

MEETING

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND LIBRARIES COMMITTEE

DATE AND TIME

WEDNESDAY 9TH JUNE, 2021

AT 7.00 PM

VENUE

HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, LONDON NW4 4BG

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

Chairman: Councillor Reuben Thompstone
Vice Chairman: Councillor Roberto Weeden-Sanz

Councillors:

Roberto Weeden-Sanz	Helene Richman	Nizza Fluss
Jennifer Grocock	Charlie O-Macauley	Lachhya Bahadur Gurung
Sarah Conway	Zakia Zubairi	

In line with the Constitution's Public Participation and Engagement Rules, requests to submit public questions or comments must be submitted by 10AM on the third working day before the date of the committee meeting. Therefore, the deadline for this meeting is **Friday, 4th June at 10AM**. Requests must be submitted to Tracy Scollin Tel 020 8359 2315 tracy.scollin@barnet.gov.uk

You are requested to attend the above meeting for which an agenda is attached.

Andrew Charlwood – Head of Governance

Governance Service contact: Tracy Scollin Tel 020 8359 2315 tracy.scollin@barnet.gov.uk

Media Relations Contact: Tristan Garrick 020 8359 2454

ASSURANCE GROUP

Please consider the environment before printing

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	Minutes of last meeting	5 - 10
2.	Absence of Members (If any)	
3.	Declaration of Members' Disclosable Pecuniary interests and Non Pecuniary interests (If any)	
4.	Report of the Monitoring Officer (If any)	
5.	Public Comments and Questions (If any)	
6.	Members' Items (If any)	
7.	Community Participation Strategy	11 - 48
8.	Community Safety Governance Review	49 - 62
9.	Forward Plan	63 - 66
10.	Any item(s) the Chairman decides are urgent	

FACILITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Hendon Town Hall has access for wheelchair users including lifts and toilets. If you wish to let us know in advance that you will be attending the meeting, please telephone Tracy Scollin Tel 020 8359 2315 tracy.scollin@barnet.gov.uk. People with hearing difficulties who have a text phone, may telephone our minicom number on 020 8203 8942. All of our Committee Rooms also have induction loops.

FIRE/EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

If the fire alarm sounds continuously, or if you are instructed to do so, you must leave the building by the nearest available exit. You will be directed to the nearest exit by uniformed custodians. It is vital you follow their instructions.

You should proceed calmly; do not run and do not use the lifts.

Do not stop to collect personal belongings

Once you are outside, please do not wait immediately next to the building, but move some distance away and await further instructions.

Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

This page is intentionally left blank

Decisions of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee

8 March 2021

Members Present:-

AGENDA ITEM 1

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

Councillor Jennifer Grocock
Councillor Helene Richman
Councillor Nizza Fluss
Councillor Lachhya Gurung

Councillor Sara Conway
Councillor Danny Rich
Councillor Zakia Zubairi

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Cllr Rich asked for a correction under item 3: he is a magistrate and sits on the Youth Bench but is not a 'youth magistrate'; this role doesn't exist.

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2020 were approved subject to the above amendment.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS (IF ANY)

Apologies were received from Cllr Charlie O-Macauley.

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

Cllr Grocock noted that she is the Chairman of the Finchley and Golders Green Area Committee and of the East Barnet Community and Police Panel Ward.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

None.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

A Member's Item was received in the name of Cllr Zakia Zubairi – Hendon Library and Hendon Hub

Cllr Zubairi stated that assurances need to be given that Hendon Library will remain in its current historic building. Members have received many calls from residents opposing the proposed changes to the Hendon Library, which has been in its location since 1929. Cllr Zubairi commented that Barnet Council has wasted £500,000 on reducing the library's floor space by 13% and had also cut staffed opening hours. Residents have expressed concerns that its temporary move to a portacabin would result in the loss of this library altogether.

The Chairman noted that a consultation process is currently underway and requested that Cllr Zubairi forward her comments to the Governance Service so that they could be included in the response.

Action: Cllr Zubairi

The Chairman added that the Hendon Library would be considered when it returns to CLLC following the consultation. CLLC would interrogate the findings on the library services aspects of the consultation but not on the wider Hendon Hub, which would be considered by Policy & Resources Committee.

The Director of Assurance, Ms Clair Green stated that the item that had been previously presented to CLLC set out the wider consultation around the Hendon Hub. A link would be sent to all Members on the consultation, which is currently on the 'Engage Barnet' section of the website. Ms Green would confirm the arrangements outside the meeting and with the Chairman, to ensure that it is brought back to CLLC. She would ensure that Members are clear of the next steps.

Clerk's note: Due to technical difficulties the Assistant Director: Commissioning and Business Improvement was unable to comment at the virtual meeting so has added the following comment:

Phase 1 of the consultation regarding Hendon Hub of which Hendon Library is a part is still on-going and will close on the 21 May 2021. In addition to the main consultation process, the library service is also asking residents to provide feedback on what they would like to see within any new building. This survey also closes at the end of May. A second phase of consultation will follow in early summer. The Assistant Director: Commissioning and Business Improvement contacted Cllrs Thompstone and Conway on the 9 March to clarify consultation arrangements.

Cllr Conway stated that Barnet Council did not appear to always listen to the responses to its consultations. She added that there are fears that as part of the wider Hendon Hub plan, this precious local and iconic resource would be lost.

The Chairman noted that over 3000 responses had been received on the previous libraries consultation and this feedback had dramatically changed some of the original proposals. He did not see the Hendon Hub project as an intention to remove Hendon Library.

Cllr Sara Conway – Engagement with residents in a world living with Covid

Cllr Conway thanked officers for the governance review on community safety, and for their time in callover the previous week. She felt encouraged by the positive work such as that around the Census, Community Strategy and the Health Champions. She suggested a review be carried out, to look at the lessons learnt including receiving feedback from other organisations, which would be relevant for the Community Participation Strategy.

Cllr Conway noted that currently engagement remained difficult for residents who did not have internet access, particularly in the absence of face-to-face ward surgeries and other meetings, as well as consultations being online. She stated that she has noticed a lack of

response to some consultations recently and suggested a closer look at the Resident Forums and other ways of reaching those who may be disengaged.

The Chairman reported that the committee would be feeding into the Participation Strategy very soon. He added that he has been impressed with officers and the many voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) organisations that have set up joint working in very difficult circumstances during the pandemic and agreed that the pandemic had highlighted where further work is needed. He invited the Community Engagement, Participation and Strategy Lead, Mr Will Cooper, to speak on the Community Participation Strategy.

Mr Cooper noted that the consultation aspect of the Strategy would be considered by Policy & Resources Committee (P&R). The Consultation and Engagement Strategy would be part of this and its refresh would be considered by CLLC. Mr Cooper agreed that different ways of working could be discussed to try to get residents more involved and to ensure that those without online access can be reached. The successes from working with partners during the pandemic should be built on and would be considered as part of the Community Participation Strategy, including trying to formalise some of the relationships built during this time.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report.

7. DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS STRATEGY

Mr Peter Clifton, Community Safety Manager, noted that domestic abuse services had been reconfigured over the past year to ensure continued support for victims during the pandemic. There had also been a fourfold increase in the MARAC meetings and a communications campaign on how to report domestic abuse, emphasising that people could still leave home despite lockdown if they are at risk.

In addition, the allocation of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) has been increased and information sharing with the MARAC Group has been enhanced. Additional training on domestic abuse risk identification has been carried out in primary care settings, resulting in an increase in the number of referrals. In Barnet there does not appear to have been an increase in domestic abuse cases during lockdown.

Cllr Rich enquired whether reports were presented elsewhere in the council on girls and gangs and women and slavery. The Community Safety Manager reported that this was reported in the Domestic Violence and VAWG Group as part of its Strategy, which included themed work on modern day slavery and criminal exploitation of young people. Reports are also presented to the Vulnerable Adolescents Risk Panel. The Community Safety Manager would bring more information on the different areas looking at these topics back to the Committee.

Action: Community Safety Manager

Cllr Conway asked about access for residents to the One Stop Shop as this had been busy during lockdown. She reported that Jewish Women's Aid had provided an excellent half day's training on domestic violence and recommended that this be offered to all Councillors. The Community Safety Manager responded that Jewish Women's Aid is a valuable member of the Domestic Abuse and VAWG Forum. He would discuss options for training with the Domestic Abuse Strategy Coordinator.

The Community Safety Manager noted that the One Stop Shop had moved to a telephone triage service during the pandemic and he had heard positive feedback so it may be continued in this format in the future.

Cllr Gurung asked who the agencies are, as referred to in 2.22 of the report. The Community Safety Manager responded that these are Barnet Council (Community Safety, Adults and Children's Social Care), Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust, DV services such as SOLACE, the police, probation services and VCS services. He would provide a full list following the meeting.

Action: Community Safety Manager

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the progress made by the Safer Communities Partnership on delivering the four priority objectives of the Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

8. BARNET ZERO TOLERANCE TO HATE CRIME PROJECT UPDATE

Mr Sam Rosengard, Prevent Coordinator, presented his report. He noted that the project's objective is to reduce hate crime in Barnet, improve support for victims, and raise awareness about how to report hate crime and safeguard the most vulnerable victims of it.

The multi-agency response to hate crime in Barnet is overseen by the Safer Communities Partnership Board and the Access to Justice Committee, which receive quarterly updates on the progress of the project and on hate crime figures in Barnet, locally and nationally.

The Prevent Coordinator reported that awareness raising on hate crime is led by Reshma Hirani, who has delivered training to several organisations in Barnet.

Currently the Reporting Centre Network is being increased to ensure that residents can access support when reporting hate crime. Also, additional Hate Crime Reporting Champions have been recruited.

Mr Rosengard reported that because it has been recognised that hate crime might impact disproportionately on vulnerable groups like disabled people, Barnet is actively asking statutory professionals and community groups to think about safeguarding actions that might be necessary. In November 2020 during Safeguarding Week a webinar had been held for Barnet staff.

Cllr Conway noted that she was pleased to hear that the team had contacted some communities, and that this had been fed back to her as a positive experience. She suggested that knowledge from the reporting centres might help with the community engagement work. The Prevent Coordinator would contact the Community Engagement, Participation and Strategy Lead to discuss this. He added that the team hopes to expand the reporting centres across the community.

Action: Prevent Coordinator

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the progress made in delivering Barnet's Zero Tolerance to Hate Crime project.

9. ITEM REFERRED FROM ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

9. ITEM REFERRED FROM ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The Chairman introduced an item in the name of Cllr Jo Cooper. He noted that Appendix 1 should have read '8th February 2021' rather than '8th February 2020'. Cllr Cooper was not in attendance.

Cllr Conway stated that she had been advised by governance that it would not be possible to use CIL funding towards community safety issues. There are safety and maintenance concerns around some of the parks, and she suggested piloting an action plan in Montrose Park prior to the end of lockdown.

The Director of Assurance reported that work is underway to clarify where cross-cutting issues such as this should be brought, and how issues can be communicated between the different committees that share an interest. This would be brought back to a future meeting of CLLC. She added that work is ongoing to look at Barnet's parks from a Covid perspective. A project is underway looking at how the council can work with residents and the voluntary sector to help maintain the parks and make them safer, and at the use of Section 106 funding. The Head of Governance would bring a report to Policy and Resources Committee in the near future.

Action: Governance Officer, Director of Assurance

Cllr Grocock reported that the Area Committees have been invited to look at their 2021/22 priorities. Suggestions would be put forward at their next meetings, and issues that concern residents and Members will form part of these discussions.

Cllr Conway stated that some pilots to try out different approaches with partners would also be helpful. This was being looked at prior to the pandemic and a renewed focus on this would be welcome.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report.

10. WORK PROGRAMME

Cllr Conway reported that some Member training on community safety issues would be helpful to help them to deal with serious incidents in their wards. Ideally a dedicated person to contact at the Council in such incidents could be provided as this can be a difficult time for Members.

