair Green, Director of Assurance clair.green@barnet.gov.uk

Summary

The Constitution, Article 7 includes the following within the Audit Committee's terms of reference:

"The Audit Committee shall prepare a report to Full Council on an annual basis on its activity and effectiveness."

The attached Annual Report describes how the Audit Committee meets its objectives as well as detailing the work of the Committee to date and the outcomes it has achieved for 2019-20.

Recommendations

1. That the Committee recommend Full Council to note and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2019-20 as an accurate record of the outcomes and work programme for the year.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 The Annual Report describes the work of the Committee to date and the outcomes it has achieved for 2019-20.

1.2 The Committee is asked whether they wish to make any amendments and note that the report will be presented to Full Council in due course.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is a Constitutional requirement for the Audit Committee to present an Annual Report to full Council each year.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 None.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Once agreed by the Committee the report will be sent to the next Full Council meeting.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

The Audit Committee provides the Council with independent assurance and effective challenge and, therefore, the Committee is central to the provision of effective governance that supports delivery of all corporate priorities.

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

5.2.1 None in context of this report

5.3 Social Value

5.3.1 None in the context of this report

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 There are no legal issues in the context of this report.

5.4.2. The Audit Committee's terms of reference are noted in the Council's Constitution, Article 7. which states that the Audit Committee "shall prepare a report to Full Council on annual basis on its activity and effectiveness".

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 None in context of this report

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 Effective systems of audit, internal control and corporate governance provide assurance on the effective allocation of resources and quality of service provision for the benefit of the entire community to assist with compliance with the Council's duties under the 2010 Equality Act.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

- 5.7.1 None in the context of this decision

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

N/A

5.9 Insight

- 5.9.1 None in the context of this decision

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Appendix 1

Audit Committee Annual Report 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020

Clr Rohit Grover
Chairman of the Audit Committee
July 2020

Contents

1. Introduction and overview

2. Summary of Audit Committee outcomes during 2019-20

3. Conclusions

Annex 1 – Schedule of actual work 2019-20

1. Introduction and Overview

1.1 Good corporate governance requires independent, effective assurance about both the adequacy of financial management and reporting, and the management of other processes required to achieve the organisation's corporate and service objectives. Good practice from the wider public sector indicates that these functions are best delivered by an independent audit committee. In this context, "independence" means that an audit committee should be independent from any other executive function. Further, the National Audit Office regards "well-functioning Audit Committees as key to helping organisations achieve good corporate governance".

1.2 It is important that local authorities have independent assurance about the mechanisms underpinning these aspects of governance.

Specifically:

1.2.1 **independent assurance** of the adequacy of the control environment within the authority;

1.2.2 **independent review** of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and

1.2.3 **assurance** that any issues arising from the process of drawing up, auditing and certifying the authority's annual accounts are properly dealt with and that appropriate accounting policies have been applied.

1.3 Effective audit committees can bring many benefits to local authorities and these benefits are described in CIPFA's *Audit Committees - Practical Guidance for Local Authorities* as:

1.3.1 raising greater awareness of the need for internal control and the implementation of audit recommendations;

1.3.2 increasing public confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting;

1.3.3 reinforcing the importance and independence of internal and external audit and any other similar review process (for example, providing a view on the Annual Governance Statement); and

1.3.4 providing additional assurance through a process of independent and objective review.

1.3.5 Effective internal control and the establishment of an audit committee can never eliminate the risks of serious fraud, misconduct or misrepresentation of the financial position. However, an audit committee:

➤ **can give additional assurance through a process of independent and objective review**

➤ **can raise awareness of the need for sound control and the implementation of recommendations by internal and external audit**

1.4 **Audit Committee at Barnet Council**

The Council's Constitution includes the terms of reference for the Audit Committee, defining its core functions. The terms of reference describe the purpose of the Audit Committee as being:

“to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority’s financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority’s exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process.”

