

MEETING

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE AND TIME

TUESDAY 10TH JUNE, 2014

AT 7.00 PM

VENUE

HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, NW4 4BG

TO: MEMBERS OF POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE (Quorum 3)

Chairman: Councillor Richard Cornelius
Vice Chairman: Councillor Daniel Thomas

Councillors

	Paul Edwards	Alison Moore
	Anthony Finn	Alon Or-Bach
Dean Cohen	Ross Houston	Sachin Rajput
Tom Davey	David Longstaff	Barry Rawlings

Substitute Members

Councillor Mark Shooter	Councillor Melvin Cohen	Councillor Geof Cooke
Councillor Reuben Thompstone	Councillor Alan Schneiderman	

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

Andrew Nathan – Head of Governance

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Media Relations contact: Sue Cocker 020 8359 7039

ASSURANCE GROUP

ORDER OF BUSINESS

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	AGENDA ITEM 5
	<p>Policy and Resources Committee</p> <p>10 June 2014</p>
Title	Petition requesting free 30 minutes parking to save our high street
Report of	Business Governance
Wards	All
Status	Public
Enclosures	N/A
Officer Contact Details	Kirstin Lambert, kirstin.lambert@barnet.gov.uk . 020 8359 2177

Summary
This report provides Members with information relating to a petition signed by 2,000 residents submitted to the Council on a request for free 30 minutes parking to save the local high street.

Recommendations
<p>1. That the Committee consider the petition received by the Council in relation to requesting free 30 minutes parking to save our high street and indicate what action is to be taken, in accordance with the options outlined in paragraph 5.3.3.5</p>

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 In April 2014 a petition was received by the Council from Ms Loretta Paterson requesting 'Free 30 minutes parking to save our High Street'. On 23 May the number of signatures reached 2,000, which is the threshold for referral to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Constitution provides for the Policy and Resources Committee to consider the petition, and take action as per the options outlined in paragraph 11.3.3.5 to this report.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 None.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Post decision implementation will depend on the decision taken by the committee, as per the options outlined in paragraph 5.3.3.5 of this report.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Policy and Resources Committee must ensure that its consideration of petitions is reflective of the Council's priorities.

- 5.1.2 The three priority outcomes set out in the 2013-16 Corporate Plan are: -

- Promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough
- Support families and individuals that need it – promoting independence, learning and well-being
- Improve the satisfaction of residents and businesses with the London borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study

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

- 5.2.1 None in the context of this report.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 Council Constitution, Annex A to Responsibility for Functions sets out the Terms of Reference of the Policy and Resources Committee.

5.3.2 Council Constitution, Public Participation Procedure Rules – paragraph 6.9 provides that “petitions which receive 2,000 signatures and over but less than 7,000 will be considered by the next available meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee. Petitions are required to be received 15 days before the Committee meeting and only one petition will normally be heard per meeting. The Chairman of Policy and Resources will request that the relevant Chief Officer and Chairman of the relevant Committee attend the meeting to be called to give account with regard to the issue raised.”

5.3.3 The procedure to be followed at the meeting and the actions available to the Committee are set out below:

5.3.3.1 Lead Petitioner is given five minutes to present the petition;

5.3.3.2 Committee Members have an opportunity to ask questions of the Lead Petitioner;

5.3.3.3 Chief Officer and Chairman of the relevant Committee respond to the issues raised in the petition;

5.3.3.4 Committee Members ask questions of the Chief Officer and relevant Committee Chairman;

5.3.3.5 Committee will then consider the issues raised and the responses received and take one of the following actions:

- Take no action
- Note the petition
- Make representations to the relevant Chief Officer and relevant Committee Chairman on the issue(s) and a recommended course of action. Such representation requires a formal response to the Chairman of Policy and Resources and Lead petitioner within 20 working days.
- Instruct an officer to prepare a report for a future meeting of the Committee on the issue(s) raised.
- Commission a Task and finish Group or Panel to consider the issue(s)

5.4 Risk Management

5.4.1 Failure to deal with petitions received from members of the public in a timely way and in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Constitution

carries a reputational risk for the authority.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

5.5.1 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”), the council has a legislative duty 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 those with a protected characteristic and those without; and promoting good relations between those with protected characteristics and those without. The ‘protected characteristics’ are age, race, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The ‘protected characteristics’ also include marriage and civil partnership, with regard to eliminating discrimination.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

5.6.1 None, in the context of this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1.1 None, in the context of this report.

	<p align="center">Policy and Resources Committee</p> <p align="center">10 June 2014</p>
<p align="center">Title</p>	<p>Finance and Business Planning – Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/16 to 2019/20</p>
<p align="center">Report of</p>	<p>Andrew Travers, Chief Executive Chris Naylor, Chief Operating Officer Kate Kennally, Strategic Director of Communities Pam Wharfe, Strategic Director of Environment & Growth</p>
<p align="center">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p align="center">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p align="center">Enclosures</p>	<p>Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015-20 Appendix 2: Priorities and Spending Review Report</p>
<p align="center">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>John Hooton, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, 020 8359 2460</p>

<h2>Summary</h2>	
<p>This report seeks approval from Policy and Resources Committee on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The process for Theme Committees to develop commissioning priorities for the period 2015-20 which will come back to this committee in December 2014 to form the basis of a refreshed Corporate Plan; b) The process for Theme Committees to develop savings proposals to meet the financial challenges over the period 2015-20 which will come back to this committee in December 2014; and c) The allocation of transformation funding to support the delivery of savings plans. 	

<h2>Recommendations</h2>

- 1.1 That Policy and Resources Committee note the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy up to 2020 as set out in Appendix A and the assumptions underpinning this in section 1.3;**
- 1.2 That Policy and Resources Committee note the Priorities and Spending Review report as set out in Appendix B;**
- 1.3 That Policy and Resources Committee agree the process for updating the Corporate Plan, through the development of commissioning plans by Theme Committees, as set out in section 1.5;**
- 1.4 That Policy and Resources Committee agree the allocation of savings targets set out in section 1.6, along with the preferred option for allocating the remaining budget gap;**
- 1.5 That Policy and Resources Committee agree the draw-downs from the transformation reserve as set out in paragraph 1.7.2; and**
- 1.6 That Policy and Resources Committee agree the approach to consultation as set out in section 1.10.**

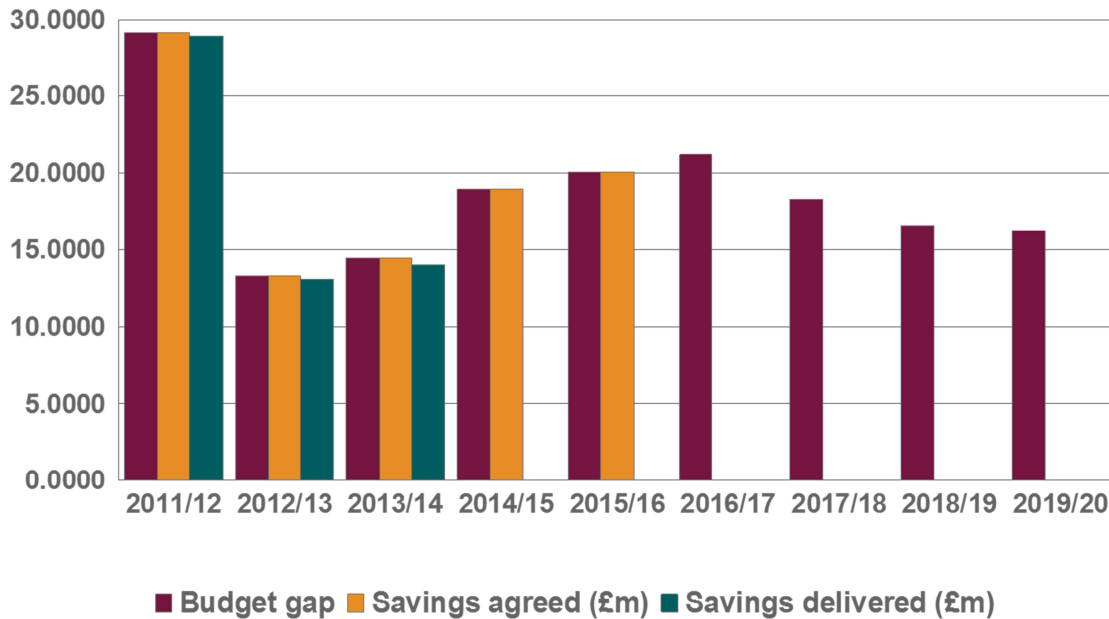
1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 Executive Summary

- 1.1.1** In March 2014, the Council set a Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy covering the period 2014/15 and 2015/16. The MTFs for this period includes savings proposals totalling £39m which, will produce a balanced budget position.
- 1.1.2** Following the local elections in May, this report sets out the process for re-defining the Corporate Plan priorities, and the process for setting a Medium Term Financial Strategy through to 2020. Following the move to a committee form of governance, this report also sets out the process by which Theme Committees will contribute to this process and enable the Policy and Resources Committee to set a Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy for consultation in December 2014.
- 1.1.3** This report sets out the budget gap for 2016 through to 2020, which is estimated at a further £72m. Given the scale of cuts already made to local government budgets, this represents a huge challenge for the organisation to address.

1.2 Strategic Context

- 1.2.1 The financial position of Local Government is extremely challenging, despite recent improvements in the UK economy. Growth has been slower than originally projected at the 2010 Spending Review. When the Coalition Government first sets its spending plans and deficit recovery programme, it was projected that the annual budget deficit would be eradicated by 2015. This target has been missed, and it is now expected to be in balance by 2018. Public sector debt as a % of GDP is not currently expected to start falling until 2016/17.
- 1.2.2 The Government is committed to addressing the budget deficit primarily by cutting expenditure (80%) compared to increasing taxation (20%). Of the total £732bn annual government expenditure, approximately half of this is “non-departmental” spend, primarily welfare and pensions, which is driven by demand. Welfare expenditure has already been subject to significant cuts. Of the remaining “departmental” expenditure, over 50% of this is protected as it relates to the NHS, schools, defence equipment and overseas aid. Local government, along with transport, police, skills, universities and defence, sits in the remaining non-protected expenditure group. For this reason, a disproportionate level of cuts will continue to fall on Local Government until the end of the decade.
- 1.2.3 In spite of the on-going financial challenges, the Council continues to provide high quality services to residents. Resident satisfaction with the Council has increased by 21% since 2010. Compared to 2010, residents think the Council is doing a better job, offering better Value for Money, is working to improve the local area, listening to concerns of local residents and responding quickly when asked for help. In addition, 91% of primary schools and 86% of secondary schools in Barnet are rated as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ by Ofsted – among the best in the country - and Adults and Children’s services are recognised as ‘excellent’ by external inspectors. The Borough remains an attractive and successful place to live, with 87% of residents satisfied with their local area.
- 1.2.4 Over the period 2011-15, the Council has worked hard to reduce costs, cut waste, and improve efficiency. Over that period, a total of £75m of annual savings have been found in Council budgets. Tough decisions have been made, including outsourcing support services, setting up joint ventures and shared service arrangements to reduce costs and/or increase income, and better managing demand for social care. Importantly however, the Council is only half way through a decade of austerity, and therefore further work needs to be done to balance the budget to 2020. The graph below shows the scale of the challenge the Council has already faced, and the challenge that will continue to the end of the decade.



1.2.5 The Council's future regeneration programme will see £6bn of private sector investment over the next 25 years to ensure that the Borough remains an attractive place to live and do business. This will create around 20,000 new homes and up to 30,000 new jobs across the Borough and generate £5.6m of recurrent income for the Council by 2020 and one off income of £50m to be reinvested in infrastructure.

1.2.6 Residents from across the Borough will continue to share in the benefits of growth, with increasing housing development leading to an increase in the tax base and, subsequently, lower Council tax bills for residents. During these challenging times, the Council does not want to increase financial the burden on families and individuals. This is why the Council has frozen Council Tax from 2010-11 and 2013/14, and reduced Council Tax by 1% in 2014/15.

1.3 Medium Term Financial Strategy update

1.3.1 **Appendix A** sets out the Medium Term Financial Strategy for Barnet Council through to 2020, taking into account the national economic context such as government spending cuts and inflation, along with local factors such as population and demand pressures. The headline figure is a budget gap of a **further £72m for 2016-20** beyond the current Medium Term Financial Strategy which covers the period 2014-16.

1.3.2 This budget gap that the Council faces includes assumptions about levels of expected Government grant, future levels of business rates and changes to the Council Tax base, along with a range of other assumptions about pay and non-pay inflation, future levies and other risks.

- 1.3.3 Modelling has been undertaken to understand the potential impact of growing demand on the council's budget resulting from demographic change and taking into account a range of factors including population increase, inflation and likely legislative changes. An allowance has been included within the budget envelope for demographic growth in line with population projections.

Implications of the Care Bill

- 1.3.4 It is important to note that this projection does not currently include the additional costs associated with the implementation of the Care Bill. Considerable uncertainty still exists in respect of the costs and associated funding of these changes. As a result of these legal changes that come into effect in April 2015, it is likely that there will be a considerable number of users and carers that will come forward for assessment, resulting in additional costs of both assessment and delivery of care. These costs, taken together, could be in excess of £10m per annum. The Government has a clear protocol in respect of new burdens and provision of funding to meet these, so it is hoped that the Care Bill will not result in additional costs for the Council. However, there is a significant risk that this may not be the case, and therefore the Council's reserves and contingency position must remain prudent.

Budget assumptions

- 1.3.5 The assumptions within the budget envelope are as follows:

- **Demographic pressures** – an assumption has been made in the budget envelope for future demographic pressure particularly for Adults and Children's Social Care costs.
- **Inflation (pay):** in line with the Local Government pay award for 2013/14, a 1% increase in pay is assumed for future years;
- **Inflation (non-pay):** Figures from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) for inflation have been used to estimate the increase in non-pay costs;
- **North London Waste Authority levy:** figures for the NLWA levy are based on published figures for the period from 2014-16 and projected levy increases based on the waste disposal procurement exercise for the period from 2016-20;
- **Capital financing costs:** the current provision of capital financing costs is currently set in excess of actual spend until 2016 due to recent capital slippage, and a provision has been added beyond that point;
- **Contingency:** from 2016/17 a conservative estimate of £500k has been included in contingency;
- **Council tax support:** Over the next 2 years there are significant changes expected due to welfare reforms. Provision has been set aside in 2014/15 and 2015/16 for potential increases in these costs related to Council Tax increases or increases in take up;
- **Concessionary fares:** increases have been projected in line with demographic changes of 60+ in Barnet.
- **Public Health** allocations have been assumed to increase in line with GDP, the increase in expenditure shown here nets off against the amount

- earmarked for the service itself, so has a neutral effect on the Medium Term Financial Strategy ;
- Future allocations of **New Homes Bonus** are projected in line with known developments in the borough, and is currently transferred to balances to build up the infrastructure reserve, so has a neutral effect on the Medium Term Financial Strategy ;
- **Business rates**: there has been no growth assumed in business rates. An increase in yield has been estimated in line with inflation;
- **Business rates top up grant**: the business rates top up grant is assumed to increase in line with inflation;
- **Revenue Support Grant**: the assumption for the reduction in RSG is such that the reduction in the total quantum of retained business rates and RSG is approximately £10m per annum;
- **Council Tax**: a Council Tax freeze has been factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015/16 and 2016/17, with an increase of 2% per annum beyond that point. The Council tax baseline takes into account current developments and regeneration schemes where developers are in place. It does not take into account schemes that are proposed, but where developers are not yet in place;
- **LACSEG and Council Tax & Housing benefit administration grants** have been assumed to reduce by 10% in line with previous reductions of specific grants; and
- The **PFI credit** is fixed and no change has been factored in.

1.3.6 Policy and Resources Committee are asked to note the assumptions set out above.

1.4 The Barnet Priorities and Spending Review

1.4.1 The scale of the challenge is huge. Saving another £72m from the Council's annual budget will require a fundamental shift in the way public services are delivered. Such a scale of change will take time to deliver, and for this reason it is vitally important that the Council has a plan for the future, and this plan stretches not just a couple of years in advance, but for the next 5 years to 2020. As agreed in the budget report to Cabinet in July 2013, Council officers have undertaken a review of budgets, spending and potential opportunities to make further savings over the period 2016-20. This report is set out at **Appendix B**.

1.4.2 The Barnet Priorities and Spending Review has been a process led by officers. It has been informed by public consultation, and officers have engaged with all three main political parties over the last 12 months. This report sets out options for the theme committees to consider in developing their responses to future budget challenges. It is important to note that no decisions on future budget savings are being made in this report, this report sets out options for members to consider through Council committees informed by consultation with residents.

1.4.3 The PSR is proposing a number of options to be considered by committees in responding to the budget challenge. They are set out below, with the PSR report appended to this document.

Efficiency – there are opportunities for the Council to become more efficient without discernibly affecting the quality of services to residents. The PSR has identified options as follows:

A series of measures to improve workforce productivity including a review of all terms and conditions and costs of management;

Further scope to drive down the cost of suppliers and contracts;

Reductions in accommodation costs if we modernise working practices and share buildings with other public sector bodies, such as the NHS;

Increasing energy efficiency across the Council estate;

Reducing subscription costs and membership fees to a minimum across the Council;

Consider the alternative options for the delivery of waste collection, recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance services to improve outcomes at lower cost; and

Adults and Safeguarding Committee to consider the level of integration of health and social care services and how this should be governed.

Growth & Income – the PSR has identified a number of options to increase revenue from growth and income.

There are opportunities for regeneration and measures to boost local economic growth to increase the Council's residential and commercial tax yield. There are also opportunities to raise additional income from fees and charges in a way that is fair to all residents and users of services.

Modelling predicts that business growth and the development of new homes over the next 5 years will raise almost £5m in additional tax to fund services.

The PSR also invites committees to consider legally viable options for fees and charges by 2% above inflation from 2016/17 to 2019/20 which would raise additional income.

Regeneration will also help reduce future demand on services – effective design of new communities will help support independence and avert social care costs.

Reducing demand, promoting independence – with less money and rising demand, the Council and residents will need to behave differently. The Council will need to focus on backing residents to help themselves and each other, providing different support and guidance where needed with the aim of reducing reliance on the state and investing in preventive services, alongside residents taking greater personal and civic responsibility. The PSR has identified options as follows:

More money could be spent on measures to support residents to live for longer in their own homes, increasing disabled facilities grants and funding for housing adaptations, and measures to build more extra care housing, as well as providing more support to carers to carry on caring.

Measures can be taken to increase the number of children and young people living in Barnet foster homes, and providing enhanced support to prevent placements breaking down and triggering more expensive residential placements.

Encouraging greater levels of recycling will reduce the overall cost of sending waste to landfill, with consideration to be given to the frequency of waste collection to help achieve this.

Service redesign – Adopting a first principles approach to how the Council fulfils a number of its statutory and non-statutory obligations to reduce services in a way that better targets support to those that use services and reduce cost. The PSR has identified options as follows:

An evidence led review of Barnet libraries to identify a new model of library services which utilises the latest technology to increase efficiency whilst maintaining a comprehensive network.

Early Years: Improved targeting of early years support to ensure a reduction in the number of children and young people entering social care.

Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee invited to consider the option of an alternative delivery model for the Education and Skills service, in order to ensure the continued provision of high quality services through a partnership approach that brings together resources from different sectors.

1.5 Commissioning Plans and the Corporate Plan

1.5.1 The Corporate Plan is the overarching strategic document for the Council, setting out its commissioning priorities and objectives. The latest Corporate Plan which covers the period 2014-15 to 2015-16 was published in April and has been revised to reflect the new freedoms offered by the Localism Act.

1.5.2 Following the local elections in May, the Corporate Plan needs to be updated. Following the creation of the new committee system, there is an opportunity for these committees to set the future direction of the Council. It is therefore proposed that Theme Committees agree commissioning plans for the period 2015-20, which will be reported back to Policy and Resources Committee in December 2014 as part of a refreshed Corporate Plan.

1.5.3 The tone of the Corporate Plan will be guided by an overall narrative of Barnet being a place:

1. Of **opportunity**, where people can expect a **good quality of life**
2. Where **responsibility is shared, fairly**
3. Where **services will be transformed** by a smaller, smarter public sector
4. Where people are **helped to help themselves**

1.6 Budget envelopes for Theme Committees

1.6.1 Forward planning to identify opportunities for improving efficiency, and growing the local tax base in particular, will minimise the need for future cuts in service provision. This report recommends that theme committees are allocated a savings target for the period 2016-20 in line with the potential opportunity areas identified in the Priorities and Spending Review report. The opportunity areas for each committee are as follows:

Adults and Safeguarding Committee £12.6m

- Improving efficiency – c£4.7m including:
 - Measures to improve workforce productivity, reviewing terms and conditions and management overheads; and
 - Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down the cost of suppliers and contracts.
- Reducing demand and promoting independence – c£6.9m including:
 - Measures to help older people with dementia live longer at home;
 - Providing more support to younger people with learning difficulties so that they are better placed to support themselves in early adulthood;
 - Focusing social care assessment processes so that those most in need get the most extra support; and
 - Increasing disabled facilities grants, housing adaptations and building more extra care housing.
- Redesigning services – c£1.0m including:
 - Integrating service provision and commissioning with the NHS so that conditions associated with frail elderly residents are managed and supported more effectively.

Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee £8.0m

- Improving efficiency – c£2.3m including:
 - Measures to improve workforce productivity, reviewing terms and conditions and management overheads; and

- Re-procuring key contract and improving contract management to drive down the cost of suppliers and contracts.
- Reducing demand and promoting independence – c£0.5m including:
 - Measures to increase the number of children and young people living in local Barnet foster homes and providing enhanced support to prevent placements breaking down and triggering more expensive residential placements.
- Redesigning services – c£5.1m including:
 - Considering the option of an alternative delivery model for the Education and Skills service, in order to ensure the continued provision of high quality services through a partnership approach that brings together resources from different sectors; ;
 - Improved targeting of early years support to ensure a reduction in the number of children and young people entering social care; and
 - An evidence led review of the Library service to consider a new model of library services, utilising the latest technology to reduce overheads whilst maintaining a comprehensive network.

Environment Committee £5.9m

- Improving efficiency – c£2.4m including:
 - Measures to improve workforce productivity, reviewing terms and conditions and management overheads;
 - Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down the cost of suppliers and contracts; and
 - Examining how alternative delivery models may deliver improved outcomes for waste, recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance at lower cost; and
 - Affecting changes in the management and costs of disposing waste.
- Reducing demand and promoting independence – c£2.7m including:
 - Working with residents and community groups to achieve a reduction in the amount of waste generated and considering the frequency of waste collection to help achieve this.
- Promoting growth and raising income – c£0.8m including:
 - Exploiting commercial opportunities to sell services to businesses and private land owners; and
 - Increasing income from better utilisation across the parks and open spaces asset portfolio.

Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee £10.1m

- Improving efficiency – c£4.5m including:
 - Reducing the costs of office accommodation and increased income for Council assets;
 - Increasing energy efficiency of the Council estate;
 - Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down the cost of suppliers and contracts; and
 - Capitalisation of regeneration related expenditure.
- Promoting growth and raising income – c£5.6m including:
 - Growing the Council's residential and business related tax base from regeneration and development activity.

Community Leadership Committee £0.8m

- Improving efficiency - c£0.2m including:
 - Operational efficiencies in delivering the borough's CCTV services
 - Cancellation of the MOSAIC contract and using resources provided by the Council's Customer and Support Group.
- Promoting growth and raising income – c£0.6m including:
 - Considering moving to a full cost recovery model for the borough's CCTV services.

Health and Wellbeing Board £0.7m

- Improving efficiency - £0.7m including:
 - Re-procurement of sexual health services across the borough.

Policy and Resources Committee £12.7m

- Improving efficiency – c£9.2m including:
 - Measures to improve workforce productivity, reviewing terms and conditions and management overheads (including sharing posts with other Councils);
 - Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down the cost of suppliers and contracts;
 - Reducing subscription costs and membership fees to a minimum across the Council;
 - Rationalising IT and printing costs across the Council;
 - Bearing down on redundancy costs;
 - Reducing financing and borrowing costs;
 - Sharing corporate services (for example emergency planning, audit, business continuity) with another Council; and
 - Review of Councillor allowances.
- Promoting growth and raising income – c£3.4m including:
 - Increasing fees and charges where legally permissible by 2% above inflation; and
 - Considering changes to Council Tax Support and the level of contribution from those eligible for support.

1.6.2 The opportunity areas set out above provide the basis for savings targets to be set for each theme committee, summarised as follows:

Committee	Total budget for theme committee (£m)	Total of potential savings (£m)	% saving against budget	Allocation of remaining gap (£m)
Adults and Safeguarding	81.2	12.6	16%	5.4

Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding	49.9	8.0	16%	3.4
Environment	33.5	5.9	18%	2.5
Community Leadership	1.7	0.8	48%	0.3
Health and Wellbeing Board	14.3	0.7	5%	0.3
Policy and Resources	91.7	12.6	24%	5.4
Assets, Regeneration and Growth	5.2	10.1		4.3
Total	280.6	50.8		21.6

1.6.3 These opportunity areas enable £51m of savings to be made against a budget gap to 2020 of £72m. To enable the gap to be closed in full, Policy and Resources Committee will need to decide how to allocate this gap. The options are either:

- a) To allocate the remaining £21m gap to committees in the same proportion as the savings targets set out above; or
- b) To hold the remaining £21m gap within the Policy and Resources Committee remit and review the approach to Council Tax increases. An increase of approximately 4% per annum over and above current assumptions would see the gap closed.

1.6.4 In working up proposals, Committees will need to consider the legality of options, and also have regard to the equalities impact.

Implications of PSR savings proposals for Delivery Units

1.6.5 It is important for the committee to have regard for the impact of these savings targets in terms of delivery unit budgets. This analysis, along with the percentage of total budget, is set out below:

Delivery Unit	Total budget (£m)	Total of potential savings (£m)	% saving against
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			budget
Adults and Communities	82.0	13.5	16%
Assurance	3.8	0.5	12%
Commissioning Group	6.8	1.3	19%
CSG	20.1	4.6	23%
Education and Skills Non-DSG	5.8	0.9	15%
Family Services Non-DSG	44.1	7.2	16%
Street scene	33.5	5.9	18%
Re	0.5	2.7	*
Public Health	14.3	0.7	5%
Other (central expenses, Council Tax increases)	69.7	13.6	20%
Total	280.6	50.8	

* The Re budget is nearly net £nil due to income raised from services, so the comparison between budget and savings is not applicable.

1.6.6 This report sets out the opportunity areas for future savings to be made. It looks to maximise opportunities for further back office savings, and savings from growth of the tax-base, thus minimising the impact on front-line services. Policy and Resources has the highest quantum of savings to find from the commissioning group, assurance, customer and support group and central expenses. The Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee has a significant target representing opportunities to grow Council Tax receipts from regeneration activity, and opportunities to reduce costs of office accommodation. The Adults and Safeguarding committee has a high savings target, but it also has the largest budget area, so the percentage saving is lower than for back office services. Similarly the savings percentages for Family Services and Education and Skills are lower than for back office services.

1.7 Current budgetary position and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014-16

- 1.7.1 The 2014-16 medium term financial strategy was agreed by full Council on 2 March 2014. While the 2013/14 outturn position is expected to report a balanced position, pressures exist in respect of the delivery of services in the current budget envelope. Demographic pressures exist in Adults and Children's social care. Pressures exist within the Streetscene budget as a result of the parking judicial review and the increased costs of disposal of recyclates. The Performance and Contract Monitoring Committee will monitor this position throughout the year and take action as appropriate to address any issues arising.
- 1.7.2 The transformation reserve has been set aside by the Council to fund programmes and projects to deliver savings and improve service performance. While this report primarily deals with the process for delivering budgets for the period 2016-20, considerable challenges remain in delivering agreed savings for 2015/16 and implementing legislative change within the agreed medium term financial strategy. It is recommended that the following draw-downs are approved:
- **Family Services:** A drawdown of £1m, to ensure that the Family Services department continues to deliver the required level of performance for statutory services. In addition, this programme sets out to develop services to meet current need, encourage and develop targeted early interventions, to provide efficient processes and structures across the Delivery Unit, to reduce the social care placements bill and deliver Medium Term Financial Strategy savings of £6.2m.
 - **Adults and Communities:** A drawdown of £550k to support Adults and Communities Delivery Unit in preparing for the implications of the anticipated Care Act, improving access to services, increasing capacity to support individuals in the community and manage growing demand for services. In addition, this transformation programme will deliver a range of projects to deliver £8.4m of savings in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015/16.
 - **Education and Skills:** A drawdown of £150k to research options to improve service provision, identify potential savings in 2015/16 and beyond and seek options to improve support to schools in future years.
 - **Streetscene:** Cabinet Resources Committee (2 April) approved the in sourcing of the Go Plant transport contract, delivering savings of £125k in 2014/15 and further savings in later years. To achieve this saving a drawdown of £200k is requested related to project management and HR activities.
 - **Smarter Working:** A drawdown of £160k to support the integration of workforce changes, IT systems, and office accommodation to enable further

savings. This programme will develop detailed options and proposals to transform how the Council's employees and promoting mobile working.

- **Portfolio and Programme Management:** The funding of a Portfolio Management function and Programme Management Office (PMO) to will oversee and support delivery of projects, efficient resourcing, improving how the Council manages changes and providing a focus on delivery of benefits. This is the continuation of PMO funding from previous years, to enable delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and support identification and delivery of a further £70m base budget savings. A requested drawdown £1.7m to fund this function in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

1.8 Capital Programme

- 1.8.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy includes provision for future capital expenditure on Council priorities through to 2020. It is important to note that some priorities, such as school places, are funded in full to the end of the decade. Other priorities, such as housing, investment in roads and pavements, and rolling/cyclical programmes of maintenance, will need to be considered for 2016-20. Theme committees should consider their capital requirements as part of their budget proposals and feed these back to Policy and Resources Committee in October. Policy and Resources Committee will receive a report in October that considers options for the future capital programme alongside a review of contingency and reserves balances.

