

# **ENTREPRENEURIAL BARNET**

*THE PUBLIC SECTOR CONTRIBUTION TO BARNET'S ECONOMY, 2014-2020*

**September 2014**

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# Overview

1. A thriving economy which taps into the entrepreneurial spirit of local residents is an important element of our aspiration to be a successful, growing suburb of a successful, growing world city. Barnet Council and its partners are committed to supporting the economy to grow and to improving living standards by boosting incomes, opportunities and wellbeing for people in Barnet. This report sets out in more detail what we aim to achieve, and how we will go about doing it, for consultation. The report focuses principally on the actions to be undertaken by the Council; throughout the Autumn other partners, including the Police, NHS, Middlesex University and Barnet and Southgate College, will be developing their proposals to add to the actions set out here ensure that together we deliver maximum benefit for the local economy.
2. The recent recession focused attention on what the wider public and community sectors can do to support local economies and stimulate growth. While the public sector does not in general create wealth directly, it does have a major impact on the local economy. For example the Council maintains the roads that businesses rely on to receive and deliver goods; acts as regulator and as the planning authority; and buys goods and services. Other public sector partners, and acts as a regulator. The public sector, along with the voluntary and community sectors, is also increasingly reliant on locally generated income for their financial security, meaning that a successful local economy is tied to the longer term success of the public sector whole.
3. Barnet has a strong economy, based predominantly on significant numbers of small businesses. Although no particular sector dominates, there are a large number of companies offering business-to-business professional services, and a growing number offering business-to-consumer services such as IT, construction, and marketing. Many of our businesses are owned by residents, and a significant proportion of our residents (around 40%) work locally. Businesses are increasingly being run from home which has implications for infrastructure (particularly digital infrastructure) and the kind of workspace needed.
4. By contrast, Barnet has a much lower than average proportion of large businesses, with the top 50 businesses by employee number accounting for just a fifth of jobs in the Borough. High demand for land to build housing, and a relatively short supply of industrial and commercial land, mean that Barnet is likely to remain a small business economy over the medium to longer term. The exception is the development of Brent Cross Cricklewood, which offers a significant opportunity to create a new business hub for Barnet, hosting businesses of different sizes, including larger national and international businesses, and headquarters operations.
5. The principal challenge, therefore, is to maintain Barnet's strength as a base for small businesses, whilst also creating the conditions for sustainable business growth in the future. As such the Council and its partners have set ourselves the goal of ensuring that:

*Barnet is the best place in London to be a small business*

6. Of course there will always be medium-sized and larger businesses in Barnet too. They play an important role in our economy, and many of the things that are important to smaller businesses are also important to them. Barnet partners are therefore committed to working with the Council's Joint Venture partner, Re, to deliver a sustained improvement in Barnet's ranking on the Local Futures *Business Location Index* to be within the Top 100 LA areas in the UK out of 325 (Barnet is currently ranked at 125<sup>1</sup>), and the top ten per cent when compared to similar boroughs.
7. Much of the public sector activity that impacts our economy takes place at sub-regional or city wide level. Consequently, fundamental to the development and implementation will be close and routine working between Barnet Council and neighbouring Boroughs, the London Mayor and the Greater London Authority, and national government. The recent West London Alliance Jobs, Skills and Growth Programme is an example of this partnership working.
8. There are five key ways in which partners in Barnet impact upon local economies and which are therefore the focus of this report:
  - **Getting the basics right.** Ensuring that when businesses need to engage with the Council – whether to pay business rates, apply for a license, or report a problem – the process is as efficient, transparent and painless as possible, and does not create any unnecessary constraints or costs on running a successful business.
  - **Stewardship of place.** The Council is responsible for maintaining much of the built and natural environment in the borough including many aspects of our town centres, and so has a big influence on whether Barnet is a pleasant place for businesses and their staff to locate, and an efficient place to move around. Our regeneration programme alone will create 3,000 jobs directly, and commercial space for 27,000 more by 2030, as well as providing the space and flexibility for further future growth.
  - **Shaping the labour market.** Although the Council has a less direct role in education than in the past, it retains overall responsibility for ensuring school improvement, and works closely with Barnet and Southgate College and Middlesex University to maintain the high standard of skills among Barnet residents. By developing a labour market with the skills and behaviours that employers are seeking, and with a strong culture of entrepreneurship, the desirability of Barnet as a place to start a business will grow and incomes will rise. A healthy workforce will also be more productive and the Council, through its public health responsibilities, will play a role in promoting this
  - **Buying goods and services.** The Council manages contracts that are collectively worth more than £1bn. Across the whole of the public sector the figure is much higher, and it is important that local businesses have a fair chance of winning these contracts in a transparent and genuinely competitive environment. In some sectors, such as domiciliary care, the Council is a main player in the market and must clearly signal likely future needs so that providers can respond.