- 1.4.1 To bring additional expertise from the sector and financial capability the Audit Committee also has two independent members.
- 1.4.2 The Audit Committee has a work programme that has been drawn up to effectively discharge its responsibilities as defined by the terms of reference.
- 1.4.3 The Committee relies upon independent, qualified professionals to provide assurance. Directors and Assistant Directors (or equivalent grade) have attended Committee to support the process and to aid in the Committee’s effectiveness/understanding.
- 1.4.4 During the year 2019-20 the Committee undertook all its meetings in the public domain. There was one instance whereby an item was considered exempt and was discussed in Part 2 of the meeting. This was 30 January 2020 - Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) Q3 Progress Report 2019-20: Capita Employee Benefits – London Borough of Barnet Pension Scheme - Internal Fraud Summary Report. The committee meeting due to take place on 29 April 2020 was cancelled following the lockdown restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee meeting on 14 July 2020 will be taking place virtually using Microsoft Teams. Registered speakers will be able to call into the meeting and the public will be able to access a live stream of the meeting through a link on the meeting webpage.
- 1.4.5 From the Local Election in May 2018 to the present, the Audit Committee has been chaired by two Councillors:
 - Councillor Anthony Finn from May 2018 to May 2019; and
 - Councillor Rohit Grover from May 2019 to the present.

With regards to the rest of the Committee following Local Elections two new Members were appointed in May 2018, Councillor Alex Prager and Councillor Laithe Jajeh -they replaced former Councillor Hugh Rayner and former Councillor Sury Khatri.

- 1.4.6 Between May 2019 – February 2020, two Member Briefing Sessions were arranged for Members of the Audit Committee:
 - 27 June 2019, Statement of Accounts; and
 - 5 February 2020, Fraud Awareness.
- 1.4.7 The Chairman during 2019-20 continued to require senior officer attendance where there were high priority Audit recommendations and has continued to encourage public participation at the Audit Committee. The Chairman has also encouraged the two independent members to be active participants in meetings of the Committee.

2. Summary of Audit Committee Outcomes during 2019-20

- 2.1 During the financial year (April 2019 – March 2020) the Audit Committee has demonstrated many outcomes with a focus on delivering improvement to the organisation. The way in which these were implemented were as follows: -

2.1.1 **Key controls and assurance mechanisms.** The Committee relies upon information presented from qualified, independent and objective officers and external assurance providers. The key controls and assurance mechanisms are as described within the Annual Governance Statement. The Audit Committee is not a working group, it does not carry out the work itself, but relies on the assurance framework to bring significant issues to the Committee for discussion and make recommendations for the Executive and officers to take forward. The Committee recognises that management are responsible for a sound control environment¹.

2.1.2 **Cross-Council Assurance Service (CCAS).** The Internal Audit service is delivered through a mixed economy model, which includes an in-house team and external provider, currently PwC. During Q4 a procurement exercise for CCAS was completed, with Barnet leading the process on behalf of a number of other London boroughs. The Framework contract was awarded to PwC for Internal Audit, Advisory and Anti-Fraud and Mazars for Risk Management. As the contract manager, Barnet will receive a 1% contract management fee for all invoiced work going through the Framework, which has a maximum OJEU limit of £50m over the contract term.

2.2. External Audit financial resilience and value for money. For 2019/20, BDO continue to be the Council's appointed external auditors.

2.2.1 In September 2019, in accordance with International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 260, the council's external auditors (BDO) provided a final report on matters arising from the audit of the Council's Accounts. The ISA 260 report has to be considered by "those charged with governance" (The Audit Committee) before the external auditor can sign the accounts, which legally had to be done by 30 September 2019.

2.2.2 The key messages arising from the audit of the 2018/19 financial statements were that they:

- gave a true and fair view of the financial position of the group as at 31 March 2019 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- were prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19; and
- were prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

2.2.3 In providing the opinion on the financial statements, the external auditors, concluded on what is known as the Value for Money Conclusion. The Council received an unqualified opinion which means that the External Auditors were satisfied the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2019. This was an improvement on the previous year where the Inadequate Ofsted rating for Children's Services meant that the 2017/18 VFM conclusion was qualified.

2.4 Improvement agenda – the Audit Committee is committed to improving shortfalls in the control environment, rather than apportioning blame.