1.9 Timetable

- 1.9.1 Theme Committees will be supported by officers throughout the summer and autumn to develop their response to these targets, agree a package of proposals by November, to enable a draft medium term financial strategy for the Council to be set by Policy and Resources Committee in December 2014.
- **June:** Finance and business planning process commences. Each Theme Committee receives a report on the budget and business planning process, the budget envelope to 2020, and a summary of potential savings opportunity. Each Committee is asked to develop commissioning priorities and proposals to inform a new Corporate Plan, commissioning strategy for the Committee, and savings proposals.
 - **July – September:** Each Theme Committee initiates working group(s) to work with Officers to identify commissioning priorities and budget savings.
 - **October – November:** Each Theme Committee to agree draft commissioning priorities and savings proposals, for submission to Policy and Resources Committee in December.
 - **December:** Policy and Resources Committee (2 December)

1.10 Consultation

1.10.1 Consultation has already commenced to enable the Council to plan for the future, and will continue as options set out in this report are considered further. Consultation follows three broad phases:

- a) Phase 1 – Citizens’ panels and focus groups have targeted service users, businesses and some protected characteristic groups to gauge residents’ views about local services and priorities.
- b) Phase 2 – the “Call for Evidence” is on-going. This has involved online channels, asking local and national commentators and stakeholders for views on how we meet future challenges, and ensures this thinking is informed by best practice. It was suspended in purdah, and re-opened on 27th May. The findings of phases 1 and 2 will be shared through Theme Committees in July to inform decision making.
- c) Phase 3 – consultation on specific savings proposals will commence as they are formulated. Theme committees will run consultation on groups of ideas over the summer/autumn to inform proposal development. Individual consultation on specific proposals will take place following agreement of a draft Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan at Policy and Resources Committee in December.

1.10.2 Existing Medium Term Financial Strategy savings for 2015/16 are planned for Education and Skills. To facilitate the development of a business case for these savings which will come back to committee in the autumn, the Policy and Resources Committee is asked to approve consultation with stakeholders for this specific saving proposal.

1.10.3 The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to agree this approach to consultation.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 As set out in the report above, Local Government is facing significant cuts in funding which will require a fundamental change to the way services are delivered by 2020. Such a scale of change takes time to deliver, and for this reason it is vitally important that the Council has a plan for the future, and this plan stretches not just a couple of years in advance, but for the next 5 years to 2020. As agreed in the budget report to Cabinet in July 2013, Council officers have undertaken a review of budgets, spending and potential opportunities to make further savings over the period 2016-20. This report feeds back on that process, and makes recommendations for committees to take this forward.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 This report in itself does not ask that members make any decisions on specific savings options; rather it sets out a process for engaging all members and theme committees in the development of budget proposals for the period up to 2020.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following approval of these recommendations, reports will be taken to theme committees to enable them to consider the development of commissioning plans and savings proposals to meet the targets in this report. These committees need to be in a position to recommend commissioning plans and draft budget proposals to Policy and Resources Committee on 2 December for consultation.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

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

- 5.1.1 This report covers the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and annual business planning process. In March 2014, the Council set a two year Medium Term Financial Strategy covering the period 2014-15 to 2015-16. Following the local elections in May, this report sets out the process for re-defining the corporate plan and priorities, and the process for setting a budget and medium term financial strategy extending through from 2016 through to 2020.

- 5.1.2 In addition to continued austerity, demographic change and the resulting pressure on services poses a significant challenge to the Council. The organisation is facing significant budget reductions at the same time as the population is increasing, particularly in the young and very old. Given that nearly two thirds of the Council's budget is spent on Adult Social Care and Children's Services, this poses a particular challenge as these services are predominantly 'demand led'. There will also be costs related to infrastructure development. The annual allocation of New Homes Bonus funding is allocated to the infrastructure reserve as a contribution towards these costs.

5.2 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.2.1 All proposals emerging from the business planning process need to be considered in terms of the Council's legal powers and obligations (including, specifically, the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010) and, where appropriate, mechanisms put into place to ensure compliance with legal obligations and duties and to mitigate any other legal risks as far as possible.
- 5.2.2 Constitution, Responsibility for Functions, Annex A, sets out the terms of reference of the Policy and Resources Committee.

5.3 Risk Management

- 5.3.1 The Council has taken steps to improve its risk management processes by integrating the management of financial and other risks facing the organisation. Risk management information is reported quarterly to Committees and is reflected, as appropriate, throughout the annual business planning process.
- 5.3.2 Previous budget setting reports have referred to risks in respect of future spending cuts for Local Government. In December, the Government confirmed spending totals for Councils for 2014/15 and 2015/16. This announcement also indicated that austerity is likely to continue until the end of the decade. Current modelling suggests that this is likely to equate to further annual reductions of between £15m and £20m to the Council's budget. For this reason, it is important that the Council continues to be prudent with its use of reserves and contingency to mitigate against future cuts.
- 5.3.3 The challenges set out in this report require fundamental change in the way Council services are delivered, which impacts on the human resources of the organisation and related policies and practices. This process will be managed in conjunction with Trade Unions and staff.

5.4 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.4.1 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the decision-making of the Council. This requires elected Members to satisfy themselves that equality considerations are integrated into day to day business and that all proposals emerging from the finance and business planning process have properly taken into consideration what impact, if any, there is on any protected group and what mitigating factors can be put in train.
- 5.4.2 The projected increase in the borough's population and changes in the demographic profile will be key factors that need to be considered when determining both the corporate strategy and service responses. Both of these need to also reflect the aspirations and contributions of current residents
- 5.4.3 Similarly, all human resources implications will be managed in accordance with the Council's Managing Organisational Change policy that supports the Council's Human Resources Strategy and meets statutory equalities duties and current employment legislation.

5.5 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.5.1 As set out above.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 None

Medium Term Financial Strategy	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
Budget brought forward	282,313	273,361	266,453	260,770
Statutory/cost drivers				
Inflation (pay)	1,097	1,108	1,119	1,130
Inflation (non-pay)	3,309	3,376	3,443	3,512
Inflation 2% increase fees & Charges	(500)	(500)	(500)	(500)
North London Waste Authority (NLWA) levy	982	999	1,017	1,035
Capital financing costs	1,900	1,900	1,900	1,900
Statutory/cost drivers sub-total	6,788	6,883	6,979	7,077
Central Expenses				
Contingency - general risks	500	500	500	500
Concessionary Fares	227	255	292	346
Public Health Grant	344	382	392	371
Central Expenses sub-total	1,071	1,137	1,184	1,217
Balances to/(from) reserves				
Specific reserves contribution 2015/16 NHB	(10,291)			
Specific reserves contribution 2016/17 NHB	10,735	(10,735)		
Specific reserves contribution 2017/18 NHB		10,548	(10,548)	
Specific reserves contribution 2018/19 NHB			9,897	(9,897)
Specific reserves contribution 2019/20 NHB				7,583
Reserves sub-total	444	(187)	(651)	(2,314)
Total expenditure	290,616	281,194	273,965	266,750
New Formula grant funding				
Business Rates	36,672	38,028	39,473	41,013
Business Rates- Top up	18,904	19,603	20,348	21,142
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	40,000	30,000	20,000	10,000
New Formula grant sub-total	95,575	87,631	79,821	72,154
Council Tax				
Council Tax (CT)	143,352	146,353	149,203	152,531
CT freeze grant 15-16	1,647			
Core grants				
Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credit	2,235	2,235	2,235	2,235
Education Services Grant	3,210	2,889	2,600	2,340
NHB	10,735	10,548	9,897	7,583
Housing and CT Benefit Administration Grant	1,928	1,735	1,562	1,405
Public Health	14,679	15,061	15,452	15,823
Other funding sub-total	177,786	178,821	180,949	181,918
Total Income from grant and Council Tax	273,361	266,453	260,770	254,072
Proposed Pressures	3,992	3,583	3,382	3,593
Budget Gap before savings & pressures	17,254	14,741	13,194	12,677
Proposed Savings	(21,246)	(18,324)	(16,576)	(16,270)
Budget Gap after savings	0	0	0	0

14,550
57,867

(72,417)

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London Borough of Barnet

**Priorities & Spending Review 2014:
Options for the new Council**

June 2014

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Introduction

There is no getting away from the fact that the economic challenges the UK has faced over the past few years have had a significant impact on organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors and on citizens up and down the country. For Local Government, the unprecedented squeeze on public spending, coupled with rising demand for services, has made the scale of the challenge particularly acute. The last 5 years have been undeniably difficult and – as this report will explore – the signs are that this will continue until the end of the decade.

2. In Barnet, the council has approached these challenges in a sensible and planned way and has always sought to manage the council's finances responsibly. As a result, not only has a level of relative protection been provided to the most vital front line services up to now, the council has created headroom to invest in issues that residents care about – green spaces; schools; housing; transport and infrastructure; and helping young people to find jobs. Tough decisions have been required but, by facing up to the challenge in this way, Barnet has built a solid platform from which to successfully negotiate the next few years.

3. Looking to the future, it is clear that further tough decisions will be required if the council – and the wider public sector in Barnet – is to live within its means. However, it is not all doom and gloom. The UK economy is now expanding and London in particular is expected to grow strongly over the latter half of the decade. As it does so, it will create a real opportunity for the borough of Barnet and for its residents and businesses – an opportunity to share in the benefits of this growth, regeneration and, ultimately, success.

4. The benefits of growth are already being felt locally in Barnet, through the regeneration of areas such as Colindale and Grahame Park and with the major redevelopment of Brent Cross Cricklewood due to start soon. This regeneration is vital for the future of the borough and will provide new homes for Barnet's residents, space for businesses, create thousands of new jobs and revitalise communities across the borough. The council will work to ensure that full advantage is taken of this opportunity, so that Barnet continues to be a successful borough, as part of a successful, global city.

5. Although much of this success and opportunity will happen without any intervention from the council, it does have a role in ensuring that growth happens responsibly and that Barnet's distinctive characteristics and those things that 'make Barnet, Barnet' – its schools and green spaces – are maintained. But it is also important that this opportunity is to the benefit of all residents of Barnet. As such, not only will the council play a role in helping to maintain the right environment for a successful and thriving borough, it will also need to work more closely with other parts of the public sector – such as the NHS and Job Centre Plus – to identify those residents at risk of missing out and provide the right interventions when they are needed.

6. By helping people to help themselves, it will reduce dependence on local services and on the ever diminishing resources available. In that sense, not only is enabling independence the right thing to do for Barnet's residents, it is also an essential part of managing the financial challenges facing the council.

7. As the council approaches the challenges and opportunities of the next few years, a new relationship with Barnet's residents will emerge. As the council's Residents Perception Survey consistently shows, Barnet benefits from strong, cohesive communities and a sense of people looking out for each other and getting involved in local activities. It is crucial that this develops over the years ahead – not simply because the council will need to scale back its activities in some areas, but because, in many cases, residents know best about what is right for their neighbourhoods. Enabling greater community participation will therefore be a priority for the council, alongside doing more to understand the needs of local communities and engage effectively with them; becoming more transparent; and involving residents in the services they use.

8. This report marks the end of the **Barnet 'Priorities and Spending Review' (PSR)** – a 12 month, bottom up process of analysis, evidence gathering and ideas generation to determine the likely impact of further austerity and increasing demand on the borough and, most importantly, to identify some of the changes that will be required to allow the council to live within its means and continue to provide vital services. Not only will the council need to become more efficient, the scale of the challenge also necessitates a closer relationship between the council and the wider public sector to integrate and reconfigure local services around the needs of residents.

9. The PSR represents a considered, rational process for developing a range of options for meeting the projected gap in the council's finances – which is forecast to be **£72 million** between 2016 and 2020 - rather than taking decisions in an arbitrary, top down way. The report sets out a package of options for the council to save money and raise revenue, which has the potential to provide a financial benefit of approximately **£51 million** and go a long way towards closing the £72 million budget gap.

10. Some of these options will require up-front investment and a focus on **preventative action** in order to unlock future savings. Some ideas focus on **changing the behaviour of residents in order to reduce demand on services**. Some will require the council to work differently as an organisation and more closely with other parts of the public sector – both locally and regionally – to become **more efficient** and provide **better, more integrated services**. And some will require the council to stop doing some things entirely as it **prioritises the resources it has available** – either because they are less of a priority or because someone else can do it better.

11. It will be for elected Councillors – as representatives of Barnet's residents – to determine which of these options, and others that we will continue to emerge, they wish to implement, in consultation with residents. It is not the expectation that all of the options presented in this

report will be taken forward to implementation – some will need further development and challenge to overcome barriers to delivery. As such, **the conclusion of the PSR does not mark the end of the need for the council to think differently as it grapples with the challenges ahead.** Rather, the PSR represents a point in time – a chance to look ahead and begin to plan effectively for the future.

12. Indeed, as the PSR process concludes, a gap of some £21 million remains between the council's forecast budget to 2020 and the options identified through this process, particularly in the last three years of the decade. This means that even greater change will be required. It will be for Councillors to determine how the level of Council Tax will play into reducing the financial gap but the scale of the challenge means that, as councils up and down the country continue to innovate, **a new form of Local Government is likely to emerge.**

13. By 2020, it is likely that more Local Authorities will join forces to **merge commissioning and delivery functions**, not only with each other but across the public sector and other local and regional service providers. This is likely to trigger the development of clusters of multi-agency hubs, where public sector agencies are co-located to provide fully integrated services to residents. The **ways in which residents engage with councils – to pay a bill or make a transaction – will become more intuitive with more activity taking place online.** And, by the end of the decade, it is likely that **a more diverse mix of service providers will emerge, from across the public, private and voluntary sectors.**

14. It is clear from how councils have successfully dealt with the first round of spending cuts passed on in the 2010 Spending Review that Local Government can be trusted to deliver – to achieve efficiency savings and reform services for the better. But **meeting the challenges of the future will also require Whitehall to reform both its relationship with Local Government and the way in which councils are funded.** Achieving the vision of a fully integrated public sector with services geared around the needs of individuals will **require Government to devolve more responsibility to Local Authorities and to loosen the reins on the Local Government finance system**, doing more to provide greater flexibility across the system to promote integration and incentivise growth.

15. As this report will demonstrate, there will undoubtedly be challenges ahead but there is also **reason to be optimistic** - to strive to grasp the opportunities open to Barnet's residents and businesses and to share in the success of remaining one of the most prosperous boroughs in one of the best cities in the world.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Knowing that austerity will continue until the end of the decade, Barnet Council has a responsibility to plan for the future, building on the success of how it has dealt with the challenges of the past 5 years.**
- **The council established the Priorities & Spending Review (PSR) process to consider how it will successfully live within its means to the end of the decade.**
- **The PSR has been based on a process of consultation and engagement: With residents, so that the council understands what residents care about; and with a variety of local and national organisations so that the council has access to a wide range of ideas to inform its approach.**
- **The council forecasts that its budget will reduce by a further £72 million between 2016/17 and 2019/20, in addition to the £72 million reduction in the first half of the decade. Overall, the council's spending power in 2020 will be roughly half of what was in 2010.**
- **Although the council needs to make further savings, its budget will still be around £200 million by 2020. The council will ensure these resources are prioritised effectively, in accordance with the priorities of residents; that its statutory duties are effectively discharged; and that the decisions it takes are transparent and represent value for money.**
- **Despite the challenges, there are opportunities. London's economy will grow strongly over the remainder of the decade, and this growth will benefit Barnet.**
- **The borough's regeneration schemes will create more than 20,000 new homes and provide for up to 30,000 new jobs and the council will receive over £5.6 million in recurrent income from regeneration by 2020, with a further £50 million of non-recurrent income to be reinvested in infrastructure.**
- **However, not all of Barnet's residents may be able to take advantage of this opportunity, which creates a role for the council – working with other parts of the public sector – to identify those residents who need a degree of support to enable them to benefit from Barnet's success.**
- **The council is working in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions, local Job Centres, skills providers, employers and Public Health with the aim of moving more people into work. Not only will this improve the quality of life for individuals, it will also reduce pressure on local services.**
- **Greater community participation in local issues will also be an essential part of the change the council will need to achieve to meet the financial challenges ahead. The council will develop a Community Participation Strategy, with the aim of achieving a greater level of collaboration with communities and enabling residents to take on greater responsibility for their local areas.**
- **Feedback from the first phase of PSR consultation has been used to establish a set of principles that have framed the development of options for closing the £72 million budget gap. These principles are Fairness, Responsibility, and A Good Quality of Life for All.**
- **In total, the PSR has identified options that have the potential to save the council up to £50.8 million through reduced spending and increased income over the period from 2016/17 to 2019/20 and go towards closing the £72 million budget gap.**
- **Of this, nearly half (48%) come from options for increasing organisational efficiency. Of the remainder, 20% comes from options for reducing demand and increasing independence; 20% from the proceeds of growth and taking a more entrepreneurial approach to maximise income; and 12% from redesigning and integrating services.**
- **It will be for elected Councillors to decide which of the PSR options to take forward to implementation through Council Committees, in consultation with residents and council staff.**
- **By way of illustration, if the entirety of the PSR package were to be implemented, the profile of savings shows that it is the last three years of the decade where a significant budget gap is likely to remain, with challenge really biting in 2017 and 2018.**
- **The council will continue to innovate to identify further opportunities to close the gap and it will be for Councillors to determine the balance of spending reductions and income generated through Council Tax as it does so.**
- **The council will require further flexibilities from central Government to fully close the gap, through greater financial devolution and increased flexibility across the Local Government Finance System to incentivise growth.**

1. ABOUT THE BARNET PRIORITIES & SPENDING REVIEW 2014

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- Knowing that austerity will continue until the end of the decade, the council has a responsibility to plan effectively for the future, building on the success of how it has dealt with the challenges faced over the past 5 years.
- In the summer of 2013, the council established the Priorities & Spending Review (PSR) to consider how it will successfully negotiate the financial challenges over the period from 2016/17 to 2019/20.
- The PSR represents a considered, bottom up process tasked with developing a package of options for meeting the projected gap in the council's finances until the end of the decade. The PSR has been based on evidence and analysis, with the objective of avoiding budget allocations being made in an arbitrary, top down way.
- There are three main elements of the PSR:
 1. **Forecasting the council's budget to 2020** – so that the council understands the scale of the challenge and the level of savings required. This analysis will form the basis of a new Medium Term Financial Strategy, which will set the council's budget envelope to 2019/20.
 2. **Consultation and engagement** – i) With residents, so that the council understands what residents care about; and ii) With a variety of local and national organisations - such as think tanks, professional bodies, businesses, Government departments - so that the council has access to a wide range of thinking to inform its approach.
 3. **Developing options for meeting the challenge** – using evidence, research and analysis to develop a range of potential options for making savings and generating income to close the gap in the council's finances.
- This report represents the conclusion of the PSR. It will be for elected Councillors to determine which of the options presented will be taken forward, developed further and implemented, following consultation with residents and staff.

The importance of planning for success

1.1 A critical element of Barnet Council's success in dealing with the financial challenges of the past five years has been the emphasis it has placed on **forward planning**. Barnet has a history of approaching challenges in a considered, logical and structured way and it is right that this should continue.

1.2 In 2008, the council's 'Future Shape' programme foresaw the spending cuts that were passed on by Government at the 2010 Spending Review and set a platform on which to base its response. Future Shape was succeeded by the 'One Barnet' programme, which developed 'bundles' of services to test with the market and will generate cumulative savings of £275 million over 10 years.

1.3 Knowing that the UK's current budget deficit means that austerity will continue until the end of the decade which, combined with rising demand, will place increased pressure on the council's resources (see **Chapter 2**), it is right that the organisation continues its commitment to forward planning. To do otherwise would leave the council at risk from ill-considered, short-term decision making.

The Barnet Priorities & Spending Review

1.4 The council's response has been the **Priorities & Spending Review (PSR)** - a 12 month process of analysis, engagement and ideas generation, which commenced in summer 2013 with the ambition of understanding the level of financial challenge facing the council and its local strategic partners up to 2020 and developing options for elected Councillors to consider - after the 2014 Local Elections - to close the budget gap.

1.5 Ultimately, the PSR is about **innovation** – of both thinking and doing things differently. The PSR has been designed to raise questions that challenge the role of the state, civil society and the individual, set within the context of local priorities that allows the council to determine its longer-term priorities and set a new **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)** to 2020.

1.6 A crucial element of the PSR is **consultation and engagement**. To date, the PSR has included a first phase of resident consultation – through Citizens Panel events and Focus Groups - so the council has an understanding of what residents care about as it considers the challenges ahead. The PSR has also consulted with a variety of local and national organisations - think tanks, professional bodies, businesses, Government departments – through a '**Call for Evidence**' so that it has access to a wide range of thinking to inform its approach. The Call for Evidence will close at the end of June 2014 and used to inform decisions taken through Council Committees.

1.7 This report represents the **final output of the PSR**. It sets out a **package of options for the council to save money and generate income which will be considered by elected Councillors**, with those measures which are taken forward **subject to public consultation before a final decision is taken and implementation begins**. The **legal implications** of each option will also be fully explored and **Equalities Impact Assessments** considered.

Continued innovation and further analysis

1.8 It is important to be clear **the end of the PSR does not mark the end of the council's thinking**. As this report sets out, a gap in the council's finances will remain even if all of the options were implemented and the estimated quantum of saving achieved. This means that the council will need continue to innovate and develop new approaches to how public services are designed and delivered, including through even greater integration across the public sector.

1.9 Further options will need to be developed and worked through as, inevitably, some of the measures set out in this report will not be taken forward or will be scaled back when subject to further scrutiny. In such cases, **alternative proposals will need to be developed to ensure that the budget gap is closed**. Further detail on the PSR process and the methodology that has supported it is set out in **Chapter 6**.

2. THE SCALE OF THE CHALLENGE TO 2020

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- The UK is not yet half way through what is expected to be a decade of austerity and, despite a growing economy, a national budget deficit of approximately £50 billion will remain at the time of the next General Election in 2015. This means that cuts to public spending will continue until the end of the decade, no matter which political party is in power nationally.
- As part of the Government's aim to bring the UK's finances back into surplus, further spending cuts will be passed on to Local Government by Whitehall.
- Alongside continued austerity, population growth and demographic change will increase pressure on local services, particularly health and social care.
- The Government's major policy reforms will also increase the pressure on Local Government, particularly the implementation of the Care Act - which will require Local Authorities to cover the cost of care beyond the £72,000 cap for individuals – and increased entitlements through the Children and Families Act. Although the Government has pledged additional resources to help meet these pressures, this is unlikely to be sufficient.
- The PSR forecasts that the council's total budget will reduce by a further £72 million over the four year period from 2016/17 to 2019/20. This is in addition to the £72 million budget reduction from 2011/12 to 2015/16, meaning that council's total spending power will be around 50% lower at the end of the decade, compared to the start.
- Further austerity and rising demand will also impact the wider public sector and the council's local strategic partners: The Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group, Police, Job Centre Plus, Middlesex University, Barnet and Southgate College and Community Barnet. The PSR forecasts that up to £185 million could be cut from the combined budgets of the council and its local strategic partners over the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.
- It is clear, therefore, that the combined challenge of continued austerity, policy reform and rising demand is a challenge that requires a collective response from the council and its local strategic partners.
- Alongside reforms to local services, many of Barnet's residents will continue to face financial pressures, due to high energy bills, high and increasing housing costs, continued public sector wage restraint and the impact of changes to the benefit system.

The context of the PSR

2.1 This chapter sets out the **wider economic context and financial challenges** facing the council, the wider public sector, and many of Barnet's residents. It explains why the council believes that austerity and continuing demand for public services will continue, and presents a clear **rationale** for the council's decision to take forward the PSR.

The economic impact of the global financial crisis

2.2 The economic turmoil of the past 5 years or so can be traced back to the origins of the financial crisis which spread across the banking sector from 2007 to 2009 and eventually led to a **global economic downturn**. This downturn – and the resulting squeeze on public spending - has had huge ramifications for the global economy, the public finances in the UK and on living standards.

2.3 In 2010, when the current Government came to power, the UK budget deficit – the gap between how much it was spending and how much it received in income through taxation - was the largest in its peacetime history at over £150 billion. Annual interest payments on the UK's borrowing alone stood at £43 billion, which meant **the Government was spending more each year on servicing its national debt than it was on schools in England**.

2.4 The Government's initial response to the UK's burgeoning budget deficit came at the 2010 Spending Review, which set a pathway for tackling the debt and deficit burden by **cutting public spending by £81 billion over the period from 2011 – 2015**. Inevitably, the impact of this reduction in spending has been felt by Local Government. The consequence of the 2010 Spending Review for Barnet was that, over the period from 2011 – 2015, **the council's budget was reduced by 26%, equivalent to £72 million**.

2.5 Barnet's response to the first wave of cuts has been **carefully planned and implemented**. A consequence of this careful financial planning – through the agreement of a robust Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) through to 2015/16 - has meant that **the council been able to afford a level of relative protection to frontline services up to now, with 77% of the savings up to 2015 coming from back office and management costs**. The successful management of taxpayer resources has also meant that the council has been able to pass on a proportion of these benefits to residents through **lower Council Tax bills**. Council Tax in Barnet has been frozen since 2010/11, with a 1% reduction in bills to every household in 2014/15.

2.6 However, although the council now finds itself in a relatively strong financial position compared to a number of other Local Authorities, there are still challenges ahead in implementing the decisions taken as part of the current MTFS up to 2015/16, in addition to the need to make cuts on a similar scale in the latter half of the decade.

The macro-economic position today – economic growth alongside continued austerity

2.7 Nearly four years on from the 2010 Spending Review, the context of public sector spending cuts is now well established and familiar to all those working across the sector or closely with it. That being the case, the council's own recent consultation in relation to the PSR –

which is explored in **Chapter 6** - has highlighted a **degree of surprise amongst residents about the need for further austerity**.

2.8 This surprise might be because **the UK economy – after a sustained period of recession – is now growing**, with inflation below 2% and unemployment almost at pre-financial crisis levels, particularly in London. However, despite an upturn in the macro-economic picture, the fact remains that – as things stand and despite cuts of around £100 billion since the 2010 General Election – the UK is still running a structural deficit of over £80 billion which, although declining, is **expected to stand at around £50 billion by the 2015 General Election**. That is to say, even with strong growth factored into the Treasury's fiscal assumptions, the amount of money being spent by the Government in 2015 will still be £50 billion more than it receives through taxation. That is why further austerity will be required beyond 2015, no matter who is in No10¹. Inevitably, this means that further cuts will be passed on to Local Government.

The impact on residents from policy reform and continued fiscal restraint

2.9 Alongside on-going austerity, and the impact this will have on local services, **many of Barnet's residents will continue to be affected by financial pressures for a number of years**. This is likely to be driven by high energy prices and rapidly increasing housing costs, the latter being most acute in Barnet and across London. For those residents working in the public sector, there will be continued restraint on wages for the next 5 years, which the Government will use as a mechanism to control inflation and reduce the budget deficit. Taken together, this means that, despite relatively low inflation at the present time, large numbers of people in certain parts of the borough are likely to continue to see their income squeezed.

2.10 Added to this, large numbers of residents in Barnet and across London will be further challenged by the Government's focus on **reducing welfare spending**. Total UK spending on welfare is forecast to be £222bn in 2014/15, some 30% of total public spending (£732bn)². That being the case, and considering that large areas of public spending such as health and education have been ring-fenced, creating a significant gearing effect, it is not possible to eradicate the country's budget deficit without taking action to cut the welfare bill. In recognition of this, **both Labour and the Conservatives have set out plans to cap spending on welfare over the next Parliament**.

2.11 Locally, **the elements of the Government's Welfare Reform programme that have been implemented thus far (the Benefit Cap; the under-occupancy charge; and changes to Council Tax Support) are having an impact**. Analysis shows that, in 2015/16, a total of £80 million will be cut from benefits going to Barnet residents – the 10th highest of all Local Authorities. In total, 27,000 Barnet residents have been impacted by benefit reforms introduced to date, with 4,600

¹ The pace of austerity is likely to alter slightly depending on who is in power and the decisions they take in relation to the balance between taxation and spending. Based on current forecasts, the Conservatives have said they will eradicate the deficit by 2018/19, whereas Labour will take a further year to do so.

² Budget 2014, HM Treasury, March 2014

residents facing a gap of more than £25 a week between their rent and housing benefit. The rising cost of housing across London and in Barnet³ has exacerbated the impact, with around 40% of those claiming housing benefit and Council Tax support in paid employment and the number of council tenants in rent arrears increasing.

2.12 Although the impact of Welfare Reform is being felt across the borough, the impacts are most acute in the more densely populated areas to the South and West and in more deprived Wards. It is these residents who will require intervention from the council and the wider public sector to enable them to move into employment and reduce their reliance on the state.

Increasing demand on local services from demographic change and policy reform

2.13 Pressure on public services will be exacerbated by **continued population growth and demographic change** over the next decade, consistent with wider growth that will be evident across London.

2.14 Between the 2001 and 2011 Census periods, total population in Barnet grew by 11.5% (London 11.6%) and it remains **the second of the most populous borough in London**, surpassed only by Croydon. Within the overall growth in population, the size of the average household has increased and growth in the young and old populations has been particularly rapid.

2.15 These trends are set to continue over the coming years. **Barnet's total population is expected to increase by nearly 5% over the next 5 years (an increase of 17,308)**, with further growth in both the young and old cohorts. The effects of an ageing population will become most acute, with the over-65 population forecast to grow by 10.4% over the next 5 years and 24% over the next decade⁴, placing increased pressure on social services and health budgets.

2.16 Alongside this, the council will also face significant financial pressure as a result the **Government's policy reform programme**, particularly in relation to the **Care Act** which sets out wide ranging reforms to the way health and social care is funded. The main component of the Act is the introduction of care accounts for people eligible to receive care and support, and a cap on the total cost that individuals contribute towards their care. Once individuals have contributed up to a maximum of £72,000, it will fall to Local Authorities to cover any costs above this level.

2.17 Although the Government has announced that additional funding will be provided to Local Authorities to cover the costs of the Care Act, analysis by London Councils has shown that this is likely to be inadequate. London Councils estimates that an additional £1.5 billion will required nationally from 2016 to 2020, against the Government's estimate of £1 billion⁵. Clearly,

³ Private sector rents in Barnet increased by 9% in 2013

⁴ GLA 2014 population estimates

⁵ Care and Support Funding Reform: Cost implications for London. London Councils.

any shortfall in the level of additional funding provided by Government will increase the financial burden on Local Authorities.

2.18 The **Children and Families Act** includes new responsibilities for Local Authorities to transform the system for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN), including those with disabilities. The Act extends the SEN system to include children from birth to the age of 25 and gives children, young people and their parents greater control in decisions about how their needs are met. To support this, a new co-ordinated assessment process involving health, education and social care is required that will develop an integrated plan for each child who needs it.