Cllr Conway noted that the fly tipping taskforce is a positive step but this continued to be a huge problem in Burnt Oak. She requested a discussion on environmental crime at a future meeting.

Ms Green responded that governance is looking into future training needs and other support that can be put in place in relation to community safety. This would be a positive addition to the member development programme; she noted that any other suggestions from Members on development needs are welcome.

Ms Green noted that the issue of fly tipping is shared with Environment Committee, There is a dedicated team that is tasked to clean up fly tipping as it appears. Further

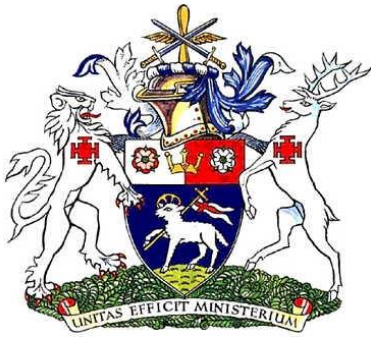
clarification on communication between the different committees on areas of shared interest would be brought back, to ensure that committees are kept informed.

The Chairman noted that a future CST report to CLLC includes details on fly tipping enforcement.

Action: Director of Assurance

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

The meeting finished at 8.14 pm



Community Leadership and Libraries Committee

AGENDA ITEM 7

9 June 2021

Title	Barnet Community Participation Strategy 2021
Report of	Councillor Thompstone, Chairman of Community Leadership and Libraries Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix 1. Barnet Community Participation Strategy 2021
Officer Contact Details	William Cooper, Deputy Head of Strategy – Strategy and Engagement. william.cooper@barnet.gov.uk 020 8359 2236

Summary

This is the fourth update to the Community Participation Strategy, which was first approved in 2014. Originally scheduled for November 2020, this update has been delayed due to the interruption to normal council business caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

During those intervening months, the Barnet Plan 2021-2025 has been published. This sets out a new approach for the council based on greater partnership working; both across professional sectors but also with residents. It also includes a commitment to explore place-based working. The Community Participation Strategy 2021 responds to these aims. It looks at how the council can maximise the new strengthened bonds that have developed between partners and communities during COVID-19, and how we can use these to meet the challenges that the pandemic has brought on the borough.

This is a more broad-reaching version of the Community Participation Strategy than previous updates. However, it remains true to the original outcomes proposed in 2014:

- Residents and community groups will be more independent and resilient; able to deliver more, and to take on more responsibility for their local areas
- Services will offer more choice, and be better matched to local need
- The Council and the community will work together to make sure community capacity is supported and used to its full potential
- People become more active, involved and engaged in their communities by unlocking the substantial capacity of both the council and local business' workforce and direct it to where it is most needed in the borough.

Officers Recommendations

1. That members approve the new Community Participation Strategy
2. That members approve the proposal to increase the funding to the Barnet Together infrastructure partnership, and to delegate responsibility to officers to develop a detailed costings proposal for this to be approved by Policy and Resources Committee

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The last update of the Community Participation Strategy was approved in November 2018 with a two-year delivery plan. The principle outcome of this update was establishment of the VCS Development Partnership contracts. These created the current infrastructure support arrangements for the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) that are known as Barnet Together. These contracts are due to finally elapse in the Autumn of 2021 having already been extended by a year to ensure continued support throughout the pandemic.
- 1.2 The COVID-19 Community Response programme to the pandemic saw the council and Barnet Together working in closer partnership than ever before. VCFS partners worked alongside the council and NHS to coordinate and deliver emergency support to residents. The programme provided a demonstration of what could be achieved by working in a different way. It also enabled us to harness the significant increase in social capital that the pandemic triggered in our communities. Residents volunteered in their hundreds, and as the vaccine programme rolls out, they are still coming forward. The benefits of volunteering to personal wellbeing have long been known, and with rising unemployment and inactivity there is a greater need for residents to become active and involved in their communities.
- 1.3 Volunteering is one way that residents can participate, but the strategy also makes a renewed commitment to increasing opportunities for residents to participate in local decision making and make their views known. This will help to build trust between the

council and its communities and ensure that the services we deliver are more tailored to the needs of residents.

- 1.4 The Barnet Plan proposes two ways that the council can deliver better for the borough: by working in collaboration with our partners and in a place-based way. The Community Participation Strategy describes how these approaches can be put into practice and how we can make better use of existing mechanisms and funding to facilitate this.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Approval for the strategy is required in order to begin planning and delivering the work it proposes.
- 2.2 Approval to delegate the funding of the new Barnet Together infrastructure commission is driven by timing. The two contracts we have with these organisations will elapse in September and October 2021, while the next meeting of Community Leadership and Libraries Committee is not until November. Discussions are underway as to what the new settlement will look like but we are not yet in a position to propose a final cost. Committee's permission is therefore sought to develop this proposal in the interim as part of council budgeting. This costing will be brought to Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The alternative to this strategy would be to return to the way we were working before the pandemic, and this is not recommended. In an earlier draft of this strategy from 2019 it was already recognised that the 2018 VCFS contracts were not making sufficient impact. Working more closely with the sector enables the council to deliver services and support to residents that we would be unable to provide ourselves at the same cost. It is therefore a valuable preventative investment.
- 3.2 During the pandemic VCFS were able to supplement the funding we provide to them with various other external grants. This made significant impact to what they were able to deliver in the borough and showed what could be achieved with a larger funding

envelope. This level of delivery will have to be reduced if the funding cannot be sustained.

- 3.3 There is also a strong case for increasing engagement with residents. The alternative - doing less - would risk damaging the council's reputation with its communities.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following approval, the council's Strategy Team will take forward its proposals and develop a two-year delivery plan. This will be monitored by the team and reported to this committee on an annual basis.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The current Community Participation Strategy action plan contains targets that are used as indicators on the delivery plan for this committee. Several of these are KPIs from the VCS development contracts and will need to be replaced when those contracts end. The new implementation plan will include a new series of indicators to be monitored through the corporate performance framework.

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

- 5.2.1 The strategy calls for a new approach to community participation that will require some additional resource to implement. The budget from the VCFS development contracts is being retained but there will be a need to increase this funding just to continue the current level of delivery. The proposed new structure for Barnet Together could potentially cost significantly more. However, as well as providing better outcomes for residents, the extra investment will result in greater fundraising capacity and social value.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 The Community Participation Strategy will set out how the council can maximise the potential for social value contributions in our supply chain and use this resource to support the community. A Social Value Policy is also in development that will set a new threshold for contributions and outline how these will be administered.
- 5.3.2 In its broadest sense, social value runs through everything in this strategy. It proposes ways of working that unlock the assets in our communities, and harness these to create stronger, more cohesive communities whose needs are better served.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 There are no legal or constitutional implications to this report.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 Increasing community participation can carry some risks. These will be analysed and identified for every piece of work with mitigation plans put in place.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, the Council is under an obligation to have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share it; and fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' and persons who do not share it. The 'protected characteristics' are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Council also has regard to the additional protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership even though this does not apply to certain parts of the public-sector equality duty.

5.6.2 The Community Participation Strategy actively advances equalities and diversity by helping ensure the council reaches and hears from a diverse cross-section of residents. Increasing resident engagement helps to ensure our services meets the needs of our communities.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 The council expects partner organisations in the VCFS and private sectors to agree with our corporate parenting pledge and support our endeavours to raise outcomes for looked after children and care leavers.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 Consultation and engagement are fundamental to the Community Participation Strategy. It sets out how the council can have a closer and more productive dialogue with residents.

5.8.2 Following approval, a delivery plan for the strategy will be co-designed with the voluntary community and faith sector. Aspects of this are already underway.

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 Insight is also a key element of the Community Participation Strategy, and a comprehensive understanding of the assets in our communities is fundamental to its delivery. Collating and mapping this data will be an output of the strategy that will benefit the wider council as well as the community.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 [A paper setting out the proposed direction of the Community Participation Strategy](#) was presented at Community Leadership and Libraries Committee on 5 March 2020.
- 6.2 [The previous Community Participation Strategy update and Barnet Together Action Plan](#) approved at Community Leadership and Libraries Committee, 21 November 2018.

Barnet Community Participation Strategy 2021

Contents

Background	8
Strategic context	8
The Barnet Plan 2021-2025	8
Previous Community Participation Strategies	8
The COVID-19 pandemic and Barnet's Community Response	9
Summary of proposals	11
Vision and principles	13
What do we mean by community?	14
What do we mean by participation?	15
Participation and prevention	15
Participation and inclusion	16
EqIAS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Enabling place-based working	17
Understanding 'place'	17
Delivering for places	19
What assets can be contributed by different groups in a place?	21
A stronger partnership with the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector	22
The case for a stronger partnership	22
Co-designing the new partnership	23
Elements of the new Barnet Together	24
Working with our faith communities	26
Enabling resident participation	28
Participation and engagement	28
The engagement spectrum	28
Enabling community voices to be heard	29
A greater say in place-based improvements	29
Ward members and resident engagement	29
Engaging through partnership	30
Gathering robust resident insight	31
Active participation – volunteering in Barnet	32
Unlocking resources for the community	34
Can community participation lead to savings?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Channelling resources into the community	34
Potential for wider use of development income	34
Community Innovation Fund	35
Crowdfund Barnet	37
Social Value	37
Capacity building in the VCFS	38

1. Background

1.1 Strategic context

The Barnet Plan 2021-2025

In March 2021, the council published its new Barnet Plan¹, setting out the organisation's priorities for the next four years as the borough recovers from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan is divided into four priorities that serve as themes under which all the council's services will be planned and delivered:

- Clean, safe and well-run
- Family Friendly
- Healthy
- Thriving

The Barnet Plan also redefines the council's approach to carrying out its work. Firstly, we will explore the potential for 'place-based' working. This means putting people and their immediate environment at the heart of what we do and tailoring our services to the needs of specific communities in specific locations.

Another aspect of the Barnet Plan's approach is a focus on equality in everything we do: ensuring equality of opportunity for everyone in the borough, celebrating our diverse population and fostering community cohesion. Also, working in a preventative way wherever possible. Getting ahead of problems and providing support at an earlier stage, so that people's needs do not increase and they are able to enjoy greater independence and wellbeing. Finally, an organisational commitment to working in partnership - with other agencies, but also with residents themselves.

These four aspects of the Barnet Plan approach come together in the Community Participation Strategy. It describes how we will put this approach into practice, by harnessing existing assets and relationships, while building new ways to work together with communities. Enabling Barnet residents to be active participants in their communities and work with us in making Barnet a better place to live, work and study.

Previous Community Participation Strategies

The Barnet Community Participation Strategy was first published in November 2014 and has been updated twice since then. The last update in 2018 established the council's most recent voluntary sector development contracts. These commissioned the provision of centralised volunteering services through Volunteering Barnet, and infrastructure support for Barnet's voluntary community and faith sector (VCFS).

¹ [022176 - BC2135 - BARNET Corporate plan 2021 - 2025 - FINAL \(1\).pdf](#)

Originally, this update to the Community Participation Strategy was due to be brought to committee in February 2020. This timing was primarily driven by the voluntary sector contracts, whose two-year terms were both due to end that Autumn. Discussion had already been underway for some time at that point as to how these contracts could be replaced, and how our relationship with community groups and residents could be more collaborative.

A paper was brought to [Community Leadership and Libraries Committee on 5 March 2020](#) outlining some of this thinking. The publication of the new Community Participation Strategy was subsequently postponed until November 2020 to allow time to develop these proposals. Two weeks later the first national lockdown came into force as the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic began to sweep the country. Much of the council's normal business was suspended, and work on the strategy was paused.