¹The control environment comprises the systems of governance, risk management and internal control

2.4.1 The Audit Committee has been provided with assurances on internal audit high priority recommendations and the progress against these quarter by quarter. The Audit Committee and its Chairman has asked that leading officers (Directors or Assistant Directors / Strategic Leads) to attend the Audit Committee to explain any deficiencies identified by Internal Audit and how they intend to address and action them. The important aspect that the Audit Committee has been assessing each quarter is whether the direction of travel from one quarter to the next has been improving via recommendations having been implemented. This focus on improving the control environment through follow-up and discussion has made Delivery Units accountable for improvement. We followed up a total of 156 recommendations that had been raised and were due to have been implemented by the end of 2019/20. Of those, we found that 118 had been fully implemented by the year end, with 15 ongoing and 23 outstanding due to COVID-19 delays. The direction of travel for implementing audit recommendations by year end was 76%, a deterioration on 2018/19 when 82% were confirmed as having been implemented within revised agreed timescales. The deterioration compared to the previous year can likely be attributed to the impact of COVID-19 on overall Council delivery and the reduced capacity to address audit findings in Q4.

A risk has been maintained on the Council's Strategic Risk Register which recognises that this performance needs to be improved as if audit actions are not implemented this could lead to a deterioration in the Council's control environment.

2.4.2 The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require the Head of Internal Audit to provide an annual opinion, based upon and limited to the work performed, on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control (i.e. the organisation's system of internal control). The opinion does not imply that Internal Audit has reviewed all risks relating to the organisation and is based on the work performed in 2019-20 but the conclusion should be considered in the context of the financial pressures facing the Council in a period where savings are required to be made but there is a greater demand for local services due to the borough's growing population. For 2019-20 a 'Reasonable' Annual Internal Audit Opinion was given, which shows improvement on the previous two years when a 'Limited' Opinion was given.

2.4.3 In line with the Scheme of Financing Schools, the Chief Finance Officer is required to deploy internal audit to examine the control frameworks operating within schools under the control of the Local Education Authority ("LEA"). In 2019-20, Internal Audit performed 23 schools' visits and undertook 4 follow-up reviews. At the year-end four reports had still to be agreed by the school due to COVID-19

2.4.4 The **Internal Audit and the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT)** functions, which are organisationally independent from the rest of the Council, have a combined Annual Plan approved annually by Audit Committee which demonstrates their commitment to joint working, making the best use of resources and avoidance of duplication of effort. This also enables them to ensure that any control weaknesses identified through fraudulent activity are followed up with recommendations to strengthen the control environment and noted on the service risk registers.

2.5 Issues external and internal assurances – during the year the Audit Committee has been presented with various reports regarding control weaknesses. Areas that received an Internal

Audit 'No / Limited' assurance rating, or where a management letter identified areas of weaknesses and high priority recommendations, are listed below. The Committee has also continued to follow up all High priority recommendations within Reasonable Assurance reports where those recommendations are not implemented within the agreed timeframes. 2019-20, a new approach was adopted whereby Internal Audit now also follow-up a sample of Medium priority recommendations and report the outcome to the Audit Committee.

Review Title	Assurance rating	Number of High Priority recommendations	Number of Medium Priority recommendations
Highways Programme	No	6	0
Banking & Payment Arrangements – Accounts Payable	Limited	2	4
Accounts Receivable	Limited	1	6
Banking & Payment Arrangements – Cash & Bank	Limited	0	7
Pension Fund Finance and Investment	Limited	2	1
Mosaic – Application Review	Limited	1	3
Domestic Violence	Reasonable	1	2
Adults Safeguarding	Reasonable	1	2
Re Operational Review Follow-Up	Partially Implemented	1	0
Teachers' Pensions	Reasonable	1	0
Menorah Foundation School	Limited	2	5
St. Michael's Catholic Grammar School	Limited	1	6
St Mary's CE School EN4	Reasonable	1	2

2.6 Anti-Fraud – during the year the CAFT operated to an anti-fraud strategy and annual work plan which was approved by the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee has also received quarterly progress as well as an Annual report from CAFT which provide detailed summary on outcomes including preventative, proactive and reactive anti-fraud work undertaken.

2.6.1 The Concessionary Travel Fraud Team investigated 347 cases of alleged Blue Badge misuse and Fraud. Of these, 37 cases were successfully prosecuted at Magistrates court with a further 74 cases resulting in a Formal Caution being administered by CAFT (after the offence was admitted during a formal interview under caution). These cases have resulted in more than £24,580.00 worth of costs being recovered. A further 94 cases also concluded in Warning letters being sent to the Badge Holders and offenders.