2.19 There is also a requirement for Local Authorities to publish a single source of information for children and their families about the range of services and support available to them, as well as to develop a personalised budget offer for families. Implementing this new system will be resource intensive in the short to medium-term, with the longer-term potential pressures arising from extending the age range to 25 still being explored.

The financial impact on Barnet Council and its local strategic partners

2.20 As **Chapter 6** sets out, the PSR has modelled the council's budget to 2020, based on assumptions around income and expenditure and the continued squeeze on public spending. Based on the outputs of the model, **the council expects its total budget to reduce by a further £72 million over the four year period from 2016/17 to 2019/20**. That is to say, the council's budget will be £72 million lower on 1 April 2020 than it was on 1 April 2016.

2.21 This level of budget reduction in the latter half of the decade is in addition to the £72 million that will be taken out of the council's budget from 2011/12 to 2015/16 and means that, by the end of the decade, the council's total spending power will be almost half of what it was at the start.

2.22 The PSR has also modelled the impact that further austerity and rising demand is likely to have on its **local strategic partners**: The Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group, Police, Job Centre Plus, Middlesex University, Barnet and Southgate College and Community Barnet. **The PSR forecasts that up to £185 million could be cut from the combined budgets of the council and its local strategic partners over the period from 2016/17 to 2019/20**.

2.23 It is clear, therefore, that the combined challenge of continued austerity, policy reform and rising demand is **a challenge that is shared across the local public sector and between the council and its local strategic partners**. Successfully meeting this challenge therefore requires a **collective response**.

3. FULFILLING THE COUNCIL'S DUTIES AND FOCUSING ON WHAT RESIDENTS CARE ABOUT

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- Although the council is facing further budget reductions of around 20%, the majority of the council's budget – some £200 million – will remain by the end of the decade.
- The council's focus will be to ensure that resources are prioritised effectively, in accordance with the priorities of residents; that statutory duties are effectively discharged; and that decision making is transparent and represents value for money.
- In making the required organisational and service reforms through to 2020, the council will work to ensure:
 - That Barnet's waste is disposed of and the borough's streets are cleaned.
 - That Barnet's parks and green spaces are looked after.
 - That the borough's network of roads and pavements and other transport infrastructure remains viable.
 - Continued housing development and regeneration across the borough.
 - That Barnet's schools remain amongst the best in the country - with enough places to meet future need - and equip children to become successful adults.
 - Effective safeguarding and protection for the borough's children, young people and vulnerable adults.
 - Personalised, integrated health and adult social care providing individuals and families with the right support to enable them to remain in their own home.
 - A new standard in customer services, with the way in which residents interact with the council significantly improved and simplified.

Although the council needs to make further savings, it will still have a budget of around £200 million by the end of the decade

3.1 Inevitably, when the attention of any organisation – or any family or individual - turns to the decisions they will need to take to cut costs, it often becomes the primary focus. However, it is important to remember that, whilst the council will need to take some very challenging decisions in order to manage a further 20% reduction to its budget, **around £200 million of taxpayer resources will remain under its control by 2020.**

3.2 The focus of the council will be to ensure that these **resources are prioritised effectively**, in accordance with the views expressed by residents through consultation, and that its statutory obligations are fulfilled. In doing so, the council will also ensure that the decisions it takes are transparent and represent value for money for the taxpayer.

Prioritising the issues residents care about

3.3 Given the scale of financial challenge, it would not be sensible to make generalisations about areas of council spending that will be protected at this stage. However, it is possible to

give an indication about the on-going responsibilities of the council and **the priorities that it will focus on over coming years**. The council has drawn on feedback received from residents through recent **Resident Perception Surveys**, which are in depth surveys of 2,000 residents conducted on a biannual basis and used as a reliable barometer of resident views.

3.4 Over the last two years, Barnet's Resident Perception Surveys have highlighted the maintenance of the borough's **roads and pavement networks** and **street cleanliness** as areas of high priority. **The quality of Barnet's schools and green spaces** have also been highlighted, with a similar picture emerging through the first phase of PSR consultation, and **these are issues that the council will continue to focus on**.

Box 1: Council resources will be used to ensure:

- That Barnet's waste is disposed of and streets are cleaned.
- That Barnet's parks and green spaces are looked after.
- That the borough's network of roads, pavements and other transport infrastructure remain viable and are able to cope with increased usage.
- Continued housing development and regeneration across the borough, to help meet the needs of a growing population.
- That Barnet's schools remain successful - with enough places to meet future need - and equip children to become successful adults.
- Effective safeguarding and protection for the borough's children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Personalised and integrated health and adult social care, providing individuals and families with the right support to enable them to remain in their own home.
- Improved and simplified processes for residents and businesses to interact with the council, for example to request a service or pay a bill.
- On-going engagement with the police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- New standards of customer service with users helping to co-design the services they use, making customer transactions easier and more intuitive.

Environmental services

3.5 The improvements made to the council's **waste and recycling offer** in October 2013 have created a step-change in the amount of waste that is recycled, with a corresponding reduction in the amount sent to land-fill. Not only is this better for the environment, it is also more cost effective for the council. Although further savings will need to be made to waste and recycling services, the council will **continue to ensure that the borough's waste and recycling is collected and disposed of**.

3.6 The council continues to be committed to **keeping the streets of Barnet clean**. Within the last six months, the council has invested in a fleet of mechanical sweepers to better clean Town Centres and residential streets. The cleanliness of the borough will be further improved by changes to ensure that cleansing routes are optimised and that Town Centre and residential sweeping beats are regularly reviewed to ensure a consistent standard of cleanliness.

3.7 Resident feedback consistently shows that Barnet's **parks and green spaces** are amongst its biggest assets and are a strong influence for people deciding to live in the borough. The council recognises this, and will **continue to ensure that the borough's parks and green spaces are looked after**, including through greater partnerships with community groups.

Housing, regeneration and infrastructure

3.8 As the borough continues to grow, the council will focus on the provision of high quality **housing and infrastructure** across the borough. Barnet's seven major regeneration schemes will create more than 20,000 new homes over the next 20 years. A total of 965 new affordable homes were built in 2011/12 and 2012/13, with capacity for 300 new council homes on non-regeneration estates and over 40 to be built over the next 2 years.

3.9 Over the past 3 years, the council has invested more than £10 million in the **borough's road and pavement networks** in addition to the annual base spend of £4 million. The council will **continue to ensure that Barnet's roads and pavements – as well as other parts of the borough's transport networks – remain viable** and are able to cope with increased usage.

Adult Social Care and Community Services

3.10 The council will **continue to achieve its core priorities and statutory duties in relation to adult social care and health**, including:

- Providing **timely and accurate information, advice and guidance** to residents with social care needs.
- Providing **appropriate assessment** and **personalised support** to both residents with care needs and family carers.
- Sustaining a **strong partnership with the local NHS** so that individuals can maintain and improve their **physical and mental health**.
- **Safeguarding vulnerable adults**.
- The **discharge of statutory duties** under a range of legislation including **community care; mental capacity; and crime and disorder**.
- Ensuring access to **leisure services** across the borough and **promoting physical health**.
- Partnership working through **community safety measures to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour**.

3.11 Adult social care services are going through a significant period of change, which will continue over the next few years as Local Authorities respond to the changes made through the **Care Act** and do more to **integrate health and social care**. Barnet has embraced this agenda and, as the council negotiates the challenges of the next few years, it will ensure that:

- The borough is **effectively prepared for the implementation of the Care Act**, both in terms of helping to prepare residents for the changes but also to ensure that the council discharges its statutory duties.
- The council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) makes effective use of the **Better Care Fund to integrate health and social care services**, providing greater choice and more coordinated services to residents whilst generating efficiency savings.
- The council implements its vision for adult social care, which is focused on **providing personalised, integrated care with more residents supported to live in their own home**.

Children's Services

Education & Skills

3.12 Barnet's **schools and education facilities** rank amongst the best in the country, with **91% of primary schools and 86% of secondary schools rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding**. Results from GCSE exams taken in the summer of 2013⁶ show that 71.5% of Year 11 pupils in Barnet obtained 5 GCSEs including English and Maths, compared to the national average of 59.2%, **placing the borough in the top 5% of Local Authorities nationally when it comes to exam success at key stage 4**.

3.13 Drawing on feedback from residents, **the council recognises that quality of the Barnet's schools is at the heart of the borough's success** and is one of reasons why so many people chose to live here. It is the top priority of the council's **Education and Skills Delivery Unit** to ensure that this success continues, and that the other core aims of Barnet's Education Strategy are achieved, namely that:

- Every child attends a **good or outstanding school**, as judged by Ofsted;
- The **attainment** and **progress** of children in Barnet schools is within the top 10% nationally;
- The progress of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils is accelerated, in order to **close the gap** between them and their peers.

3.14 In working to achieve these aims, the **Education and Skills Delivery Unit** will focus on achieving the following outcomes over the next few years, working closely with Family Services to deliver against the outcomes in Barnet's **Children and Young People's Plan**:

⁶ 2013 GCSE results, Department for Education

Box 2: Prioritising schools and post-16 participation

Schools

- Ensuring a sufficient supply of school places to enable all pupils to secure a place at a good school and improving attendance.
- Ensuring that all children with Special Educational Needs receive the support they need at school to achieve their best.
- Providing a clear Local Authority offer in relation to the effective monitoring and challenge of Barnet's schools and, where schools are identified as providing cause for concern, they get the right support to improve quickly.
- Ensuring effective use of the pupil premium to benefit of vulnerable pupils.
- Ensuring schools are well governed, with relevant and up to date training and support available to all schools, including Academies and Free Schools.

Post-16 participation, progression and skills

- Effective tracking and monitoring of 16+ young people.
- A broad offer for young people, encompassing a range of options including apprenticeships and employment opportunities.
- A sufficient local offer to enable young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to live and work in their local community.
- A cohesive strategic approach to equipping residents with the skills required to access employment.

Family Services

3.15 The council's **Family Services Delivery Unit** will continue to focus on:

- **Creating better life chances for children and young people** across the borough;
- **promoting family and community wellbeing** and encouraging **engaged, cohesive and safe communities**; and
- sustaining a strong partnership with the local NHS so that families and individuals can **maintain and improve their physical and mental health**.

3.16 In addition, Family Services will continue to deliver against outcomes in Barnet's Children and Young People's Plan around **ensuring a great start in life for every child, preparation for adulthood, early intervention and prevention, and keeping children safe**.

3.17 Family Services will **ensure effective delivery of the 200 or so statutory functions the council is required to provide**, including those related to **Adoption, Assessment, Care, Safeguarding Children, Youth Offending and Early Years support**. Barnet is a comparatively safe borough with a low proportion of children in care and maintaining that level will continue to be one of the service's priorities. Family Services will continue to ensure that its **safeguarding arrangements are effective and robust**, achieved by improving the interface between statutory services, for example Social Care and Youth Offending teams working closely together to identify and support young people who might be at risk.

3.18 Family Services will also drive improvement across all its practices by **increasing the participation of children and young people**, including in social care decisions that impact on them.

3.19 It is widely acknowledged that **effective early intervention and prevention** can improve outcomes for families and that support offered early on can significantly reduce the need to seek or receive more acute, costly support at a later stage. A review of cases of looked after children in the borough has identified the ‘toxic trio’ of **domestic violence, substance misuse and mental ill-health**, particularly when they were present in combination, as common features of families where harm to children has occurred. As such, tackling these issues will continue to be a priority and Family Services will work with partners in the Clinical Commissioning Group to coordinate the most effective commissioning and delivery of services.

Customer services

3.20 The council’s partnership with Capita to provide ‘back office’ functions – which includes IT, estates management, procurement, finance, HR and revenue and benefits – as well as front facing customer services will provide an improved service at lower cost. The contract provides for significant up-front investment to service improvements, which would not have been possible had the services remained in-house. In total, **the contract with Capita will save the council £125.4 million over 10 years.**

3.21 The partnership will also achieve **new standards of customer service**. It will see service users co-design the services they use; it will make customer transactions – such as paying Council Tax or requesting a parking permit – easier and more intuitive; and it will provide the council with a much richer source of customer insight about who is using local services and their preferences. This insight will help to design more responsive services in the future.

Developmental and Regulatory Services

3.22 The council’s partnership with Capita to provide Developmental and Regulatory Services (DRS)⁷ will **deliver a guaranteed £39m financial benefit over 10 years as well as significant upfront investment to sustain and improve these services**. The DRS contract will be managed via an innovative Joint Venture between the council and Capita, named ‘Regional Enterprise’ (Re).

3.23 The contract includes a range of key performance indicators which focus on **improving customer satisfaction** with the services provided, as well as growth related indicators such as **increasing business survival rates** in the borough – through improved transport and

⁷ Planning Development Management, Building Control and Structures, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing, Strategic Planning and Housing Strategy, Highways Network Management, Highways Traffic and Development, Land Charges, Cemetery and Crematoria, Regeneration.

infrastructure and local supply chain management – and **reducing youth unemployment** through investment in apprenticeships, enterprise hubs and partnerships with Middlesex University and Barnet and Southgate College.

3.24 The Joint Venture will provide a regional platform to deliver DRS services across the south of England. Re will create a strong consultancy base and a **'best in class' range of tradable services** to win and deliver work for other authorities. As a partner in the business, **the council is entitled to a share of all income generated**, meaning that Barnet's taxpayers will benefit from the future success of the enterprise.

4. THE IMPORTANCE OF GROWTH AND REGENERATION IN BARNET

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- Barnet will continue to be a successful, growing borough as part of a successful, growing World City. London's economy will grow strongly over the remainder of the decade, which represents a significant opportunity for Barnet's residents and businesses, as well as for the council.
- Growth and regeneration is crucial for the future of the council and the borough – it brings in more revenue from Council Tax, Business Rates and the New Homes Bonus which means that less will need to be cut from local services.
- The council will receive £5.6 million in recurrent income from regeneration by 2020, with a further £5.7 million accruing by 2025. The council will also receive £50 million in one off income by the end of the decade, to be invested in infrastructure.
- Barnet will go through a significant period of regeneration over the next decade and beyond, with seven major schemes being planned and implemented in areas such as Colindale, Dollis Valley and Brent Cross Cricklewood. In total, these schemes will create more than 20,000 new homes and provide for up to 30,000 new jobs across the borough.
- Prioritising regeneration and development – both in terms of Barnet's residential and commercial spaces – will revitalise communities and ensure that the borough continues to benefit from the proceeds of growth.
- Regeneration will also reduce future demand on services through the effective design of new communities, helping residents to live longer in their own homes and reduce pressure on social care services.

Responsible growth and regeneration for a prosperous future

4.1 Investment in regeneration and development is an **essential driver for economic growth**. Regeneration **creates jobs, reinvigorates communities and improves living standards**. Regeneration is also crucial in maintaining Barnet as a successful and prosperous London borough, where people want to live, work and study.

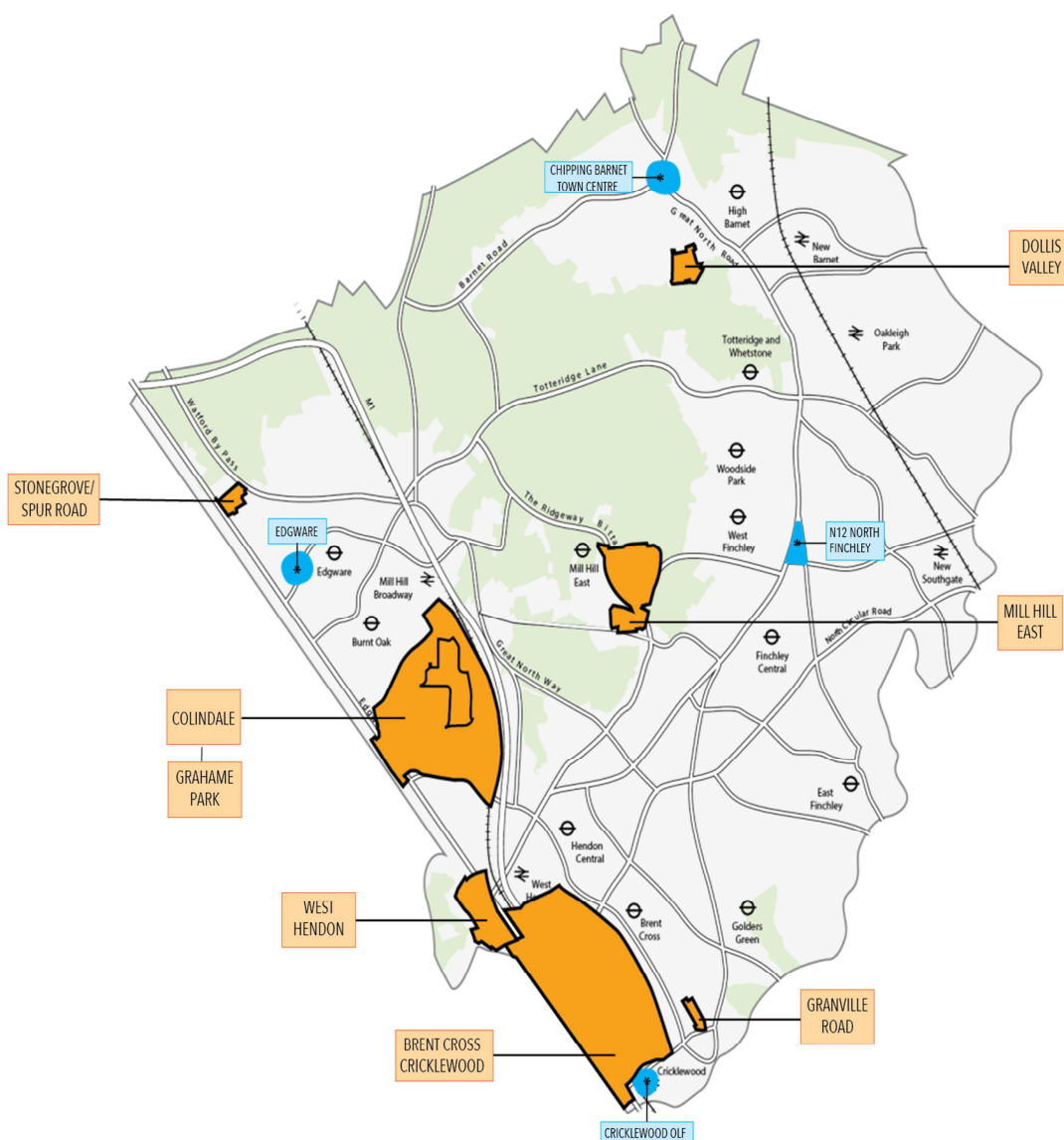
4.2 Barnet will go through a significant period of regeneration over the next decade and beyond, with seven major schemes being planned and implemented in areas such as Colindale, Dollis Valley and Brent Cross Cricklewood. In total, **these planned regeneration schemes will create more than 20,000 new homes and provide for up to 30,000 new jobs across the borough**. They will also bring **significant investment in infrastructure** – in transport, schools and community facilities.

4.3 Whilst the council is committed to embracing regeneration as a driver for continued success, it is essential that regeneration is delivered by the council and its partners in a **responsible and sustainable way**. The council will ensure that **Barnet's green and open spaces are protected** so that the borough remains an attractive place where people want to live now and in the future.

The benefits of Barnet’s major regeneration schemes: New homes, local jobs, modern infrastructure and revitalised communities

4.4 There are seven major regeneration schemes either being planned or being implemented across Barnet. In total, the council expects to receive **£5.6 million from the proceeds of growth** – in other words, the recurrent income from the planned regeneration schemes already in the pipeline – by 2020, with a **further £5.7 million of recurrent income generated by 2025**. The council will also benefit from **one off income of over £50 million** from regeneration by 2020, to be invested in infrastructure.

Figure 1: The location of Barnet’s major regeneration schemes



Box 3: The benefits of Barnet's major regeneration schemes

Colindale and Grahame Park

- The regeneration of Colindale, in the west of the borough, is Barnet's largest regeneration scheme. 3,000 new homes have already been built in Colindale since 2010 and, by 2025, the regeneration will create over 10,000 new homes, with around 1,000 jobs created by 2016.
- £700 million will be invested in the complete regeneration of Grahame Park, Barnet's largest housing estate, over the next 13 years which will transform the community.

Brent Cross/Cricklewood

- Planning consent for the £4.5 billion, privately funded regeneration scheme at Brent Cross Cricklewood, in the south west of the borough, was issued in 2010 and modifications agreed in 2014. In 2014, the council started the process to appoint a new development partner to deliver the scheme.
- The plan includes the refurbishment and extension of the Brent Cross shopping centre, creating 7,500 new homes and commercial space for up to 27,000 new jobs. Construction is planned to start in 2016 and will take 20 years to complete. The development will include significant investment in major infrastructure and transport including new roads, junctions and bridges, a new Thameslink railway station and replacement bus station at Brent Cross, as well as new schools and community facilities.

Stonegrove and Spur Road

- The £230 million regeneration of the Stonegrove and Spur Road Estates in Edgware, to the north of the borough, will create a revitalised, attractive and vibrant neighbourhood. The current mix of low and medium rise blocks, constructed in the 1960s and 70s, will be replaced with nearly 1,000 new homes. By March 2014, 388 new homes had been built and the scheme is on track to be completed by 2018.
- There will be road improvements to important junctions between Spur Road and Green Lane and investment in community facilities, with a new combined community hall and church buildings.

West Hendon

- The £500 million regeneration scheme at West Hendon, to the west of the borough, will create a mixed tenure of around 2,000 new homes. By February 2014, 186 new homes had been completed.
- A revised Masterplan was given planning consent in 2013 and the next major phase of 216 homes commenced in January 2014. The scheme will include the replacement of the existing community centre with a new, modern facility and the reconfiguration of the road network to improve access and traffic flow.

Dollis Valley

- The £129 million privately funded regeneration of the Dollis Valley Estate, to the north of the borough, will create a new sustainable neighbourhood with mixed tenure housing and improved transport links. The first phase started on site in January 2014 and the scheme is due for completion in the Spring of 2015.
- The existing 436 flats and maisonettes will be replaced with a mixed tenure high quality development of up to 616 new homes. Within the community space to be created, there will be a number of social enterprises co-located together, as well as training facilities to provide skills and job opportunities. There will also be a nursery providing childcare and additional employment opportunities.

Mill Hill

- The £200 million regeneration of Mill Hill, in the centre of the borough, aims to create a revitalised neighbourhood on the existing 83 acre site, with good progress made on site.
- The planned regeneration will create 2,174 new homes, together with a primary school, modern community facilities, and employment and retail opportunities with up to 500 permanent direct jobs and 40 indirect jobs. The new primary school and the east-west link road are due to open in 2014.

Granville Road

- The planned £40 million privately funded regeneration of the Granville Road Estate, situated at the southern end of the borough, includes the construction of around 145 new homes.
- The development agreement has been signed and a planning application is expected during 2014.

Effective regeneration to reduce demand on health and social care services

4.5 Not only is the prioritisation of regeneration and development essential for the continued success of the borough, in terms of building new homes for new and existing residents and creating commerce and jobs, it is also **an essential component of the council's strategy for reducing pressure on services over the longer-term.**

4.6 The effective design of modern residential developments in communities that are well connected and encourage people to lead active lives through access to leisure and recreational activities, will **help Barnet's residents live healthier lives and live longer in their own homes which will reduce pressure on health and social care services over the longer term.**

5. OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL AND PROMOTING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- In the years ahead, Barnet will continue to be a successful borough as it benefits from being part of a successful London.
- However, there will be residents who are not currently able to take advantage of this opportunity and who are at risk of missing out – perhaps because of health problems or because they do not have the right skills or qualifications to move into employment.
- This creates a role for the council – working effectively with other parts of the public sector – to identify those residents who need a degree of support to allow them to take advantage of Barnet’s success.
- The council is working in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions, local Job Centres, skills providers, employers and Public Health to provide guidance to residents impacted by the Government’s programme benefit reform, with the aim of more people moving into work and reducing dependency on services.
- Despite a reduction in unemployment in Barnet over the past 12 months, there remains a significant cohort of residents who have been out of work for some time. The council has joined forces with Jobcentre Plus, Barnet and Southgate College and providers of the Government’s Work Programme to agree a Partnership Agreement which aims to reduce unemployment and reliance on public services.
- Greater community participation in local issues will be an essential part of the change the council will need to achieve over the next five years. In order to negotiate the challenges ahead, the council will need to work with residents to increase self-sufficiency, reduce reliance on services, and make the best possible use of community strengths and knowledge to tailor services to need.
- The council will develop a Community Participation Strategy and Action Plan, with the aim of achieving a greater level of collaboration with communities and enabling residents to take on greater responsibility for their local areas.

Ensuring that growth and success remains an opportunity for all

5.1 Barnet’s position as a **successful London borough** means that the benefits of London’s growing economy will bring continued prosperity to the area - and to large numbers of Barnet’s residents and businesses – with limited intervention from the council.

5.2 However, there will be residents who are not currently able to take advantage of this opportunity and **who are at risk of missing out** – perhaps because of health problems or because they do not have the right skills and qualifications to move into employment. This creates a role for the council – working with other parts of the public sector such as health and Job Centres – to identify those residents who need a degree of support to allow them to take advantage of Barnet’s success.

5.3 This means **providing the right interventions – in relation to issue such as skills, employment, health care and education – to the right people, at the right time**. This is not about creating a culture of dependency and reliance on the state – most people want to live

independent lives without the need of support – rather, the opposite. **Better enabling residents to help themselves will help to reduce reliance on public services**, and is a crucial component of the council’s long-term financial plan.

Welfare reform

5.4 The Government’s **welfare reform programme** – which is an essential component of plans to eradicate the UK’s budget deficit – has had an impact on large numbers of residents across the borough. The council has worked with the Department for Work and Pensions and local Job Centres to **communicate the changes to the benefit system to residents so that they can make the necessary adjustments**.

5.5 The council’s overriding aim is to see **more people entering employment as the primary means of dealing with changes to benefits**, and has used the funding available to it – such as Discretionary Housing Payments – in such a way as to **incentivise work**. However, some residents will **require support to overcome personal challenges that act as barriers to employment** – such as access to childcare, health concerns, a lack of skills or qualifications – and the council has put in place policies to provide the right interventions to enable people to move into work and reduce pressure on local services.

Box 4: Case study – preparing residents for Benefit Reform and supporting them into work

Local Government Association analysis shows that the largest impacts of the Government’s benefit reform programme are felt in London. This includes not just those boroughs that have traditionally been identified as ‘deprived’ but also boroughs such as Barnet, where high housing costs means that large numbers of residents are in receipt of housing benefit. Barnet has the 10th highest number of people impacted by the Benefit Cap of all English Local Authorities. Around 27,000 Barnet residents are impacted by reforms to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, 60% of which are working households.

The council has worked in partnership with the Department of Work and Pension and local Job Centres to prepare families to manage the changes brought in by benefit reform and help them find work to move off the Benefit Cap. A Benefit Cap Task Force - a co-located team comprising officers from Barnet Homes, the council’s Revenues and Benefits Service, and Jobcentre Plus – was set up in June 2013 to support people to find work and minimise the numbers of residents at risk of becoming homeless by helping them to find suitable accommodation. To date, the Task Force has engaged 92% of people affected by the Benefit Cap and has reduced the risk of people becoming homeless. 31% of residents supported by the Task Force have found work – higher than the majority of London boroughs. Across London, figures from the Department of Work and Pensions suggest that 27% have come off the Benefit Cap by moving into work in 2013/14, with DWP estimates in March 2014 suggesting that, in Barnet, this figure is higher at around 33%.

In the next year, Barnet will build on this success by preparing residents for the implementation of further benefit reforms including the introduction of Universal Credit and the transfer to Personal Independence Payments. The creation of the joint Task Force represents a new model of service provision that joins up support for the most vulnerable with the aim of helping them to improve their lives. This approach delivers more effective services; better outcomes for individuals; and a more integrated public sector and is a model that the council will continue to develop.

Skills and employment

5.6 Over the past 12 months, **economic growth in London has seen unemployment fall to almost pre-financial crisis levels**. In Barnet, there has been a 21% reduction in Job Seekers Allowance claims, a 25% reduction in youth unemployment and a 23% reduction in long term unemployment claims.

5.7 The £1m invested to **support young people into work and training** through the council's 'Platforms' programme has helped bring about this change, by engaging with over 263 young people and 70 businesses. **In 2013, the proportion of young people in Barnet aged 16-18 that were recorded as not in education, employment or training ('NEET') fell to 2.3% - the fourth lowest figure in the country and well below the London average of 3.8%⁸.**

5.8 Despite this success, there remains a **significant cohort of residents who have been out of the labour market for some time**. In response, the council has joined forces with Jobcentre Plus, Barnet and Southgate College and providers of the Government's Work Programme to develop a **Partnership Agreement aimed at reducing unemployment across the borough**. The agreement will be underpinned by a **Joint Action Plan** to monitor performance. The focus of the agreement will be to support vulnerable and hard to reach cohorts into work; develop career pathways into higher level jobs in the care sector; and a focus on retail and construction opportunities that will derive from regeneration activity across the borough.

Unlocking the potential of community participation

5.9 Greater **community participation, engagement and involvement** will be an essential part of the change the council will need to achieve over the next five years. In order to negotiate the challenges ahead, the council will work with residents to **increase self-sufficiency, reduce reliance on statutory services, and make the best possible use of community strengths and knowledge to tailor services to need**.

5.10 The council's strategic vision is to **develop a new relationship with residents that enables them to be independent and resilient and to take on greater responsibility for their local areas**. This is not about the council shifting its responsibility to residents – it is about recognising that residents want to be more involved in what happens in their local areas. Not only does this benefit residents, it will also **increase community cohesion and reduce the pressure on statutory services**. As such, **more effective resident engagement and greater community participation becomes a necessary pre-cursor to meeting the challenges facing the council**.

5.11 In many cases, residents and community groups are better placed to provide local services and understand the challenges facing their communities. The council must do more to take this into account when deciding how services are designed and delivered. This has the potential to enable residents to gain opportunities to develop their skills and capacity and communities will have stronger networks and connections and become more cohesive as a result. Greater levels of community activity also has the potential to provide both residents and

⁸ Department for Education, May 2014

the council with more choice about how priority outcomes are achieved, through a broader range of options from which to choose.

5.12 Done effectively, greater collaboration leads to services that are **better informed about local need** and are **improved and more efficient as a result**. This will enable the council to use the most locally appropriate ways of delivering services, making use of the work of voluntary and community groups and formal and informal networks in addition to its own activity, and develop a structured approach to how existing and future capacity and demand is managed.

