
Annual Governance Statement

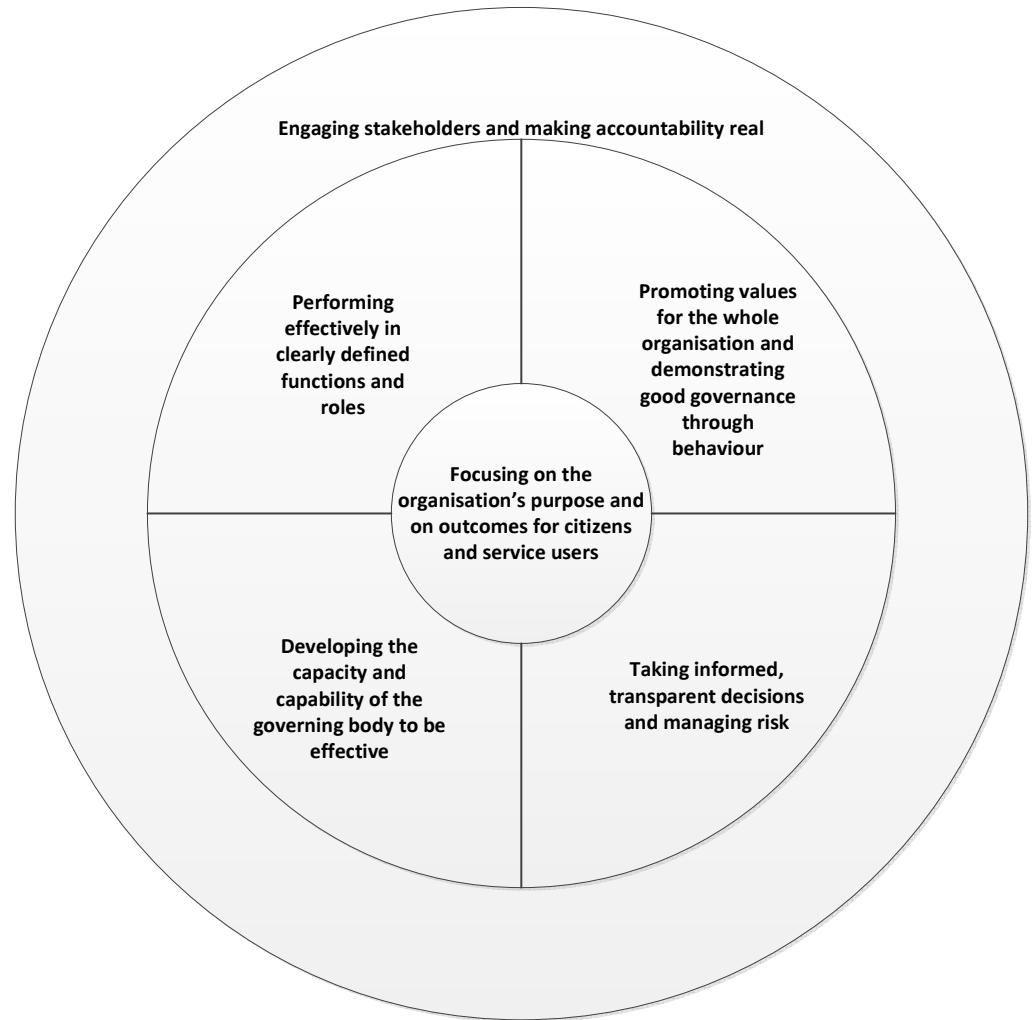
2013-14

Scope of Responsibility

- Barnet London Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- In discharging this overall responsibility the Council is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions including the management of risk.
- Barnet London Borough Council has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework delivering Good Governance in Local Government. This statement explains how the Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulations 4[2] of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006 in relation to the publication of a statement of internal control.
- The Assurance Director completed her biennial review of the Code of Corporate Governance during 2013-14. The Code of Corporate Governance is included within the Constitution.