2.6.2 The Tenancy Fraud team has also continued to be successful this year, it has investigated 496 cases of alleged Tenancy Fraud in 2019-20. They were responsible for recovering 34 properties and preventing 27 Right to Buy applications due to the applicants not being eligible to purchase under the scheme. In addition to this Tenancy fraud officers prevented 5 new housing applications that were submitted by persons who were not eligible to be housed.

- 2.6.3 **The Corporate Fraud Team** investigated 102 cases of alleged fraud. These resulted in 2 members of staff resigning, as well as a number of cases where there are ongoing legal actions.
- 2.6.4 A comprehensive review of the **National Fraud Initiative (NFI)** reports was carried out using the new fraud risk scoring to prioritise resources on matches that scored over 75%. This led to 7524 cases being processed and as a result, CAFT were able to report overall overpayments of £603,448.82.
- 2.6.5 During 2019-20 the financial investigation on **Operation Rouble**, which was reported in 2018-19, continued and by using a range of powers authorised under the Proceeds of Crime Act the CAFT specialist financial Investigators were extremely effective by recovering £1,698,218.64 to compensate Capita's insurers, thereby reducing the loss from £2.063 million to less than £365,000.
- 2.6.6 The methods used comprised of confiscation and compensation orders as well as legal settlement agreements with entities that were registered 'off shore'. The work was extremely time consuming and complex and broke new ground in recovery. No other local authority has used these methods to recover proceeds of crime. This investigation received wide publicity with praise being given by Specialist Police Units, Senior Management and Members of the Council to the CAFT in relation to the response and subsequent criminal and financial investigation and Proceeds of Crime recovery conducted by the team.
- 2.6.7 In relation to **Proceeds of Crime (POCA) Investigation** CAFT Specialist Financial investigators received 29 cases in 2019-20. As well as carrying out PoCA investigation for the London Borough of Barnet, these specialist officers also assisted other local authorities with the PoCA element of their criminal cases resulting in the courts confiscating £2,313,388 from offenders.
- 2.6.8 **Whistleblowing** matters are also reported to the Audit Committee. There were no instances reported during the 2019-20 year

2.7 **Planned and unplanned work** – The Committee has completed its work plan in accordance with its planned level of activity as detailed at annex 1.

3. Conclusions

3.1 In conclusion the Audit Committee feels that it has demonstrated that it has added value to the Council's overall Governance Framework.

3.2 Throughout the rest of 2020-21, as the Council moves further into the COVID-19 'recovery' phase, at an appropriate the Audit Committee will resume inviting senior officers to attend Committee where their actions have not been completed and it is reasonable to expect them to have been implemented and / or they have not engaged in the follow-ups process. This will aid the Committee in its understanding of the services and the issues identified through the audit process, but mostly to ensure that internal and external recommendations are given the priority required and implemented on a timely basis.

3.3 The Audit Committee's focus will continue to be ensuring action is taken of internal control deficiencies and reviewing progress on a regular basis as well as commitment to improving shortfalls in the control environment, rather than apportioning blame.

Annex 1 – Schedule of actual work 2019-20

Detail Reports considered:

Audit Committee Meeting Date	Agenda Items
1 May 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to financial controls; Progress report on the Grant Thornton recommendations and action plan • Internal Audit Exception Recommendations Report and Q4 Progress Report 1st January to 31st March 2019 • Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) Annual Report 2018/19 • Internal Audit & Anti-Fraud Strategy and Annual Plan 2019-20 • Audit Progress Report • Certification of Grant Claims • Committee Forward Work Programme
16 July 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report of the Chief Executive • Annual Internal Audit Opinion 2018-19 • Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance • Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2017-18 • Internal Audit Exception Recommendations Report and Q1 Progress Report 1st April to 30th June 2019 • Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) Q1 Progress Report 2019-20

Audit Committee Meeting Date	Agenda Items
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Auditor's Audit Completion Report for the year 2018/19 • Committee Work Programme
30 October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Exception Recommendations Report and Q2 Progress Report 1st July to 30th September 2019 • Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) Q2 Progress Report 2019-20 • Final external auditors report 2018-19 • Annual Audit Letter 2018/19 • Committee Forward Work Programme
30 January 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Exception Recommendations Report and Q3 Progress Report 1st October to 30th December 2019 • External Audit Plan 2019/20 • External Auditor Progress Report - Verbal Update • Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) Q3 Progress Report 2019-20 • Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) Q3 Progress Report 2019-20: Capita Employee Benefits – London Borough of Barnet Pension Scheme - Internal Fraud Summary Report (Exempt Report) • Committee Forward Work Programme
29 April 2020	CANCELLED – due to lockdown restrictions.