5.13 The council will support this vision by **developing plans that engage residents and communities with the objective of them taking on more responsibility and, where appropriate, to transfer services, assets or functions to the community**. The council will develop a **Community Participation Strategy and Action Plan**, with the aim of achieving the vision of greater collaboration with communities.

The council's Voluntary & Community Sector development partner

5.14 Alongside the development of an effective strategy, the council will need a strong **voluntary and community sector (VCS) development partner** to help realise its vision. That is why the council has gone out to tender to procure an effective local partner, or partners, to help put the practicalities in place to unlock the potential of community participation.

5.15 Barnet has a large and diverse VCS, with around **1,400 organisations across the borough**. The sector is estimated to contribute in excess of £250 million to the local economy. The council does not have the capacity or networks to engage with a sector so large (and yet composed of many small organisations) and there are many groups considered 'hard to reach' who require encouragement in order to participate in their local areas. **The council needs a VCS development partner with appropriate networks, local knowledge, independence, credibility and understanding of the reasons why people choose to get involved in their local areas in order to encourage communities to participate and share responsibility for tackling local challenges.**

5.16 The council will work with its VCS development partner to unlock the potential of Barnet's communities through initiatives to **increase volunteering and participation; build networks of people with shared interests; set up community trusts to support capacity; develop social investment models; support the transfer of strategic assets from the council to communities; and nurture grassroots initiatives that harness the high levels of social capital in the borough.**

5.17 There is also a key role for the VCS partner to play in supporting the **Community Offer for Barnet Adult Social Care** and the council's shared vision with the Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group for **integrating health and social care** services.

6. PRIORITIES & SPENDING REVIEW 2014 – APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- In taking forward the PSR, the council's objectives were to:
 - Develop a clear sense of the council's longer-term strategic priorities and outcomes, through a process of engagement with residents;
 - Ensure that the council's future strategic priorities and outcomes are more cross-cutting and not based around Delivery Unit silos;
 - Ensure that these priorities are developed in the context of the strategic challenges facing the borough over the medium to long-term;
 - Implement a process for ensuring that the council's resources are allocated in accordance with these priorities; and
 - Make decisions around spending and the allocation of resources based on evidence of impact and effectiveness.
- As a first step, the council developed a financial model to forecast the scale of the financial challenge over the period 2016/17 to 2019/2020, based on assumptions about future expenditure and income.
- Having established the scale of the challenge, the next step of the PSR was to develop a framework to guide the development of options for meeting the challenge. The PSR framework set out three work streams - Efficiency; Growth; and Service Transformation – with the development of options taken forward as part of each work stream.
- The PSR has been based on extensive consultation and engagement, in three phases:
 - Phase 1: Consulting residents on what matters to them as the council begins its thinking about meeting the challenge.
 - Phase 2: 'A Call for Evidence' - consulting residents, local and national professional organisations and think tanks on their views about how the council should go about meeting the challenge.
 - Phase 3: Consulting residents on specific service by service savings proposals before final decisions are made by elected Councillors and proposals are cast into budgets.
- The outputs from the first phase of consultation have been used to establish a set of principles against which the development of PSR options have been framed. These principles are: Fairness; Responsibility; and Quality of Life for All.
- Further evidence from the PSR Call for Evidence will be used to inform the development of savings and income generation options by elected Councillors through Council Committees.

The objectives of the PSR

6.1 The PSR was designed as **a 12 month process of research and analysis to understand the scale of the financial challenge to the end of the decade, determine the council's longer-term priorities – reflecting the priorities of residents - and set a new Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2019/20**. The PSR process has been underpinned by **consultation**, both with residents and with local and national commentators.

6.2 As set out in **Chapter 1**, the fundamental driver of the PSR was to ensure that decisions taken by elected Councillors about how to allocate budgets across different part of the council – and the decisions required to live within those budgets – were taken on the basis of a **considered, bottom up process informed by engagement and consultation** and to avoid decisions being taken in an arbitrary, top down way. The objectives of the PSR, which were developed at the start of the process, were to:

- Develop a clear sense of the council’s longer-term strategic priorities and outcomes, through a process of engagement which reflects the aspirations of residents;
- Ensure that the council’s future strategic priorities and outcomes – and the means of delivering them – are more cross-cutting and not based around Delivery Unit silos;
- Ensure that these priorities are developed in the context of the strategic challenges facing the borough over the medium to long-term;
- Implement a process for ensuring that the council’s resources are allocated in accordance with these priorities; and
- Make decisions around spending and the allocation of resources based on evidence of impact and effectiveness.

Calculating the council’s spending envelope to 2020

6.3 The first step of the PSR was to **determine the scale of the financial challenge facing the council to the end of the decade**, by modelling the council’s budget over the period from 2016/17 to 2019/2020. In doing so, the council developed a financial model based on assumptions about the forecast level of expenditure and income in order to determine the gap between the two.

6.4 This is a forecast, which involves taking account of a number of variables, and is therefore **susceptible to change**. However, that being the case, the financial model is based on the most recent official statistics in relation to issues such as demography and inflation and is based on HM Treasury assumptions about future public spending reductions. As such, the council believes that the model **represents a credible basis upon which to base future spending plans**.

Box 5: Modelling the council’s budget to 2020

Expenditure variables modelled:

- Pay and non-pay inflation
- Assumptions relating to the North London Waste Authority levy.
- Capital financing costs.
- Contingency levels.
- Spending on concessionary fares.
- Demographic assumptions.

Income variables modelled:

- Public Health allocations.
- Business rates and top up grant.
- Revenue Support Grant.
- Council Tax income.
- Education Support Grant, Council Tax & Housing benefit admin grants.

The outputs of the model: A £72 million budget gap between 2016/17 - 2019/20

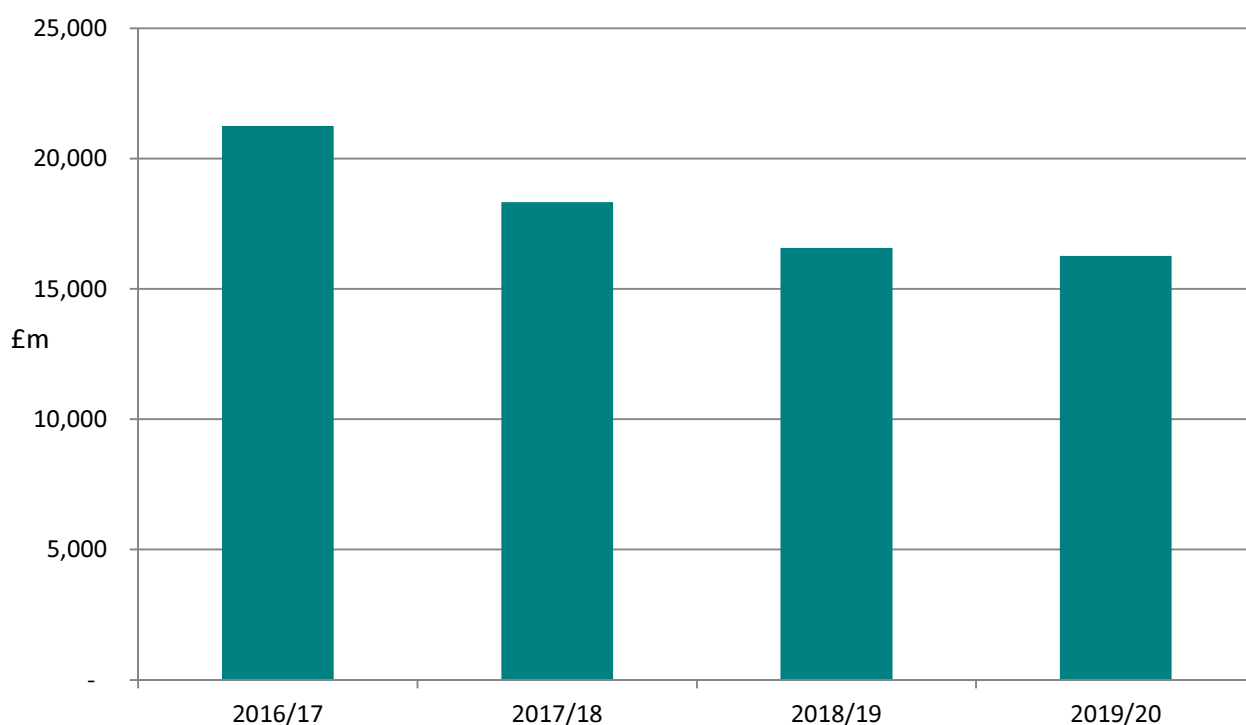
6.5 The PSR financial model was used to develop the council’s forecast budget over the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. The output of this modelling has shown that **the scale of the budget gap facing the council over the period is forecast to be £72 million**, with the following profile:

Table 1: Profile of forecast Barnet Council budget gap from 2016/17 to 2019/20

2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	Total £m
21	18	17	16	72

6.6 That is to say, **the council will have £72 million less available to spend on 1 April 2020 than it does on 1 April 2016**. When combined with the £72 million reduction to the council’s budget over the period 2010-11 to 2015-16, **the council’s spending power – when factoring in inflation - will be around 50% lower at the end of the decade than it was at the start**.

Graph 1: The council’s forecast £72 million budget gap from 2016/17 to 2019/20



Developing a PSR framework

6.7 An important element of the PSR was the need to **develop a framework early on in the process in order to draw a distinction between the options being developed**. The PSR framework was based around three work streams:

Box 6: The Priorities & Spending Review Framework

1. **Be more efficient:** The development of measures to generate efficiency savings through *business* transformation programmes, workforce development, better procurement and more effective use of assets.
2. **Growth and income:** The development of measures to maximise income through increasing the tax base (housing and regeneration) and generating income for the council.
3. **Service transformation:** The development of measures plans to reduce the cost of services through the commissioning of *service* transformation programmes, taking a ‘Whole Place’ approach to service delivery across the public sector; and the de-commissioning of lower priority services.

6.8 The PSR framework served as an important mechanism for **guiding the development of options for making savings and generating income** across different parts of the organisation and with local partners.

PSR consultation and engagement

6.9 From the outset, it was the council’s intention that the PSR would be based on a process of **consultation and engagement** – not only with residents but also with local and national partners, think tanks, membership organisations and commentators. To develop options for the future of the council and for local services without basing analysis on the views and preferences of Barnet’s residents would not be feasible.

6.10 As such, the consultation strand of the PSR is perhaps the most important element of the process, as it not only grounds the development of options in the context of **what matters to residents** but it also provides a degree of **external challenge** to the council’s thinking, to ensure that it is informed by learning and best practice from elsewhere.

Box 7: Objectives of the PSR consultation and engagement

- **The objectives of the consultation strand of the PSR were to:**
 - Understand resident views about the services in their local area.
 - Identify what residents value about their local area.
 - Discuss what residents think the service priorities should be for their local area.
 - Identify whether there are areas where Barnet needs to focus its investment to meet needs and demand.
 - Understand what residents feel the priorities should be for the vulnerable in times of austerity.
 - Identify where there are opportunities and how the Council can support individuals getting more involved in their area e.g. mentoring, skills development, looking after their area, and other volunteering.

Approach to consultation and engagement in the PSR

6.11 The consultation and engagement strand of the PSR has been based around three distinct phases:

Phase 1: Consulting residents on what matters to them as the council begins its thinking about meeting the challenge

- Phase 1 was conducted by OPM – an independent research organisation – using a qualitative approach based on the use of Citizen Panel events and Focus Groups. A total of 215 residents were engaged during the first phase of PSR consultation.
- Three Citizens' Panel workshops and 16 focus groups were held between October and December 2013 and included a reflective sample of the local population, while focus groups were targeted at specific service users, businesses and some protected characteristic groups.
- A summary of the first phase of consultation, published in February 2014, can be found at the following link: <http://barnet-challenge-opm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Summary-report-phase-1-Barnet-Challenge-consultation.pdf>

Phase 2: A 'Call for Evidence' - consulting residents, local and national professional organisations and think tanks on their views about how the council should go about meeting the challenge

- The 'Call for Evidence' phase of PSR consultation is an online consultation which builds on the feedback from residents in Phase 1.
- The Call for Evidence moves from asking residents for their broad views of the borough, their priorities and council services, to asking questions of groups and organisations about how change might be brought about and the future of local public services. The Call for Evidence asks for ideas about how the council should prioritise, how it can save money and how it can generate more income.

Phase 3: Consulting residents on specific service by service savings proposals before final decisions are made by elected Councillors and proposals are cast into budgets

- The third phase of consultation will happen on specific savings and income proposals ahead of final decisions being taken by elected Councillors. Consultation on specific proposals will happen through the council's annual Finance and Business Planning Process in the usual way.

Messages from the first phase of resident consultation and the development of a set of principles to frame the PSR: **Fairness; Responsibility; and Quality of Life**

6.12 The first phase of PSR consultation enabled the council to construct a framework for discussion on the PSR through the development of a set of **PSR principles**, based on the views of Barnet's residents. These principles were used to frame the development of PSR options.

6.13 Specifically, the results of the consultation demonstrated the need for the council to develop a programme of transformation that supports the principles of: **Fairness; Responsibility; and Quality of Life for All**.

Box 8: Barnet's PSR principles - Fairness; Responsibility; and Quality of Life

Fairness

- The consultation demonstrates that residents value the support the council provides to the most vulnerable and there is a belief that the council should do all it can to support everyone to enjoy the advantages of life in Barnet.
- There is support for the council to help local businesses, and a belief that the council should be more entrepreneurial and market its services more widely.
- No one, unsurprisingly, identifies services for which they would pay more, but there is a great deal of support for the council being more entrepreneurial in the development process.

Responsibility

- The consultation demonstrates that, when residents come to terms with the scope of the reduction in public spending and its impact on local services, they understand the need for the council to change and that residents and voluntary organisations will have to play a bigger part in 'Keeping Barnet Barnet'.
- The deal proposed to the council though the consultation is that the council should actively make voluntary activity and community participation as simple as possible. Those consulted expressed a desire for the council to show how it is on the side of residents and businesses and is prepared to support the local community to look after itself.

A Good Quality of Life for all

- The consultation demonstrates that Barnet's parks and green spaces are very highly valued by residents and are, along with education, key indicators of quality of life in the borough. They are also areas where it may be possible to mobilise more voluntary activities.
- The council seems to be blamed in part for the failings of local high streets and there is a belief that the council needs to be a participant in developing their future.
- The consultation shows that the most frequent, heavy users of public services - those with the most to lose from change - are also the most sceptical about the scale of the financial challenge facing the council and about the need to reform services to meet that challenge.
- The consultation also demonstrates a lack of understanding about the need for on-going austerity and a sense that spending cuts were now a thing of the past.

Taking account of views expressed through the PSR Call for Evidence

6.14 The **Call for Evidence** phase of the PSR consultation – which asks for views on how the council can meet the financial challenges it faces – is a crucial component of how the council will generate ideas for savings and service reform.

6.15 Responses from residents and from local and national professional bodies and think tanks as part of the Call for Evidence will be **considered, collected and presented to elected Councillors as savings and income generation proposals are developed through Council Committees.**

7. MEETING THE CHALLENGE – PSR SAVINGS AND INCOME OPTIONS

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- The council’s total revenue budget in 2015/16 will be £280 million, with 60% of spend going on social care services for children and adults and on environmental services including waste, recycling and street cleansing. Although savings will need to be maximised across all areas of the organisation, significant reductions will need to be made from within these services if the council is going to close the £72 million gap in its finances.
- Council resources are spent mainly on 3 things: Workforce; supplies and services from third parties; and buildings and assets. In making the £72 million of savings required, the council will have to spend less across all of these areas.
- There is a clear trade-off between spending less on services and generating additional income. The council will need to consider the relative balance between spending reductions and increased income – including from Council Tax - in meeting the financial gap.
- In total, the PSR has identified options that have the potential so save the council up to £50.8 million through reduced spending and increased income over the period from 2016/17 to 2019/20 and go towards closing the £72 million budget gap.
- The options identified through the PSR can be categorised as follows:

Category	Potential £m
Increasing organisational efficiency	24.4
Reducing demand, increasing independence	10.0
Service redesign	6.2
Growth and Income	10.2
Total	50.8

- Of the total £50.8 million identified, nearly half (48%) come from increasing efficiency. Of the remainder, 20% comes from reducing demand and increasing independence; 20% from the proceeds of growth and taking a more entrepreneurial approach to maximise income; and 12% from redesigning and integrating services.
- It will be for elected Councillors to decide whether to take the options forward to implementation, through decisions at Council Committees and informed by public consultation. In order to transact this, the PSR has categorised the options identified according to areas of responsibility for each Committee.

7.1 As set out in **Chapter 6**, financial modelling shows that the council is facing a forecast budget gap of £72 million over the period from 2016/17 to 2019/20. This chapter focuses on **the options for making savings and generating income for closing that gap that have been identified through the PSR.**

7.2 Options have been developed by council officers, working with the council’s public sector and wider strategic partners and drawing on feedback from resident consultation. **It will be for elected Councillors, as representatives for Barnet’s residents, to determine which of these options – and others that the council will continue to develop – will be taken forward through**

to implementation, following public consultation on specific proposals. Many of the options will require further iteration and development to ensure that the associated risks and barriers to delivery are identified and mitigated as business cases for each option are developed.

Barnet’s total budget

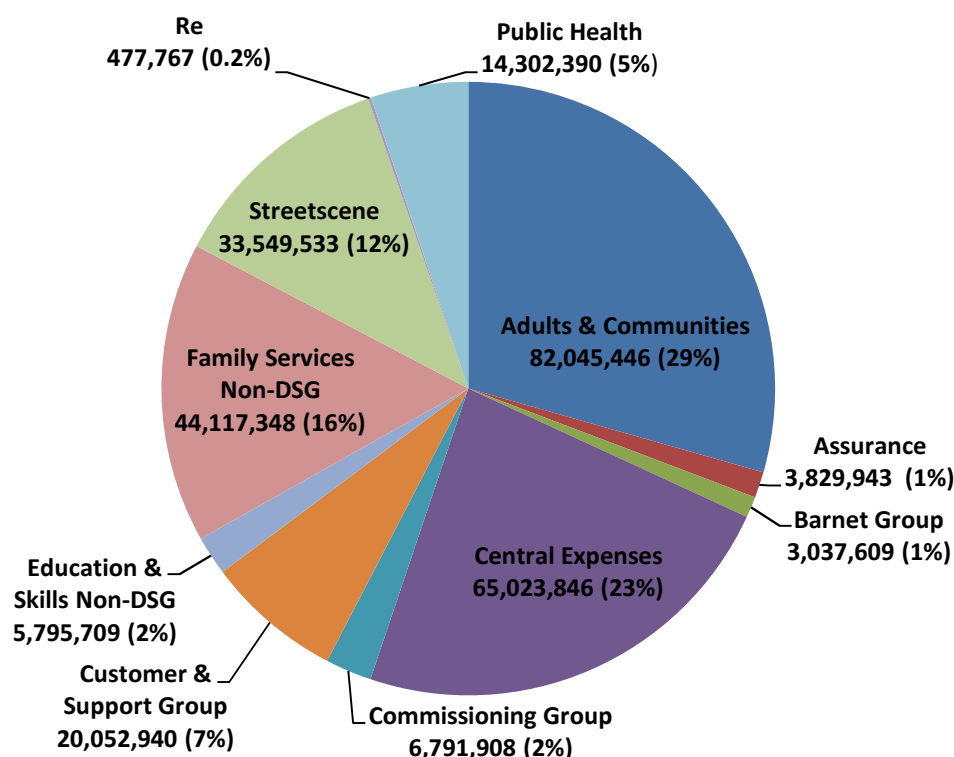
7.3 Before outlining the PSR options, it is important to set the context by considering how the council’s current budget is currently constructed and, therefore, where savings will need to be made.

7.4 The council’s total base net budget position in 2015/16⁹ will be £280 million (excluding the dedicated schools grant). This is £72 million lower than the council’s base budget in 2010/11, before the first round of spending cuts were passed on from Government.

7.5 Of this £280 million, the majority of council spending is allocated to three main areas which make up over 60% of the budget:

- **Adult Social Services** - £82 million (29%);
- **Children’s Services** (Family Services and Education & Skills combined) - £50 million (18%); and
- **Streetscene** (parks, environment, street cleaning) - £33.5 million (12%).

7.6 This means that, in order to negotiate a further budget reduction of £72 million by 2020, a large proportion of savings will need to be found from within these three budget areas.



⁹ 2015/16 is the final year of the council’s current Medium Term Financial Strategy period and represents the baseline for the new MTFS through to 2020.

7.7 Savings will need to be found from within the **central expenses budget**, which includes spending on **staff redundancy, concessionary fares, levies, contingency and the financing of new school builds**.

How the council budget is spent

7.8 In general, Local Authorities spend their resources in **three main areas**. This means that, if the council is going to spend less, it follows that spending on one or all of these three things will need to reduce:

- **Workforce costs** – at the beginning of 2016/17, Barnet will spend £66 million a year on its workforce.
- **Supplies and services from third parties** – at the beginning of 2016/17, Barnet will spend £177.5m a year on supplies and services from third parties.
- **Buildings and assets** - at the beginning of 2016/17, Barnet will spend £4.9m a year on buildings and assets.

7.9 There is a **clear trade-off between spending less on services and generating more income**. Local Authorities can raise income by:

- **Increasing fees and charges** for a range of council services.
- **Changing eligibility criteria** for access to certain services.
- **Commercialising services**.
- **Increasing the Council Tax rate** – increasing Council Tax by 2% raises roughly £2.5m a year.
- **Changing the Council Tax contribution rate** for those eligible for Council Tax support.
- **Growing the tax base** – by building more residential properties and encouraging more enterprise and commerce.

7.10 As the council takes decisions about how to achieve a further £72 million of savings over the latter half of the decade, it will need to consider **the balance not only between how savings are made – for instance, savings to workforce, suppliers and assets – but also the relative balance between spending reductions and increased income**.

Categorising the options developed through the PSR

7.11 As the PSR process progressed and the evidence base developed, opportunities for saving money and increasing income began to emerge. Analysis of these emerging options identified a level of commonality between them, which led to the development of **four categories of intervention** that the council should consider as it puts in place the reforms required to meet its future financial challenges.

7.12 The **four PSR themes** are:

Box 9: Priorities & Spending Review themes

1. **Increasing organisational efficiency** – Opportunities for the council to become more efficient without discernibly affecting the quality of services to residents (i.e. doing more – or the same – with less).
2. **Reducing demand, increasing independence** – With less money and rising demand, both the council and the borough’s residents will need to behave differently. The council will need to focus on enabling residents to help themselves and each other. This will be achieved through a variety of means:
 - Intervening where needed in a targeted way, with the aim of reducing reliance on public services state.
 - Investing in preventative services, such as better targeting of early years support to prevent young people from entering social care services.
 - Enabling residents to take greater personal and civic responsibility, through the development of a new relationship with residents based around greater transparency, engagement and involvement in local services.
3. **Service redesign** – Adopting a first principles approach to how the council fulfils a number of its statutory and non-statutory obligations has revealed opportunities to re-design services in a way that better targets support to those who used services and reduce cost, including through greater integration across public sector agencies.
4. **Growth and Income** - Regeneration and measures to boost local economic growth will increase the council’s residential and commercial tax yield. There are also opportunities to raise additional income from fees and charges, in areas where it is legally viable and in a way that is fair to the users of services.

Options for savings and income generation identified through the PSR

7.13 Through the PSR process, the council has identified options to make savings and increase income across the organisation which total approximately £50.8 million over the period from 2016/17 to 2019/20.

7.14 The total financial benefit of the PSR options package may change due to differing degrees of risk involved in delivering the options. The £50.8 million value should therefore be seen as an approximate figure at this stage, pending further analysis through the development of detailed business cases.

Box 10: PSR options – financial summary:

- In total, the PSR has identified £50.8 million of savings and income generation options over the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 towards closing the total forecast budget gap of £72 million over the period.
- The options identified have been categorised as follows:

Category	Potential £m
Increasing organisational efficiency	24.4
Reducing demand, increasing independence	10.0
Service redesign	6.2
Growth and Income	10.2
Total	50.8

- Of the total £50.8 million of options identified, nearly half (48%) come from options for increasing organisational efficiency.
- Of the remainder, 20% comes from options for reducing demand and increasing independence; 20% from the proceeds of growth and increased income; and 12% from service redesign and integration.

Proposed share of PSR options allocated to Council Committees

7.15 The PSR process has identified the scope for generating savings and increasing income across all areas of the council, by analysing spending on items such as workforce and contracts within each of the council’s Delivery Units and the central directorates (the Commissioning Group and Assurance Group). Through detailed analysis, the PSR has identified a quantum of savings that it would be feasible to make within each Delivery Unit by going further on organisational efficiency and also through the redesign of services.

7.16 Now that the PSR process has concluded, it will be for elected Councillors to take decisions on whether to take the proposals set out in this report forward through to implementation, through decisions at Council Committees. In order to transact this, the PSR options have been categorised according to areas of responsibility for each Committee.

7.17 It is proposed that the £50.8 million of PSR options are allocated to the 7 Council Committees and the Health and Well Being Board according to the following share:

Council Committee	Share of PSR options £m	% of total budget overseen by Committee
Adults and Safeguarding Committee	12.6	16%
Children, Education and Libraries Committee	8.0	16%
Environment Committee	5.9	18%
Community Leadership Committee	0.8	48%
Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee	10.1	24%
Policy and Resources Committee	12.7	
Health and Well Being Board	0.7	5%
Total	50.8	100

7.18 It will be for each Council Committee to **work through the detail of the options set out in this report – through the development of detailed business cases and the commissioning of further analysis where required – and take final decisions on which options to implement.**

PSR savings and income options by Council Committee – detail

7.19 This section sets out **further detail on the PSR options that will go to Committees for consideration and decision.**

Adults and Safeguarding Committee – savings of £12.6m

7.20 The **Adults and Safeguarding Committee** will have oversight of how the council delivers adult social care through the Adults and Communities Delivery Unit. As the council’s largest internal Delivery Unit, with a total revenue budget of **£82 million**¹⁰ (29% of the council’s total budget), a significant proportion of savings will need to be found from within the Adults and Communities Delivery Unit in order for the council to close the gap in its total budget.

7.21 The PSR has identified scope to make **organisational efficiency savings of approximately £4.7 million by 2019/20** through a range of measures, including:

- **A 10% reduction in workforce spending by 2019/20 (2.5% a year from 2016/17 to 2019/20), in order to save £1.5 million.** Savings will be achieved by **increasing workforce productivity, reviewing Terms and Conditions and reducing layers of management** within the Adults and Communities Delivery Unit.
- Savings of approximately **£2.6 million by 2019/20** by **re-procuring key contracts, bearing down on external suppliers and improving contract management to drive down costs.**

7.22 Around £79 million is spent by the council each year on **adult social care costs**, which includes spending on personal budgets for care and support, domiciliary care and equipment to

¹⁰ 2015/16 Medium Term Financial Strategy

support people in their own homes, as well as residential and nursing care placements. It is the council’s ambition to **support more people with care and support needs to remain in their own community and home for as long as possible, to improve their quality of life and to reduce demand on high cost residential care placements.**

7.23 The PSR has identified the opportunity for savings of approximately £6.9 million by 2019/2020 through measures to **target support and develop a wider range of housing options for residents with dementia and learning disabilities - and their families – which allows them to live at home for longer and support themselves more.**

7.24 Similarly, the PSR has identified further savings opportunities totalling £1m through **integrated working with the NHS and redesigning services** to ensure that older people receive co-ordinated, joined up care services that reduce duplication and better anticipate and respond to their needs.

Summary:

- The PSR has identified options to increase the financial benefit to the council by approximately **£12.6 million** in the Adult and Safeguarding Committee’s area of responsibility area, through the following means:

Improving organisational efficiency, including:	Approximately £4.7 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to improve workforce productivity, review of Terms and conditions and reducing management overheads within the council’s Adults and Communities Delivery Unit. • Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down contract and supplier costs. 	
Reducing demand and promoting independence, including:	Approximately £6.9 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to help older people with dementia live at home for longer, reducing the demand for social care services. • More effective, targeted support to younger people with learning difficulties to support their growth into early adulthood. • Targeting social care assessment processes on those that are most in need. • Increasing disabled facilities grants and housing adaptations to allow people to live at home for longer, reducing the demand for social care services, and building more extra care housing. 	
Redesigning services, including:	Approximately £1.0 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating service provision and commissioning so that conditions associated with frail elderly residents are managed and supported more effectively. 	
TOTAL	Approximately £12.6 million

Children, Education and Libraries Committee – savings of £8.0 million

7.25 The **Children, Education and Libraries Committee** will have oversight of the council's Children and Family Services, which is made up of the **Family Services** and **Education and Skills Delivery Units**.

7.26 Combined, **spending on Children and Family Services accounts for approximately 18% of the council's total annual budget (£49.9 million in 2015/16)**, which represents the **second largest area of council spend**. As with the Adults and Communities Delivery Unit, the council will need to make significant savings from within Children and Family Services if it is to successfully close its overall budget gap.

7.27 The PSR has identified scope to make **organisational efficiency savings of approximately £2.3 million by 2019/20**, through a range of measures within Family Services, including:

- A **10% reduction in workforce spending by 2019/20 (2.5% a year from 2016/17 to 2019/20), in order to save £1.8 million**. Savings will be achieved by **increasing workforce productivity**, reviewing **Terms and Conditions** and **reducing layers of management**.
- Savings of approximately £0.5 million by **re-procuring key contracts, bearing down on external suppliers and improving contract management to drive down costs**.

7.28 Within the **Education and Skill Delivery Unit**, the PSR has identified the opportunity for **an alternative delivery model for the provision of services to schools, to deliver efficiency savings, increase income and ensure the continued provision of high quality services through a partnership approach that brings together resources from different sectors**.

7.29 The PSR has identified options for a **reconfigured early years model** which will enable Barnet to better focus on **increasing early years standards for all** and **better identify, support and signpost the most vulnerable families in the borough**. This will reduce the number of cases escalating to the point that a social care intervention becomes necessary.

7.30 The PSR has identified the opportunity to improve outcomes for looked after children and generate savings by **positioning Barnet as an excellent borough in which to be a foster carer**. This includes investing in an enhanced support offer for foster carers that enables more foster care support to children, including those with complex needs, and reduces spending on more expensive external placements.

7.31 The PSR has also identified opportunities for a revised **Libraries Strategy**, based on an evidence led review of Barnet's libraries to identify a new model of library services which utilises the latest technology to increase efficiency whilst maintaining a comprehensive network.