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

- The governance framework encompasses the systems and processes, culture and values, by which the authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.
- The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to achievement of London Borough of Barnet policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- The governance framework has been in place within Barnet London Borough Council for the year ended 31st March 2014 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts and is consistent with the six core principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework on this page:



Assurance Cycle



What are we seeking to receive assurances on?

- Delivery against the corporate plan whilst observing the governance framework
- Management of the Council's key risks
- Design and effectiveness of internal controls
- Compliance with laws, regulation, internal policies and procedures
- Key governance tools are fit for purpose, e.g. the performance management and risk management framework
- Value for money
- Direction of travel of previous governance issues
- Effectiveness of the system of Governance

What sources of assurance do we require?

- Internal Audit Annual Plan
- CAFT Annual Plan
- External Audit Annual Plan
- Ofsted and Care Quality Commission
- Other external agencies
- Management assurances from active compliance frameworks
- Committees/Internal Boards responsible for monitoring and reviewing the systems, processes and documentation
- Governance review project

How we will arrange ourselves to receive adequate assurances?

- Officer and Member structures working together
- Senior Management Teams working closely with Executive Roles
- Decision-making bodies
- Bi-monthly Assurance Meetings
- Cabinet Resources Committee
- Scrutiny Committees
- Audit Committee
- Board Assurance: Partnership/Enabling/Delivery Boards
- Group Leaders Panel
- Constitution Ethics and Probity Committee and Member working group.

How we know that we are effective?

- Review sources of assurance identified at the Planning Phase
- Review Annual Reports that provide further insight such as: scrutiny committee report, audit committee annual report, task and finish groups
- Ensure sources of assurances have delivered against their plans at the necessary quality
- Internal and External Audit Annual Reports/Letters
- Highlight areas of weakness, development and implement action plans.



Principle	Description of Governance Mechanisms	Assurances received
<p>1. Identifying and Communicating the Council's Vision and Purpose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members, working with officers, have developed a clear vision of their purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users. • The One Barnet Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the ten year vision for the borough. • The Corporate Plan expresses the vision and priorities of the council and this has been communicated to residents, service users, partners and other stakeholders • A governance structure supporting the Barnet Partnerships Board (BPB) was approved by Cabinet in February 2012. The BPB and its three main sub boards (Health and Well Being Board, Children's Trust Board, Safer Communities Board) work to a shared vision as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2020. • The Council uses different performance measures (quality, outputs, value for money, customer satisfaction) to give an overview of council performance and to highlight areas of improvement. • All key projects (capital, transformation, regeneration) are aligned to the Council's strategic objectives and governed by the published project management toolkit. • Relationships with our commercial partners are governed by performance indicators that are linked to our overall vision. Our partners were selected through a competitive dialog process which determined strategic fit to organisation. Additionally, a joint venture company (JVCo is known as Re) was formed to deliver Development and Regulatory Services • The Contract Monitoring Overview and Scrutiny Committee was responsible for scrutinising the group of services provided by CSG, Re, The Barnet Group Ltd and Joint Legal Service (otherwise known as external delivery units). The role of the Committee was to scrutinise performance against key performance indicators and financial targets; change requests; and the delivery of new commissions. • Work was undertaken in 2012 to reshape the senior management structure of the council to become more flexible and capable of providing senior leadership capacity and delivering change to achieve the councils ambitions in the new operating model. The new structure came into effect in April 2013. • An employee engagement survey was carried out to gauge employee satisfaction and assist in improving the organisation for employees as a place to work and consequently improve how the organisation performs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management Framework – information is published quarterly against the corporate priorities and targets and reported through Cabinet Resources Committee subject to call in by scrutiny committees. The performance of commercial contracts for external delivery units is also monitored through this process. • Externally reported data: Government Single Data List, London benchmarking and LGG Inform benchmarking available to support performance reporting. • We publish strategic and service data online to enable residents to hold us to account • Internal Audit Plan linked to the overall objectives of the Council and the risks to their achievement • Employee Annual and Half-year review process linked to the Council's objectives • CSG and Re Commercial Contracts • Contracts and Performance Management Overview and Scrutiny • Employee Engagement Survey 2014 <div data-bbox="1525 1070 1966 1318" style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 10px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>Weaknesses identified :</p> <p>The staff survey observed that the management and communication of change could be improved</p> </div>