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A Motion of Gratitude

This Council notes that:

1. The Covid-19 pandemic has thrown previously unknown and unprecedented challenges at the country, including the London Borough of Barnet.
2. There have been 459 deaths across the borough due to the Covid-19 pandemic*.
3. From the start of lockdown on 23rd March to 28th August, the Council has continued to provide core services as well as additional essential support and relief to those in the community more affected by the outbreak. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. 4,855 urgent phone calls, and 3,999 emails asking for help answered
 - b. 7.6 million bin collections
 - c. 27,339 householders given Council Tax payment support
 - d. 14,148 food parcels and 700 hygiene parcels dispatched to the most vulnerable
 - e. 3,904 local businesses were awarded over £60 million in grants
 - f. 4,600 'triage' calls made and 6,600 text messages sent to shielded individuals
 - g. 1.8 million items of PPE dispatched to care homes, home carers and schools
4. Thousands of residents across the borough volunteered their time to help their community, including the 993 who registered to volunteer with *Barnet Together*.
5. A number of staff members have taken time from their substantive roles to support the Borough Emergency Control Centre.
6. 50 members of staff created the Essential Supplies Hub, and manned it with the assistance of 21 volunteers and made over 10,000 deliveries to over 750 households.
7. A Covid-19 recovery strategy is being implemented. This will set out how the Council will ensure that the borough is able to continue to future-proof the borough and build a post-Covid Barnet with a plan to support our residents and businesses.

This Council believes that:

1. Staff at Barnet Council have put in an extraordinary effort to protect and provide for the borough's residents.
2. The fact that large projects, such as the Brent Cross Cricklewood regeneration have continued to make good progress, despite the challenges of the year, shows the commitment of our staff to ensuring a Barnet fit for the future.
3. With our preparedness plans, we are prepared for any potential subsequent waves of the Covid-19 virus.

This Council resolves to:

1. Thank all the staff across the Council for all their hard work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Without their hard work, our residents, our businesses and our borough-at-large would not have been served as well as it has been.
2. Thank the thousands of residents who volunteered across the borough, to assist those in need of help during this challenging time.
3. Express our condolences to the loved ones of all those who have died due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
4. Continue working on our Covid-19 recovery strategy, that will plot a path for the borough to recover from the pandemic.

Council meeting: 20 October 2020

AGENDA ITEM 14.2

**Opposition motion: Cllr Ross Houston
Stop overdevelopment in Barnet**

Council deplores the Government's proposals to:

- impose a massive housing target of 5744 new homes a year in Barnet through their proposed new algorithm
- extend permitted development to allow the building of up to two more storeys on homes and blocks of flats without planning permission
- extend permitted development to allow former shops, offices and warehouses to be converted into housing without planning permission
- reduce Section 106 affordable housing by raising the contribution threshold to 50 units
- grant automatic planning permission for most developments in 'growth' areas
- grant automatic planning permission for most developments in 'renewal' areas subject to basic checks
- remove democratic control and accountability from the planning process by sidelining planning committees
- remove the right of residents to have a say on final planning applications

Council believes these proposals are reckless and will destroy the suburban character of our borough with massive overdevelopment, more tower blocks of one and two bedroom flats, fewer family homes, development on greenbelt and green spaces, the proliferation of poor quality, rabbit-hutch homes in former commercial premises, and even fewer decent, genuinely affordable homes.

Council notes that the Leader of the Council and his administration colleagues recently voted against opposing the Government's 'Planning for the Future' document which makes the case for many of these proposals.

Council calls on the Leader of the Council to publicly set out his views on these matters and explain to Barnet's residents why he will not oppose the plans for massive overdevelopment in 'Planning for the Future'.