Summary:

- **The PSR has identified options to increase the financial benefit to the council by approximately £8.0 million in the Children, Education and Libraries Committee's area of responsibility, through the following means:**

Improving organisational efficiency, including:	Approximately £2.3 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures to improve workforce productivity, review of Terms and conditions and reducing management overheads within the council’s Family Services Delivery Unit. Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down contract and supplier costs. 	
Reducing demand and promoting independence, including:	Approximately £0.5 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures to increase the number of children and young people in living in local Barnet foster homes and providing enhanced support to prevent placements breaking down and triggering more expensive residential placements. 	
Redesigning services, including:	Approximately £5.1 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering the option of an Alternative Delivery Model for the Education and Skills service, in order to ensure the continued provision of high quality services through a partnership approach that brings together resources from different sectors. Re-shape and re-focus the early years offer to provide better-targeted early support and signposting for families, reducing the number of children and young people who require costly higher level social care interventions. An evidence led review of Barnet’s libraries to identify a new model of library services which utilises the latest technology to increase efficiency whilst maintaining a comprehensive network. 	
TOTAL	Approximately £8.0 million

Environment Committee – savings and income of £5.9 million

7.32 The PSR has identified a package of **efficiency measures totalling £2.4 million** within the Streetscene Delivery Unit which seeks to **improve the productivity and effectiveness of four key services - refuse and recycling, grounds maintenance, street cleansing and vehicle maintenance**. The changes include **root and branch reviews of: Service need; delivery rounds; operational hours; staff productivity; and Terms and Conditions**.

7.33 In **street cleansing**, there will be greater mechanisation, a review of Town Centre teams and a review of all routes to **ensure resources are precisely targeted**. In **refuse and recycling**, a similar approach will be taken with respect to rounds, use of vehicles, routing and the on-going development of a range of new recycling services. These **efficiency and productivity changes** will be implemented in each of the four services as part of a **data led transformation project** which seeks to **maximise effectiveness and reduce cost**.

7.34 The PSR has also identified the potential for efficiencies by **bearing down on contract costs with current suppliers**, for example in **street lighting and in the re-procurement of the parking operations contract**; the on-going **internalisation of fleet operations**; and an **open exploration of what else the market or community organisations could bring in efficiency**

savings to street scene services and other elements of the service such as the **household waste recycling centre** and the **community management of bowling greens**.

7.35 In terms of **service demand**, the biggest area of spend is on **waste disposal and waste collection**, with annual budgets of £15.5 million and £6 million respectively. Barnet currently ranks 29th out of 33 London boroughs in the league table of **tonnes of waste produced per household**, and pays a fifth of the entire levy to the North London Waste Authority (NLWA), despite being only 1 of 7 boroughs to contribute. Whilst the borough is large and has a large number of households, more pro-active work that can be done to improve this and reduce costs. This is an area of substantial focus and has the potential to **deliver approximately £2.7 million in savings**. This will be achieved through **establishing good data about future demand; the development of a commissioning policy; active client management of the NLWA relationship to get the best deal for Barnet; and continuing to expand recycling and getting a better price for recycled materials**. It will also be achieved by working creatively with residents so that they can take reduce the amount of waste produced.

7.36 The PSR has identified opportunities to **maximise the use of parks and open spaces to generate income in a responsible way**, by looking at assets such as cafes and buildings in parks; sports pitches and the potential to develop these and other sporting facilities; and to take a commercial approach to a number of services, for example trade waste sales, and **the sale of the cleansing and grounds maintenance to the commercial sector**.

Summary:

- The PSR has identified options to increase the financial benefit to the council by approximately **£5.9 million** in the Environment Committee’s area of responsibility, through the following means:

Improving organisational efficiency, including:	Approximately £2.4 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing a programme of operational change to optimise resources and deliver improvements in productivity across refuse and recycling, grounds maintenance, street cleansing and vehicle maintenance services. • Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down contract and supplier costs. • Examining how alternative delivery models may deliver improved outcomes for waste and recycling, parks and street cleansing at lower cost. • Changes to the management and costs of disposing of waste. 	
Reducing demand and promoting independence, including:	Approximately £2.7 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with residents and community groups to achieve a reduction in the amount of waste generated and considering the frequency of waste collection to help achieve this. 	
Promoting growth and raising income, including:	Approximately £0.8 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploiting commercial opportunities to sell services to businesses and private land owners. • Increasing income from better utilisation across the parks and open spaces asset portfolio. 	
TOTAL	Approximately £5.9 million

Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee – savings and income of £10.1 million

7.37 As set out in **Chapter 4**, the council will benefit significantly over the PSR period through its major regeneration schemes, which will increase the residential and business related tax base through the construction of houses and commercial properties. In total, the PSR forecasts that the council will receive an additional **£5.6 million** over the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 as a result of **planned regeneration and development activity**.

7.38 In addition, the PSR has also identified the **opportunity for efficiency savings** of up to **£4.5 million** by 2019/20, through a range of measures including **reducing office accommodation costs** and **increasing income from council owned assets**; **increasing energy efficiency** across the council’s estate; re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to **drive down contract and supplier costs**; and **capitalising regeneration-related expenditure**.

Summary:

- The PSR has identified options to increase the financial benefit to the council by approximately **£10.1 million** in the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee’s area of responsibility, through the following means:

Improving organisational efficiency, including:	Approximately £4.5 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the cost of office accommodation and increasing income through more effective use of council owned assets. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the energy efficiency of the council estate. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down contract and supplier costs. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalisation of regeneration-related expenditure. 	
Promoting growth and raising income, including:	Approximately £5.6 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the council’s residential and business related tax base as a result of regeneration and development activity. 	
TOTAL	Approximately £10.1 million

Policy and Resources Committee – savings and income of £12.6 million

7.39 The PSR has identified opportunities for **organisational efficiency savings** across the areas of the organisation which will be overseen by the **Policy and Resources Committee** – in particular the council’s **Commissioning Group and Assurance Group** – with **a package of efficiency measures which has the potential to save up to £9.2 million**.

7.40 This includes **savings to workforce costs within the Commissioning and Assurance Groups**, where **a 10% workforce saving across both groups will save approximately £630,000 by 2019/20** and is in line with workforce savings that are recommended within Delivery Units.

7.41 In addition to greater workforce productivity, the PSR has identified a range of **further efficiency measures** including **reducing IT and printing costs** across the council; re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to **drive down contract and supplier costs**; cutting spending on **membership fees and subscription costs**; bearing down on **redundancy costs**; options for **reducing finance and borrowing costs**; and reviewing **Councillor allowances**.

7.42 The PSR has identified the potential for savings by **combining commissioning and corporate functions with another Local Authority, including the sharing of senior management team posts**, which could save up to **£600,000 if a partner Authority could be identified**.

7.43 There is a **clear trade-off between the amount that the council will need to cut from public service budgets and the amount of revenue that can be generated through fees and charges**. The PSR has identified options to **increase council income by raising fees and charges across a range of council services**, where it is legally viable to do so, by a moderate amount in order to reduce the level of cuts to service budgets.

7.44 Additional income could also be generated by **reviewing the level of Council Tax contribution from those eligible for Council Tax Support**, although further modelling will be required to determine the potential impact on the levels of personal indebtedness by those affected and potential debt write offs to the council.

Summary:

- The PSR has identified options to increase the financial benefit to the council by approximately **£12.6 million** in the Policy and Resources Committee’s area of responsibility, through the following means:

Improving organisational efficiency, including:	Approximately £9.2 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to improve workforce productivity, review of Terms and Conditions and reducing management overheads (including sharing management post with other Local Authorities) within the council’s Commissioning and Assurance Groups. • Re-procuring key contracts and improving contract management to drive down contract and supplier costs. • Reducing subscription costs and membership fees to a minimum across the council. • Rationalising IT and printing costs across the council. • Bearing down on redundancy costs. • Reducing finance and borrowing costs. • Sharing corporates services (for example, emergency planning, audit, business continuity) with another Local Authority. • Reviewing Councillor allowances. 	
Promoting growth and raising income, including:	Approximately £3.4 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering moderate increases to a range of fees and charges, where it is legally viable to do so, to help off-set the level of cuts to service budgets. • Considering changes to Council Tax support and reviewing the level of Council Tax contribution from those eligible for support. 	
TOTAL	Approximately £12.6 million

Community Leadership Committee – savings of £0.8 million

7.45 The PSR has identified a **package of measures which could save up to £800,000 in the budget areas overseen by the Community Leadership Committee**, in particular through alternative delivery models in relation to the provision of services related to community safety.

7.46 There are opportunities to generate operational efficiencies of approximately £200,000 in the delivery of the borough’s **CCTV services**. Going further, **the council could save an additional £600,000 by moving to a full cost recovery model of CCTV provision**, which would include charging businesses and commercial properties that benefit from the existence of CCTV cameras.

Summary:

- The PSR has identified options to increase the financial benefit to the council by approximately **£0.8 million** in the Community Leadership Committee’s area of responsibility, through the following means:

Improving organisational efficiency, including:	Approximately £0.2 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational efficiencies in the delivery of the borough’s CCTV services. • Cancellation of the MOSAIC contract and using resources provided by the council’s Customer and Support Group partner. 	
Promoting growth and raising income, including:	Approximately £0.6 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering moving to a full cost recovery model for the borough’s CCTV services 	
TOTAL	Approximately £0.8 million

Health and Well Being Board – savings of £0.7 million

7.47 The PSR has identified options to create efficiency savings through the **re-procurement of sexual health services across the borough**, overseen by the **Health and Well Being Board**. In total, approximately £4.4 million is spent on sexual health services in Barnet, funded from the Public Health grant. This includes spending on services provided in Sexual Health Clinics, such as Family Planning and STI and HIV testing and treatment.

7.48 The opportunity for savings identified involves the creation of **integrated sexual health services** - incorporating family planning and STI/HIV services into one seamless structure – which will tackle current issues of accessibility and fragmentation. This will **expand community provision** and **drive down the unit costs of care**.

Summary:

- The PSR has identified options to increase the financial benefit to the council by approximately **£0.7 million** in the Health and Well Being Board’s area of responsibility, through the following means:

Improving organisational efficiency, including:	Approximately £0.7 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-procurement of sexual health services across the borough. 	
TOTAL	Approximately £0.7 million

8. THE IMPACT OF THE PSR ON CLOSING THE BUDGET GAP AND OPTIONS FOR GOING FURTHER

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- In total, the PSR package of options has the potential to save up to £50.8 million by 2019/20, against the council's forecast budget gap of £72 million. This means that there will be a £21 million shortfall, even if the full package of PSR options were implemented and the estimated quantum of savings realised.
- In terms of the expected profile of how the estimated benefits generated by the PSR options accrue, the forecast budget gap of £21 million in 2016/17 would be eradicated and the forecast gap of £18 million in 2017/18 would be substantially closed, with a remaining gap of £5.3 million in that year.
- However, the financial gap in the final two years of the decade remains significant, at £6.7 million and £9.5 million respectively.
- This suggests that, through the implementation of the options identified via the PSR – and assuming the maximum level of savings is achieved - it is feasible for the council to reach a balanced budget position up to 2017/2018, although this will require some very difficult decisions.
- Looking further ahead, it is clear that it is the latter two years of the decade in particular – 2018/19 and 2019/20 – where a significant budget gaps remains, even if all the PSR options were implemented.
- The council will continue to work and innovate as it attempts to close the gap and it will be for elected Councillors to determine the ratio of spending reductions versus tax increases in meeting the shortfall.
- The council will also need further flexibilities from central Government to fully close the gap, through greater financial devolution – particularly in London - and increased flexibility across the Local Government Finance System to incentivise growth and generate further efficiencies.

The impact of PSR options against the forecast £72 million budget gap to 2019/20

8.1 The table and graph below illustrates **the potential impact that implementing the package PSR options could have on reducing the council's forecast £72 million budget gap to 2019/20, should they all be taken forward**. Given that the potential financial benefit from the entirety of the PSR package totals £50.8 million, **it is clear that a significant shortfall – some £21 million - will remain and that further change will be required for the council to reach a balanced budget position by 2020**.

2017/18: The year of challenge

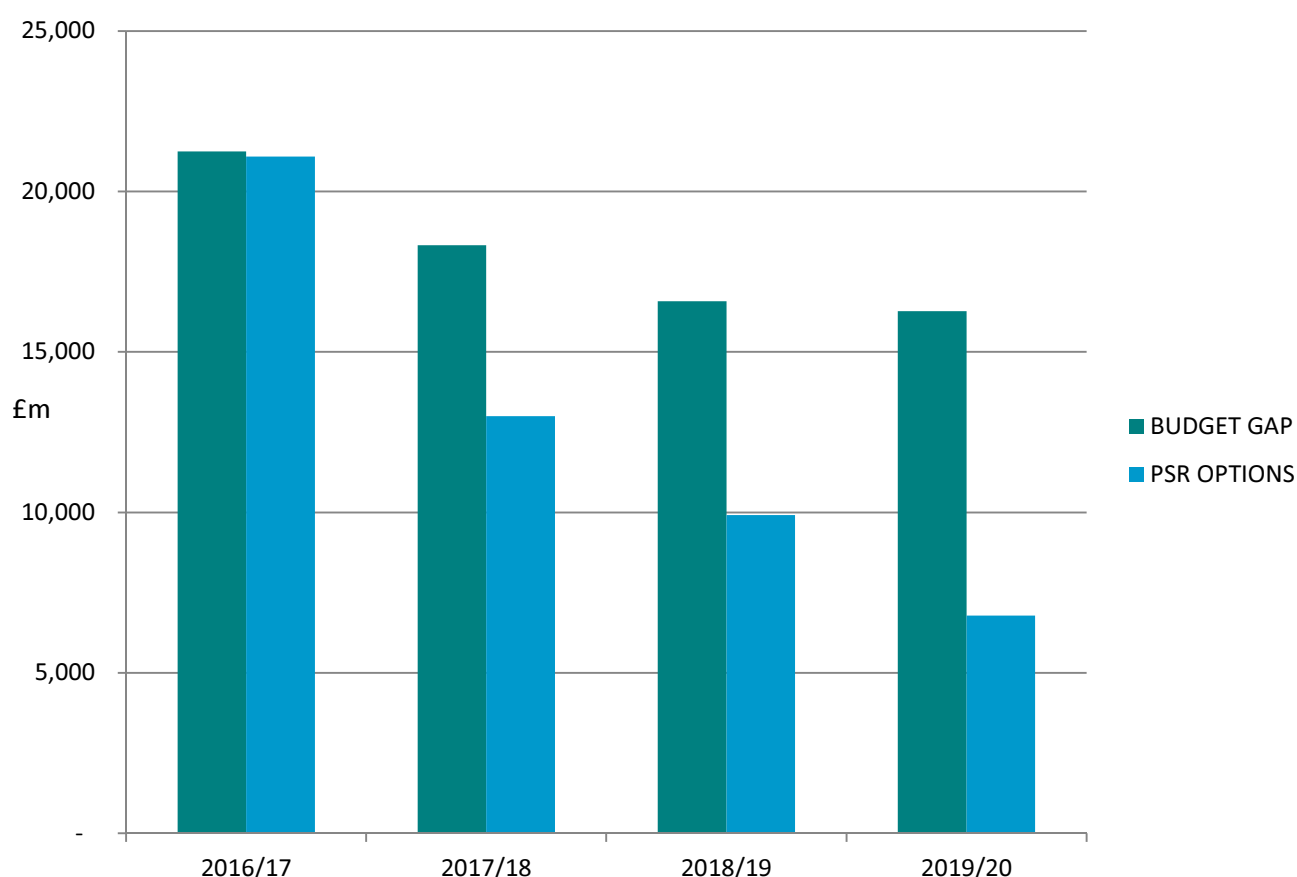
8.2 In terms of the expected **profile** of the savings and income options outlined, the graph illustrates that, if Council chose to implement the full package of PSR options outlined in this report, and assuming the total quantum of savings were to be realised, **the forecast budget gap of £21 million in 2016/17 would be eradicated** and **the forecast gap of £18 million in 2017/18 would also be substantially closed**, with a shortfall of £5.3 million in that year.

Table 2: Estimated gap if all PSR proposals were implemented and estimated quantum of savings achieved

2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	Total £m
0	5.3	6.7	9.5	21.5

8.3 However, **the financial gap in the final two years of the decade remains significant at £6.7 million and £9.5 million respectively.** This suggests that, through the implementation of the options identified via the PSR – and assuming the maximum level of savings is achieved - **it is feasible for the council to reach a balanced budget position up to 2017/2018**, although this will require some very difficult decisions to be taken by elected Councillors.

8.4 Looking further ahead, it is clear that it is the **latter two years of the decade in particular – 2018/19 and 2019/20 – where a significant budget gaps remains.**



Closing the remaining budget gap to 2020

8.5 **The council will continue to innovate as it attempts to meet the shortfall** – going further in working with the wider public sector and other local strategic partners to co-locate and integrate services both at the local level and regionally. However, it is likely that other factors will need to come into play for the budget gap to be fully closed.

8.6 For example, **it will be for elected Councillors to determine the right balance between the scale of spending reductions and tax** increases that will be required to reach a balanced budget and, as part of this, **the appropriate level at which Council Tax is set in future years.**

8.7 The outcome of the PSR suggests that, although Barnet will leave no stone unturned as it seeks to unlock **further efficiencies, redesign and integrate services, and become more entrepreneurial** in order to maximise income, the council – and Local Government in general – **will require greater devolution and funding flexibility to be passed on by central Government in order to fully meet the scale of the challenge to 2020.**

8.8 The PSR has identified a number of issues which have an impact on Barnet's resources but provide limited benefit to the borough and over which the council has no control due to statutory requirements. One such example is the council's contribution to the **Lee Valley regional park**, to the east of Barnet, to which the council makes an annual contribution of £400,000 even though the park is not a part of the borough. Although reducing spending in this area would help the council to close its remaining budget gap, it is unable to implement reforms because of a **statutory requirement** placed on the council.

8.9 To fully close the gap, **Government will need to devolve more control and more funding to Local Authorities;** it will need to **loosen the reins on the Local Government finance system and provide more flexibility to promote integration and incentivise growth;** and it will need to be **more coordinated in the way it engages and works with Local Government.**

The need for greater financial devolution to Local Government

8.10 **Increased financial devolution** has the potential to significantly support Local Authorities as they deal with the on-going impact of austerity and rising demand. The financial sustainability of Local Government will increasingly be a function of **its ability to manage and share financial risk with other local public service partners** and, in so doing, **achieving savings and service reform 'across the system'**. It will also be the product of **local measures to achieve economic growth, so long as the benefits of that growth are retained locally to fund services and investment.** For this to happen, it will require **significant financial decentralisation.**

8.11 Opportunities to **promote economic growth, jobs and housing** that would arise from investments funded by **locally retained business rates** and the **removal of the Housing Revenue Account debt cap** suggest the need for **greater sub-regional working, particularly across London.**

8.12 London can learn from the experience of other regions and sub-regions when developing **appropriate financial governance arrangements** to support joint **'City Deal' type working at a sub-regional level.** Substantial sub-regional borrowing, investment, programme management

and benefits distribution require robust financial governance and this in turn implies the need for decision making entities that can bear financial risk and be accountable.

8.13 In Manchester, this joint working is enabled through a **Combined Authority** arrangement which has responsibility for transport, economic redevelopment and regeneration functions on behalf of the ten constituent authorities. It has also pooled transport funding to establish a £1.2 billion programme, mostly funded through Prudential Borrowing, with an initial levy on constituent authorities and the capture of future business rates income stream on an earn back basis.

8.14 **Combined Authority Arrangements are currently only available to authorities outside of Greater London.** In other words, London Boroughs are currently excluded from establishing Combined Authorities, thus reducing their ability to conceive and execute investment opportunities at a sub-regional level. Without reform, this is likely to become an increasingly limiting factor as London Boroughs develop plans for meeting the financial challenges ahead.

Next steps

8.15 **The publication of this report marks the end of the PSR process.** The council will now move into the ‘business as usual’ process of setting its budget, where elected Councillors takes decisions to set **a new Medium Term Financial Strategy** to the end of the decade, **with annual budgets agreed through the Finance and Business Planning Process.**

8.16 Barnet will move to a **Committee system of governance** from June 2014. This new system – which will **include representation from all locally elected political parties** – will ensure that the options available to the council to save money and maximise its income in a fair and legal way are **debated and agreed in openly and transparently**, with each Committee taking final decisions regarding the options for closing the council’s overall budget gap.

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	AGENDA ITEM 7
	<p>Policy and Resources Committee</p> <p>10 June 2014</p>
Title	Reference from Council- membership of the Local Government Association
Report of	Head of Governance
Wards	All
Status	Public
Enclosures	Appendix A - Business Item –Cllr Brian Coleman- Council 8 April 2014
Officer Contact Details	Andrew Nathan- Head of Governance, 020 8359 7029; andrew.nathan@barnet.gov.uk

<p>Summary</p> <p>A Non-Executive Business Item was submitted to Full Council by Councillor Brian Coleman proposing that Barnet withdraw from the Local Government Association. The item was not dealt with at the meeting.</p> <p>Business items not dealt with at a meeting of Council are then referred for consideration and any necessary action to the relevant committee. This report therefore requests the Committee to consider the matter.</p>
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Recommendations

1. That the Policy and Resources Committee consider the Business Item referred to it from Full Council.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 A Non-Executive Business Item was submitted to Full Council on 8 April 2014 by Councillor Brian Coleman proposing that Barnet give notice to withdraw from the Local Government Association (LGA). The full text of the item is attached at Appendix 'A'. The item was not dealt with at the meeting.
- 1.2 Under the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution, Business items not dealt with at a meeting of Council are then referred for consideration and any necessary action to the relevant committee (unless the mover requests that a vote is taken at the meeting, which was not the case in this instance).
- 1.3 This report therefore requests the Policy and Resources Committee, as the Committee within whose Terms of Reference this matter falls, to consider the matter.
- 1.4 The main benefits of Barnet remaining a member of the LGA is that it allows the council to be part of a collective platform for promoting Local Government and helping to set the political agenda as it relates to the sector including through negotiation and engaging with - and lobbying of - central Government, businesses and other organisations; represents a mechanism for sharing best practice and facilitating joint working across Local Authorities; and provides support through peer challenge, leadership development and other direct support.

The LGA state that the benefits of membership include the following;

- the opportunity to influence their work through membership of boards, panels, commissions, advisory groups or the Councillors' Forum
- access to support and advice for councillors through their political group offices
- access to up-to-the-minute news, briefings and daily news headlines on the LGA website through a suite of subscription e-bulletins
- discounts on selected LGA services, including improvement support and leadership programmes
- support on national media relations including in times of crisis
- access to a wide range of free or discounted events
- access to legal advice, opinions and guidance on complex issues
- opportunities to join their special interest groups
- use of facilities at Local Government House, including free meeting room hire
- invitations to Royal Garden Parties

- 'first magazine' delivered bi-weekly.
 - **Local Futures** – free and discounted services provided by research and strategy consultancy specialising in geographically reviewing social and economic change
- 1.5 As part of the Council's commitment to transparency the Council has developed a "Transparency Portal" – that enables the easy publication of raw data in a form that can be readily utilised by interested external parties. The portal will go live in the next couple of weeks and will put the Council at the forefront nationally of public sector transparency. The development of the portal was made possible by the award of a £43,000 grant from the LGA in 2013/14

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 This Committee is requested to give its instructions.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Not applicable.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Any decision taken by the Committee on responding to this item will be implemented as soon as is practicable.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Not applicable

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

- 5.2.1 The Council's current subscription costs £60,000, and 12 months notice is required to terminate.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 Constitution, Part 4, Council Procedure Rules: 23.5 'if the Member's business item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting, it will be referred to an appropriate Committee or Council sub-Committee for consideration and any necessary action'.

5.4 Risk Management

- 5.4.1 None specifically arising from this report.

5.5 **Equalities and Diversity**

5.5.1 None specifically arising from this report.

5.6 **Consultation and Engagement**

5.6.1 None specifically arising from this report.

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 Local Government Association- LGA Membership- downloaded from <http://www.local.gov.uk/membership>

APPENDIX A

Council: Tuesday, 8 April 2014

Non-Executive Business Item: Councillor Brian Coleman

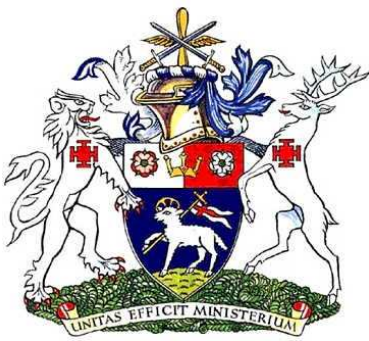
Membership of the Local Government Association

Council notes its' current membership of the Local Government Association which currently costs the Council taxpayer £60,000.

Council further notes its membership of the London Councils and believes membership of that organisation is sufficient to deal with the Council's Political lobbying and representation needs.

Council resolves to give the LGA the required 12 months notice and to withdraw in 2015.

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Policy and Resources Committee

10th June 2014

Title	Improving Consultation and Transparency within the Council
Report of	Chris Naylor, Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance
Wards	All
Status	Public
Enclosures	<p><i>Appendix 1) Consultation Strategy</i> <i>Appendix 2) Consultation and Engagement Strategy – Consultation findings</i> <i>Appendix 3) Transparency – Consultation findings</i> <i>Appendix 4) Declaration & Commitment Statement to Transparency</i> <i>Appendix 5) Equalities Impact Assessment for Transparency Declaration</i> <i>Appendix 6) Equalities Impact Assessment for Consultation</i> <i>Appendix 7) Local Government Transparency Code – May 2014</i></p>
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Summary

This report outlines plans to improve and formalise the council's consultation programme, ensuring that Members are fully aware of residents' views when developing policy and services.

It also outlines the council's plans to improve the publishing of council information allowing residents to better scrutinize the activities and performance of the council.

Recommendations

1. That the Committee approve the Declaration and Commitment Statement to Transparency (Appendix 4)

2. That the Committee approve Consultation Strategy (Appendix 1)

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Over the coming months, Council Committees will be considering business planning and budgets in order to agree the Corporate Plan and Medium-term Financial Strategy for the period 2015/16 to 2019/20. As set out elsewhere on the Policy and Resources meeting agenda, while there remain opportunities to improve efficiency by changing how the council works, it's becoming clear that there will also need to be many changes in how council services are delivered to residents.
- 1.2 The scale of change and the impact it will have on services means that it is important that residents are assured that the Council has their best interests at heart when making decisions about the future of their services and is committed to involving residents and service users in planning change.
- 1.3 A more systematic consultation strategy and a demonstrable commitment to transparency will be key to this.
- 1.4 Barnet faces a known set of challenges. Resident Perception surveys regularly score the council poorly for involving residents when making decisions and more generally listening to the concerns of local people. Meanwhile research and consultation undertaken during the Priorities and Spending Review noted that those service users most reliant on Council services are the most sceptical about the scale of challenge the Council faces and consequently of the need for change.
- 1.5 In response, the council has developed a programme of activity to support: the building of confidence and community resilience; and to ensure residents are actively involved in the process of decision making about the future of their services. This programme includes:
 - Improvements to consultation and engagement;
 - Measures to boost transparency;
 - Measures to improve customer service standards;
 - Support to the third sector, community groups and local suppliers so that they are better able to participate with the Council in the provision of services

- 1.6 This report outlines plans to improve and formalise the council's consultation programme, ensuring that members are fully aware of residents' views when developing policy and services.
- 1.7 It also outlines the council's proposals to improve the publishing of council information allowing residents' to better scrutinize the activities and performance of the council.

Consultation

- 1.8 In the year 2013/14, the council carried out 38 formal consultations. Most of these were to a high quality with the Children's and Adults' services in particular having regular contact with service users as services change and develop.
- 1.9 However, the council was taken to court under Judicial Review by one resident, who argued that the council had not effectively consulted on the NSCSO and DRS Contracts. Although the case fell and the council was able to proceed with the contracts, several months of savings were lost and the Judges involved in the case, at both initial hearing and appeal, found that the council's model of consultation weak and the national guidelines and legislation vague. There has also been concern that some 'ad-hoc' (i.e. not part of a major work stream) consultations are not run to the high standards of major consultations.
- 1.10 The Consultation Strategy paper (Appendix 1) outlines how the council can have the highest standards of consultation and engagement with residents and how to ensure residents are aware of the consultation processes the council will follow in regard to policy and service changes. It aims to ensure that members are fully informed of the views of residents and other stakeholders when making decisions.
- 1.11 Used alongside an internal toolkit it will ensure that all officers run consultation and engagement to a high standard.
- 1.12 The council has reviewed best practice throughout local government and produced key recommendations:
 - a) **Increase the size of the Citizen's Panel** - the panel is made up of a representative mix of Barnet residents. It is proposed to increase the number of panel members from 1,600 to 2,500. This will increase the response rate, bringing responses close to the statistically significant number of 1,100 (the point where accuracy can be gauged to within plus or minus 3 per cent).
 - b) **Depending on the topic/s this panel should undertake four regular 'quarterly omni-surveys' of residents views on service development or area based workshops**– this will allow regular access to the Citizen's Panel without the panel suffering from 'consultation fatigue'.

- c) Services to also be encouraged to commission focus groups using the panel to recruit residents to explore topics in depth**
- d) The council should undertake two Residents' Perception Surveys each year**
- e) All service consultations should be quality controlled by the Commissioning Group**
- f) Each consultation should report conclusions back to participants – “we asked, you said, we did”**
- g) The council should publish a forward plan for consultations**
- h) The council should publish an annual review of consultation**

Several of these proposals are in hand. The council is about to publish the first sixth monthly Resident Perception Survey and has been improving the reporting back on consultations over the past year.

Transparency

- 1.13 The use of government information and raw data has developed dramatically over the past decade and this council has already made great strides to becoming an exemplar of open data. The contracts with Capita, which in the past might have been available to a few people with the time to visit the council building, are now available online with minimal redaction.
- 1.14 Greater transparency of public bodies is at the heart of enabling the public to hold politicians and public bodies to account. Where public money is involved there is a fundamental public interest in being able to see how it is being spent, to demonstrate how value for money has been achieved, or to highlight inefficiency.
- 1.15 The council is committed to publishing information in such a way that allows the public to hold the council to account, demonstrating a commitment to public scrutiny. The council already publishes performance data, key contracts and details of payments over £500. The council provides an e-mail alert system for residents covering planning and licensing applications and the introduction of the single customer account has, over time, the potential to allow the council to tailor information to the specific interests of each registered account holder.
- 1.16 With data easily processed by outside agencies or companies, data held by the public sector can have an economic and social value beyond that identified or achievable by the council. Much of Transport for London's raw data is published in real time allowing third party creation of apps widely

used by London residents, but developed at no cost to the taxpayer. The council already provides details of traffic management orders to the makers of “Appy Parking” for example.