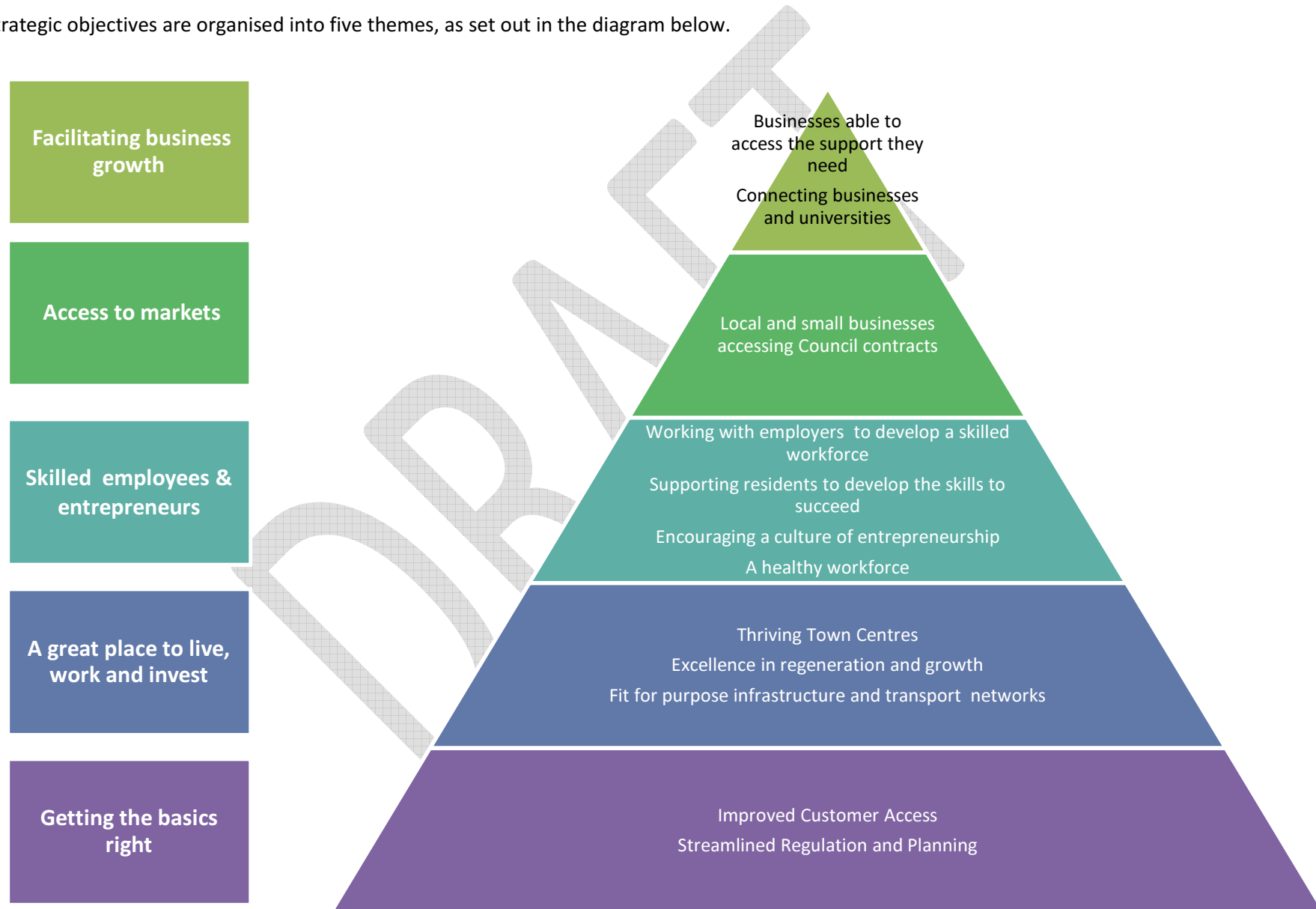
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<sup>1</sup> In June 2014

- **Providing or signposting business support services and premises.** Traditional economic development activity focuses on the provision of business support, premises and networking opportunities. While this is not the Council's primary focus, we do have a role in making sure that businesses know how to access these services and associated information in a transparent way, and that the Council is informed by a strong dialogue with the business community that allows us to respond to the changing economic climate in a way that maintains strong growth. Business creates growth, and we will do what we can to encourage this at every opportunity.
9. If we can get these five areas right, we can give a real boost to local businesses' chance of success. If we do not, we could seriously hinder prospects for growth. This consultation draft sets out how we propose to achieve our goal of making Barnet the best place in London to be a small business, and outlines some of the key actions we will take to meet these objectives.

# Our strategic objectives

Our strategic objectives are organised into five themes, as set out in the diagram below.