Principle	Description of Governance Mechanisms	Assurances received
<p>2. Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected Members are collectively responsible for the governance of the Council. Decision making and scrutiny of these decisions has been separated through the executive arrangements introduced by the Local Government Act 2000. The Constitution includes a statement on the roles of the Executive and Scheme of Delegation in place. This governance structure was in place in 2013-14 but will move to a committee system of governance in 2014-15. Statutory Officers are also documented within the Constitution. The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) is documented in the Constitution and works with Members and Strategic Directors to deliver the council's themes. Role of the Chief Finance Officer (s.151 officer), as documented in the constitution, has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and maintaining an effective system of internal financial control The Monitoring Officer is in place and, in accordance the Constitution, is responsible for ensuring agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with. Formal procedures and rules govern the Council's business: Constitution, Scheme of Delegation and procedure rules such as financial regulations, etc. The Constitution, Ethics and Probity Committee is in place to monitor and agree changes to the Constitution, making recommendations to full council. There is an annual process to review and agree the Pay Policy in accordance with the Localism Act section 38 (1); the Remuneration Committee remit is to review senior management pay, set a pay policy and appoint senior management (Chief Officers). General Functions Committee continues to be in place whose remit it is to review conditions of service. Arrangements exist within services and corporate performance to evaluate unit costs and performance. Benchmark information is collated from London Council's LAPS tool and the LGA's Inform tool and reported quarterly internally as a mechanism for ensuring clarity between Members, policy and Officer implementation. The Health and Well-Being Board became a statutory body of the Council in April 2013. The Board's terms of reference outline its responsibilities to ensure that health and social care monies are spent effectively to benefit Barnet's residents and improve health and care outcomes. An annual report will be produced in November 2014 and governance assurances considered in the 2014-15 AGS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Audit Annual Report satisfactory assurance over the fundamental and key financial systems and satisfactory assurance over system of internal control for 2013-14 Bi-Monthly SCB Assurance reporting receiving internal and external sources of assurance Performance reporting through the Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. Internal unit cost comparison summary is created each year and circulated to senior officers. Performance challenge session with Deputy Leader every quarter Formal Quarterly Performance reporting to Cabinet Resource Committee Audit Committee in place providing independent oversight of internal control environment and corporate governance <div data-bbox="1585 1054 2024 1385" style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Weaknesses identified within the Internal Audit Opinion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fit for purpose systems Business Continuity and Resilience Contracts Management and Benefits realisation Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities </div>

Principle	Description of Governance Mechanisms	Assurances received
<p>3. Values of Good Governance and Standards of Behaviour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council recognises that good governance is underpinned by shared values demonstrated in the behaviours of its Members, staff and partners. • The Council agreed four core values that were launched in 2011. The values are intended to shape the culture and define the character of the organisation now and into the future. Each year the Council awards staff who embody these values. • The Assurance Director is the Monitoring Officer and is responsible for ensuring that decisions are made in accordance with the Constitution. • Directors have the primary responsibility for ensuring that decisions are properly made in line with the Scheme of Delegation • Standards of conduct and behaviour expected of Members and Officers exist and are communicated. Training programmes were in operation during the year to support good governance • Arrangements are in place for Members and Officers to register interest and manage conflicts of interest. • A Performance management framework is in place to embed values with staff • Values are embedded within the main body of the CSG contract, and for Re, are represented through membership of the Joint Venture Board. • The Equalities Policy develops and maintains shared values including leadership values for both the organisation and staff reflecting public expectations, and communicates these with members, staff, the community and partners. The council has published its strategic equality objective: 'our commitment is that citizens will be treated equally, with understanding and respect, have equal opportunity with other citizens; and receive quality services. This is monitored through performance indicators. • The Committee and Delegated Powers Report (DPR's) templates require consideration of risk and equalities and require formal clearance by Finance, Legal and Governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values Awards Nomination Panel made decisions on who embodied the Values Awards • Monitoring Officer reports to SCB Assurance • Minutes and Decisions of all Committees observed by Monitoring/Deputy Monitoring Officer • Half-yearly and Annual Performance Review RAGG ratings for staff, explicitly linking to achievement of objectives • Equalities Policy • Equalities Impact Assessments and a cumulative impact assessment of the budget process which published with the 2013-14 budget papers. • Equalities given Satisfactory Assurance internal audit report 2014 • CSG Contract • Equalities Annual Report (Draft)