- 1.17 It is proposed to publish information currently held by the council in raw data form. This will be published on a specific platform for which funding has been obtained from the Local Government Association.
- 1.18 The proposed declaration and commitment statement for Transparency (Appendix 4) and the attached Transparency consultation (Appendix 3) demonstrate the council’s awareness that public use of data has changed and information that can be made public should be. While following / adhering to the council’s responsibilities within the Data Protection Act there is still scope to publish information widely.

Key proposals

- A published commitment to transparency (Appendix 4)
- The creation of a data portal, allowing for the publication of raw data.
- Commitment to transparency across the organisation by engaging Transparency Champions within each DU

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Council needs to formalise its consultation procedures to ensure residents are fully engaged and participate in their future
- 2.2 The Council needs to present information and data in a fashion that is most useful to residents, in line with the Governments approach to transparency

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The Council has explored best practice in Local Government in developing these proposals. A lack of clarity on consultation processes could leave the council open to legal challenge and could result in councillors making decisions without the full views of a representative group of residents or service users
- 3.2 The alternative is not to have a declaration on transparency. This is not recommended due to the Councils pledge to be an exemplary council and commitment to being transparent. The council already publishes over and above the Local Government Transparency’s Code suggested minimum requirements. (Appendix 7)

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following the committee’s approval of the Declaration and Commitment Statement to Transparency (Appendix 4), the declaration would be published on Barnet council’s web page and identified officers will drive to embed a

culture of transparency throughout the council, whilst pushing harder to explore newer and fuller ways to be transparent.

- 4.2 The council will increase the size of the Citizens' Panel, identify those elements of the coming council business programme that need public consultation and engagement and ensure they meet the standards as outlined in this strategy. The council will also publish an annual report and a forward plan of consultation.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.2 The council openly declaring its commitment to transparency will make it more accountable and provide the necessary drive in ambition to deliver upon its commitment to improving services to residents.
- 5.3 A commitment to transparency is an enabler for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy goals; to improve health and health/welfare services, promote integration of health and social care, hold services to account, and to engage the public. It is their ambition that individuals, commissioners and providers will be able to access clear, transparent information about the quality of the care they are buying or providing, including the experience of users and carers. Individuals, families and carers can therefore make informed choices, and there are incentives for providers to drive continuous quality improvement.

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

- 5.4 There are no financial implications to the council declaring its commitment to transparency.
- 5.5 Increasing the size of the Citizens Panel will cost approximately £40,000 per annum. This will be funded from within existing Commissioning Group resources.

Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.6 The Council is required by statute to consult on some matters and in such cases the relevant statute sets out some minimum requirements for consultation. In other matters though there is no statutory requirement, the Council will consult under public law principles, that is generally where there is an expectation that it will consult on matters as it has done so previously or when the matter will have a significant impact.
- 5.7 There are no legal issues associated with the council publicly declaring its commitment to being openly transparent. However it does reinforce the council's vision and ambition to exceed the Local Government Transparency Code. The Code is issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in exercise of this powers under section 2 of the Local

Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 to issue a Code of Recommended Practice (the Code) as to the publication of information by local authorities about the discharge of their functions and other matters which he considers to be related.

- 5.8 The terms of reference of the Policy and Resources Committee are contained in the Constitution, Responsibility for Functions, Annex A.

Risk Management

- 5.9 There is a medium-high risk to the council's reputation in not being openly transparent.
- 5.10 A lack of clarity on consultation processes could leave the council open to legal challenge and could result in councillors making decisions without the full views of a representative group of residents or service users.

Equalities and Diversity

- 5.11 A separate Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached to this paper for both Consultation (Appendix 6) and Transparency (Appendix 5).

Consultation and Engagement

- 5.12 Consultation Questions

Two separate consultations were carried out to:

- Inform the Transparency Strategy and ascertain residents' views on what type of data and in what format residents would like the council to publish its' data (Appendix 3). The consultation also asked residents if there was any information they felt the council could publish to support economic and business development in the borough or help in their day to day life.
- Secondly, to ascertain resident views on the council's draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy (Appendix 2), in particular to find out if residents agreed with: the key recommendations, the principles, and standards set out in the strategy. The consultation also asked residents if they felt that the strategy clearly communicated the role of consultation and engagement in the council, and how their views obtained from consultations fed into the decision-making process.

- 5.13 Consultation methods:

- Both consultations ran for six weeks, from the 4th March to 13th April 2014.

- The consultations were published on the council's engage space where residents were invited to submit their views via online survey. Paper copies were also made available on request.
- The consultations were widely promoted through a press release; Community Barnet's newsletter, e mailed to 900 individual residents, and extensively promoted via Facebook and through weekly tweets to the council's 7,000+ followers.

5.14 Consultation Feedback

Despite repeatedly promoting the consultations both had a low response. However, the responses were consistent with other policy type consultations that do not affect residents directly.

Findings from both consultations can be found in Appendix 2 and 3

5.15 Transparency specific

Further consultation and engagements are planned after the launch of the Open Data Portal and the initial publication of data.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1. There are no previous decisions that relate to this document.

Draft

Consultation and Engagement Strategy

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1. Executive summary

This draft strategy recognises the significant challenges currently faced in the public sector.

In particular:

- increasing financial pressures
- increasing expectations for greater involvement in the provision of future services and the development of services
- the demographic change that will impact on the services the public sector provides in the borough
- the need to influence behaviour, in particular around waste disposal, climate change, travel, lifestyle and health habits.

The Consultation and Engagement Strategy builds upon the processes that already exist across the council and with partners. It aims to embed best practice and maximise the benefits of engagement for all our citizens and local communities. It outlines how the council will continue to strengthen the way in which we involve citizens, service users, businesses and the voluntary sector to ensure that their continued involvement makes a real difference to their local area and the type of services we provide.

It also builds on the good practice of the first Engagement Strategy published in October 2010, and takes into account the requirements under the council's duty to consult as laid out in the Local Government Act 1999, and the updated 2011 Best Value Guidance, as well as the recent lessons learnt from the NSCSO Judicial Review in 2013.

The role of councillors as fundamental to the consultation process is emphasised, and it should be clear that council consultations are constructed to support councillors' decision making.

The strategy highlights how consultation and engagement activities will be effectively planned, which will be based on corporate standards and basic principles that will provide a consistent approach to consultation and engagement across the organisation.

The council's online consultation hub, Engage Barnet, will continue to publish all the council's consultation activities, including those that are targeted at only service users, so that all the council's consultations and how we involve residents and users in the development and improvement of our services are clearly visible. The central Consultation Officer will offer guidance on consultation design when required, and will quality assure all consultations. However, service consultation development and the administering of these will continue to be devolved to services. To aid in this process the central Consultation Officer has developed procedures to ensure all our consultations are published to the highest standard which include guidance and protocols on publishing to Engage Barnet, and bespoke consultation tools. A full consultation toolkit will be developed which will seek to promote an ethos where a wide range of techniques will be applied at the variety of levels of the engagement spectrum.

The strategy will also strengthen our approach to ‘giving local people and local communities’ real influence and power to improve their lives.

The strategy contains the following recommendations:

1. The council should expand the Citizens’ Panel¹
2. Depending on the topic/s and most appropriate method required, the panel should undertake four regular consultations a year, either ‘quarterly Omni-surveys’ of residents views or area-based workshops on service development or locality based issues
3. Advocate the use of more focus groups or face to face engagement (some recruited from the panel) to explore topics and issues in depth
4. The council should undertake two Residents’ Perception Surveys each year
5. All service consultations should be quality assured by the central Consultation Officer
6. Each consultation should always give feedback to participants on conclusions and how the council has responded to the findings of consultation
7. The council should publish a forward plan for consultations
8. The council should publish an annual review of consultation
9. The council should ensure that the development of a single customer account is undertaken with a view to fully engaging residents with the work of the council.

Effective community engagement demands particular skills, careful management and clear leadership including more strategic management from both our councillors and senior managers.

This strategy itself will be the subject of a consultation exercise, both inside and outside the council in order that the proposals can be tested, refined and “owned” by everyone involved in its implementation.

¹ The Citizens Panel is made up of 1500 Barnet residents, selected to be representative of the adult population of the borough in terms of ward, age, gender, ethnicity, housing tenure, faith and disability

2. Introduction

Barnet Council is committed to involving local people in shaping their area and the services they receive.

Consultation and engagement is one of the key ways the council interacts with and involves local communities and residents, providing them with opportunities to:

- gain greater awareness and understanding of what the council does
- to voice their views and know how they can get involved
- to have their views fed into the democratic decision making process.

Barnet already has a good track record on consulting and engaging local people as a normal part of service delivery. We have well-established structures such as a 1500 strong Citizens' Panel¹ and a network of Partnership Boards, user groups and forums; we undertake an annual telephone residents' perception survey; and we routinely undertake consultation across the full range of council activities. We also have strong linkages with our partners the Police, Public Health, NHS, Community Barnet, Communities Together Network² and the business sector. Elected councillors are also at the heart of consultation and community engagement in Barnet through the Residents Forums.

The strategy builds on these existing engagement mechanisms and seeks to:

- provide a framework for co-ordinating consultation and engagement
- recognise and promote good practice in consultation and engagement where it already exists within the council
- establish a system to enable quality assurance and standards on all aspects of consultation
- promote a consistency of approach throughout the council
- establish a means of monitoring the council in respect of its consultation performance
- identify the role of councillors in the consultation process
- provide residents, officers, and members with a clear statement of when the council will consult
- make recommendations for improving consultation and engagement in Barnet.

This strategy is supported by consultation protocols, and an internal toolkit which is currently being written by the central Consultation Officer. It will be published as a supporting document to this strategy and will further assist staff responsible for designing consultation and engagement activities to comply with the council's corporate standards and principles.

¹ The Citizens Panel is made up of 1500 Barnet residents, selected to be representative of the adult population of the borough in terms of ward, age, gender, ethnicity, housing tenure, faith and disability

² Communities Together Network act as an insight and information exchange and discussion forum for community engagement and to improve understanding amongst the council, strategic partners and community groups of what really matters to the different communities in the borough. It identifies and uses community expertise to sustain good community relations and support community cohesion.

3. Background: Local and National Context

3.1. Local context

The council's One Barnet programme focused on a new way of working which promotes greater efficiency, and a new approach of working with our partners and residents to ensure the people of Barnet can lead the lives they want to.

The strategy will align itself on the One Barnet key guiding principles of developing:

- a new relationship with citizens
- a relentless drive for efficiency
- a one public sector approach.

The Consultation and Engagement Strategy supports the council's Corporate Plan priority 'to improve the satisfaction of residents and businesses with the London Borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study; promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough'.

The strategy also supports and is aligned to the Customer Access Strategy, the Information Management Strategy and the developing Transparency Strategy.

3.2. National Context

Community engagement has been at the core of the local government modernisation agenda for a number of years. Developing and enhancing involvement is seen as vital for supporting the legitimacy of local government, developing community leadership and improving service delivery.

There has also been a range of legislation and Local Government White Papers over recent years¹. Most importantly, all councils are under a general Duty of Best Value to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness"². In addition, each council is under a 'Duty to Consult'³ with representatives of a wide range of local people authorities must consult representatives of council tax payers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. Authorities should include local voluntary and community organisations and businesses in such consultation'.

1 The Local Government Act 1999, updated with the DCLG Best Value Guidance 2011, the Localism Act 2011, 'Communities in Power: Real people, real power' (July 2008), the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (October 2007), Sustainable Communities Act (October 2007), and Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities' (October 2006).

2 Section 1 of DCLG's „Best Value Statutory Guidance 2011, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-value-statutory-guidance--4>.

3 Section 3(2) of the Local Government Act 1999

The Localism Act 2011 also includes the involvement of residents, of which a key part is the new set of rights for communities – the right to challenge, to bid and to build. This means providing more opportunities for local people to get involved and influence decisions that affect how their area develops.

The Consultation and Engagement Strategy will ensure the council continues to strengthen involvement and engagement particularly at a local level and thereby also complying with the Duty to Consult.

To achieve this we require a robust Consultation and Engagement Strategy that incorporates current legislation and policy demands of:

- Local Government Act 1999 (Best Value, Duty to Consult)
- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- Equality Act 2010
- Updated Best Value Statutory Guidance 2011
- Localism Act 2011.

4. Scope of the strategy

This strategy will be adopted across the organisation and it will promote more effective and efficient consultation to a consistent set of corporate standards.

The strategy is for use by the council's central Consultation Officer, council officers and elected councillors. We also anticipate that our partners, the voluntary and community sector, and the general public will also find it a useful best practice guide.

4.1. Engagement spectrum

'Engagement' is a term that is frequently referred to by the council and our partners and relates to the entire working relationship the council and its partners has with its citizens and communities.

It is important to recognise that under the engagement spectrum there are different approaches which will achieve different outcomes. Each will play a vital role in our relationship with our residents and can be used to support and complement each other. Effective engagement needs a customised approach which will build on our new relationship with citizens. Our diverse communities, citizens, customers and businesses all have different needs and will prefer to engage with us using different methods and at different levels of the engagement spectrum. Sometimes it may be appropriate just to inform our citizens about local issues or challenges the public sector faces, while at other times we will seek to involve citizens and communities in much greater depth.

In particular it should be stressed that engagement with residents and service users does not end with a decision being taken; there may often continue to be a need for ongoing engagement to ensure policy decisions are effectively implemented.

It is important that the council and its partners have a joint understanding of these terms for clarification and to avoid confusion.

Figure 1 highlights the scope of the engagement spectrum and how each stage increases the role of our citizens.

Figure 1: Barnet Engagement Model

Effective engagement in Barnet takes a number of forms					
	Insight	Informing	Consulting	Involving	Empowering
Aim	Understanding better the needs, views, and concerns of our residents	As an open council provide balanced information	Capture residents views on issues of relevance to them. Give an extensive range of opportunities for residents to have their say	Involve residents in testing, designing, and evaluating what we do	Build residents' capacity to deliver services and to promote independence
Tools	Service user data Value mode Cameo Secondary data Diversity monitoring, Resident events	Online/Social media Face to face local meetings, forums Newsletters Press Posters/Leaflets	Online/Engage Barnet/ Online surveys/ Social media Citizens' Panel: surveys, focus groups, workshops Service user panels Local forums Youth Board/Parliament	Virtual teams Challenge panels Co production of service development Online tools Youth Board/ Parliament	Co production Resident run schools Online tools: Pledgebank/Fix my street Youth Board/ Parliament
Examples	Residents profiling Customer profiling Councillor surgeries, Leader visits, ward walks	Barnet First, NHS, Police newsletters Press releases Resident Area forums, Committees, Web site/ social media/ Engage Barnet	Area forums system Council Tax Support Scheme consultation –a range of tools used Budget consultation online survey Citizen's Panel Corporate Plan Deliberative Event	Experts by experience Youth Board members sat on panel to recruit LBB Director Ward panels Town Centre Strategy's	Experts by experience Personal budgets Big Society Youth Board reps sit on School Health & Well Being Steering Group
Increasing the role for the resident					

The table below highlights what good engagement will look like on the different levels of the engagement spectrum.

What good engagement looks like	
Insight	Routinely harnessing insights from all our officer, service, councillor, and partner engagement activities and using them to drive service improvement
Informing	Give residents a good understanding of what the council ,councillors and partners are doing, and feel comfortable offering views on the future of public services Use resident insight into ensure we inform them in a way that works for them
Consulting	Our consultations should consistently provide enough information for residents to respond confidently, engage with representative set of residents, and provide an update to respondents explaining how their contribution has been used
Involving	A broad range of our residents will be involved in the work of the public sector. Use local councillors to build bridges between neighbourhoods and the state
Empowering	A significant number of residents and communities will be involved in controlling service design and delivery through a variety of different mechanisms

4.2. What are the benefits of effective consultation and engagement?

Effective engagement brings extensive benefits to the citizens and agencies involved. The main benefits are:

- **increased trust and transparency** – relationships and trust in the council and its partners will be improved through effective engagement between citizens, partners, businesses and the voluntary sector
- **increased democratic legitimacy** – for the council and its partners through devolution/localisation of decision making
- **improved reputations** – for the council and its partners and greater accountability because of more effective information dissemination and better dialogue
- **opportunities to influence** – citizens will be given the opportunity to have greater choice in the design, and delivery of our services
- **removes barriers** – it removes physical, language or social barriers to citizens and communities getting access to information or voicing needs or opinions.
- **improved citizen understanding** – citizens and local communities will be better informed and have a clear understanding of all our policies, priorities and the challenges we face
- **increased satisfaction** – evidence shows that effective engagement brings increased satisfaction with public services
- **shared skills and expertise** – effective engagement gives participants opportunities to learn new skills, share expertise and ways of working
- **citizens feel more involved** – streamlined engagement activity and regular information about results of what they said and how this has impacted service delivery

- **knowledge of local issues** – it allows service providers to reach a better understanding of their communities and be more in tune with needs or problems as they arise
- **community spirit** – it supports community spirit and encourages citizens to take control of their own neighbourhoods
- **improves opportunity for joint projects** – it can give rise to joint planning, development and delivery of services where appropriate.

However, in addition to the benefits, there can be challenges which we must be aware of and consideration needs to be given on how these are managed when embarking on any engagement activity.

These can be:

- **managing expectations** – citizen involvement can raise possible expectations about the amount of influence they have
- **resource-intensive** – effective engagement is often very resource-intensive
- **managing competing interests** – engagement will often expose diverse and competing interests. Managing how this is captured and reconciled may be complex.

5. Core objectives

In order for us to make decisions about services, priorities and performance, it is vital that we have accurate and reliable information derived from research, consultation and engagement. To help us achieve this the strategy has identified six objectives:

Objective 1: Strategic and coordinated

We will improve the planning and coordination of research, consultation and community engagement between delivery units and key partners, in order to improve methodology, avoid duplication and provide value for money. Our online consultation hub, 'Engage Barnet', will act as a key tool in this process.

Objective 2: Clear and consistent

We will provide clear guidance, and ensure our best practice principles are consistently implemented for research, consultation and engagement activities undertaken by the council and its partners.

Objective 3: Customised and innovative

For consultation and engagement to be effective we will ensure there is a customised approach that will build on our new relationship with citizens.

We will also make best use of new and imaginative ways to consult and engage with our residents and service users and encourage high quality engagement.

Objective 4: Inclusive and appropriate

We will ensure that all communities are supported and encouraged to participate effectively, through the use of appropriate methods of research, consultation and engagement.

Objective 5: Follow-up action

We will ensure that the outcomes of research, consultation and engagement are used to inform policy and decision-making and that appropriate feedback mechanisms are in place. We will always provide feedback through our consultation hub, Engage Barnet.

Objective 6: Actively involve

The council and its partners will support citizens and community groups to be actively involved in improving the service they receive and their communities.

Implementing these objectives does not necessarily mean that more engagement is needed. There is already a wealth of activity happening, with many more new projects planned; instead the council and its partners must ensure more effective use of current resources and not necessarily more. Harnessing the success of existing mechanisms and networks remains key.

Effective consultation and engagement will involve improvement on all our six objectives which will build on our new relationship with citizens and builds trust with our citizens.

The consequence of not implementing these improvements is that the council and its partners may waste resources for consultation and engagement activities that do more harm than good and further distance citizens. Constructive engagement is very resource-

intensive, but by implementing it efficiently there are real opportunities to ensure Barnet is shaped by its citizens and communities.

5.1. How will we achieve our core objectives?

Using this approach, the Consultation and Engagement Strategy will aim to deliver an effective and coordinated approach to engagement for the benefit of all citizens and the diverse communities of Barnet.

We will aim to:

- ensure citizens are informed of the work of the council and its partners through engagement activities
- strengthen, develop and sustain opportunities for local people and groups to influence what happens in their communities
- involve end users in the design of services from beginning to end, so that the services best meet their needs
- provide opportunities for communities to shape and influence the development and delivery of quality services and policies that reflect local needs and priorities
- manage and co-ordinate engagement activities to ensure consistency, quality and partner participation and avoid duplication
- ensure that engagement activities provide opportunities for participation for all sections of the community, particularly people and groups that are often missed out of community engagement activities
- listen to communities and ensure feedback to participants about the outcomes of consultation and engagement
- provide variety, innovation, flexibility and choice in engagement activities
- develop activities to involve citizens in the democratic process, e.g. electoral participation, consultations, attendance at committee meetings
- listen and learn from our own and others' experience and share engagement skills and knowledge of putting the citizen at the heart of decision-making.

6. Who we will consult with and engage

In terms of whom we will consult and engage with, this strategy covers any consultation, research, engagement or involvement activity.

This could be with:

- residents of Barnet
- service customers and users
- elected councillors
- members of staff/staff forums
- people who work, study or visit Barnet
- non-users and potential users of services
- businesses and business organisations
- interest and pressure groups, for example, tenant and residents associations
- voluntary and community groups
- communities and neighbourhoods
- groups of people defined by a common factor such as age, disability, gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation
- hard to reach groups such as mobile populations, refugee communities, people for whom English is not the first language, or people who need specialist media
- public and private sector stakeholders
- Government organisations.

In addition, there is a pivotal role in facilitating and building engaging opportunities for local councillors, Residents Forums, and voluntary and community sector, each of which are outlined in this section.

6.1. Local councillors

Elected councillors have an essential role providing representation and a voice for local people; providing information and acting as a channel of communication; they also act as powerful advocates for individuals and as champions for users of local services. Elected councillors' unique community leadership role provides them with a major input into the consultation and engagement process.

Their role in consultation and engagement goes further than the use of results to inform decision-making. In addition to roles as ward councillors, where they need to manage differing and sometimes conflicting interests, councillors will also lead on consultation and engagement activities within the new governance arrangements planned for 2014. It is essential that elected councillors are aware of and involved at an early stage in the development of consultation and engagement activities, particularly where their ward is affected. This approach has numerous positive outcomes as their local knowledge of relevant issues, circumstances and groups can be invaluable to ensuring comprehensive and effective engagement is carried out.

6.2. New governance arrangements and Residents' Forums

New governance structures will allow residents to contribute to policy development at an early stage. They will make governance of the council and the development of policy more open.

Committee meetings

Details of the new committee systems can be found [here](#).

As well as being more open in the development and review of council policy, the new system, in addition to public questions, will allow committees to seek written public proposals at an early stage in policy development for some emerging policies. It is envisaged that such proposals will come from organisations and residents with a particular interest and experience in a service.

Residents' Forums

Forums were revised in 2013 after a public consultation. The revised format for forums can be found [here](#).

Area-based Sub-committees

The previous reform of forums linked them more closely to Environment Sub-Committees. The remit of Area-based Sub-committees will be extended further in June 2014 when each committee will have a designated budget of £100,000 to spend on local schemes.

These governance arrangements and Residents' Forums are outside the scope of this strategy.

6.3. The voluntary and community sector

Community Barnet works closely with and represents many of our local community groups and charities. Community Barnet will have a varied and key role to play in consultation and community engagement, from being a consultee directly, to acting as the liaison point between the council and local organisations working with particularly marginal or vulnerable groups.

The Charter (formerly Compact) was agreed between the London Borough of Barnet, local residents and the voluntary and community sector. The Charter is a principles document defining the shared values and aspirations between these parties, enhancing working relationships between LBB departments, residents and voluntary and community groups.

7. How we will consult and engage

The council will use various methods depending on the subject matter, the level of engagement required, and the type of stakeholders we are trying to reach, and in some cases this will require a multi method approach.

In summary these methods include:

- paper surveys
- online surveys
- social media –face book, twitter
- focus groups
- citizens panel
- youth board
- area forums
- deliberative conferences
- workshops
- budget consultation tools (simulator, simalto)
- consultative workshops
- in-depth interviews
- peer research
- user panels
- customer care journey mapping
- mystery shopping
- experts by experience
- ethnographic research
- road shows.

When selecting which consultation and engagement method is the most appropriate to use, the council will consider a number of factors including accessibility, equality, cost, effectiveness and timeliness.

On request, and within reasonable limits such as cost and timeliness, the council will provide individuals or organisations with an alternative method of consultation where the chosen method prevents them from being able to participate. An example of this would be providing on request an easy read version of a survey for a resident who has learning difficulties, or for an internet survey, to provide a paper survey to residents who are unable to access the internet.

The consultation and engagement toolkit will give further guidance on how to design a consultation that ensures the appropriate methods and formats are used.

8. Corporate mechanisms for promoting consultation and engagement and proposals for change

Barnet Council has developed an extensive network of corporate community consultation and engagement mechanisms and opportunities for local people to get involved. These are outlined below and are in addition to those discussed in section 7.

8.1. Engage Barnet

The introduction of Engage Barnet and the direct link to the site from the front page of the council's website has allowed the council to publish and promote all consultations in a single, easily accessible spot.

In summary the site aims to:

Give residents an opportunity to take part in a consultation

Engage Barnet is a place where residents can find out, and also gives an opportunity to take part in consultations. This may be through an online survey embedded on the page or a mail box supplied for residents to email their comments.

Promote other strands of the consultation

The site is also used to promote other strands of the consultation which may include for example an exhibition where residents can view plans, a consultative workshop, a road show, or focus groups that are being conducted as part of the consultation.

Give feedback to residents on how we have acted on the results

Engage Barnet is also where the council informs residents how we have acted on the results of all

our consultations. Feeding back is an important part of any consultation as it completes the consultation cycle and demonstrates how the council has listened.

As well as publishing consultations on the Engage Barnet, consultations are also promoted further, ensuring our consultation's reach all our different communities and stakeholder groups, using the many mechanisms the council has in place. Some are outlined in detail in this section and further guidance will be provided in the Consultation and Engagement Toolkit.

The strategy will ensure consistent high standards are achieved when publishing consultations, and propose the following quality assurance procedures:

- consultation approach and design to be quality assured by the central Consultation Officer
- any content to be placed onto Engage Barnet is signed off by the Consultation Officer
- closed consultations will be closely monitored to ensure results placed onto the site also have follow up actions to all participants.

8.2. Barnet Council website

Council websites are becoming an increasingly important communication and consultation channel for local authorities. In 2012, Barnet Council re-launched its website (www.barnet.gov.uk) giving residents a vast array of information about public services in the borough, how to access them or contact services directly. Residents can pay their Council Tax online or report issues such as graffiti or fly tipping. The website also has Engage Barnet clearly visible on the homepage, where residents can find out about past and current consultations; and take part in online consultations. There is also a dedicated consultation page and 'Get involved' page. The council will build upon this work with the development of a new website and ensure that the 'My Account' facility effectively supports engagement with residents.

- **the council should ensure that the development of a 'My Account' facility fully supports the engagement of residents with the work of the council.**

8.3. Barnet First

Barnet First is the council's quarterly magazine. It helps keep residents and businesses in the borough informed about what the council and its partners are doing and why, as well as providing information and news about the local area. It is hand-delivered throughout the borough. Copies can also be obtained from council receptions and libraries or it can be downloaded from the council's website. Officers and partners frequently use Barnet First to inform and consult residents through questionnaires and articles. For example, various articles were published in Barnet First in relation to the Council Tax Options public consultation. This was carried out from July to September 2012. The magazine was used to raise the profile of the consultation, encourage residents to take part but also

to feedback the results of the consultation and how they were used to inform the decisions taken by the council.

8.4. Barnet's Citizens' Panel

Barnet's Citizens' Panel currently consists of around 1,500 local residents which is profiled to be representative of Barnet's diverse community. Established in 1995, Barnet was one of the first councils to set up a panel. A third of the panel is replaced every year.

The panel provides a platform through which Barnet Council and its partners can listen to a representative sample of Barnet residents' perspectives on important issues and decisions which may affect them, the areas they live in and services they use.

A critical aspect of the panel is ensuring panel members and the wider community receive feedback on the results of these consultations, including how they have been used to inform decision making and shape future plans and services. To achieve this, the panel has its own dedicated webpage on the council's website and panel members are sent regular newsletters. This will be expanded as part of the council's commitment to properly inform residents who take part in consultations.

- **it is proposed that the size of the panel be increased to 2,500 residents. This should lead to substantial responses to consultations. The council will aim for major consultations to receive around 1,100 responses, to allow +/- 3% confidence in the accuracy of data**
- **in order to prevent consultation fatigue, the council will run quarterly consultations with the panel, rolling several service consultations in to a larger "Omni-survey" or area based panel workshops.**

8.5. The Residents' Perception Tracker Survey

As well as residents' views on specific policy and service proposals it is important that the council carefully tracks residents' perceptions on the borough and ensures that services consider residents' concerns and wishes wherever possible. In 2012/13 and 2013/14, the council used the results of the Residents' Perception Survey to direct funding from a service improvement fund in to areas as diverse as an apprentice scheme and maintenance of roads and pavements.

- the council has moved this survey from biennial to biannual, running a smaller survey mid-year for tracking purposes. It is proposed to continue with this frequency.

9. Other mechanisms for consultation and community engagement

In addition to the corporate mechanisms for consultation and community engagement outlined in the previous section, there are numerous other service forums, boards, groups, panels and channels whereby local people can get involved and have a say.

These groups will have a notable role to play in service-specific consultations, and at times corporate consultations, and will be used to specifically encourage comment on relevant service changes. The toolkit will provide a full list of these mechanisms with the relevant contact details.

Some of the key mechanisms are outlined in this section, although this is not an exhaustive list.

9.1. Service User Groups/Partnership Boards/Forums

There are numerous groups that exist in Barnet specifically to support and consult with service users. They all have varying terms and conditions, roles and responsibilities but ultimately provide service users in Barnet with an opportunity to feed back their views and improve how services are being delivered in the borough. Examples of these groups include Barnet Youth Board, Carers Forum, and the Over-55s Forum.

9.2. Housing groups

Barnet Homes is an arms-length management organisation (ALMO) and it manages 16,000 council homes (including 5,000 leaseholders) in the borough on behalf of the council.

Residents in these properties can get involved in developing services and influencing decision-making processes in a variety of ways including:

- **HUB meetings:** these are held every 3 months are open to all Barnet Homes residents to discuss services and other housing matters chosen by residents and board members
- **Performance Advisory Group (PAG):** a group of volunteer tenants and leaseholders that challenge and influence the way Barnet Homes provide services.