# Context

## The Barnet Economy

10. Barnet is the second largest borough in London, with population growth of 16% projected over the next 20 years. It acts as a gateway to the capital by road and by rail, with both the M1 and two major rail lines providing easy access to central London and the rest of the UK. For people living and working in Barnet, Central London is only 30 minutes away by tube, and these journey times are set to fall significantly as the upgrade of the Northern Line is completed in the second part of 2014. Development of major opportunity areas at Brent Cross-Cricklewood and Colindale will create thousands of new jobs and homes, as well as offering opportunities to upgrade key infrastructure.
11. With a population of 364,000 in 2014, and a labour market that is characterised by a high level of skills, high mobility, and flexibility to adapt to changing economic conditions, Barnet is in an excellent position to make a significant contribution to the growing local, London, and national economies. The unemployment rate is currently slightly higher than was the case before the recession, at 5.9% in December 2013 compared with 5.6% in late 2007. While Barnet as a whole has experienced lower unemployment than the London average during that period, this masks differences between different parts of the borough, with pockets of significant deprivation and worklessness. Ensuring that everyone in Barnet is able to contribute to growth, as well as benefit from it by having the right skills, will be a core area of focus for our future approach to developing the economy.
12. Barnet is varied geographically, with the east of the borough providing attractive and leafy Edwardian and Victorian suburbs, quality parks and green spaces, and easy access to the green belt and natural beauty of Totteridge. The west of the borough on the other hand is characterised by high growth, fast change, new investment and development, and a rapidly growing and diverse population as new housing, regeneration and employment opportunities come to fruition.
13. A detailed analysis of the Barnet economy is set out in a report produced for Re and the Council by Middlesex University<sup>2</sup>, which demonstrates that Barnet's Business community is characterised by:
  - **Small businesses:** with a particularly high proportion of self-employment. By March 2013<sup>3</sup>, Barnet had a higher proportion of micro businesses (89.7%) than either Greater London (84.8%) or England (82.9%). On the other hand, the largest 53 employers with more than 200 staff represented 21.3% of the total borough workforce in 2008<sup>4</sup>. Major employers include Middlesex University, McDonald's Head Quarters, Pentland Group and Brent Cross Shopping Centre.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.barnet.gov.uk/developing-barnets-economic-strategy>

<sup>3</sup> ONS IDBR Business Activity, Size and Location <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-313744>

<sup>4</sup> NOMIS Annual Business Inquiry (2008)

- **Dynamism:** with a high level of entrepreneurialism, demonstrated by an above average number of business start-ups (2,995 in 2012), but also an above average level of business failures 3,175 in 2012<sup>5</sup>. Only 53.1% of Barnet businesses currently survive more than 3 years, compared to 56.2% for Greater London and 59.7% for England. Ensuring that entrepreneurs have access to the support they need to start well, grow and sustain their businesses is an important part of our approach.
  - **High skill levels:** Half of residents hold a qualification at NVQ level 4 or above, which is higher than the London or the UK averages. Whilst 39% of the Borough's working graduate residents work locally in Barnet (down slightly from 41% in 2001), 56% work in other London boroughs (principally in Camden, Westminster, the City of London and Southwark).
  - **Diverse range of sectors:** Barnet's economy isn't characterised by a single dominant sector. The largest areas of employment tend to focus on business to business and business to consumer services, including professional, scientific and technical services (PST), retail, health and education, and property and information communications also featuring amongst the sectors with the greatest proportions of business units.
  - **Areas of high growth:** The biggest growth sectors in Barnet during the past four years have been education (30%), property (25.8%), health (21.6%) and Professional, Scientific & Technical (PST) (20.3%). During the last recorded year, growth has been particularly strong in the property (8.5%), production (8.3%) and education (5.8%) sectors. Barnet's growth in property, education, health, PST and the motor trades sectors has been particularly strong when compared to the A5 corridor and London as a whole.
  - **Highly distributed:** Barnet is characterised by a number of town centres. The London Plan identifies one major town centre in Edgware, 14 district town centres, and 15 local and neighbourhood centres.
14. The most recent data suggests that in 2012 there were 65 jobs in Barnet for every 100 residents aged 16-65. Although this ratio is slightly below the England average of 79, when compared to similar suburban boroughs Barnet has a relatively high level of available jobs: Redbridge has a score of 47; Enfield 50; Harrow 57; Brent 57; Croydon 58; and Ealing 64<sup>6</sup>. Hounslow and Hillingdon have much higher scores due to the presence of Heathrow Airport. However, as the population of London grows rapidly so the proportion of those working in outer London is likely to grow. That means for every 100 new working age residents, at least 65 new jobs must be created. Our current regeneration programme delivers capacity for this jobs growth, but nonetheless maintaining a sufficiently large economic base is likely to need on-going attention.
15. Central Government funding for the public sector in Barnet has been massively reduced since 2010 – savings of £72million have already been delivered by the Council alone, with a further £72 million needed by 2020. Across the whole public sector in Barnet we need to make £184million savings by 2020 – a reduction of around half of our total budget. Going forward, we will need to ensure that every penny is working hard for people and business here, including by considering the impact of our policies and spending on the local economy, and local businesses, as a whole.