1.2 The COVID-19 pandemic and Barnet's Community Response

Even before the country entered lockdown on 23 March 2020, Barnet's communities had begun to come together in response to the crisis. While a lot of this activity was taking place at neighbourhood level, a coordinated borough-wide response was quickly initiated by the Barnet Together partnership in order to harness the combined strengths of the VCFS. This began with the establishment of a donation page - the Barnet Community Response Fund.

A task force of VCFS organisations was convened by Barnet Together to plan how to support residents. They then approached the council and involved senior officers in these discussions. Within days a structured response programme was devised. This comprised a number of workstreams that focused on tackling specific aspects of the crisis, such as supplies for shielding residents, volunteer mobilisation, and support for children and families. This saw VCFS organisations and statutory services working together in completely unprecedented ways; not only delivering services in partnership but planning and coordinating them too.

Case study:**Barnet COVID-19 Community Response**

The Community Response programme arose in the early days of the pandemic as a set of measures rapidly put in place in response to a crisis that was unfolding fast. Barnet Together had already set up the Response Fund donation page and begun pulling together a task force of organisations. The council then helped provide structure and project management to this network of groups, facilitating where necessary but allowing VCFS organisations to lead where it was more appropriate.

The main structure of the programme was broadly in place by the time the first lockdown began, though it was regularly adapted as the pandemic unfolded. A series of workstreams were established to tackle the areas of greatest need. Each of these was led by a multiagency steering group and often an operational level liaison group. At the heart of the Vulnerable Adults workstream was the Community Help Hub: an emergency contact centre and website that was available seven days a week. The Hub would refer residents in need to support services often provided by sector partners such as Age UK Barnet. During the first wave of the pandemic the Help Hub fielded over six thousand calls and 12000 emails.

There was a surge of interest in volunteering from the community, and the Volunteering Barnet service launched a new online portal to enhance its ability to process them. Since April 2020 the service has received 2,347 new volunteer registrations and deployed nearly 900 of these into roles. Meanwhile as lockdown meant the council was unable to deliver some of its services, staff from these teams were redeployed into community volunteering roles. These included supporting health services by delivering oxygen tests to residents' homes or helping process some of the ten thousand food deliveries at the Essential Supplies Hub.

The Community Response was able to deliver successful solutions quickly. This was greatly helped by an approach of genuine partnership and trust. This enabled the changing needs of the community to be quickly met by the organisation best placed to do so.

The Barnet COVID-19 Community Response has demonstrated what can be achieved when residents, VCFS organisations and the public sector all work together for the benefit of the community. The Community Participation Strategy aims to build on these successes and formalise these new ways of working into a permanent legacy.

1. Summary of proposals

Theme	Proposal
<p>Enabling place-based working</p>	<p>The council will work with partners to gather comprehensive data on the borough, in order to map not only the needs but also the strengths and assets in Barnet’s communities.</p> <p>The insight this mapping provides will enable evidence-based decision making and identify the organisations and individuals in localities that can work together to deliver place-based change.</p>
	<p>Barnet’s Local Insight Tool will be the primary vehicle for mapping local data. It will be a shared resource, with our VCFS partners able to update and maintain data within it.</p>
	<p>Wherever possible, projects affecting specific localities will be designed and delivered in partnership with the community. This includes local improvements as well as changes to service delivery. Residents and community groups will be involved from the outset; their views sought and their skills, knowledge and expertise utilised.</p>
	<p>The council will develop a set of common processes for place-based working and publish these internally as a toolkit resource.</p>
<p>A stronger partnership with the voluntary community and faith sector</p>	<p>The council will enter into a new alliance with Barnet Together, with the partnership confirmed as the authorised representative partnership for Barnet’s voluntary community and faith sector. The alliance will build on the close partnership working arrangements forged through the COVID-19 community response, with VCFS planning and delivering together with council and other statutory partners.</p>
	<p>The new alliance with Barnet Together will be based on a set of shared objectives and an operational structure that makes the best use of what each partner brings to it.</p>
	<p>VCFS organisations in the borough will be able to become members of Barnet Together and share information about their services through its data tools. This will enable a wealth of data about the sector to be gathered, greatly strengthening the shared insight available to Barnet Together and the council.</p>
	<p>Barnet Together will coordinate a structure of themed, multiagency groups. These will include groups convened as part of the COVID-19 community response, and existing council VCFS forums that are already in place.</p>
	<p>While working in partnership with the council, Barnet Together will retain an independent, and if necessary, critical voice. Challenging the council and other partners and highlighting where we can improve.</p>

Theme	Proposal
	<p>The local VCFS will be engaged in the planning and delivery of place-based projects, harnessing their knowledge, skills and trusted relationships with residents.</p>
	<p>The Barnet Faith Covenant and Pledge will be renewed, reaffirming the council's commitment to working with our faith communities and enabling their participation in delivering the Barnet Plan.</p>
Enabling resident participation	<p>The council's Strategy team will lead on the development of processes that ensure residents are engaged in a meaningful way in the design and delivery of local services.</p>
	<p>Mechanisms will be developed that enable the views of the community to be captured more effectively, and more easily fed into local decision making. This will include revitalising the constituency Resident Forums and creating stronger links between these and smaller place-based networks such as Town Centre groups.</p>
	<p>The council will make better use of statistically representative resident insight by committing to regular Resident Perception Surveys and reinstating a Citizen's Panel. Wherever possible, formal consultations will be conducted with a representative sample of residents, adding greater robustness to the insight that leads our decision making.</p>
	<p>The council will capitalise on the recent increase in volunteering among Barnet residents and work with Barnet Together to develop a Volunteering Strategy for the borough.</p>
	<p>The council will work with Volunteering Barnet to better understand how it can make more use of volunteers in its own service delivery and ensure that volunteering is properly recognised in its plans for employability support.</p>
Unlocking resources for the community	<p>The council will explore the potential for community participation and engagement to inform the allocation of the neighbourhood element of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Using place-based approaches, VCFS insight and strengthened resident engagement mechanisms will ensure that funding achieves the best outcomes for the community.</p>
	<p>The Community Innovation Fund will continue to be used as a mechanism for funding new preventative initiatives in the borough,</p>
	<p>As an outcome of its new Social Value policy, the council will develop and maintain a menu of community projects and initiatives that can be supported through social value contributions from commercial suppliers.</p>
	<p>Greater use will be made of Crowdfund Barnet as a method for resourcing place-based projects. We will explore how civic crowdfunding can work alongside CIL, Section 106 and other forms of community investment.</p>

2. Vision and principles

“We are committed to working in partnership and we will build our approach around:

- Putting people and places at the heart of what we do, breaking out of organisational silos*
- Respecting the contributions of every partner, recognising different perspectives, investing in the shared capabilities and removing barriers to delivery where we can.*
- Building on the work of each other, sharing opportunities to connect people and ideas, leverage resources, and play complementary roles.*
- Supporting Barnet residents to be active participants in their communities and to be our partners in making Barnet a better place to live, work and study.*
- Trying to get ahead of problems wherever possible, focusing on prevention and early intervention.*
- Experimenting and learning together, sharing insight and experience from what is working and what is not to continue to develop our approach in achieving the best outcomes we can for residents.”*

The Barnet Plan 2021-2025

3.1 The Case for Community Participation

The evidence for the benefits of community participation has been building over the last decade. The success of ‘asset-based’ initiatives such as the Wigan Deal² have shown that by strengthening and harnessing the power in its communities, a council can achieve both improved outcomes and considerable savings.

Evidence across the country suggest that investing into voluntary and community sector can bring great improvements in outcomes and provide return on investment. Evaluation by the Kings Fund of the Wigan Deal estimated that over its first four years, the fund delivered a social return on investment of £1.63 for each £1 invested.³

At its heart, this kind of approach is based on a new relationship between the council and its communities. A dialogue that aims to build trust and cooperation, but also a partnership where each party contributes their own particular skills and strengths. There are numerous benefits to this way of working. For residents, greater participation in their community can lead to improved health and wellbeing for them as individuals. While strengthening community cohesion by bringing groups together can increase social capital and the health and resilience of a community. These points were made in 2010’s Marmot review of health inequalities *Fair Society, Healthy Lives*⁴, stating:

“The extent of people’s participation in their communities and the added control over their lives that this brings has the potential to contribute to their psychosocial well-being and, as a result, to other

² [A citizen-led approach to health and care: Lessons from the Wigan Deal | The King's Fund \(kingsfund.org.uk\)](https://kingsfund.org.uk)

³ [A citizen-led approach to health and care: Lessons from the Wigan Deal | The King's Fund \(kingsfund.org.uk\)](https://kingsfund.org.uk)

⁴ [Fair Society Healthy Lives full report \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk)

health outcomes... It is vital to build social capital at a local level to ensure that policies are both owned by those most affected and are shaped by their experiences.”

Greater community participation is also good for our democracy and the public trust it relies on. In recent years public interest in traditional political processes has waned, while the rise of social media has led to an increased expectation that people’s voices will be heard. Engaging with the community openly and meaningfully can help address these twin challenges. Listening to residents’ views and concerns and working with them to help resolve issues.

A community-centred approach also supports a preventative agenda and has been a long-recognised concept for reducing health inequalities, strengthening community resilience and active engagement with local VCFS in place making⁵. This approach also has a great potential to reduce demand on statutory health and social care services.

Social prescribing is now a familiar part of local health service delivery but is itself a community-centred approach firmly focused on prevention. It utilises services, activities and organisations in the community that can benefit a resident’s wellbeing in a way that reduces the demand on services. This approach can be applied to other areas of the council’s work, involving residents earlier to head off issues and avoid situations escalating.

3.2 What do we mean by community?

The term ‘community’ can be applied to many things in public services, and when talking about community-led initiatives or community assets it’s important to be clear what we mean. Some of the best examples of local authorities rethinking community participation are summed up in ‘The Community Paradigm’⁶, a 2019 publication by New Local Government Network. It recognises that we usually define a community as a group of people who share a connection and who live or work in a geographical place. It also notes that a community can be:

“... any network of individuals collaborating more or less formally to achieve a shared, socially beneficial goal”.

This means that when working in public services we need to firstly understand the existing communities in our borough, while also recognising that new communities can be formed at any time and for any number of reasons. Often a community that forms around a cause, issue or shared interest can be the first rung on a ladder that eventually results in that group becoming an established community organisation. We have seen examples of this during the pandemic, where local neighbours connecting through WhatsApp groups developed into Mutual Aid networks. Some of these have since formalised further into established organisations in the local VCFS. This is often

⁵ Public Health England: Health and Wellbeing Guide to Community Centred Approach, 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-wellbeing-a-guide-to-community-centred-approaches>

⁶ <https://www.newlocal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/The-Community-Paradigm-New-Local-2.pdf>

described as the VCFS ‘ecosystem’ and an aim of this strategy is to improve the conditions for this ecosystem to flourish in Barnet.

3.3 What do we mean by participation?

The varying levels by which citizens participate in public services are usually expressed as a ladder or scale. This follows the ‘Ladder of Citizen Participation’ first modelled by Sherry Arnstein⁷⁷ in a US planning journal in 1969. The ladder has been reused and adapted many times since, but the basic concept defines participation as a range of interactions of increasing depth and value. At one end citizens are simply informed about planning decisions that have already been made, while at the other where they are making the decisions themselves.

Arnstein’s original intention was that we should always be aiming towards the top of the ladder, towards citizen control. Although greater participation is still the goal of this kind of work, a contemporary reading of the ladder is more nuanced. Arguably, all of the steps on it are legitimate and have their place. There will always be a need for public bodies to communicate unilaterally with residents, as we have seen with the recent flood of public health information issued during the pandemic. However, if we are communicating with residents from a place of greater understanding, then those messages will be far more effective.

This understanding of our communities comes from dialogue; from involving communities in our work at every stage. Not only when we want them to test the value of our planning and decision making (the consultation rung of the ladder) but actually enabling the community to propose ideas that can lead to these decisions.