There are a number of other wider housing consultative forums aimed at partner organisations including

- **Housing Forum:** ad-hoc meeting that reviews key emerging housing policy issues and includes council and registered provider stakeholders
- **Private Landlords Forum:** a meeting of private rented sector landlords who let their properties to housing applicants and wish to help improve services provided by Barnet Homes and the council.

9.3. Healthwatch Barnet

Healthwatch Barnet is part of a new national Healthwatch network, giving people a powerful voice locally and nationally. Healthwatch was established through the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and is supported by a national umbrella body, Healthwatch England.

Healthwatch Barnet works in partnership with other local charities. It engages with people of all ages and from all communities to understand their experience of the quality and efficiency of health and social care services. It has a place on Barnet's Health and Wellbeing Board and Clinical Commissioning Group Board, as well as other local groups and Committees, to raise patient's and service-users issues, to help improve services.

9.4. Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board

Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board sets out the priorities of the Community Safety Strategy for the borough. Partners examine the results of all council and partnership community consultation where residents are asked about their views on crime and community safety. This will include results of the Public Attitude Survey, the Police Resident Attitude Survey, surveys and feedback from public meetings and events and the police ward panels.

Increasing community confidence and effective community engagement will remain a key priority for the partnership. Partners will be developing a community engagement plan (2014/15) setting out how they will engage with residents and partners on community safety.

9.5. Other ways to get involved and have a say

Other ways people can get involved and have a say include: contacting (write to, email or telephone) relevant council officers or departments; by submitting a complaint through the council's complaints procedure; submitting a Freedom of Information Request; contacting their local councillor or attending their councillor's surgery; attending council meetings or committees; or by submitting a petition.

10. How we will continue to improve

The following section outlines how Barnet Council intends to continue to improve its approach to consultation and engagement.

It sets out the corporate best practice principles and quality standards in relation to consultation and engagement; the importance of equalities to engagement; what success should look like and a consultation calendar outlining regular research, consultation and engagement activities that are undertaken.

10.1. Best practice principles and quality standards

The following best practice principles and quality standards will continue to bring about improved planning, co-ordination and consistency to consultation and community engagement activities undertaken in Barnet. These standards are now mandatory for all consultation undertaken by Barnet Council and they are also a good guide for partner agencies and set out what residents can expect.

The standards are:

1. **Procedural** – all consultation and community engagement activity will be discussed with the service, Engage Barnet site administrators and the central Consultation Officer at the planning stage, and all such planned activity will be added to the Consultation Forward Plan and be published on Engage Barnet.
2. **Needed** – we will check if anyone else has already undertaken consultation where the results could be shared and unnecessary repetition and duplication avoided.
3. **Clear, concise and relevant** – we will explain why we're consulting and how we're going to take people's views into account as part of the decision making process. All our information will be worded clearly and avoid jargon.
4. **Timely and well planned** – we will allow adequate time so that people have a proper chance to get involved. Sufficient time will be given to planning and conducting the consultation and for the results to be collated, analysed and considered.
5. **Inclusive and accessible** – we will involve the widest spectrum of the community in our consultations, including under-represented or marginalised groups. We will tailor our approach to the needs of the audience, recognising we need to consider levels of understanding, timeframes, accessibility of venues, childcare, language and appropriate means of communication etc. This approach is not only good practice but also helps to ensure the council meets its statutory equalities obligations.
6. **Appropriate methods** – we will use consultation methods that make best use of our resources and give the best results for the target audience. We will also be prepared to try new ideas and innovative approaches.
7. **Action-focused** – we will act on the findings to improve services, programmes and quality of life for local residents. Where a decision is contrary to the views of those consulted, we will give clear reasons why.
8. **Closing the feedback loop** – we will report back to the public what they've told us during the consultation and what we've done as a result of it.

The consultation toolkit and protocols will further assist staff responsible for designing consultation and community engagement activities to comply with the council's corporate standards.

10.2. Consultation and Equalities

Understanding the needs of Barnet's diverse community and ensuring an inclusive approach to consultation and community engagement is a key aspect of the objectives, quality standards and principles set out within this strategy. It underpins the ethos of Barnet Council as well as being a requirement of the Equality Framework for Local Government, and ensures compliance with legislative requirements as laid out in the Equality Act 2010. Further guidance on how to ensure consultation and engagement activities are inclusive and where necessary target marginalized or under-represented groups will be provided in the consultation toolkit.

Monitoring

Effective consultation and engagement activities should include standard equalities and diversity monitoring. Collecting such information helps us better understand our citizens and communities and target our services. The toolkit will provide standard monitoring questions around the nine protected characteristics as laid out in the Equality Act 2010. Due regard and consideration should be given to when the supplementary questions should be included; in particular will they add value and inform the consultation project or activity? Advice on this issue can be sought from the central Consultation Officer.

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

Consultation and engagement is an important component of the EIA process. An EIA helps identify whether the implementation of a new policy or initiative or operation of a current policy, function or service affects different people or

groups in different ways. Thereby ensuring possible negative consequences are either eliminated or mitigated.

Existing research and consultation is often required to assess any potential impacts of proposals, while additional work may be required to fill any gaps and ensure people who are likely to be affected are consulted. An EIA toolkit has been developed to assist with completing EIAs. Further advice on EIAs can be sought from the central Equalities Advisor.

10.3. What will success look like?

Over the last few years, Barnet has already been working to strengthen how the council informs, consults, involves and empowers its community. Section 4.1 and Appendix 1 have set out in detail the difference between these levels of engagement, examples, and key considerations for each level of engagement.

As part of our ongoing improvement corporately, across council's delivery units, and in conjunction with our partners, Barnet will need to demonstrate through the normal course of business that:

- we understand the needs and interests of our local community
- we use this understanding to ensure information, consultation, involvement and empowerment opportunities are provided and that they target the right people and are accessible
- consideration is given to the appropriate level of engagement (using Section 4.1 and appendix 1)
- we adhere to the best practice principles and quality standards outlined in Section 10.1, and 10.2, although also taking into account wider factors (statutory guidance, resources and political priorities)

- local people feel that there are sufficient opportunities to get involved and they know how to access them if they want to. Our community should also recognise that the council's policies reflect this involvement and those services are accessible, responsive and tailored to the different needs of our local communities.

10.4. Consultation Forward Plan

There are a number of periodic corporate research, consultation and engagement activities undertaken by the council.

These are outlined below.

Residents' Perception Survey (every 6 months)

March, April, October, November

Citizens' Panel

February, May, September, December

Budget Consultation

January, November, December

10.5. Consultation and Engagement Annual Report

The council will publish an Annual Report, looking back on each year on what has been consulted on, the number participants taking part, and how we have acted on the results.

Appendix 1: Levels of consultation and engagement and key points to note

Type of activity	What's involved	Goal	Key points to note	Examples
Insight	Gathering residents/service user profile information	To understand the equality impact assessment (EIA) of any proposed change	The outcome of the insight gathering should inform any proposals and the impact on protected characteristics or other residents.	New Council Tax Benefits Scheme, assessing who and how recipients will be impacted by the proposed changes.
Inform	Providing information is a one way process of notifying people about local services, initiatives and issues that affect or may interest them	To provide the public with balanced objective information to assist them in understanding the issues and alternatives, opportunities and solutions, progress and performance as well as how to access services, It also enhances transparency.	The value of providing information should not be underestimated. Surveys often indicate people want more information about services in their area.	Barnet First, Press releases, the Council's website, Area Forums, posters, leaflets, social media.
Consult	Asking people for their views to inform decisions, services, plans, and changes	To obtain public feedback and views on proposed changes, priorities or new initiatives. While views are considered, the final decision rests with the council. Consulting is more than just providing information but less than inviting to participate in decision-making.	It is the primary way of ensuring council services respond to and reflect the needs of local people. Not always the best option as there may be other factors that will influence the decision. The final decision will rest with Councillors. The process must be made clear at the outset of the consultation, and the consultation should be inclusive and provide feedback on any decisions made.	Statutory examples: – Department of Health Annual Social Care User Survey; Introduction of a CPZ's – Proposed withdrawal or variance to a service or policy that could impact on customers or residents Non-statutory examples: consult on any relevant topics using surveys or focus groups i.e. Annual Residents Survey.
Involve	Involving people in the design, development and direction of activities and services in cooperation with public organisations	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solutions.	There is greater emphasis on relationship building It requires much more active involvement from resident than consultation. It is critical to be clear about the level of influence of participants will have.	Mystery shopping, Co production of services, Experts by Experience
Empower	We maintain an equal and effective working relationship	To place final decision making in the hands of the public. This builds on community involvement method but also includes a responsibility for the community to deliver the activities, actions and services agreed by the decision-making body.	Empowerment requires the greatest amount of input by the community and is sometimes known as community management or ownership.	Experts by Experience. Budgeting, , transfer of assets or management of them to the community, i.e. academy school, Pledgebank, Adopt a Place

Consultation on the draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy

Consultation Findings

May 2014
Consultation
Consultation & Communications

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the detailed findings from the Consultation on the draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

1.1 Views on the strategy's recommendations, best practice principles and quality standards

Residents responding to the survey were in the main supportive of the strategy, with the majority agreeing with its' key recommendations, the principles for conducting consultation, and the standards that the strategy says the council will adhere to when conducting consultation and engagement. Respondents who did not agree with these elements of the strategy were more likely to indicate that they were neutral rather than disagree.

1.2 Different levels of engagement and when the council consults

In terms of the different levels of engagement that the council will use and how these feed in the council's decision making process, the majority of respondents agreed (two thirds) that the information included in the strategy clearly explains the different levels of engagement; understand what each level of engagement is trying to achieve; and that the information provided in the strategy clearly explains when the council will consult with its residents. Again respondents who did not agree with these elements of the strategy were more likely to indicate that they were neutral rather than disagree.

In terms of the strategy being clear on how residents views will be considered by councillors in the decision making process, again the majority of respondents agreed (just under two thirds) that they understand how their views will be considered by councillors in the decision making process, with the remaining respondents being split between neutral, disagreeing and indicating they did not know.

1.3 Additional comments

Respondents were invited to give reasons for their answers, and if they felt the strategy had missed anything. Only four to six respondents answered each of these questions and these have been reported on in the detailed response in section five of this report.

DETAILED FINDINGS

1. INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the detailed findings from the consultation on the draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

2. METHODOLOGY

- The consultation was open for six weeks, from the 4th March to 13th April 2014.
- The consultation consisted of an online survey. Paper copies were made available on request.
- The consultation was published on the council's engage space. <http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/>. The consultation included a hyperlink to the council's draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy.
- The survey was widely promoted through a press release and it was emailed to 900 individual residents. The consultation was also Tweeted to the council's 7,000+ followers.
- Despite the repeated promotion of this consultation there was a low response rate. However, this number of respondents is consistent with other consultations that do not appear to affect residents directly.

3. RESPONDENTS

- The survey received a total response of 20 responses (not all respondents completed all questions). Due to the small sample size the overall findings should be treated with caution.
- Of the 20 respondents, 15 (89 per cent) were Barnet residents, and two (11 per cent) were both Barnet residents and also from the business community. There were no responses from the voluntary sector or other public sector stakeholders.
- All respondents were over 25 years of age. 14 (82%) of the 20 respondents were aged 45-64 years old.

4. CALCULATING AND REPORTING ON RESULTS

- The results are based on "valid responses" only, i.e. all those providing an answer (this may or may not be the same as the total sample) unless otherwise specified. The base size may therefore vary from question to question depending on the extent of non-response.

5. DETAILED RESPONSES

5.1 VIEWS ON THE STRATEGY'S RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1.1 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the recommendations.

The majority of respondents agreed with all of the statements.

- All of the respondents (20) agreed that “Each consultation should always give feedback to participants on conclusions and how the council has responded to the findings of consultation.”
- 90 per cent of respondents (18 out of 20) agreed that “The council should publish an annual review of consultation”.
- 85 per cent of respondents (17 out of 20) agreed with the statement: “The council should advocate the use of more focus groups or face to face engagement.”
- 80 per cent of respondents (16 out of 20) agreed that “The council should publish a forward plan for consultations.”
- 75 per cent of respondents (15 out of 20) agreed with the statement: “The panel should undertake four regular consultations a year, either ‘quarterly Omni-surveys.’”
- 75 per cent of respondents (15 out of 20) agreed that: “All service consultations should be quality assured by the central Consultation Officer.”
- 70 per cent of respondents (14 out of 20) agreed with the statement: “The council should expand the Citizens’ Panel.”
- 65 per cent of respondents (13 out of 20) agreed with the statement: “The council should undertake two Residents’ Perception Surveys each year.”
- 60 per cent of respondents (12 out of 20) agreed that “The council should ensure that the development of a single customer account is undertaken with a view to fully engaging residents with the work of the council.”

5.1.2 Respondents were asked to give reasons why they disagreed with any of the recommendations.

A third of the respondents (six out of 18) answered this question. Their comments are set out below.

- One respondent felt that focus groups gave only limited information about the views of the total population.
- One respondent felt that whilst they understood the importance of obtaining the views of residents, this should not be an opportunity to waste tax payers’ money.

- There was a view that two perception surveys per year were too many as attitudes do not change that often. Also that the council should not decide how many consultations run each year but that they should be carried out only when there is a policy or process to be consulted on.
- One respondent felt the council does not consult properly and goes through the motions. They felt that the council should make more effort to provide opportunities for a wide range of residents (from those who use computers to those who don't) to express their views.
- With respect to the recommendation "The council should ensure that the development of a single customer account is undertaken with a view to fully engaging residents with the work of the council" there was a view that the council assumes all residents engage with the council via the web and that focussing on the internet would mean many elderly residents who do not use the internet would be discriminated against.
- One respondent was concerned about data protection issues particularly with regard to the views of residents being stored on servers run by an external contractor.

5.1.3 Respondents were asked if they would like to see any other recommendations included in the strategy.

Half of the respondents (nine out of 18) said they would not like to see other recommendations included in the strategy. 28 per cent (five out of 18) said they would like to see other recommendations and 22 per cent (four out of 18) were not sure.

5.1.4 Respondents were invited to tell us what other recommendations they would like the council to consider and to give reasons why.

Twenty per cent (four of 20 respondents) told us what other recommendations they would like the council to consider.

- One respondent would like all consultations to be made publicly available, without passing an opinion, and that discussion and comments should be available to be made on another forum.
- Two respondents shared the view that there should be more widespread and open engagement with residents and council members, to allow discussions on areas that may need to be looked into in more depth.
- One respondent felt that trust needs to be built first. Also that uninformed views are counterproductive and that there needs to be an education programme of what the council does and how it works before the views of residents are taken seriously.

5.2 BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES AND QUALITY STANDARDS

5.2.1 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statements about the best practice principles that have been identified in the strategy.

The vast majority of respondents agreed with all of the statements.

- 15 out of 20 respondents (75 per cent) agreed with the statement: “Overall I am satisfied with the principles that have been identified.”
- 14 out of 20 respondents (70 per cent) agreed with the statement: “The principles help me understand what engagement standards I can expect from the council.”
- 13 out of 20 respondents (65 per cent) agreed that: “The principles identified will help deliver good quality engagement.”

5.2.2 Respondents were asked to give reasons why they disagreed with any of the statements.

Of the 20 respondents, four (20 per cent) answered this question. Their comments are set out below.

- There was a view that there is too much waste of money by using outside agencies when properly trained staff would be far more appropriate.
- One respondent felt the key would be whether the council uses the information constructively or as a box ticking exercise.
- One respondent commented that the definition of 'political priorities' has not been given.

5.2.3 Respondents were asked if there were any other best practice principles that should be included in the strategy.

Half of the respondents (nine out of 18) were not sure if any other principles should be included in the strategy. 30 per cent (five out of 18) said they did not think that any other principles should be included, and 22 per cent (four out of 18) said they did think other best practice principles should be included.

5.2.4 Respondents were asked what other best practice principles or quality standards they would you like the council to consider.

Two of the 20 respondents (ten per cent) answered this question. Their suggestions for other best practice principles or quality standards are set out below.

- One respondent felt that there should be immediate publication of the raw data as soon as the politicians start making statements about the research to avoid the risk of false statements or representations being made about the data. This would support the MRS Code of Conduct rule B61.
- Another felt that openness and honesty should be stressed and that there should be punishment of employees and councillors if misinformation is given.

5.3 DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT AND WHEN THE COUNCIL CONSULTS

5.3.1 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statements about the information provided in Appendix one.

The majority of respondents agreed with all of the statements.

- 12 out of 18 respondents (66 per cent) agreed with the following statements:
 - The information clearly explains the different levels of engagement.
 - I understand what each level of engagement is trying to achieve
 - The information provided explains clearly when the council will consult with residents.
- 11 out of 18 respondents (61 per cent) agreed with the following statement:
 - I understand how my views will be considered by councillors in the decision making process.

5.3.2 Respondents were asked to give reasons why they disagreed with any of the statements.

Three of the 20 respondents (fifteen per cent) said they disagreed with the statements and gave further comments, which are set out below.

- One respondent said that engagement had not happened in the past and that they were looking forward to the attitudes of councillors changing.
- One respondent felt that there was a trust issue and that the council has to change first before a level of trust can be restored between citizens and the council.
- There was a view that lip service was being paid, particularly with respect to planning committee decisions.

5.4 GENERAL COMMENTS

5.4.1 Respondents were invited to tell us any further comments they had about the strategy.

Three of the 20 respondents (fifteen per cent) answered this question and their comments are set out below.

- There was a view that existing staff in their specialists fields should be used to deal with residents' views, and not external agencies.
- One respondent was concerned about the costs of the proposals.
- One respondent felt that the council should build trust and respect for residents and their views.

Transparency Consultation

Consultation Findings

May 2014
Consultation
Consultation & Communications

Transparency Consultation

1. INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the detailed findings from the Transparency Consultation.

2. METHODOLOGY

- The consultation was open for six weeks, from the 4th March to 13th April 2014.
- The consultation consisted of an online survey. Paper copies were made available on request.
- The consultation was published on the council's engage space. <http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/>.
- The survey was widely promoted through a press release and it was emailed to 900 individual residents. The consultation was also Tweeted to the council's 7,000+ followers.
- Despite the repeated promotion of this consultation there was a low response rate. However, this number of respondents is consistent with other consultations that do not appear to affect residents directly.

3. RESPONDENTS

- The survey received a total response of 28 responses (not all respondents completed all questions). Due to the small sample size the overall findings should be treated with caution.
- All of the respondents were Barnet residents. There were no responses from the voluntary sector or other public sector stakeholders.
- All respondents were over 35 years of age. Residents over 45 years of age accounted for 88 per cent of the sample.

4. CALCULATING AND REPORTING ON RESULTS

- The results are based on "valid responses" only, i.e. all those providing an answer (this may or may not be the same as the total sample) unless otherwise specified. The base size may therefore vary from question to question depending on the extent of non-response.

5. RESPONSES TO THE SURVEY

5.1 Types of data the council could publish

Respondents were asked what other information they would like the council to publish that would demonstrate that the council is being accountable?

- Of the 28 respondents, 15 (54 per cent) provided suggestions for data that could be published.

The two most requested types of data related to the accountability of councillors and staff and transparency with regard to spending. Whilst much of the information related to these issues is published, this suggests that people would be interested in being provided with further data on these subjects. It should be noted that this feedback tallies with the January 2012 Citizens' Panel Consultation, in which issues such as expenses, allowances, salaries and parking revenue were all raised, as they are here. The 2012 consultation also noted that much of this data was already published. Any gap analysis going forward should analyse how much more of this data we hold and can make available.

- Ten respondents (36 per cent) suggested information that was already published on the council website.

This suggests that there is a level of disconnect between what we publish and what we are perceived to publish. It can be assumed that the current Barnet website is at least in part the cause of this, as its limited search function makes it hard to track down information. Data on the website is also corralled in specific business areas spread around the site, which means one has to look in a number of places to identify council data. This may also be a result of the format in which we publish data (e.g. PDF and Word), which makes it hard to identify and analysed specific datasets.

The two most salient factors here, then, are the accessibility of the data that we hold and the communication of that data.

With regard to the first of these points, the introduction of the CKAN portal will provide a one-stop shop for Barnet data, and provide a tool by which to upload and analyse datasets. With regard to the second issue, the feedback would suggest that the data portal must be adequately signposted and promoted to the wider public.

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- Individual respondents also expressed interest in data on the following areas. Whilst much of this data is already published, we would need to consider its accessibility and if we hold any more that can be published:
 - Planning
 - Licensing
 - Parking revenue
 - Open tenders
 - Road works
 - Street trees
 - Littering and vandalism

5.2 Data to support business development

Respondents were asked if there was any information they felt the council could publish to support economic and business development in the borough.

- The response to this section was limited, with only seven (25 per cent) individuals providing relevant feedback. However, four (14 per cent) of the respondents suggested data with regard to parking space availability would be particularly useful, especially with regard to the retail sector.
- Of the remaining respondents, interest was shown in the publication of information with regard to what the council is doing to help business and details of new businesses opening in the area. Whilst the former is more about providing council advice, the latter could be an issue to be explored.
- The limited number of respondents that provided feedback for this section concentrated almost exclusively on the retail industry, with little comment on any other sectors.

5.3. Data held by other public bodies

Respondents were asked if there was any other information held by the council, or other public bodies, which they would like published and that would be helpful in their day to day life.

- There were eight (29 per cent) relevant responses in this section. These are set out below. There appears to be no unifying theme to analyse here, but each could be considered for publication:

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- (i) Crime figures – whilst the council does not produce this data, local and national recorded crime and the British Crime Survey could be linked to from CKAN
 - (ii) An expanded list of contact numbers in one place
 - (iii) Expenditure and council activity broken down by ward
 - (iv) National and local Planning regulations and policies
 - (v) Information on the recycling process
 - (vi) Statistics on how many individuals use services (e.g. libraries)
- One respondent also expressed concerns with regard to the data quality of previously published data, especially with regard to metadata such as creation date, etc. These issues should be addressed by the CKAN publishing schedule.

5.4 Format of data the council could use

Respondents were asked what other formats they would you like the council to use to publish its data.

- As is probably to be expected, respondents exhibited a limited knowledge of open data and the most useful data formats that contribute to the user-friendly manipulation of the data. The primary concern of the nine (32 per cent) respondents that provided relevant feedback here was with regard to how readable and accessible documents were, rather than data. Mention was made of PDF and Word formats that are already in use on the website and are not the best means of delivering open and transparent data for effective reuse.
- Responses from older residents stressed the importance of information being available in paper formats. Whilst this is understandable with regard to most documents, it would be essentially impossible to implement this with datasets.
- Some useful points were raised as to the inaccessibility of the current Capita contracts. These are currently on the website but in a PDF format that does not allow for easy searching and extraction of information. In addition a further concern was raised with regard to the accessibility and usefulness of the current website. With regard to the Capita contracts, as these constitute thousands of pages of documents, there is likely to be a resourcing issue in transferring these to a more user-friendly format. If a less labour-intensive means of doing this can be identified, it should be considered. However, it is clear from this feedback that all future contract publications should be in a more accessible format.
- The response to this section is generally limited by the assumption it makes that individual respondents have the necessary technological expertise to have a preference for an open data format. This could be seen as a flaw in the

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methodology of the questions, as the formatting question should really be targeted at a more specialist audience.

6. Conclusion

The limited response shows that there were clearly some issues with regard to the consultation methodology. The broad brush approach, together with the self-selecting sample, meant that we were not necessarily able to reach those with most interest and knowledge with regard to Transparency.

Whilst the response to the consultation was exceptionally limited, the lack of response provides some very useful insight:

- Knowledge of the information already published on the council's website is very limited.
- There is apparently very little public knowledge of the wider issues with regard to transparency.
- Any work going forward on transparency should take this into account and ensure that all efforts are made to inform the public and the wider community as to what we are doing and why.

Appendix 4

London Borough of Barnet

Declaration & Commitment Statement to Transparency

Ambition:

Barnet council intends to set the gold standard for local government transparency. We believe that council data is your data and we have a responsibility to:

A) Keep it safe

B) Make information about the borough and the council freely available

C) Provide good quality and timely data

D) Ensure our data is open and easy to use and understand.

Transparent open data is essential for accountability and we believe providing access to our data can empower individuals, the media, civil society and businesses to achieve better outcomes for themselves and for public services.

Our vision is to not only adhere, but to exceed the Local Government Transparency Code requirements.

Reasons:

- a) Releasing Data for Improved Governance - the release of open data enables you to understand how the council works and contribute meaningfully to decision-making processes. It also strengthens our democratic institutions and encourages better decision-making to meet the needs of our residents.
- b) Releasing data for improved performance and efficiency – publishing data freely means that the council’s performance and spending and opportunities for improvement are visible, and supports ‘armchair auditors’ to hold us to account
- c) Releasing data to build shared responsibility and partnership – making Barnet a place of opportunity and success is a shared endeavour that relies on everyone having access to the same information about the challenges and opportunities we face
- d) Releasing data to build trust - the council has a huge impact on those that live and work in Barnet and has to make vital decisions about how public funds are spent. Publishing data on this enables you to see how and why we make these decisions.
- e) Releasing Data for Innovation - Recognising the importance of diversity in stimulating creativity and innovation, the more people and organisations that use our data, the greater the social and economic benefits that will be generated. This is true for both commercial and non-commercial uses. Freely-available data can be used in innovative ways to create useful tools and products that help people navigate modern life more easily. Used in this way, open data is a catalyst for innovation in the private sector, supporting the creation of new markets, businesses and jobs.

Declaration:

We, the London Borough of Barnet, agree that open data is an untapped resource with the potential to encourage the building of stronger, better connected borough that better meet the needs of residents and allows innovation to flourish.

We therefore agree to follow the principles that will be the foundation for access to, and the release and re-use of, data made available by the London Borough of Barnet. They are:

1. Principle 1: Open Data by Default

We will:

- establish an expectation that data will be published openly by default, while recognising that there are legitimate reasons why some data cannot be released, in particular pertaining to intellectual property, commercial sensitivity, personally-identifiable and sensitive information, which must be observed;
- publish data on a portal so that all data released can be found easily in one place, free to access and re-use.
- ensure that all data processing is compliant with any legal or contractual requirements including the Data Protection Act 1998

2. Principle 2: Quality, Quantity and Timely

We will:

- release high-quality open data that is timely, comprehensive, and accurate. To the extent possible, data will be in the original and unmodified form. We will make sure that data is properly described, so that consumers have sufficient information to understand what the data is telling us and its strengths, weaknesses, analytical limitations of information and security requirements, as well as how to process the data; and
- release data as early as possible, allow users to provide feedback, and then continue to make revisions to ensure the highest standards of open data quality are met.

3. Principle 3: Usable by All

We will:

- release data in open formats wherever possible, ensuring that the data is available to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes; and
- release as much data as possible, and include providing data in multiple formats, so that it can be processed by computers and understood by people.
- Publish information in a form that allows all residents to make the most of the opportunities the borough offers

Appendix 5 Declaration & Commitment Statement to Transparency Equality Analysis (EqA)

Questionnaire

Please refer to the guidance before completing this form.

1. Details of function, policy, procedure or service:	
Title of what is being assessed: The Declaration and Commitment Statement to Transparency	
Is it a new or revised function, policy, procedure or service? New	
Department and Section: Information Management Team	
Date assessment completed: 9 th May 2014	
2. Names and roles of officers completing this assessment:	
Lead officer	Jenny Obee, Head of Information Management
Stakeholder groups	Residents, Businesses, Customers, Employees and Elected Members
Representative from internal stakeholders	
Representative from external stakeholders	
Delivery Unit Equalities Network rep	
Performance Management rep	
HR rep (for employment related issues)	
3. Full description of function, policy, procedure or service:	

Please describe the aims and objectives of the function, policy, procedure or service
Please include - why is it needed, what are the outcomes to be achieved, who is it aimed at? Who is likely to benefit? How have needs based on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and carers been taken account of? Identify the ways people can find out about and benefit from the proposals. Consider any processes they need to go through or criteria that we apply to determine eligibility.

The Declaration and Commitment Statement to Transparency is needed to embed a transparent attitude and culture throughout the council to fulfil the council's ambitions to be an exemplary local authority to transparency.

The outcome is to make the council more accountable and providing access to our data can be empowering and beneficial to everyone regardless of race, religion etc, furthermore the council recognises the importance of diversity in stimulating creativity and innovation, the more people and organisations that use our data, the greater the social and economic benefits that will be generated. This is true for both commercial and non-commercial uses.

The published data will be made available on a dedicated portal for all to see, free to access, to use and re-use by default.

4. How are the equality strands affected? *Please detail the effects on each equality strand, and any mitigating action you have taken so far. Please include any relevant data. If you do not have relevant data please explain why.*

Equality Strand	Affected?	Explain how affected	What action has been taken already to mitigate this? What action do you plan to take to mitigate this?
1. Age	Yes X / No <input type="checkbox"/>	The very elderly customers may not have the technological means to directly use open data themselves, but the care services they may use or buy can be made upon informed choices based on the transparent information about the quality of their care.	Transparency is an enabler for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy goals; to improve health and health services, to promote integration of health and social care, to hold services to account and engage the public.
2. Disability	Yes X / No <input type="checkbox"/>	Our commitment to transparency is in addition to the current user accessibility in that data will be freely available in an open format for users	Information will be provided on request in required format
3. Gender reassignment	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> / No X		

4. Pregnancy and maternity	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> / No X		
5. Race / Ethnicity	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> / No X		
6. Religion or belief	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> / No X		
7. Gender / sex	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> / No X		
8. Sexual orientation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> / No X		
9. Marital Status	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> / No X		
10. Other key groups?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> / No X		

<p>5. What will be the impact of delivery of any proposals on satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents?</p>
<p>Positive, in the context that the release of open data strengthens our democratic institutions and encourages better policy–decisions to meet the needs of our residents. It will develop links to allow the public to provide feedback on the most important data they would like released.</p>
<p>6. How does the proposal enhance Barnet’s reputation as a good place to work and live?</p>
<p>By publishing information in the (intended) form that supports residents to live a full and active life in Barnet. Furthermore, freely-available data can be used in innovative ways to create useful tools and products that help people navigate modern life more easily. Used in this way, open data is a catalyst for innovation in the private sector, supporting the creation of new markets, businesses and jobs.</p>
<p>7. How will members of Barnet’s diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?</p>
<p>Transparent open data is essential for accountability and providing access to our data can empower individuals, the media, civil society and businesses to fuel better outcomes in public services.</p>
<p>8. What measures and methods have been designed to monitor the application of the policy or service, the achievement of intended outcomes and the identification of any unintended or adverse impact? <i>Include information about the groups of people affected by this proposal. Include how frequently will the monitoring be conducted and who will be made aware of the analysis and outcomes? Include these measures in the Equality Improvement Plan (section 15)</i></p>
<p>The Transparency project will be compiling a publishing schedule for all the open data it publishes to ensure that post-project the data is regularly refreshed and updated. There will be further Consultation and Engagements with Barnet residents and businesses asking ‘what further information they would like to have’? Furthermore, there will be an email facility where customers can request additional open data, which would be made available for all to use and re-use.</p>
<p>9. How will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities? <i>Include whether proposals bring different groups of people together, does the proposal have the potential to lead to resentment between different groups of people and how might you be able to compensate for perceptions of differential treatment or whether implications are explained.</i></p>

The transparent philosophy is that we believe that council data is the peoples' data and that open data is an untapped resource with huge potential to encourage the building of stronger, better connected societies that meet the needs of our residents and allows innovation and prosperity to flourish.