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Adopting a Barnet-wide definition of Islamophobia

This Council notes that:

1. The Council agreed to create and adopt a definition of Islamophobia in July 2019
2. According to the 2011 census, over 36,000 Muslims live in Barnet, making up over 8% of the borough's population
3. Muslim communities in Barnet are members of traditions from around the globe, including but not limited to Albania, Iran, Pakistan and Somalia
4. The below definition was written from consultation with Barnet's Muslim community, and has the support of the Barnet Islamic Forum.

This Council believes that:

1. No form of racial or religious hatred has any place in the London Borough of Barnet
2. It is right that a definition of Islamophobia in Barnet was built by the Barnet Muslim community

This Council adopts the following definition of Islamophobia:

Anti-Muslim prejudice, also known as islamophobia, is a perception of Muslims, often expressed as a dislike or hatred towards an individual, a group or their property, institutions and facilities for possessing the perceived characteristics of a Muslim.

This prejudice is often rooted in racism, and can be manifested in many ways, including but not limited to abusive behaviour, threats of violence, damage and desecration of property, assault and extreme violence.

Under Full Council Procedure Rule 17.17: if my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting, I ask that it be voted upon at the Council meeting.

Adopting the IHRA Definition Examples

This Council notes that:

1. Barnet Council adopted the working definition of antisemitism proposed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in January 2017.
2. Barnet Council was the first local authority in the country to adopt such a definition.
3. Since Barnet Council's adoption, best practice has been to adopt the IHRA definition examples alongside the definition proper.
4. The motion of January 2017 was proposed by the late Councillor Gordon.

This Council believes that:

1. It is right to take this opportunity to bring our definition up to date in line with current best practice, and to reaffirm our own commitment to fighting hatred and religious intolerance.
2. In recognition of Cllr Gordon's campaigning against antisemitism, this should be done in his memory.
3. The 'examples' that illustrate antisemitism can help clarify what is and is not antisemitic to those without a full understanding of the many ways in which this hate crime is perpetrated.

This Council resolves to:

1. Adopt the following illustrative examples of antisemitism, as set out by IHRA:
 - a. Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for "why things go wrong." It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.
 - b. Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
 - ii. Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

- iii. Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
 - iv. Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
 - v. Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
 - vi. Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
 - vii. Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
 - viii. Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
 - ix. Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
 - x. Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
 - xi. Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.
- c. Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).
 - d. Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.
 - e. Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

Under Full Council Procedure Rule 17.17: if my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting, I ask that it be voted upon at the Council meeting.

Standing up for local control of the planning process

Following the publication by Government of the White Paper, 'Planning for the Future' on 6 August 2020, Council notes:

1. That Barnet Council has a robust system of officer and councillor-led planning controls which has a good track record.
2. That, nationally, the vast majority of planning applications are given the go-ahead by local authority planning committees, with permission granted to around nine out of ten applications.
3. That research by the Local Government Association has said that there are existing planning permissions for more than one million homes that have not yet been started.

Council is concerned that the White Paper proposals, alongside related changes to Permitted Development Rights and Prior Notification regulations, seek as a whole to:

1. Reduce or remove the right of residents to object to applications near them.
2. Grant automatic rights for developers to build on land identified as 'for growth'.
3. Remove Section 106 payments for infrastructure and replace them with a national levy.

Council further notes:

1. The reforms are opposed by Theresa Villiers MP, who warned of a "free-for-all" that would cause "serious damage" and "huge unhappiness in my constituency and many others", and that she urged the Government "to scale back what is proposed".
2. The reforms are opposed by the all-party Local Government Association, currently led by Conservative Councillors.
3. The Royal Institute for British Architects called the proposals 'shameful and which will do almost nothing to guarantee delivery of affordable, well-designed and sustainable homes'.

Council believes:

1. Barnet residents deserve to have local democratic control over what happens in their neighbourhoods.
2. That existing planning procedures allow this local control and give residents a say in planning proposals that affect them.
3. That these White Paper and related proposals for automatic rights to build in 'growth' areas, and increased permitted development rights, risk unregulated growth and unsustainable communities.
4. And therefore that Barnet Council will respond to the White Paper by actively defending current arrangements, insofar as they allow for local democratic control and for residents to have their say.

Under Full Council Procedure Rule 17.17: If my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting, I ask that it be voted upon at the Council meeting.

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