The need for public services to take this approach has never been greater. Demand for services is growing – and changing. This puts pressure on budgets, but also on services, many of which were designed to meet a very different set of challenges to those we face today. Services designed and delivered in partnership with communities are far more likely to succeed in meeting their needs.

3.31 Participation and prevention

For many years now health and social care services have recognised that the best way to reduce the growing demand on services is to encourage healthier lifestyles, and put interventions in place that reduce the risk that people’s health will decline to the point where acute care is required. Taking an active role in community life can have significant benefits to wellbeing; whether from the satisfaction that you have played a part, or simply knowing that your voice has been heard.

Community participation is not just about dialogue, but also active participation: communities co-delivering services and initiatives, through volunteering and community-led enterprises. Barnet has always been a borough with an active voluntary sector, and the Volunteering Barnet service has been steadily placing residents into volunteering opportunities for the last five years. These numbers have risen enormously during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 2,347 new people registering on our

⁷⁷ [Arnstein. A Ladder of Citizen Participation.pdf \(eukn.eu\)](#)

Volunteering Barnet website since the pandemic began. Of these, over 800 have been deployed in volunteering roles. When surveyed by Volunteering Barnet, 96% of these said that they would volunteer again.

We have also seen a huge rise in informal voluntary activity. This has included people cooking food or delivering shopping to shielding neighbours or helping share safety messages through their social networks as Health Champions.

Volunteering can also be a valuable step towards greater employability. The pandemic has led to rising numbers of unemployed people, and young people are leaving education with far fewer opportunities to find employment. Meanwhile many of our older resident have endured long periods of inactivity and isolation. Opportunities to get out and play a part in their communities could therefore have life-changing benefits for their health. Community participation is therefore a vital way that the borough can rebuild from the pandemic, ameliorate some of its impacts on our communities and support the council's prevention agenda.

3.32 Participation and inclusion

This strategy supports the principles of the council's new Equalities Diversity and Inclusion Policy. In particular that we are:

- insight-led
- engage our communities meaningfully
- take a community-led approach to our work.

Working more closely with our residents and understanding them better will help our services to be more inclusive, and to meet the diverse needs of our communities. It will also help ensure that we can better test the impact of our decision making through Equalities Impact Assessments. In order to do this, we have to make sure we are listening to diverse voices, and enabling dialogue with all corners of our community.

Often, it is our partner organisations that are best placed to have those conversations.

3. Enabling place-based working

“We will explore the potential for more place-based working. In this we will tailor our approach to the unique needs of people in a given location or within a specific community. By working with the people who live and work locally, actions and activities are built by the local perspective. To do this we will need to work through our partners, our voluntary and community organisations as well as our businesses and other public services.”

The Barnet Plan 2021-2025

4.1 Understanding ‘place’

Barnet is London’s most populous borough, with a resident population approaching 400,000. It is also one of the largest in terms of its space, covering an area of 33 square miles. There are already many different ways that the borough is sub-divided. For example, its three political constituencies, 21⁸ wards or 30 town centres. Not to mention the many different districts and neighbourhoods that our residents may identify with or feel they belong to.

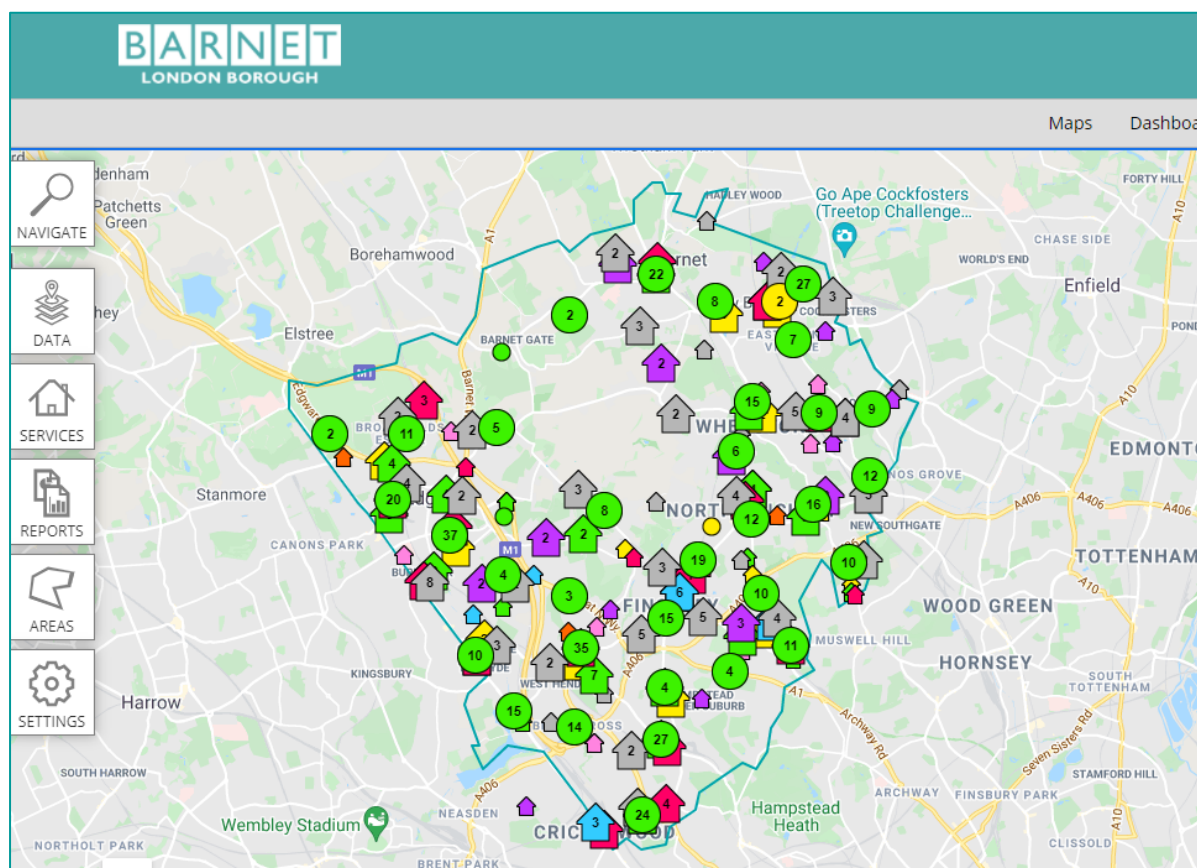
The Barnet Plan makes a commitment to place-based working; delivering projects that are tailored to a community’s needs in partnership with the residents and organisations that make up that community. It goes without saying that in order to be able to work in this way the council must first gain a thorough understanding of who and what makes up a community.

Most of the demographic data about the borough’s population has historically been collated and published on the [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#), but other datasets have sometimes been scattered around the organisation and held by the service area that works most with that information. In 2020 the council established a new Insight and Intelligence Hub: a central corporate team tasked with leading on the council’s data and insight capabilities. The team have invested in better software for analysing and presenting data. This means that statistics can be reported in live dashboards rather than static charts, making it easier to draw insight from them.

One of the most significant new products that the team has launched is the Local Insight Tool. This online resource uses mapping to display information about the borough and can enable data about places to be overlaid with details about the facilities, organisations and other assets in that location.

⁸ Changes to electoral boundaries later this year will increase the number of wards in the borough to 24.

The local insight tool



The Local Insight Tool is also a collaborative resource, meaning that partners can upload data to it and maintain sections of its database. This is particularly important in ensuring the accuracy of the data we hold about the VCFS. We will share access to the Insight Tool with partners in Barnet Together so that they can include data about their member organisations.

Primary data from residents (provided in surveys and consultations) can also be factored in. For example, showing how residents' perceptions of safety in an area might compare to the local crime and antisocial behaviour statistics. It can also provide context that can be used to better understand resident insight. For example, if residents in a certain locality report greater satisfaction with their local area, what other factors are there locally that might be contributing to this – and how might we use this information to improve satisfaction elsewhere?

Already, the council's increased insight capabilities are highlighting aspects of the borough that were not previously as well understood. It also enables a more predictive and preventative approach to identifying local need, as we can now track changes in data over time and predict where greater need might arise in future. This enhanced insight capability will therefore not only enable current and planned projects to be more place-based, but it can also be used to identify new priorities.

The Strategy team will lead on the development of a good practice guide or toolkit, setting out some common processes for effective place-based working.

4.2 Delivering for places

Many parts of the council are already working and delivering in a place-based way. The Early Help Hubs in Family Services for example provide multi-agency solutions to families and young people in their surrounding areas of the borough. Localised resident engagement is also an important part of Barnet's many public realm regeneration projects, and the borough's Town Team groups are an excellent example of place-based community participation. It is not the intention of the Barnet Plan or this strategy to duplicate any of this work. The aim instead is to build on this good practice and encourage the wider use of this approach.

Often a place-based project will be initiated by identifying needs in an area, but to begin delivering in a place-based way it is necessary to understand the assets in the local community. When we talk about assets in this context it can literally mean any aspect of a place that might be harnessed in order to benefit the community. For example:

- community halls and centres
- leisure centres
- libraries
- Parks and open spaces
- Places of worship

It can also be people themselves. This includes community organisations, including anything from established charitable services through to informal bodies such as litter-picking groups. At the smallest level, community assets can even be the particular skills held by an individual resident. An example of this are the people who cooked meals for their neighbours during the first lockdown or sewed face coverings for frontline workers.

Clearly, it's unrealistic to expect any organisation to fully understand this level of information about a community. But through providing opportunities for residents to come forward and get involved, these individual attributes can be revealed and put to use.

The table on the next page shows some of the main groups of stakeholders in a community and lists the main kinds of assets that each might be able to contribute. Generally, these assets can be grouped into four main categories:

- **Money:** direct investment and funding available to finance community benefits
- **Services:** work that can be provided by that group or individual. This includes individual skills and as well as organisational expertise
- **Insight:** data, knowledge and other local intelligence held by a group or individual
- **Spaces** – buildings, open spaces and any other physical facilities

When fully populated with this kind of data, the Community Insight Tool should make this much easier to achieve. The tool will show all the community organisations, facilities and resources that can be found in any location.

Using this insight, the next stage in place-based working is to bring all the various stakeholder groups together. The council's Town Centres team already works in this way: convening and supporting a group of local residents to consult on improvements in that particular area. Officers in the Strategy

team help to engage the relevant VCFS groups in that town centre, while also helping facilitate Crowdfund Barnet proposals and bids to other sources of funding. This work is at an early stage, but there is potential for town centre regeneration projects to be some of the best early examples of using place-based community participation to bring about local improvements.

4.21 What assets can be contributed by different groups in a place?

	Council	Residents (individuals and their informal networks)	Local VCFS	Statutory partners (Police, NHS etc)	Private sector (local businesses and employers)
Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Grants • Direct commissioning and procurement • Crowdfund Barnet platform • Capital investment sources, such as neighbourhood CIL and Section 106 • Social value contributions from procured suppliers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations to VCFS organisations, Community response Fund or Crowdfund proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to grants from trusts, foundations and other sources. • Support with bidding • Barnet Community Response Fund • Space2Grow • Barnet Giving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants • Capital investments • Social value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Value • Corporate social responsibility (CSR) investment • Donating products or services
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory and non-statutory local service delivery • Strategic coordination • Employee volunteering and other social value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal and informal volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure support • Local service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service delivery • Employee volunteering • Partnership forums and initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee volunteering and other CSR activity
Insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational insight and expertise • Insight from resident engagement and secondary data sources • Local Insight Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local knowledge • Social networks • Grassroots groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector insight • Skills and expertise • Venue Bank (venue database and booking site) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational insight and expertise • Local community insight about resident need • Service user data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational insight and expertise • Local knowledge • Customer data
Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council-managed buildings and spaces • Council-owned venues for rent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets of community value • Parks and spaces adopted by informal groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCFS-managed spaces • Community venues • Places of worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooms and venues for community use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooms and venues for community use

4. A stronger partnership with the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector

“We believe in strong, mutually respectful relationships with the statutory sector.”