(Open data is non-personally identified data produced in the course of the organisation's ordinary business, which has been released under an unrestricted Open Government Licence. Open Public data is underpinned by the philosophy that data generated or collected by organisations in the public sector should belong to the taxpayers, wherever financially feasible and where releasing it won't violate any laws or rights to privacy (either for residents or government staff).

10. How have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal? How have any comments influenced the final proposal? Please include information about any prior consultation on the proposal been undertaken, and any dissatisfaction with it from a particular section of the community.

A Transparency consultation and engagement survey commenced on 4th March 2014 and closed on 13th April 2014 with residents and customers.

28 responses were received in total, despite being widely promoted via Barnet First, Community Barnet and via social media; such as: face-book and weekly tweets to 7000 followers, plus emailing the survey link to 900 past Citizen Panel members.

The Transparency project will be publishing the open data portal launch, followed by another consultation and engagement survey, plus an article on 'Big Data' is due to be included in Barnet First, September's edition.

Overall Assessment

11. Overall impact		
Positive Impact X	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known ¹ <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>

12. Scale of Impact		
Positive impact: Minimal <input type="checkbox"/> Significant X	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known Minimal <input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/>	

13. Outcome			
No change to decision X	Adjustment needed to decision <input type="checkbox"/>	Continue with decision <i>(despite adverse impact / missed opportunity)</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	If significant negative impact - Stop / rethink <input type="checkbox"/>

14. Please give full explanation for how the overall assessment and outcome was decided
<p>Transparency us a key component for the Government’s public services reform programme to reform public services.</p> <p>A key ingredient of trust is transparency. The challenge for the council is to be transparent in a way that most usefully informs our residents, while opening up as much public data as possible for interrogation and re-use by third parties or resident auditors. By becoming more transparent and improving the range of information published by the council will have a three-fold effect for residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will increase opportunities for residents to hold us to account and improve public trust. • Opening up data sets for use and re-use by third parties will enable broader value for residents from the council’s data assets. • It will have the potential to transform the quality of the Barnet customer/resident

¹ ‘Impact Not Known’ – tick this box if there is no up-to-date data or information to show the effects or outcomes of the function, policy, procedure or service on all of the equality strands.

perception of the interaction with the council.

It's a proven phenomenon that the reuse of open data is already changing peoples' lives and businesses for the better.

15. Equality Improvement Plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from the Equality Analysis (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These now need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equality Objective	Action	Target	Officer responsible	By when

1st Authorised signature (Lead Officer)	2nd Authorised Signature (Delivery Unit management team member)
Date:	Date:

Appendix 6

Equality Analysis (EqA)

Questionnaire

Please refer to the guidance before completing this form.

1. Details of function, policy, procedure or service:	
Title of what is being assessed: Draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy	
Is it a new or revised function, policy, procedure or service? Updated strategy	
Department and Section: Communications	
Date assessment completed: 30/05/14	
2. Names and roles of officers completing this assessment:	
Lead officer	Lesley Holland/Rosie Evangelou
Stakeholder groups	All Delivery Units and Strategic Partners
Representative from internal stakeholders	
Representative from external stakeholders	
Delivery Unit Equalities Network rep	
Performance Management rep	
HR rep (for employment related issues)	
3. Full description of function, policy, procedure or service:	
<p>Please describe the aims and objectives of the function, policy, procedure or service. <i>Please include - Why is it needed? What are the outcomes to be achieved? Who is it aimed at? Who is likely to benefit? How have needs based on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and carers been taken account of? Identify the ways people can find out about and benefit from the proposals. Consider any processes they need to go through or criteria that we apply to determine eligibility.</i></p> <p><i>The consultation strategy outlines how Barnet will use and adapt a range of approaches to consultation and engagement to involve local people in shaping their area and the services they receive, and achieve the council's corporate goals as outlined in the Corporate Plan by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>promoting active involvement and engagement with the rich diversity of people who live, work and study in Barnet so that policy and decision making reflects real needs</i> <i>meeting its legal responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty</i> <i>giving local people and communities real influence and power to improve their lives</i> <i>broadening access to ensure hard to hear voices</i> <i>increasing size and use of citizens panel</i> 	

- *increasing use of focus groups*
- *focusing on a range of accessible measures for people with disabilities*
- *monitoring the impact and effectiveness of actions*
- *using feedback to improve proposals*
- *analysing the equalities impact of proposals*
- *outlining how Barnet will monitor consultation and engagement activities*
- *working with partners*
- *using the residents perception survey.*

4. How are the equality strands affected? *Please detail the effects on each equality strand, and any mitigating action you have taken so far. Please include any relevant data. If you do not have relevant data please explain why.*

Equality Strand	Affected?	Explain how affected	What action has been taken already to mitigate this? What action do you plan to take to mitigate this?
1. Age	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy aims to optimise reach and involvement for all age groups and monitor outcomes of engagement	
2. Disability	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy aims to optimise reach and involvement for all disability groups and monitor outcomes of engagement	
3. Gender reassignment	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	This group represents a hard to hear voice and the strategy will actively seek out community and specialist group links and monitor outcomes of engagement	

4. Pregnancy and maternity	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	This group represents a hard to hear voice and the strategy will actively seek out community and specialist group links and monitor outcomes of engagement	
5. Race / Ethnicity	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	Barnet will actively seek out community and specialist group links through community networks, focus groups and citizen's panel and monitor outcomes of engagement	
6. Religion or belief	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	Information on religion and belief in Barnet is included in Appendix 1. Barnet will actively seek out community, interfaith and specialist group links through community networks, focus groups and citizen's panel and monitor outcomes of engagement	
7. Gender / sex	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	Information on gender makeup of Barnet is included in Appendix 1. Barnet will actively seek out community and specialist group links through community networks, focus groups and citizen's panel and monitor outcomes of engagement	
8. Sexual orientation	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	This group represents a hard to hear voice. Barnet will actively seek out community and specialist group links through community networks, focus groups and citizen's panel and monitor outcomes of engagement	
9. Marital Status	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	This group represents a hard to hear voice	
10. Other key	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / No <input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy positively	

groups?		encourages the identification and inclusion of other groups including single parent families, carers, young carers, specific strands of disability, physical sensory impairment, learning disability, mental health conditions, those on benefit/low income	
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<p>5. What will be the impact of delivery of any proposals on satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents?</p>
<p>This is expected to increase because citizens will be actively involved in council decision making and their needs will be taken into account.</p>
<p>6. How does the proposal enhance Barnet’s reputation as a good place to work and live?</p>
<p>The consultation and engagement strategy supports the council to deliver needs led best value services which meet the needs of the diversity of Barnet residents and to communicate the equalities impact of their proposals.</p>
<p>7. How will members of Barnet’s diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?</p>
<p>A transparent council will aim to acknowledge, reflect and accommodate equalities in all mainstream activities and assess the equalities impact of decisions. The needs and interests of different communities in Barnet will be known about, understood and fully reflected in decision making.</p>
<p>8. What measures and methods have been designed to monitor the application of the policy or service, the achievement of intended outcomes and the identification of any unintended or adverse impact? <i>Include information about the groups of people affected by this proposal. Include how frequently the monitoring will be conducted and who will be made aware of the analysis and outcomes. Include these measures in the Equality Improvement Plan (section 15)</i></p>
<p><i>This is dealt with in Section 10 of the strategy.</i></p>
<p>9. How will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities? <i>Include whether proposals bring different groups of people together, does the proposal have the potential to lead to resentment between different groups of people, and how might you be able to compensate for perceptions of differential treatment or whether implications are explained.</i></p>

A transparent council will aim to acknowledge, reflect and accommodate equalities in all mainstream activities and assess the equalities impact of decisions. The needs and interests of different communities in Barnet will be known, understood and fully reflected in decision making. This is a key theme of the consultation and engagement strategy. It is a required field for all Equality Impact assessments.

10. How have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal? How have any comments influenced the final proposal? Please include information about any prior consultation on the proposal being undertaken, and any dissatisfaction with it from a particular section of the community.

The consultation strategy and toolkit recommends:

- communication and involvement with Barnet’s Partnership Boards
- reasonable adjustment to the consultation process to promote engagement of citizens with different needs.

The range of consultation and engagement methods include effective tools to reach and reflect the broad range of diversity in Barnet.

A consultation exercise has been carried out and the feedback has been incorporated into the strategy/

An annual consultation and engagement report will be produced

Overall Assessment

1. Overall impact		
Positive Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known ¹ <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Scale of Impact		
Positive impact: Minimal <input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known Minimal <input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Outcome		

¹ 'Impact Not Known' – tick this box if there is no up-to-date data or information to show the effects or outcomes of the function, policy, procedure or service on all of the equality strands.

<p>No change to decision</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Adjustment needed to decision</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Continue with decision <i>(despite adverse impact / missed opportunity)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If significant negative impact - stop / rethink</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>
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4. Please give full explanation for how the overall assessment and outcome was decided

The consultation and engagement strategy will significantly enhance and continuously improve consultation and engagement practice, community cohesion, resident satisfaction, confidence and trust in the council. It will do so by acknowledging, accommodating, celebrating and responding to the diversity of Barnet citizens and by providing a range of methods to improve access to decision making that takes account differences. This will be fully reflected in the Consultation and Engagement Toolkit which will be an important element in assessing the equalities impact of all council decisions.

Equality Improvement Plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from the Equality Analysis (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These now need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equality Objective	Action	Target	Officer responsible	By when

1st authorised signature (Lead Officer)	2nd authorised signature (Delivery Unit Management Team member)
Date:	Date:

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Appendix 7

Local Government Transparency Code 2014 – High level summary

- Expands on 2011 Code of Recommended Practice considerably.
- Sets out information which “must” be published as well as information that is “recommended” to be published, as well as frequency of publication.
- We would need to implement much of the recommended actions as well as the minimum requirements to be seen to be fully committed to the Transparency Agenda

(i) Part 2: Information which must be published (minimum requirement)

2.1 Information that must be published on a quarterly basis:

- £500+ spend
 - Further expands on what the details of each item of expenditure should include
- Government Procurement Card transactions
 - details of every transaction
- Procurement information
 - Details of every £5k+ invitation to tender
 - Details of every £5k+ contract

2.2 Information that must be published on an annual basis:

- Details of land and building assets
- Details of all grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations
- Organisation chart
- TU facility time
- Parking revenues
- Controlled parking spaces
- Senior salaries
 - Threshold has dropped from £58k to £50k
 - Employees over £150k to be named
- Constitution
- Pay multiple

(ii) Part 3: Information recommended for publication

The following is a high-level summary of the information recommended for publication over and above the minimum:

- Expenditure data
 - published on a monthly rather than quarterly basis, or ideally in “real time”.

- Publish £250+ rather £500+ spend
- All transactions on cards, not just GPCs.
- Procurement
 - Publish on monthly or “real time” basis
 - Invitations to tender on a £500+ rather than £5k+ basis
 - All £5k+ contracts in their entirety
 - Forward look of likely invitations to tender
- Parking information
 - Free parking spaces in the borough
 - Breakdown of revenue from parking charges and enforcement
- Organisation chart
 - Charts to include every employee over £50k along with salary bands
- Fraud
 - High-level details of counter fraud activities including use of powers, number of staff, overall spend, cases investigated and identified, monetary value of fraud identified and results of recovery action.

(iii) Method of publication

- Minimum
 - Public data should be published in a format and under a licence that allows open re-use. Open Government Licence is recommended standard
- Recommended
 - Information should be published in “three star” format where suitable and appropriate (open licence, machine readable, and non-proprietary format such as CSV or XML).

	AGENDA ITEM 9
	<h2>Policy and Resources Committee</h2> <h3>10 June 2014</h3>
Title	Area Sub-Committees – Budget Arrangements
Report of	Head of Governance
Wards	All
Status	Public
Enclosures	None
Officer Contact Details	Maria Lugangira, Governance Officer, 020 8359 2761, maria.lugangira@barnet.gov.uk

Summary
The report requests that the Policy and Resources Committee consider and approve the process and implementation plan around new budgets devolved to the Area Sub Committees.

Recommendations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That £100,000 per annum be allocated in principle to the Area Sub-Committees in line with the new Committee System of Governance approved by Council on 21 January 2014 2. That no action is taken to either commit expenditure or spend any money until the Community Leadership Committee has approved the governance, accountability and priorities arrangements 3. That the detailed arrangements for the governance, accountability and priorities for the budgets allocated to the Area Sub-Committee be delegated to the Community Leadership Committee for approval. 4. That the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Chairmen of the Policy and Resources and Community Leadership Committees be delegated authority to put in the place the financial arrangements and controls.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Under the previous Committee Structure the Area Environment Sub Committees' remit and powers largely involved discharging the Council's Functions relating to environment and highways matters in accordance with Council Policy and within budget. Amongst the typical business for the Area Environment Sub-Committees was;
- Safety and Traffic Management Review
 - Highways Planned Maintenance programme
 - Members Items - these primarily relate to traffic calming measures
- 1.2 The rationale for allocating Area based budgets to Sub-Committees arose as a result of the public consultation survey findings on the change of the Governance System, and feedback from attendees at Residents Forums. Amongst the key findings highlighted in the survey was that under the previous Committee structure residents did not feel involved and able to influence local decisions (decision making or policy development). Common issues raised were:
- a lack of understanding as to who is responsible for delivering some of their local services
 - confusion about how the Council makes its decisions and a perception that council decision making is 'secretive and bureaucratic'
 - a perception that council decisions and views of elected representatives do not reflect residents' own priorities or those of their local area
 - efforts at consultation are considered as a means of post-hoc rationalisation of 'predetermined decisions'
- 1.3 It was felt that the previous Area Environment Sub-Committees had limited decision-making powers, due to having restricted terms of reference and no budget devolved to them.
- 1.4 As a way of addressing this, the Constitution, Ethics and Probity Committee (CEP) agreed to (i) amend the name and Terms of Reference so that they were no longer Area Environment Sub-Committees but Area Sub-Committees, with a wider remit and (ii) allocate budgets, which would enable them to directly control a portion of the Council budget specifically devolved to them not just for environmental matters but other local matters. These non-environmental issues would either be matters referred up to the Area Sub Committee by the Chairman of the Residents Forum or delegated down by the Theme Committees (listed below) as set out in the Constitution;
- Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding
 - Adults and Safeguarding
 - Environment
 - Assets, Regeneration and Growth
 - Housing
 - Community Leadership

- 1.5 CEP agreed that the budget devolved to each Area Sub-Committee by the Policy and Resources Committee should be £100,000 p.a. over four years.
- 1.6 The implementation of Area-based budgets will offer the Council a potentially powerful tool to engage residents in the decision making process and build and enhance trust in the Council's democratic and governance process. Delegating a budget will give Area Sub-Committees control over certain aspects of spending.
- 1.7 This new process is intended to address residents' concerns raised in paragraph 1.2 by including mechanisms that will:
- empower communities to solve local problems by supporting local activity and giving people a say and influence over the resources allocated to their area.
 - improve local democracy and devolve power to a local ward based level.
 - provide an agreed, open, transparent, and co-ordinated approach to resolving local issues through partnership working with local residents.
 - provide a recognised forum for local people to bring forward not only their concerns but also their ideas for local improvements.
 - allow local residents to take part in decisions on local expenditure, which can help enhance trust and a spirit of collaboration between residents and the Council.
- 1.8 When underpinned by effective community consultation, this process will also be valuable in bringing together different groups within the community to discuss local issues and concerns. The prospect of funding will provide an added incentive when residents learn that their ideas for local improvement may secure tangible resources. This will provide an effective way of encouraging attendance at the Area Sub-Committees and Residents Forums and will encourage residents or community groups who are unaccustomed to attending meetings to engage with wider local issues.
- 1.9 In line with the principles set out in the Community Participation Strategy (scheduled to be considered by Community Leadership Committee on 25 June 2014), this process will ensure that the Council and its partners operate in a more coordinated way to empower and engage local residents. Area based budgets will enable local people to have real influence over the local allocation of resources and will improve the relationship between the Council and the community.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Community participation and involvement will be vital in achieving the changes the Council will need to make to the ways in which it delivers services over the next five years. Helping residents and community groups become more independent and resilient and take on more responsibility for

their local areas should lead to lower levels of demand on statutory services; residents will gain opportunities to develop their skills and capacity, while communities will have stronger networks and connections and become more cohesive as a result.

- 2.2 Improved community participation and involvement will also let the Council make the best use of residents' knowledge of their local area and of the resources within local communities to make sure that Council services are meeting local need as effectively as possible. In many cases, residents and community groups may be better placed than the Council is to understand and provide for the challenges facing their communities and the Council needs to take this into account when considering how to deliver services. These themes will be discussed in more depth in the Community Participation Strategy paper at the 25 June meeting of the Community Leadership Committee.
- 2.3 Improved community participation will mean that residents will need to become more involved in conversations about local priorities and in decision making, including decisions about how resources are allocated; and the Council will need to consider what support the community will need to become more independent and to take on more responsibility. The new Area Sub-Committee budgets, and the proposals to involve residents in prioritising how these are spent, are an opportunity to think about how the Council can make these principles work in practice.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 There is no existing policy that allows for the delegation of individual budgets to Area to Sub-committee, but this a new process that has been reviewed by the Constitution, Ethics and Probity Committee who have put forward the proposal.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The Area Residents Forums and Sub-Committees on the 18 June will receive a briefing paper explaining the decision taken by the Policy and Resources Committee and the implication of the decision. They will also be informed that the proposals and governance arrangements around Area based budgets are to be considered by the Community Leadership Committee on 25 June - the report will be available at the meeting.
- 4.2 Following on from the meeting of the Community Leadership Committee and agreement of the framework, communications to the public will clearly set out what the new process is and how to get involved.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The proposals contained in this report support the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan for 2013-2016:

- To create the right environment to promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough.
- To support families and individuals that need it - promoting independence, learning and well being.
- To improve the satisfaction of residents within the borough as a place to live, work and study.

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

5.2.1 The £100,000 allocated per annum will have a life span of 4 years and shall be funded from ring-fenced reserves.

5.2.2 An annual report will be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee detailing any expenditure and decisions made by the Area Sub-Committees.

5.2.3 Funding should not result in commitment for ongoing revenue expenditure beyond the life of the project.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.1.2 As part of the wider localism and community empowerment agenda introduced by the Localism Act 2011, there has been a growing interest in devolving decision making for aspects of local spending.

The Act:

- gives local authorities the formal legal ability to respond to what local people want.
- passes significant new rights directly to communities and individuals
- makes it easier for local people to take over the amenities they love and keep them part of local life
- ensures that local social enterprises, volunteers and community groups with a bright idea for improving local services get a chance to change how things are done
- enables local residents to call local authorities to account for the careful management of taxpayers' money

5.3.1 Policy and Resources Committee amongst some of its functions has overall strategic responsibility for the following:

- Allocation of a budget, as appropriate, for Area Sub-Committees
- Ensuring effective uses of Resources and Value for money
- Equalities, Diversity and Community Cohesion

5.3.3 Community Leadership Committee amongst some of its functions has overall strategic responsibility for the following;

- To oversee the arrangements for partner co-operation including pooling of budgets (other than those within the remit of the Health and Wellbeing Board) e.g. Community Budgets
- To maintain good community relations with Barnet's diverse communities ensuring that all communities have the opportunity to participate fully in the Borough's affairs

5.4 Risk Management

- 5.4.1 The proposals are founded on the principle that key strategic matters for the borough (e.g. significant planning applications) will remain within the remit of relevant themed committee. In this way understanding of what can be devolved and what can not is clear from the beginning.
- 5.4.2 The governance framework for the new arrangements will therefore need to clarify that the allocated budgets should not be used to cover work that the Council should be doing as part of its mainstream work (e.g. street cleaning) but can be used for work that needs doing but for which no budget exists in the current programme nor is there likely to be in the next year.
- 5.4.3 There is potential for confusion over who is responsible for the delivery of a particular project and how is to be delivered. Projects should link to the Community Participation strategy and the framework in place will help mitigate the risk of confusion. It should set out clearly what factors and questions need to be considered from onset and through the planning stages of a project.
- 5.4.4 The governance framework should state that resources are limited. Therefore priorities and project scope, realistic outcomes and time frames need to be clear along with the responsibilities of the Council, Councillors, stakeholders and residents.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.5.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
 - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
 - foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services

- 5.5.2 The Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance advises public authorities to::
- have an adequate evidence base for decision making and to consider what engagement needs to be undertaken with people who have an interest in tackling discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations
 - analyse the effect of a policy or practice on equality.

It will be important that proposals put to sub committee are inclusive, take account of the needs of all citizens and reflect the diversity of the area. Proposals should be accompanied with some analysis of the equalities impact so that this can be taken into account in decision making.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

5.6.1 These proposals are a response to extensive resident consultation about the changes to the Council's Committee system, which were carried out between 23 August and 22 September 2013. In addition members of the Citizens Panel were also consulted and this took place between 30 August and 30 September. A total 575 responses were received

5.6.2 The Community Participation Strategy will link the implementation of these proposals with our broader work to improve engagement and gain a better understanding of our citizens and their needs.

5.6.3 Resident Forums will be one of the avenues used to help promote awareness of the Area based budgets, along with community organisations invited to attend the meetings. Information on the Area Budgets will also be included in the Resident Forum publicity.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 The Agenda, report and minutes of the Council meeting held on the 21 January 2014 can be here;
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=162&MId=7515&Ver=4>

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	<p>AGENDA ITEM 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Policy and Resources Committee 10 June 2014</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Policy and Resources Committee Work Programme</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Andrew Travers, Chief Executive Chris Naylor, Chief Operating Officer Kate Kennally, Strategic Director for Communities Pam Wharfe, Strategic Director for Growth and Environment</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>Committee Work Programme June 2014-June 2015</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>Kirstin Lambert, kirstin.lambert@barnet.gov.uk 020 83592117</p>

Summary
The Committee is requested to consider and comment on the items included in the 2014/15 work programme

Recommendations
1. That the Committee consider and comment on the items included in the 2014/15 work programme

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Policy and Resources Committee's Work Programme 2014/15 indicates forthcoming items of business.
- 1.2 The work programme of this Committee is intended to be a responsive tool, which will be updated on a rolling basis following each meeting, for the inclusion of areas which may arise through the course of the year.
- 1.3 The Committee is empowered to agree its priorities and determine its own schedule of work within the programme.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 There are no specific recommendations in the report. The Committee is empowered to agree its priorities and determine its own schedule of work within the programme.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 N/A

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Any alterations made by the Committee to its Work Programme will be published on the Council's website.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Committee Work Programme is in accordance with the Council's strategic objectives and priorities as stated in the Corporate Plan 2013-16.

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

- 5.2.1 None in the context of this report.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 The Terms of Reference of the Policy and Resources Committee is included in the Constitution, Responsibility for Functions, Annex A.

5.4 Risk Management

5.4.1 None in the context of this report.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

5.5.1 None in the context of this report.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

5.6.1 None in the context of this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 None.

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**London Borough of Barnet
Policy and Resources
Committee Work Programme
June 2014 - May 2015**

Contact:

Subject	Decision requested	Report Of	Contributing Officer(s)
<p>10 June 2014</p> <p>Business Planning - Setting a new Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2020</p>	<p>Approve the new budget envelope (MTFS) to 2020</p> <p>Set each commissioning committee a percentage budget envelope to 2020 consistent with the new MTFS</p> <p>Mandate each commissioning committee the responsibility to work up detailed proposals for achieving the budget envelope to 2020 to report back to Policy & Resources Committee</p> <p>Consider the contents of the Priorities and Spending Review report as a set of options that council could take forward to help achieve the new MTFS</p>	<p>Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer (Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer), Strategic Director for Communities, Strategic Director for Growth and Environment</p>	<p>Commissioning Strategy Assistant Director, Deputy Chief Operating Officer</p>
<p>Area Environment Sub-Committees - Budget Arrangements</p>	<p>To allocate a budget of £100,000 per annum to Area Environment Sub-Committees as part of the new Constitutional arrangements agreed by Council in January 2014</p> <p>To delegate to the Community Leadership Committee approval of arrangements for governance, accountability and priorities for budgets allocated to Area Environment Sub-Committees</p>	<p>Commissioning Strategy Assistant Director, Head of Governance</p>	

Subject	Decision requested	Report Of	Contributing Officer(s)
Approach to Transparency	To approve a Consultation and Engagement Strategy and agree a Transparency Policy	Chief Operating Officer (Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer)	Head of Communications, Head of Information Management
Membership of the Local Government Association	To consider a referral from Council on 8 April 2014 which proposes that the Council considers its future membership of the Local Government Association	Head of Governance	
Petition requesting 30 minutes free parking on high streets	That the Committee consider the petition received by the Council in relation to free parking on high streets and indicate what action is to be taken.	Strategic Director for Growth and Environment	
Policy and Resources Committee Work Programme	The Committee is requested to consider and comment on the items included in the 2013/14 work programme.	Chief Operating Officer (Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer), Strategic Director for Communities, Strategic Director for Growth and Environment	
21 July 2014			
Business Planning Update	To consider an update on the Business Planning process for the period 2015/16 to 2019/20	Deputy Chief Operating Officer	
Procurement Forward Plan	To approve the Procurement Forward Plan for 2014/15	Head of Procurement Operations (Customer Support Group)	

Subject	Decision requested	Report Of	Contributing Officer(s)
<p>Funding for an Extra Care Housing Scheme at Moreton Close, NW7 and Advance Acquisitions of Leasehold properties on Regeneration Estates</p>	<p>To approve the Business Case and funding for:</p> <p>(i) Barnet Homes to build an Extra Care Scheme Housing Scheme for the Council at Moreton Close, NW7</p> <p>(ii) Re to acquire leasehold properties on the Council's Regeneration Estates from leaseholders who wish to sell in advance of a Compulsory Purchase Order and use these properties as temporary accommodation until they are required by the development partners</p>	<p>Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner</p>	
<p>Annual Equalities Report</p>	<p>To approve the Annual Equalities Report which details progress against the Strategic Equalities Objective as set out in the Corporate Plan</p>	<p>Commissioning Strategy Assistant Director</p>	<p>Lesley Holland, Commissioning and Equalities Policy Officer</p>
<p>Award of Internal Audit, Anti-Fraud and Risk Management Contract</p>	<p>To approve a joint procurement with a group of Local Authorities for a new Internal Audit, Anti-Fraud and Risk Management supplier</p>	<p>Head of Internal Audit and Corporate Anti-Fraud</p>	

Subject	Decision requested	Report Of	Contributing Officer(s)
Sport and Physical Activity Review		Strategic Director for Growth and Environment	
9 September 2014			
Business Planning Update	To consider an update on the Business Planning process for the period 2015/16 to 2019/20	Deputy Chief Operating Officer	
Customer Services / Insight Update	To consider an update on Customer Services and the CSG Customer Transformation programme	Commercial and Customer Services Director	
Delivering Skills, Employment, Enterprise & Training from Development through Section 106 SPD	To approve for adoption: Delivering Skills, Employment, Enterprise & Training from Development through S106 SPD	Enterprise & Regeneration Lead Commissioner	
Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	To approve for consultation: Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	Enterprise & Regeneration Lead Commissioner	
Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document	To approve for consultation: Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document	Enterprise & Regeneration Lead Commissioner	
Statement of Community Involvement	To approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement	Enterprise & Regeneration Lead Commissioner	
14 November 2014			

Subject	Decision requested	Report Of	Contributing Officer(s)
Business Planning	To consider budget proposals for the Commissioning Group and Assurance Group for the period 2015/16 to 2019/20	Chief Operating Officer (Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer)	
Local Development Scheme	To approve the Local Development Scheme	Enterprise & Regeneration Lead Commissioner	
North London Waste Plan	To approve the North London Waste Plan (Reg 18)	Enterprise & Regeneration Lead Commissioner	
2 December 2014			
Business Planning 2015/16 - 2019/20	To approve the draft budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy for consultation. To agree Commissioning Priorities proposed by theme committees. To agree Corporate Plan objectives and Management Agreement targets for 2015/16 – 2019/20	Chief Operating Officer (Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer), Strategic Director for Communities, Strategic Director for Growth and Environment	
Grahame Park Stage B	To approve the Heads of Terms of a variation to the Principal Development Agreement with Choices for Grahame Park	Enterprise & Regeneration Lead Commissioner	
13 January 2015			

Subject	Decision requested	Report Of	Contributing Officer(s)
Business Planning Update	To consider an update on the Business Planning process for the period 2015/16 to 2019/20	Deputy Chief Operating Officer	
17 February 2015			
Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015/16 - 2019/20	To approve the Corporate Plan and Budget / Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015/16 – 2019/20 for referral to Council	Chief Operating Officer (Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer)	
Environment, Planning & Regeneration and StreetScene Fees and Charges	To approve referrals from the Environment and Assets, Regeneration & Growth and Environment committees on Environment, Planning & Regeneration and StreetScene Fees and Charges for 2015/16	Strategic Director for Growth and Environment	
Customer Access Strategy	To approve the Customer Access Strategy	Commercial and Customer Services Director	
24 March 2015			
Business Planning Update	To approve Management Agreements	Chief Operating Officer (Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer), Strategic Director for Communities, Strategic Director for Growth and Environment	

Subject	Decision requested	Report Of	Contributing Officer(s)
Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	To approve for adoption: Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document		
Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document	To approve for adoption: Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document		
Grahame Park Stage B	To approve the Supplementary Planning Document for the regeneration of Grahame Park for consultation	Enterprise & Regeneration Lead Commissioner	