Principle	Description of Governance Mechanisms	Assurances received
<p>4. Making transparent decisions which are subject to scrutiny and risk management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has processes in place to demonstrate that decision makers followed due process, the decisions were properly documented and were taken having regard to all relevant considerations. • During 2013-14 when an Executive Model was in place, the Scrutiny function challenged policy development and performance and was a 'critical friend' to the Executive. The Scrutiny function is supported by Task and Finish Groups and Scrutiny Panels, who comprise 5 elected councillors who work together to undertake in-depth reviews of a service, policy or issue of concern to local people. • Decision making is supported by satisfactory risk management arrangements, with the Risk Management Strategy and Policy Statement reviewed annually by the Strategic Commissioning Board and Audit Committee. • Arrangements exist for the consideration of assurances from the Council's major partners/providers; this involves regular liaison with other audit, anti-fraud and risk management functions. • Corporate Risks are considered quarterly, as part of performance reporting, by the Cabinet Resources Committee, with oversight from the Audit Committee . Operational day to day risk management exists at an officer level with lead member involvement where appropriate. • The Council's arrangements for providing economy, efficiency and effectiveness are reviewed by the external auditors on an annual basis. Their Annual Audit Letter provides a summary of the activity undertaken during the year. • The Council is complying with minimum requirements of the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on data transparency, a standard which aims to enable residents to hold the Council to account. The Council has developed its website further to provide more information to the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report • SCB Assurance bi-monthly reporting • Barnet Homes/Barnet Group Annual Internal Audit Report • External Audit Annual Audit Letter 2012-13 • Risk Management given Satisfactory Assurance internal audit report 2014. • Major commercial partners joint risk registers • Resident perception survey

with our local police, social care and health services to ensure that they feel safe and secure.

2. increase the number of children who were placed for adoption within 12 months of being placed for adoption to 75%

3. reduce the number of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second subsequent time to 12%

How we will achieve this objective

Early identification, accurate needs assessment and effective interventions are key in supporting and empowering families to ensure that all children have the best possible start.

To achieve this we will:

- implement the Family Focus programme to work with one hundred

tion orders
time spent



Principle	Description of Governance Mechanisms	Assurances received
<p>4. Making transparent decisions which are subject to scrutiny and risk management (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective Audit Committee is in place whose purpose is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the internal control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process. The Audit Committee is chaired by a member of an opposition group and has two independent members. • The Chief Internal Auditor supports the Audit Committee and reviews its effectiveness on an annual basis • The Internal Audit function operates in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards for Local Government. There is a 'managed audit approach' with the Council's external auditor in place which ensures there is no duplication of effort. The internal Audit plan is based on the high risks reported within the risk registers. • The Constitution makes it clear that management have the responsibility for operating a sound system of internal control. Internal Audit collaboratively works with services to make recommendations around improvement to the control environment. • The Head of Internal Audit supports the Audit Committee and reports to Statutory Officers. Corporate Anti Fraud Team (CAFT) fulfils the Council's statutory obligation to ensure the protection of public funds and to have an effective system of prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. The council have zero tolerance to fraud and other irregularity. • Assurance Assistant Director is the designated Whistle blowing officer which is accessible by officers, staff and those contracting with or appointed by the Council. There is an improved Counter Fraud Framework in place designed to prevent and detect fraud. • The system of internal financial control is based upon a framework of regular management information, financial regulations, administrative procedures and a structure of delegation and accountability. The Medium Term Financial Strategy is updated each year and includes a risk assessment of budget options, the MTFS is agreed by Full Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Committee Annual Report 2012-13, 2013-14 • Audit Committee workplan and terms of reference stipulating the way in which responsibility is discharged • Internal Audit Annual Report 2012-13, 2013-14 • CAFT Annual Report • Medium Term Financial Strategy and signed Statement of Accounts

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Principle	Description of Governance Mechanisms	Assurances received
<p>5. Developing the capacity of members and officers to be effective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is committed to having Leaders with the right skills to direct and control staff. A Leadership framework was developed as part of the senior management restructure. In addition, a member development programme was carried forward into 2013-14. The Council's learning and development needs are met through training, e-learning and other methods. • Member Development sessions are held to brief Members on key areas and issues covering areas such as planning, safeguarding, growth and regeneration, new contracts, etc. • The Council has an Employee Performance Management Strategy to strengthen the relationship between corporate objectives and individual performance. Employees have half year and year end performance reviews and are rated under the RAGG (red, amber, green and gold) methodology. • The Council's value set has been incorporated within the Council's Leadership Framework and forms the basis of individual performance reviews. • The Localism Act redefined the Member standards regime and Full Council in May 2012 accepted changes to the Constitution to reflect the new requirements. A Group Leaders Panel was formed during to consider complaints against the Member Code of Conduct. This met four times during 2013-14. • All aspects of the Constitution were reviewed in 2013-14 as a result of the Council taking the decision to move to the Committee System. This included the Member Code of Conduct and Member and Officer Protocol and the Officer Code of Conduct. These were ratified by Full Council in January and April 2014 to ensure they were fit for purpose under the new Committee System. • In 2014 an employee engagement survey was carried out to gauge employee satisfaction and assist in improving the organisation for employees as a place to work and consequently improve how the organisation performs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual performance review ratings give assurances that staff are carrying out their work in accordance with Council priorities and objectives • Member role profile establish • Attendance at Member Development sessions, 12 internal events held and 36 external sessions attended. • Constitution Review 2013-14 • Member development programme provides assurance that skill and capability is focussed on annually • Employee Engagement Survey 2014 <div data-bbox="1509 719 1977 1058" style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 10px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>Weaknesses identified :</p> <p>The staff survey observed that we needed to build effective leadership with manager who are visible, open and honest in their presentation</p> </div>

Principle	Description of Governance Mechanisms	Assurances received
6. Engaging with local people and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council is committed to engaging and consulting with citizens about our services. A range of tools for effective engagement are used including: online surveys 'Engage Barnet', involving residents through face to face events, and empowering residents to help provide services themselves. A consultation hub 'Engage Barnet' is available on the web where we publish all our consultations activities, this also includes a section on 'We Asked, You Said, We Did' feeding back the results of consultations. Barnet First also includes a page in each issue reporting on live consultations and the outcome of recent surveys.' We have an on-going dialogue between community and voluntary organisations via CommUnity Barnet, the umbrella organisation for community and voluntary groups in Barnet, The council has a Citizens' Panel, the panel is statistically representative of the population of Barnet, and they participate on how Barnet residents feel about issues. It also acts a sounding-board for future policies and service decisions. The council consults widely on its Business Plan and Budget process with an online survey on the website, face to face engagement and the Citizen's Panel. The website was re-launched in April 2012 and assists encouraging public engagement with the council and the decision making process. More recently 'My Voice' was added to the front page of the council's website which serves as a central place where residents can find out how to get involved in council engagement mechanisms. Adopt a Place is a new initiative launched this year, and is another way in which residents can interact with the council, The scheme enables community groups to maintain a local feature, a green space, or a whole street, by the council providing them with support, materials, and tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Account of Adult Social Care in Barnet 2013 Budget Consultation 2014/15 findings