Voluntary Sector Manifesto, Barnet Together 2019

5.1 The case for a stronger partnership

A defining factor of the community response to the COVID-19 pandemic was the leadership shown by the Barnet Together partnership. This provided a clear demonstration of how effective working in collaboration with the VCFS can be. The partnership took control of the VCFS response, marshalling the wider sector and managing different themed areas of work. Through each wave of the pandemic, the programme structure adapted to meet the changing situation in the borough. In many ways it has become the new way of working. Formalising a new alliance with Barnet Together is therefore as much about maintaining success as it is about trying something new.

The existing arrangements with Barnet Together are based on two contracts: one for the Volunteering Barnet service, and another to provide infrastructure support. However, a lot of the activity that the partnership has led on during the pandemic is not covered by either of these contracts. The partnership has grown into something far bigger than either the scope of its commission or the value of the contracts. Partners have also attracted additional funding made available through the pandemic response that will run out, resulting in a scaling back of the current offer.

Conversations with the sector have also identified sustainable funding as one of the three biggest challenges facing the VCFS. The contracted partners in Barnet Together have also raised this as an obstacle to them developing a sustained offer for the partnership. Even the two-year term of the current contracts has presented difficulties in establishing continuity. Therefore, the new arrangements should aim to cover a longer period of time.

Case study:**Barnet Together Food Hub**

At the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, when clinically vulnerable residents were required to shield in their homes, an emergency distribution hub was set up by the council to ensure these residents received food. The Essential Supplies Hub (ESH) began operating in April 2020 in a hangar provided by the RAF Museum. The hub provided nearly 7000 individual packages of food and hygiene products in its first four months. These were sourced from government supplies, food surplus distributors and commercial retailers.

The ESH was predominantly staffed by council officers redeployed from their usual roles but was strategically led through the Covid-19 Community Response programme - a partnership initiative between the council and Barnet Together. As the requirement to shield was relaxed the ESH adapted its offer and began to supply bulk orders of food to food banks. Meanwhile council staff were increasingly required to return to their normal duties.

In September Barnet Together submitted a proposal setting out how they could take over the running of the hub from the council as an ongoing resource for the borough's network of food banks. New premises were identified at the site of the former East Barnet Library and staff from two VCFS organisations began jointly operating from there in the Autumn of 2020.

The Barnet Food Hub receives large donations of surplus food which would otherwise have gone to landfill. Pallets are often a selection of long-life and fresh foods. The hub offers this food to foodbanks who are then able to redistribute it to their wider community, taking into account dietary requirements such as halal, kashrut and vegetarian and veganism.

In April the hub received an offer from the [World Memon Organisation](#) to deliver 2000-plus food items a month for the next 4-6 months, committing up to £30-40k to the project.

Since Barnet Together took over the Food Hub it has delivered the equivalent of 300,000 meals to residents through its network of 17 food banks. As the longer-term economic impacts of the pandemic continue to be felt across the borough this makes a vital difference to food security in our community. Also, by reducing food waste, the Hub has also avoided 520 tonnes of carbon emissions.

5.2 Co-designing the new partnership

At the time of writing, Barnet Together and Barnet Council are in progress of co-designing the new partnership model ahead of Autumn 2021, when current contracts will be replaced. Some aspects will take longer to implement, and a two-year Barnet Together delivery plan will therefore be developed as an outcome of this strategy

5.12 Proposal to develop a new funding settlement with Barnet Together

The proposed new Barnet Together arrangements will create a new increased infrastructure offer for the borough. This will require more funding than has previously been allocated to VCFS infrastructure under the current contracts. Establishing the structure will also take time and require sustainability. The aim therefore will be to provide sufficient funding for the new arrangements to be sustained over a period of five years.

In order to meet the increased cost of these arrangements the council will develop a detailed costing proposal that will include consideration as to whether external funding sources can be used to support this investment. This costing proposal will be submitted to Policy and Resources Committee for approval as part of council budgeting.

5.3 Elements of the new Barnet Together

While many of the operational details of the Barnet Together partnership are still being worked out, the main elements are agreed and set out below.

Delivering together	In the spirit of the Barnet Plan, the new arrangements with Barnet Together will be a genuinely collaborative relationship of co-design and co-delivery. Both the council and partners will work to a set of shared outcomes, with responsibilities allocated to the agency best place to undertake them.
Extending reach and representation	In order to strengthen Barnet Together's legitimacy as the voice of the sector, work will be undertaken to involve as many organisations as possible in the partnership. Groups will be able to join as members and an enhanced communications and social media presence will help messages reach less engaged parts of the sector.
Shared data and sector insight	Barnet Together partners already use a range of tools to capture monitoring and performance data for VCFS organisations. The new partnership will not only boost the numbers of groups providing this data but open it up to the council as a shared insight resource. Barnet Together will also share access to the Local Insight Tool and maintain the directory of VCFS groups and assets it holds. This will have significant benefit to the council's ability to employ place-based approaches.

<p>Funding and capacity building</p>	<p>Financial sustainability is one of the main concerns affecting the VCFS, but often this is about smaller organisations lacking the capacity to bid for funding. Barnet Together will work with groups to support their fundraising, while the Strategy team’s new Community Innovations and Funding Manager will support groups to access funding from statutory sources and council grants. Combining efforts to avail of larger external funding opportunities for the Borough as a whole.</p> <p>Training is also an important way of increasing VCFS capacity to secure funding, as well as to develop their services. Barnet Together will comprehensively map both the training needs in the sector and the capacity for member organisations to deliver training. This will also involve the council, with the potential for officers to provide skills sharing training to VCFS organisations through employee volunteering.</p>
<p>Equalities, diversity and inclusion</p>	<p>Barnet Together will appoint a new development officer to work with faith and minority ethnic communities. This will help to ensure the organisations that serve these residents play an active role in the partnership and get the support they need. This role will also support the Barnet Multi Faith Forum in delivering its objectives to represent and support the borough’s religious communities.</p>
<p>A network of themed multiagency groups</p>	<p>Some of the best outcomes of the COVID-19 Community response Programme have arisen from the various themed task groups that were set up to focus on delivering the various workstreams. Most are still in place having established themselves alongside longer-running council/VCFS forums such as those in Family Services and Adults and Health.</p> <p>The new structure for Barnet Together will see the partnership continuing to service these groups as well as developing new ones where required. This will enable coordination and infrastructure support to be communicated through the sector, and ensure the right partners are delivering together around the appropriate themes.</p>
<p>A new volunteering strategy for Barnet</p>	<p>The Volunteering Barnet service is already a key element of Barnet Together. During 2020 they oversaw a boom in resident volunteering, registering over 2,000 new volunteers onto their database and deploying over 800 into volunteering roles. Barnet needs to capitalise on this new enthusiasm and develop a strategy that will ensure volunteering is built into local plans to build skills and employability, as well as playing a key role in preventative strategies for health and wellbeing.</p>

Partners and critical friends

As in any alliance, the partner agencies involved in Barnet Together will retain their independent voice. It is important for the VCFS to be able to challenge the council where it sees fit, and to point out where we can improve. We will adhere to the commitments in the Voluntary Sector Manifesto and build a partnership of mutual respect and constructive challenge.

5.4 Working with our faith communities

“We commit ourselves, as people of many faiths living in Barnet, to work together for the common good and uniting to build a better society in our Borough, in London and in the wider world. Together we are grounded in the following values and ideals: community, personal integrity, a sense of right and wrong, learning, wisdom and love of truth, care and compassion, justice and peace, respect for one another and for the earth and its creatures.

We commit ourselves, in a spirit of friendship and co-operation, to work together alongside all who share our values and ideals in Barnet and beyond, to help bring about a better Borough, a better capital and a better world – now and for generations to come.”

The Barnet Pledge

In 2015 Barnet was one of the first local authorities in the country to sign up to the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Faith and Community’s Faith Covenant and Pledge. This document is a public commitment between the council and Barnet Multi Faith Forum (BMFF) to work together to ensure faith is considered in all our work to support the community of Barnet. This reflects the key role faith plays in Barnet, which not only boasts the largest Jewish population in the country but is home to people of many different faiths. These communities often come together in acts of interfaith collaboration and support that are a defining feature of the borough.

In recent years the faith covenant has become less well known. While the council and BMFF continue to work closely, there is much more that we can do to further the role of faith in our community projects. As with other aspects of VCFS partnership, the pandemic has shown what can be possible. Throughout the lockdowns, with places of worship closed and festivals unable to be shared with friends and family, faith leaders provided video messages of reassurance and support to their communities to reinforce messages of safety and thank them for their sacrifices. Members of our faith communities have continuously played a vital role in conveying important health messages through their networks.

Building on this good work will be part of developing the new VCFS partnership, with a new Communities and Faith Development Officer working across BMFF, Barnet Together and the Communities and Faith Steering Group. Other interfaith organisations and partnerships of faith groups will be invited to get involved too.

As well as this, the faith covenant itself will also be relaunched during 2021. The commitments in the covenant will be renewed and promoted through a public communications campaign reasserting the relationship between the council, BMFF and the borough's diverse faith communities.

Case study:

Faith leaders COVID-19 video

Just over a month into the pandemic, the borough's faith communities had already been forced to celebrate several key festivals in lockdown. In order to offer thanks for this, and to reinforce the importance of continuing to worship safely, a video was produced by Middlesex University. A script was drafted in partnership with council officers and partners in the Barnet Multifaith Forum and a group of faith leaders from across the borough's religious communities each delivered this script to camera. The footage was then edited together into a coherent interfaith message:

[The video can be viewed here.](#)

6. Enabling resident participation

6.1 Participation and engagement

A central theme of community participation is to create the conditions for an ongoing dialogue with communities. Building this into our place-based approach will enable an exchange of information and views around projects that will help to ensure a shared outcome is achieved. While both terms are often used interchangeably, we generally refer to this kind of participation as engagement.

In 2014, the council published its Consultation and Engagement Strategy (CES). This document set out our ambitions to improve the way we engage residents and involve them more in our decision-making. As with the 'ladder of participation' there are levels of engagement. In the 2014 CES these were defined as a spectrum of five categories shown in the table below. The aims for how we engage in these ways are still very much aligned with the Community Participation Strategy and have been updated for 2021.

6.11 The engagement spectrum

Insight-led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the best use of the data we gather from residents • Collating and analysing this data to gain insight into the needs, concerns and perceptions of our communities • Using this insight to lead our decision-making on how to improve the borough and open further dialogues with communities so as to involve them in this work
Informing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring our external communications are shaped by a strong understanding of our communities, so as to be as relevant and inclusive as possible • Informing our communities about issues that affect them in a timely and transparent way • Being open about our policies and processes
Consulting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Striving for best practice in consultation and ensuring consistency in our approach • Consulting residents and partners at the right time in our planning • Reporting the results of consultation back to participants and being clear about how their views were considered
Involving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving residents in testing, codesigning, and evaluating what we do • Developing place-based, participatory approaches to delivering the Barnet Plan • Making it easier for residents' views to participate in local democracy
Empowering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build residents' capacity to help deliver services, through volunteering and working with local community organisations • Nurturing grassroots resident action, and supporting informal groups to develop into community organisations

6.2 Enabling community voices to be heard

6.2.1 A greater say in place-based improvements

An aim of this strategy is to increase the opportunities for residents to be more involved in the work to improve their local area. Constitutional mechanisms already exist for this, but they can tend to be underused. Each of the borough's three parliamentary constituencies has a Residents Forum and an Area Committee, where ward members sit to consider proposals for public realm improvements. At their Residents Forum, residents of that constituency can raise local issues, present petitions and propose improvements. These are heard by elected members who can then choose to refer the issue to the Area Committee for approval, or to officers of the council to be addressed.

Despite providing residents with direct access to local government, engagement with the Residents Forums is generally low. The issues raised tend to be heavily dominated by parking and other highways issues, and this may deter residents from bringing other matters to the forums.

Discussions are already underway in the council as to how Area Committees might be developed to attract a broader range projects to approve. Meanwhile, the Consultation and Research team within Strategy have offered to work with Governance to reinvigorate the Residents Forums. Some suggestions for this include:

- Promoting the forums more widely through external communications
- Devoting some time on the agenda to presentations from council officers about proposals and new developments
- Facilitating breakout groups where soft engagement can be conducted with residents over topics relevant to local places. This will enable early engagement for place-based projects to be carried out

The council is also exploring how the partnership can strengthen the link between Residents Forums and Town Teams. Each constituency might contain several town centre forums or Town Teams, usually buzzing with ideas for how to improve their neighbourhood. Encouraging representatives from these groups to take these suggestions to their local Residents Forum would help to ensure the forums received a pipeline of diverse proposals for their agenda and could even enable some of these proposals to reach Area Committee and receive funding.

6.2.2 Ward members and resident engagement

Elected members play a vital role in resident engagement. They have the ear of their communities and are often the first to hear about local issues. Many councillors are also already involved in local VCFS groups and are aware of the voluntary activities in their areas. The new data insight available to us through Barnet Together will enable members to gain an even greater understanding of the local community sector in their wards.

Different members will have different approaches to how they engage the community as well as how available they are able to be. However, the council can support members in this role by providing training in engagement methods such as effective use of social media.

The Consultation and Research team will work with Governance to explore the potential for enabling members to strengthen their engagement role.

6.23 Engaging through partnership

Throughout the COVID-19 Community Response the council has been able to reach more residents by working in partnership with VCFS groups. Barnet's diverse population is reflected in a diverse sector, with many specialist organisations uniquely placed to support the particular needs of a community. Not only can these partner organisations better reach certain residents more easily than the council, they often enjoy a much more trusted relationship with them. Working with the VCFS therefore provides channels of communication into all corners of our community that can be utilised for engagement and participation.

In 2019, the charity Near Neighbours recently conducted a government-funded project in the borough called Real People Honest Talk⁹ where facilitated discussion sessions took place in four neighbourhood areas around the borough. This meant that participants in discussion sessions felt freer to talk honestly, and without the distraction of having officers in the room. These led to a feedback event called the Big Conversation, where groups of residents pitched some of their ideas to council decision makers at the Town Hall. This event was the first time council staff had been involved in the process, something that Near Neighbours were keen to ensure.

This project showed the how VCFS partners are sometime better placed to conduct resident engagement than the council. Making more of this role for the sector will be something that is explored in designing the new Barnet Together alliance.

⁹ <https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/real-people-honest-talk>

Case study:**Community Health Champions**

Health Champions are Barnet residents who help to improve the health and wellbeing of their families, communities or workplaces. The council's Public Health, NHS colleagues and other key partners provide regular updates to the champions. This is clear, digestible information about the pandemic, the vaccination programme and any other aspect of Covid so that they can help their community make sense of the latest government guidelines and health information.

The programme is delivered by Groundwork London. Since it launched in November 2020, 250 residents have joined. One of the key objectives of the programme is to help spread positive health and safety messages to the borough's diverse communities. Over 30% of current health champions are from black and minority ethnic groups, and overall they represent a broad cross section of the borough's demographics and geography.

Health Champions contribute to health outcomes in various ways that range from sharing information, to more active involvement which includes providing insight into community needs and working in collaboration to help address these. Champions have been instrumental in dispelling misinformation about vaccination and have reaching isolated and hard to reach groups through faith organisations, local shops, brownies and scouts, mums' groups and more.

Current Health Champions have highlighted how much they value receiving information about the pandemic from a "trusted source". Others have said they now "feel better informed and more confident to have conversations with people about vaccination". Young Champions reported that since joining the programme they feel better connected to their community.

Discussions are now underway as to how we can build on the programme as we move out of the pandemic.

Anyone aged 16 and over who lives, works or studies in Barnet can sign up as a Health Champion by emailing barnethealthchampions@groundwork.org.uk

6.24 Gathering robust resident insight

The Consultation and Engagement Strategy will explore the tools and methods for engaging residents in more detail, and a lot of what this strategy has so far discussed have been the softer, less formal types of dialogue. It is important however, that decisions are based on reliable and robust insight, and this includes the insight we gather from residents. This means the council should continue to use statistically sampled user research where possible.

Often, council consultations are conducted through an open online survey. While this can be useful for increasing the numbers of residents who engage in the process or to gain feedback from residents that are already engaged in the issue, it provides no control over which types of residents

we are hearing from. In some cases, the survey sample may even become skewed towards a particular group, making the results unrepresentative of the whole community.

Until 2018 the council commissioned a Citizens' Panel. This was a statistically representative sample of 2000 residents. It provided a ready-made source of robust resident insight. While there is a cost to maintaining a panel like this, the benefits are significant. This is especially true for consultations, where it is essential to ensure a fair process and to base a decision on reliable insight. The council will therefore consider reinstating the Citizen's Panel.

Another source of statistically robust resident insight is the Resident Perception Survey (RPS). This is the council's regular borough-wide survey of residents where quantitative data is collected to track satisfaction with our services. While necessarily high-level in its detail, the RPS provides a solid foundation of resident insight to measure performance of our services and the perception that the community has of us as a council.

The frequency of the RPS has been intermittent in recent years, with gaps between surveys making it difficult to track indicators. The council will therefore commit to conducting a wave of the RPS at least annually, or biannually with a larger sized sample.

6.3 Active participation – volunteering in Barnet

6.31 Building on the COVID-19 volunteering boom

The COVID-19 pandemic has inspired huge numbers of residents to volunteer in their communities. This began to happen at the outset of the pandemic, and much of this early volunteering was informal, hyper-local and outside of our existing systems. For a while, the willingness of residents to help outnumbered the opportunities available for them to do so.

As the community response began to mobilise however, new volunteer roles came onstream and residents were deployed in a range of roles with VCFS organisations, the council and NHS. After the first lockdown eased and some people returned to work, we did anticipate a drop in volunteer numbers, but this has not been the case. New registrations have grown steadily over the year, and the roll out of the vaccination programme has created a further boom in volunteering.

There has also been a growing number of residents volunteering to clear litter from their parks and neighbourhoods. This interest in litter-picking pre-dates the pandemic and has continued to grow in popularity throughout 2020 and into this year. The council are now working with some of these litter-picking groups to help them develop their volunteering offer into other environmental activities.

Generally speaking, if people volunteer once they are more likely to repeat the experience. And a recent survey by Volunteering Barnet saw 96% of our current cohort say they would volunteer again. It is to be hoped therefore that this increased willingness among residents to volunteer will have longevity beyond the current crisis.

As part of the shaping of the new Barnet Together alliance, Volunteering Barnet will work with council to develop a volunteering strategy for the borough. This will include:

- Establishing volunteering as an established part of the landscape in the borough
- Working with the council and other local employers to improve the use of volunteers in their organisations, and encourage employee volunteering
- Developing systems for volunteer accreditation and reward
- Nurturing grassroots community participation and supporting informal groups to organise and attract funding

Case study:

Community litter-picking groups

Over the last two years there has been a steady increase in resident litter-picking groups. Currently there are around 140 of these working to help cleanse parks and open spaces across the borough. The council provides equipment and safety advice and organises for Streetscene teams to collect the bags of waste they fill during each litter-pick. Some of the more established groups are now looking to see what other environmental volunteering they could do in their local areas. Elsewhere numbers of Friends of Parks groups and community food growers are also increasing, providing fertile grassroots of environmental participation in the borough.

One of the borough's newest litter-picking groups looks after a stretch of the Dollis Brook and is run by a local Rabbi. He sees litter picking as the first stage in a greater engagement for residents with the ecology of their local river.

"Litter-picking is where we start and will be a continuing necessity, but already we have two teachers who have offered to help us learn and think, based on their specialisms of geography, botany and biology. We have enthusiastic birders, also. One of the teachers has also suggested we may be able to have the help of sixth-formers testing the health of the water. All this will help us become more aware of the life of the Brook and the life it supports- just as it has supported many of us during lockdown."

7. Unlocking resources for the community

“If we are to translate the desire for influence into genuine participation by communities to address the challenge of rising demand, they need to be convinced that their engagement is meaningful and given powerful tools to generate the necessary change. Nothing convinces a sceptical community of its genuine influence like handing over control of money.”

The Community Paradigm, NLGN 2019¹⁰

7.1 Channelling resources into the community

7.12 Potential for wider use of development income

Legislation enables local authorities to charge money from new developments that are built within their jurisdiction. Known as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) this is calculated on the floorspace of the new buildings and is designed to offset the impacts of the development to the local area. A proportion of this money can be put towards neighbourhood infrastructure projects.

The criteria for how CIL can be applied are fairly flexible, and local authorities use it in a variety of ways. Currently, Barnet is reviewing its own processes and uses for CIL, but it potentially presents excellent opportunities as a lever to increase community participation in place-based projects. Residents are far more likely to participate in a project if they know there is a budget they can influence.

Section 106 is another mechanism whereby the proceeds from planning and development in the built environment can be used to fund community outcomes. The potential uses of Section 106 money are more limited than CIL, but nonetheless Barnet has already funded a number of community projects with this resource. As an outcome of this strategy, the council will look at further developing how we use both of these funding sources.

Case study:**Community projects funded through Section 106****West Hendon Community Hub**

The regeneration of the West Hendon estate has generated funding through Section 106 that has been invested directly into the local community. Since 2017, the West Hendon Community Hub has organised fun days and outings for residents as well as providing a central location for the delivery of activities and services. These include health and wellbeing activities such as yoga, massage, pedicure and pain clinics. There is also a programme of training opportunities to boost residents' employability, delivered in partnership with Barnet and Southgate College. In the last year, this training programme has benefited 219 residents, with qualifications offered in subjects such as security, social care, childcare and business administration. Last year a film making bootcamp taught residents how to plan and execute a video project, covering script writing, editing and filming. Six participants took part in [producing a short film](#).

Metropolitan Thames Valley, the housing association working at West Hendon has also used the Community Hub as a foodbank for the local community and the wider ward. They also put in a successful joint bid with the council for a COVID-19 recovery grant from the Mayor of London. This enabled the purchase of laptops, tablets and safety signage.

Dollis Valley Estate

Section 106 funding generated by the Dollis Valley Regeneration Scheme has funded a health and fitness programme provided by a local social enterprise: No.1 Fitness Academy. It also delivered employability support to young residents supporting them into apprenticeships and other opportunities. Further support for unemployed residents is planned through the introduction of a 'guaranteed interview' programme for local railway and rail construction jobs.

7.22 Community Innovation Fund

One of the ways the council is helping to channel funding into the VCFS is through its new Community Innovation Fund. The fund was launched in early 2021 by the council and the Barnet Integrated Care Partnership (ICP). The ICP is made up of the council's Adults and Health directorate, as well as NHS partners from local acute health trusts and the North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). All of the member organisations have contributed towards the funding pot and agreed the priorities for projects it will fund. The funders were keen to differentiate the CIF from other grant schemes. It therefore has an emphasis on innovative solutions rather than ongoing sustainability funding.

The fund will support proposals for preventative innovations in adult health and wellbeing that are designed to help counteract the impacts of the pandemic.

The priorities for the first round were:

- Support for unpaid carers
- Tackling digital exclusion

- Support for residents who have lost or are at risk of losing employment
- Combating loss of mobility in older residents

The first round was held in March 2021 and received 37 applications that were evenly spread across the four priorities. 14 of these applications were put forward for assessment by the funding panel and seven were successfully funded. The total award in the first round was £126,000.