Principle	Description of Governance Mechanisms	Assurances received
6. Engaging with local people and stakeholders (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The frequency of the Resident's Perception Survey (a survey with over 1600 residents from across the borough) has been increased to twice a year to help inform our new performance management system more regularly. The outcome and results of all consultations are published on the website and Barnet First. The council has updated its 2010 Consultation and Engagement Strategy which commits to publishing a Consultation Forward Plan and Annual Reports. Public Participation & Engagement rules are included within the Constitution guiding public participation at Council meetings. The Communities Together Network was approved in November 2013 and includes a wide range of community organisation and puts in place arrangements designed to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with contribute to and participate in the work of the authority to encourage community cohesion and foster good relations between Barnet's diverse communities. The group meets three times a year and is co-chaired by the local authority and a community representative. It reports into, by exception, the Community Safety Board. There is process for Corporate complaints as well as Children's and Adults Statutory complaints. Complaints are monitored through the Customer Service work group and the Customer and Information Management Board and reported on quarterly at SCB Assurance. In all formal investigation by the Local Government Ombudsman, the Council was found to have acted fairly and followed procedure. There is also a process for publishing customer feedback online with Council responses to the comments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents Perception Survey, October 2013 Consultation Forward Plan and Annual Report (Draft) Draft Equalities Policy and 'Communities Together' Action Plan Annual Resident Perception survey Communities Together annual report will be produce in November 2014 and governance assurances considered in the 2014-15 AGS Adults and Communities Delivery Unit Annual Complaints Report 2013



Review of Effectiveness

- The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of senior officers of the Council who have responsibility for the governance environment, the Chief Internal Auditors annual report, any comments made by the Council's external auditors and any other review agencies and inspectorates. In addition, the Council has assessed its group relationships (The Barnet Group) as part of this review framework.
- Internal Audit has concluded overall, based on the findings of work undertaken at London Borough of Barnet that satisfactory assurance can be given on the systems of internal control in place, with satisfactory assurance also provided on the fundamental financial systems in place within the Council. Areas of weakness have been included within the governance issues noted for monitoring during 2014-15.
- The Council is able to confirm that its financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010). In addition, the authority's assurance arrangements conform with the governance requirement of the CIPFA Statement on the role of the Head of Internal Audit.
- We consider the arrangements in place to continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.
- A number of areas were identified in the proceeding Annual Governance Statement, an update has also been included on our progress to improve governance regarding these issues. Where they have not been sufficiently progressed they have been included within our governance issues for 2014-15.

Governance Issues – progress

The table below describes the governance issues identified during 2012-13 and the progress made against these during 2013-14:

Key Improvement Area	Lead Officer	Update on position	Carry forward for 2014-15
<p>System of Governance – a whole scale review of the system of governance will take place to ensure that the organisational structure, corporate objectives and priorities and member engagement tie into effective decision making structures.</p> <p>Of particular focus will be a review of public participation and engagement rules to consider improvements to resident engagement in decision making, further improvements into the transparency of decision making, overall addressing the concerns raised within the residents perception survey and other sources of assurance.</p>	<p>Assurance Director & Chief Executive</p> <p>Leader of the Council</p>	<p>Arrangements for a new committee system of governance were developed at the Constitution Ethics and Probity Committee. Public Participation rules were an element of this. In addition, public consultation revealed significant public interest in a new system that was understandable and customer friendly.</p> <p>The new system of governance was agreed by Full Council in January 2014 and takes effect from 2 June 2014.</p>	<p>No - new area – embedding the committee system</p>
<p>Business Continuity and Resilience - means that the core/critical businesses (mission critical activities) of the Council can continue functioning in the event of an unforeseen adverse (impacting on the ability of the Council to maintain service delivery) event. Overall the direction of travel for improvements to business continuity and disaster recovery resilience has been gradual since 2007 with the overall assessment of the controls remaining limited over a five year period and not considered sufficient to prevent large scale failures in service provision. This is particularly the case for information systems. As plans to rectify this through the NSCSO contract are on hold, due to the legal challenge, there remains a significant risk to the Council if plans remain delayed.</p>	<p>Head of Information Management</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>	<p>Business Continuity audit received limited assurance. A business continuity project is underway to ensure recommendations raised are addressed.</p> <p>The plans to rectify the business continuity arrangements were delayed due to the legal challenge and as such the project did not begin until December, Interim disaster recovery arrangements with Capita are now in place. Full resilience will be in place with the move to the new data centre due to be completed in September 2014</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Governance Issues – progress, continued:

Key Improvement Area	Lead Officer	Update on position	Carry forward for 2014-15
<p>Commissioning Outcomes – with the organisational structure in operation from April 2013 it is important that the benefits of commissioning are realised through developing and embedding a commissioning framework that focuses on the delivery of outcomes for local people.</p>	<p>Lead Commissioners</p>	<p>Barnet's 'Commissioning Council' model and supporting architecture went 'live' on 1 April 2013. Going into the new structure and way of working, the council developed a revised set of strategic objectives and priority outcomes – published in the council's Corporate Plan (April 2013). A number of changes have been made to strengthen the council's 'business architecture'. The council has also strengthened its consultation and engagement with residents to ensure that commissioning is informed by an understanding of the priorities of residents.</p> <p>For 2014-15 there will need to be a focus on the effectiveness of the organisation in commissioning against outcomes, with progress updates against those outcomes monitored through the business planning process. Revised Management Agreements will include stretching commissioning priorities for the year ahead with clear expectations around milestones and reporting. Commissioners will also identify the milestones and expectations for relevant themes Commissioning Committees on the Councils Forward Plan.</p>	<p>Yes under roles and responsibilities of a commissioning council</p>

Governance Issues – progress, continued:

Key Improvement Area	Lead Officer	Update on position	Carry forward for 2014-15
<p>Information Management – There is a requirement to align systems and processes to support good information and records management practice across the organisation.</p>	<p>Head of Information Management</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources and Cabinet for Customer Access</p>	<p>The Information Management and Governance cross cutting audit was Satisfactory. However, specific audits on IT Access controls, a case management and records management system received no assurance' and a records management audit received limited assurance.</p> <p>Progress has been made during the year with a new Information Management Strategy agreed by the Strategic Commissioning Board in September 2013. The Information Management Strategy has a three year implementation plan and will deliver continuous improvement in information management practice across the organisation. There has been much work in embedding practices across the council however the embedding process is likely to be over the duration of the Information Management Strategy three year period.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Governance Issues for 2014-15

The table below describes the governance issues identified during this review period 2013-14 to carry forward for monitoring within 2014-15.

Key Improvement Area	Lead Officer	Reporting through	Expected Delivery of Actions
<p><u>Business Continuity and Resilience:</u> Although the Council now has a Business Continuity Project underway the overarching Council Business Continuity Strategy is not yet in place. The CSG (formerly NSCSO) contract has been in place since September 2013 and the contract was designed to improve business continuity arrangements, however the planned changes to information systems will be gradual and therefore Business Continuity remains a significant risk for the Council.</p>	Head of Information Management	Chief Operating Officer Audit Committee	Key recommendations from Audit – July Fully operational in October
<p><u>Embedding New Committee System:</u> The new committee system went live June 2 and work will continue to ensure forward planning mechanisms are effective so that Committees consider issues in a timely fashion. Effective working relationships are required between the Chairman, committee members and Officers supporting the Committee. The Committee system was designed so that Members are able to become involved in the decision making to their satisfaction. The Terms of reference of each committee and the revised Constitution will take some time to bed in and become operationally effective and efficient and work is underway to review the implementation process.</p>	Head of Governance	Assurance Director Constitution Ethics and Probity Committee	March 31, 2015

Governance Issues for 2014-15, continued

Key Improvement Area	Lead Officer	Reporting through	Expected Delivery of Actions
<p><u>Information Management:</u></p> <p>Based on the review of information management practices throughout 2013-14 it is clear that improvement is required. During 2014-15 the following areas will be of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit for purpose systems ensuring the integrity, and security of data; • Access to systems are appropriately restricted to ensure sensitive data is adequately protected; and • Systems support effective records managements and improve retention and disposal practice. 	Head of Information Management	Chief Operating Officer	<p>Key recommendations from audit – June 2014</p> <p>As part of the Information Strategy implementation on key records management deliverables in 2014-15 and 2015-16</p>
<p><u>Roles and Responsibilities for the Commissioning Council</u></p> <p>For 2014-15 there will need to be a continued focus on the effectiveness of the organisation in commissioning against outcomes. To achieve this, clarity of roles across commissioning and delivery is vital. In respect of governance, roles and responsibilities across commissioning and delivery will be reviewed to ensure the effectiveness of the commissioning process in both terms of how it supports the setting of outcomes and how this translates into successful delivery . As a consequence of this the structure that the supports the Commissioning Model will be considered.</p>	Assistant Director of Strategy	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>General Functions Committee</p>	March 31, 2015

Governance Issues for 2014-15, continued

Key Improvement Area	Lead Officer	Reporting through	Expected Delivery of Actions
<p><u>Contract Management Framework</u> – Across the Council a framework to manage contracts does not exist and instead each delivery unit develops their own approach, as a result there is an inconsistent way of measuring benefits achieved. Contracts can be tactical, operational, and strategic and depending on that classification it should result in a different approach to the management of the contract and the level of information required. Over the course of the year a contract management framework will be designed to be implemented across delivery units and within the Commissioning Group.</p>	Commercial and Customer Services Director	Chief Operating Officer Performance and Contract Management Committee	March 31, 2015
<p><u>Change Management:</u> The staff survey indicated that perceptions of change management were the least positive. There is an opportunity to improve staff engagement and satisfaction by building on the employee voice and engaging more with employees so they can contribute their views and managing and communicating change with employees so they are aware of what's happening in the Council.</p>	Strategic Commissioning Board	Chief Executive	March 31, 2015

6. Certification

To the best of our knowledge, the governance arrangements, as defined above have been effectively operating during the year with the exception of those areas identified in Section 5. We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified during the review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Leader of the Council: _____

Date: _____

Chief Executive: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A: Published sources of Assurance

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Corporate Plan 2013-16
- Quarterly Performance Reports 2013-14
- Internal Audit, Risk Management and CAFT Annual Plan 2013-14
- Internal Audit Annual Report 2013-14
- Pay Policy 2013-14
- CAFT Annual Report 2013-14
- External Audit Annual Audit Letter 2012-13
- Task and Finish Group reports
- Audit Committee Annual Report 2013-14
- Audit Committee Terms of Reference and workplan 2013-14
- Citizen Panel Report – Finance and Business Planning Consultation 2013
- Local Account of Adult Social Care in Barnet 2013
- Statement of Accounts and Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Residents Perception Survey 2013
- Committee minutes, agendas and reports 2013-14
- CSG and Re Commercial Contracts
- Safeguarding Adults Peer Review, Overview and Scrutiny Summary Paper June 2013
- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013-14 (Draft)
- Barnet Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report (Draft)
- Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report (Draft)
- Equalities Annual Report (Draft)
- Consultation Forward Plan and Annual Report (Draft)