In order to provide ongoing management of the fund, the council created a new post of Community Innovations and Funding Manager. This post will also work across the funding landscape within the council and work with VCFS partners to enable them to access the CIF and other sources of funding.

The seven projects funded in the first round of the CIF

Organisation	Summary of the project
Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee	The project aims to develop an online Carers Forum for unpaid carers of adults with learning disabilities living in Barnet.
Community Focus Inclusive Arts	Using art to improve the well-being of disadvantaged residents targeted at over 55 years. The project will use arts to develop residents' digital skills, as well as digital support peer networks.
Barnet Citizens Advice	The programme will create a CAB adviser to provide support to enable those who are self-employed to stay in business, such as advice on business debt, and to those currently unemployed to set up a business.
Twining Enterprise	The programme will provide four Employment Specialists to support 100 clients per year with mental health problems to overcome their challenges and secure sustained employment.
The Arts Depot Trust Limited	A falls prevention dance and movement outreach programme designed by dance artists specialists and an NHS Frailty Lead Physiotherapist.
Community Network Group CIC	Support programme for over 40 Farsi speaking, isolated elderly people with weekly exercise sessions, emotional wellbeing workshops and digital inclusion lessons.
Stonegrove Community Trust	Funding for a Postural Stability Instructor to work within rehab services in the NHS, delivering two classes per week to help people to regain lost mobility.

7.23 Crowdfund Barnet

The council's crowdfunding platform, CrowdFund Barnet is now in its fourth year and in this time, it has enabled 20 community projects to fundraise a combined total of over £600,000.

Crowdfunding is a particularly useful tool for involving residents in place-based projects. Groups of residents or individuals can propose an idea and publicly fundraise for it in a way that might not normally be available to them if they are not a constituted charity. However, formal VCFS groups are also welcome to use the platform too.

Projects that meet the council's priorities and are well-supported by donations can be boosted with a pledge from the council of up to £5,000.

Recently the number of projects proposed through Crowdfund has been fairly small. While the pandemic has certainly had an impact on this, there remains potential to do much more with the platform.

Case study:

Crowdfund Barnet success stories

An outdoor classroom for GROW

Crowdfunded in 2019, this project transformed an empty field in Barnet into a thriving working farm to teach children and the local community about food, nutrition and the environment. The farm grows fresh fruit and vegetables and runs weekly sessions with students on food, nutrition, yoga and more. GROW is an educational programme that not only introduces children to healthier eating but helps with their well-being too.

Sowing Stitches

Also crowdfunded in 2019, Sowing Stitches is a project that converted an unused shop space into a centre providing tailoring training to local residents from disadvantaged backgrounds. This project is community-led and not only empowers local people but reduces unemployment, landfill and provides sustainable skills. Confidence building and promoting friendship is key to Sowing Stitches and helps with community cohesion in Barnet.

7.24 Social Value

The Social Value Act 2012 obliges public bodies to consider how the services or products they procure could benefit their local area. It enables councils to choose suppliers based on the contribution to local social value that they offer to make.

In order to maximise the opportunities that the Act provides, the council is developing a new Social Value Policy. This will propose raising the percentage that social value makes up in the quality component of a supplier's quote. In practice this means that there will be more resources available through social value to put towards community use.

The concept of social value can be less tangible than direct financial support and is often easiest to measure through its impact and outcomes. In order to make it more possible to quantify, most councils develop a social value toolkit based around a 'menu' of social value themes, outcomes and measures (TOMs). This calculates a financial value for each social value activity listed. A supplier can therefore select a type of activity from this menu that they commit to providing as an outcome of their contract. The council can then calculate the financial value of these contributions.

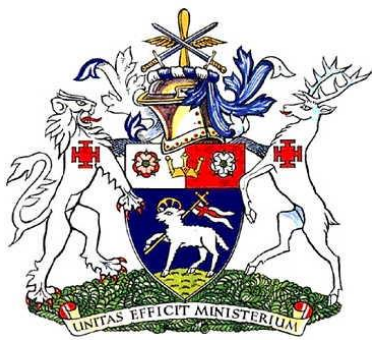
The Strategy team's Community Innovations and Funding Manager will work with partners across the council and VCFS to develop a menu of TOMs for Barnet. This will be monitored and kept under review to ensure it continues to reflect the priorities in our communities.

7.25 Capacity building in the VCFS

Increasing the capacity of local VCFS organisations to fundraise is a key role of our infrastructure partners Barnet Together. The partnership already runs a funding scheme of its own that was first set up as an emergency fundraising page at the start of the pandemic. The Community Response Fund was established to provide small grants to organisations supporting residents affected by COVID-19. One of the tasks of the new Barnet Together alliance will be to plan how this fund can be developed into an ongoing resource for the sector. It will also look at how it works with existing funds the partnership facilitates such as the Space2Grow fund for organisations supporting children and young people.

A new Community Fundraising post will also form part of the partnership's new staffing structure, enabling more direct support to be provided to groups. The post will also engage other local funders such as Barnet Giving and help increase take up of their grants

Training is also an important way of increasing VCFS capacity to secure funding, as well as to develop their services. Barnet Together will comprehensively map both the training needs in the sector and the capacity for member organisations to deliver training. This will also involve the council, with the potential for officers to provide skills sharing training to VCFS organisations through employee volunteering.



Community Leadership and Libraries Committee

AGENDA ITEM 8

9 June 2021

Title	Governance Review – Community Safety
Report of	Cllr Reuben Thompstone, Chairman, Community Leadership and Libraries Committee
Wards	All
Status	All
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A – Community Safety Governance Review
Officer Contact Details	Governance Officer: Tracy.Scollin@barnet.gov.uk , Tel 020 8359 2315 Head of Governance: Andrew.Charlwood@barnet.gov.uk , Tel 020 8359 2014

Summary

Community Safety functions transferred from the Environment Directorate to the Assurance Directorate in November 2019 for an interim period. In November 2019 responsibility for Community Safety transferred from the Executive Director of Environment to the Director of Assurance on an interim basis. Following the successful transfer of staff and responsibilities between the directorates over the interim period, a further review has taken place and the following changes to the Community Safety team have now been made on a permanent basis;

Assurance, Community Safety

Responsibilities as outlined the Community Safety Accreditation scheme of Powers including:

- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Environmental Crime
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Prevent Agenda (including Hate Crime)
- CCTV
- Covid -19 Enforcement

Family Services, new areas of responsibility

- Domestic violence (DV)
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG);
- Reduced Offending (RO)
- Integrated Offender Management (IOM)
- Violence, Vulnerability & Exploitation (VVE)

The Schemes of Delegation of the Director of Assurance and Executive Director of Children's Services will be amended accordingly.

In addition, officers have undertaken a review into governance arrangements relating to crime and disorder and community safety. This report sets out the where responsibility for community safety and enforcement functions sit within the Council and provides details of the governance review and changes and improvements to be implemented.

Officers Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 1. Note the distribution of Community Safety functions across the Council; and**
- 2. Note and provide comments on the Community Safety Governance Review (Appendix A).**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 A Community Safety Governance Review was initiated by the Director of Assurance to ensure that there was clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the various governance bodies which have responsibility for elements of community safety namely: Community Leadership & Libraries Committee; Environment Committee; and Safer Communities Partnership Board. It also sought to provide assurance that all the council's statutory obligations in relation to crime and disorder and community safety were being met and that our arrangements were consistent with best practice.

1.2 In addition, the Committee are requested to note that following the interim transfer of community safety functions from the Environment Directorate to the Assurance Directorate in November 2019 Following the successful transfer of staff and responsibilities between the directorates over the interim period, a further review has taken place and the following changes to the Community Safety team have now been made on a permanent basis;

1.2.1 Assurance - Community Safety

Responsibilities as outlined the Community Safety Accreditation scheme of Powers including:

- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Environmental Crime
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Prevent Agenda (including Hate Crime)
- CCTV
- Covid -19 Enforcement

1.2.2 Family Services - transfer of services and new areas of responsibility

- Domestic violence (DV)

- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG);
- Reduced Offending (RO)
- Integrated Offender Management (IOM)
- Violence, Vulnerability & Exploitation (VVE)

1.3 Details of the Community Safety Governance review and actions are set out in Appendix A. The review covered the following areas:

- Legal Framework
- Safer Communities Partnership Board – overview of responsibilities, membership, Safer Communities Strategy, operational sub-groups and promotional work
- Community Leadership & Libraries Committee – overview of responsibilities and membership
- Benchmarking – committee/scrutiny arrangements, partnership arrangements and other information
- Actions progressed

1.4 In relation to the actions progressed as detailed in Appendix A, the Committee are requested to note that the terms of reference of the Community Leadership & Libraries Committee and the Environment Committee have been updated to provide clarity on the reporting of community safety and enforcement issues across the two committees. Extracts from the updated terms of reference approved at Annual Council on 25 May 2021 are as follows with changes in bold underlined:

1.4.1 Environment Committee:

(1) Responsibility for all borough-wide or cross-constituency matters relating to the street scene including, parking, road safety, lighting, street cleaning, **littering, fly-tipping, fly-posting, graffiti**, transport, waste, waterways, refuse, recycling, allotments, parks, trees, crematoria and mortuary, trading standards and environmental health.

1.4.2 Community Leadership & Libraries Committee:

(1) Responsibility for libraries, culture, civic events, the mayoralty, **voluntary, community and faith sector strategy and engagement**, community safety, **environmental crime (excluding littering, fly-tipping, fly-posting and graffiti)**, registration and nationality service, **food security and Covid-19 enforcement**.

(2) **To act as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006 (Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny Regulations) 2009**

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To ensure that the Council is meeting its statutory obligations in relation to the reporting of community safety, crime and disorder scrutiny and enforcement across the Council's governance bodies.

2.2 To ensure clarity in the terms of reference of committees regarding which matters are reported to which governance body and that there is minimal duplication and clarity in reporting lines.

- 2.3 To develop and enhance the Member Development Programme so that all Members, but particularly those with responsibilities for or an interest in crime and disorder and community safety, have the right knowledge, skills and experience to be effective committee members and community leaders.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The Council could have opted to not review our current arrangements. However, this is not recommended as it is best practice to undertake regular reviews of governance arrangements and organisational structures to ensure that committees and boards are effective, and that services are managed by the most appropriate directorates/service areas.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Actions progressed are as set out in Appendix A.
- 4.2 Updated terms of reference have been reported to Annual Council and an updated Constitution has been published online:
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD334&ID=334&RPID=24483800>
- 4.3 A module has been added to the Member Development Programme on community safety which will be rolled-out in due course.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The transfer of services and community safety governance review supports the delivery of the following Barnet Plan 2021 – 2025 (Corporate Plan) priority:

Clean, safe and well run: a place where our streets are clean and antisocial behaviour is dealt with so residents feel safe. Providing good quality, customer friendly services in all that we do including: Better environmental services and a cleaner borough; and Address issues of anti-social behaviour such as frauds, fly-tipping, noise nuisance and parking

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

- 5.2.1 None in the context of this report; services provided and service costs after transfer are expected to remain the same as before transfer and all relevant budgets will transfer with them.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4 Legal implications are as set out in Appendix A.

5.5 Constitution references are as set out in section 1.4,

5.6 **Insight**

5.6.1 N/A.

5.7 **Social Value**

5.7.1 N/A

5.8 **Risk Management**

5.8.1 N/A

5.9 **Equalities and Diversity**

5.9.1 N/A in the context of this report

5.10 **Corporate Parenting**

5.10.1 N/A in the context of this report.

5.11 **Consultation and Engagement**

5.11.1 N/A

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Council Constitution, Article 7, Committees, Partnership Boards and Working Groups:
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD334&ID=334&RPID=24483825>

6.2 Annual Council, 25 May 2021, Report of the Constitution & General Purposes Committee, Constitution Review:
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=10239>

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix A - Community Safety Governance Review

Legal Framework

The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act (Sect 115) - statutory duty on responsible authorities to have a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to oversee partnership work and develop strategies to reduce crime. (Barnet: Safer Communities Partnership Board)

The Police and Justice Act 2006, (Part 3) and Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regs 2009 made under that Act - requires every local authority to have a 'crime and disorder committee' to review or scrutinise decisions and actions by responsible authorities in connection with their crime and disorder functions, meeting at least once every 12 months. (Barnet: Community Leadership and Libraries Committee). Most often the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is scrutinised under these powers.

Both Acts provide the legal power for sharing information between agencies for the purposes of community safety.

Safer Communities Partnership Board

The SCPB operates within the constitutional requirements of Council, the Metropolitan Police and other partner agencies, who ensure that the Board's approaches to policy formulation and resource allocation are consistent with those of the agencies concerned. The Council and the Police are the Strategic Authorities and responsible for taking the leading role. Barnet SCPB is an unincorporated body and therefore it does not have a legal personality. Its members work collectively within their own individual legal frameworks.

Meetings are held quarterly and a quorum comprises four members provided this consists of:

- Chairman (Barnet Councillor)
- Vice Chairman (Metropolitan Police)
- Plus at least one other representative each of the Council and the Metropolitan Police.

Other current partners are:

- London Probation Trust
- National Probation Service
- London Fire Brigade
- Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group
- MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime)
- Barnet Safer Neighbourhood Board
- Middlesex University
- North West London Magistrates' Court

Appendix A - Community Safety Governance Review

- Community Barnet
- Victim Support, North London Division
- Department for Work and Pensions

Partnership Objectives

The Partnership work collectively to deliver the Safer Communities Strategy (<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s22534/Appendix%201%20-%20Barnet%20Community%20Safety%20Strategy%202015-2020.pdf>) which has the following outcomes:

1. Barnet residents and businesses are confident that the police and council respond to crime and ASB in their area
2. Residents and businesses feel confident that the police and council respond to crime and ASB in their area.
3. Residents and businesses are engaged and informed about community safety and the action we have taken in their area.
4. Victims of Domestic Violence and Hate Crime are confident in reporting incidents and the Partnership intervenes to prevent repeat victimisation.
5. The Partnership will work to reduce Serious Youth Violence with a focus on young people as victims and offenders.
6. Sustained reductions in re-offending.
7. Sustained reductions Burglary and other high-volume crime types, such as: Violence with Injury, Robbery, Theft of Motor Vehicle, Theft from Motor Vehicle, Theft from the person, Criminal damage.

The Board has several operational sub-groups:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Delivery Group
- Multi-Agency Burglary Reduction Group
- Reducing Re-offending Delivery Group
- Domestic Violence and Violence against Women and Girls Delivery
- Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing and Gangs Strategic Sub-Group

Promotional Work

The Board previously had a dedicated Communication's Officer. Some of the evidence of campaigns, publicity etc, can be seen here:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXMkF1LmXgk>
- <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/news/Could-you-be-a-Hate-Crime-Reporting-Champion--.html>
- <http://www.owl.co.uk/>

Appendix A - Community Safety Governance Review

Community Leadership and Libraries Committee:

The Committee has responsibility for:-

1. Libraries, culture, civic events, the mayoralty, voluntary, community and faith sector strategy and engagement, community safety, environmental crime (excluding littering, fly-tipping, fly-posting and graffiti), registration and nationality service, food security and Covid-19 enforcement.
2. To act as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006 (Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny Regulations) 2009
3. To receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

Meets four times a year. Politically proportionate.

Appendix A - Community Safety Governance Review

Benchmarking – Committees Responsible for Community Safety, Scrutiny Arrangements and Partnerships

Benchmarking has been carried out with some other London Boroughs and with some authorities outside of London. The table below is a cross section of the feedback from some of the Boroughs and sets out the status of the types of partnership and overview and scrutiny arrangements that exist.

Local Authority	Formal Scrutiny Function (Police and Justice Act 2006 (Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009)	Formal Partnership Arrangements (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership – 1998 Crime and Disorder Act)	Other Boards/Information
Islington	<p>Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Crime and Disorder report • Responsible for crime and disorder scrutiny • Questions to Borough Commander and Community Safety Portfolio holder in Cabinet • Quarterly reports on community safety performance, also calling in officers to answer questions on specific topics. • Task and Finish Group, calls for action. 	<p>Safer Islington Partnership Strategic Board</p> <p>Meets 5x per year Council, police, probation, health, fire service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes Safer Neighbourhood Board, mental health trust, Adult and Children’s Safeguarding Board rep, TfL – Barnet currently doesn’t. • Chaired by Exec Member for Community Safety (Hate crime, DV, victims’ public protection) • Coronavirus response • Receives performance reports – assesses success and produces action plan • Hold each other to account for delivery 	<p>4 themes aligned with annual strategic assessment: VAWG, ASB, youth crime, offender management, prevent. Each has dedicated subgroup (if required).</p> <p>Streamlined in May 2017 to reduce duplication/resource as they had too many subgroups with up to 20 meetings of these per year.</p> <p>Safer Neighbourhood Panels in each Ward feed into the Safer Neighbourhood Board.</p>

Appendix A - Community Safety Governance Review

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly reviewed by Policy & Performance Scrutiny Committee • There are two other important community groups involved in community safety issues who are represented at the SNB – the Hate Crime Forum and the Stop & Search Community Monitoring Group. Islington Police also sometimes convenes an Independent Advisory Group comprising community members in the case of a critical incident. 	
Harrow	<p>Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Looks at crime data to give views.</p>	<p>Safer Harrow Group</p> <p>Council, police, probation, health, fire service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives quarterly crime report and stats from police • Safer Neighbourhood Board generally holds it to account • Identify crime patterns and trends through the production of the annual strategic assessment and through regular analysis of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour 	<p>Portfolio holder is a member of the Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB)– formal way to address issues.</p> <p>Some SNBs have Whatsapp groups in community, some with Ward Members joining and Champions. Offers community intelligence and community led protection.</p> <p>It is recommended that Members attend Safer Neighbourhood Panel meetings, which have most current data for each street. Each Ward has an SNP.</p> <p>May establish subgroups</p>

Appendix A - Community Safety Governance Review

<p>Enfield</p>		<p>Safer and Stronger Communities Board Meets bi-monthly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure clear engagement and cross-representation with key partnerships such as Health and Wellbeing and the Safeguarding boards. • maintain clear and positive relationships with other related partnerships, forums and groups. • have a communications plan in place to publicise its work and encourage greater community confidence and engagement. 	
<p>Newham</p>	<p>Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Commission (sits under Overview and Scrutiny Committee)</p>	<p>Community Safety Partnership Council, police, probation, health, fire service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Strategy every 3 years • Oversee how the agencies come together and make joint decisions on crime reduction • Manages crime-related grant funding • Director of Environment and Sustainable Transport sits on Board • Director of CCG on Board 	<p>Safer Neighbourhood Board rep sits on CSP</p>

Appendix A - Community Safety Governance Review

<p>Brent</p>	<p>Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee: community safety, corporate policy, partnerships and resources, environmental policy, transport and highways</p> <p>Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny covers Adults, Children's, Health, Housing</p>	<p>Safer Brent Partnership</p> <p>Council, police, probation, health, fire service and clinical commissioning group</p> <p>produces Safer Brent Strategy based on Strategic Assessment</p>	<p>Works with Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards and Health and Wellbeing Boards.</p>
<p>Sandwell</p>	<p>Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board</p> <p>Crime and ASB, housing, leisure and culture, vol sector</p> <p>List of issues included in work programme for year ahead, in consultation with the relevant partners on the Community Safety Partnership, and reflecting local community need.</p> <p>Should look at a community safety matters at least once a year.</p>	<p>Safer Sandwell Partnership</p> <p>Chaired by Borough Commander</p> <p>Joint working with HWBB, Safeguarding Adults and Children's Boards – shared Partnership Protocol</p> <p>They also hold each other to account and encourage constructive challenge.</p> <p>Each of the Partnerships will make sure that their Board and supporting sub-groups work effectively together to deliver strategic priorities and those cross-cutting issues are addressed by providing effective leadership, strong direction, challenging and/or supporting when necessary.</p> <p>Each of partnership chairs and lead officers meet quarterly</p>	<p>Small review groups can be set up; members have a specific remit to scrutinise crime and disorder issues to enable them to specialise on those issues and provide effective scrutiny, where partners would rather not use a formal committee for the discussion of all community safety issues.</p>

Appendix A - Community Safety Governance Review

		Work programmes developed by the Chairs Boards are open to scrutiny by all agencies and, the council's scrutiny boards.	
Havering	<p>Crime and Disorder Sub-Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutinises the Council's joint working with the police and other public agencies. • Meets 4x a year • Coronavirus response 	<p>Havering Community Safety Partnership</p> <p>Assesses priorities set out in the partnership plan and recommends any changes.</p>	<p>Subgroups with strong links to strategic themes:</p> <p>ASB and Community MARAC DV perpetrators panel VAWG Strategic Group Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Group</p>

Following the review, the following actions have been progressed:

1. Consider SCPB having a dedicated Communications lead to enable work and outcomes to be publicised and promoted
2. Circulating agendas and minutes of SCPB to the Opposition Spokesperson for Community Safety to improve awareness of crime and disorder and community safety issues
3. Improved sharing of information between SCPB and the CLLC to increase awareness crime and disorder and community safety issues across both bodies
4. Development of comprehensive work programmes for SCPB and the CLLC to ensure timely reporting of issues to both bodies and minimise duplication
5. Request that SCPB partners provide substitutes for the Board to ensure attendance at each meeting
6. Add crime and disorder / community safety onto the Member Development Programme to ensure that Members have clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the various governance bodies and organisations to ensure the correct routing of issues.
7. Updated terms of reference of CLLC and Environment Committee to ensure clarity around reporting of enforcement and community safety issues to theme committees.
8. Review forward plans alongside updated terms of reference for CLLC, SCPB and Environment Committee and update forward plans as required.

***DRAFT* Community Leadership
and Libraries Committee
Work Programme
2021/22**

Contact: Tracy Scollin Tel 020 8359 2315 tracy.scollin@barnet.gov.uk

Title of Report	Overview of decision	Report Of (<i>officer</i>)	Issue Type (Non key/Key/Urgent)
9 June 2021			
Community Participation Strategy	Update to Barnet's Community Participation Strategy, for approval	Deputy Head of Strategy and Engagement	Non-key
Community Safety Governance Review	Summary of Community Safety Governance Review	Director of Assurance	Non-key
6 October 2021			
Q1 2021/22 Delivery Plan Performance Report	Overview of delivery against committee priorities as linked to the Barnet Plan 2019-24	Head of Programmes, Performance and Risk	Non-key
26th January 2022			
Q2 2021/22 Delivery Plan Performance Report	Overview of delivery against committee priorities as linked to the Barnet Plan 2019-24	Head of Programmes, Performance and Risk	Non-key
Business Planning	Review and approval for the Medium Term Financial Strategy for referral to Policy & Resources committee	Director of Assurance	Key

Title of Report	Overview of decision	Report Of (<i>officer</i>)	Issue Type (Non key/Key/Urgent)
10 March 2022			
Q3 2021/22 Delivery Plan Performance Report	Overview of delivery against committee priorities as linked to the Barnet Plan 2019-24	Head of Programmes, Performance and Risk	Non-key
June/July 2022			
Q4 2021/22 Delivery Plan Performance Report	Overview of delivery against committee priorities as linked to the Barnet Plan 2019-24	Head of Programmes, Performance and Risk	Non-key
<i>Please note that the service related business items for this forward plan is under review in accordance with revised terms of reference for CLLC and will update in due course</i>			
Re-provision of Hendon Library and Local Studies Centre, and Relocation of School Libraries Resource Service	TBC	Head of Libraries Service	Non-key

This page is intentionally left blank