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<sup>5</sup> ONS Business Demography 2012 <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/datasets-and-tables/index.html?pageSize=50&sortBy=none&sortDirection=none&newquery=business+demography&content-type=Reference+table&content-type=Dataset>

<sup>6</sup> Source – NOMIS (2014)



## Local, Regional and National Policies

16. As well as being a partnership document, this report has also been designed to support delivery of the Council's wider strategic priorities, which are to: promote responsible growth; support families and individuals that need it; and improve the satisfaction of residents and business with Barnet as a place to live. The approach also supports plans for the longer-term protection, enhancement and growth of the physical infrastructure of the borough through the Local Plan.
17. Our efforts to create the conditions in which entrepreneurs can thrive also align with a number of other programmes that local partners are engaged with, either individually or in collaboration with our partners. These include
  - The Job Centre Plus Partnership Agreement, which sets out shared priorities for tackling worklessness, including: Income Support and Employment Support Allowance recipients; those aged 50 or above; people with health or mental health needs; those with disabilities; younger people; and the long-term unemployed.
  - The Council's Regeneration Strategy, and in particular the opportunities arising from growth at Brent Cross Cricklewood and Colindale.
  - Barnet's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
  - The GLA's Healthy Workplace Charter.
  - The Council's existing Skills, Employment and Enterprise Action Plan.
18. Taken together these initiatives reflect the broad approach we take to encouraging growth, and the importance we place on aligning our activity to pull in a single direction, including focusing on the health, wellbeing and productivity of the workforce, and the relationship between economic growth and the creation of attractive, liveable spaces.
19. Our approach to promoting enterprise supports both the delivery of the London Jobs and Growth Plan, prepared by the London Enterprise Panel, and the findings of the London Finance Commission, which makes the case for London to take greater devolution of financial powers from the national level to London. It also links in to The West London Alliance Jobs Skills and Growth Programme with its three themes of tackling youth & long-term unemployment, business growth, and matching skills in the labour market with the skills needed by employers.
20. By bringing together these various strategies into a single "story" for Barnet, our intention is that it will be easier for businesses and investors to understand the public sector's contribution to creating a supportive, pro-growth environment that creates real opportunities for business and minimises barriers to economic success.

## THEME A: Getting the basics right

21. All businesses in Barnet will have some level of interaction with local public services, at some point – whether they are paying business rates, have staff and customers travelling on local roads and pavements, need planning permission to expand, buy parking permits, or have to comply with environmental regulations. It is therefore important to businesses that these services are efficient, effective, easy to use and do not add unnecessary costs to business.
22. Many owners of business in Barnet are also residents, and efforts to make Barnet better for business are inherently intertwined with improving our services to residents. Through our strategic partnership with Capita to deliver corporate services, and our Joint Venture partnership, Re\_, delivering development and regulatory services, Barnet Council is committed to ensuring that our business and resident customers see continuous and practical improvement in our core services, and are able to access those services easily, at a high level of quality, and through channels that are reliable, easy to navigate, and joined up across different service areas. This mirrors the approach that the Council and its partners are already taking to improving the way residents and service users access services through the web and a variety of other channels.

## How we will deliver this priority

	<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1.1	<b><i>Streamlined regulation and planning</i></b>	<b>The planning system protects the quality of Barnet's built environment and facilitates development and growth in a socially responsible way.</b>	Local development documents will be regularly updated to reflect evolving economic circumstances and to ensure it stays aligned with our approach to economic growth.	Ongoing
1.2		<b>Advice is clear and accurate, and planning applications are dealt with consistently and in a timely way.</b>	Being clear to prospective developers, about the Council's constraints and priorities, to encourage high quality investment and development proposals which can be navigated smoothly through the planning process.	Ongoing from November 2014
1.3		<b>Businesses can choose the level of service that meets their needs.</b>	We will introduce a premium one stop shop for dealing with planning, trading standards, environmental health and building control offering guaranteed turnaround times, a single named contact, an admin service and general advice.	Ongoing from April 2014
1.4		<b>Regulators are firm but fair, helping willing businesses to improve and taking action against those that don't</b>	We will improve service standards so that our performance on regulatory services is amongst the best nationally.	Annual measure
1.5			We will simplify processes – for example by introducing a more streamlined process for renewal of licenses.	By April 2015
1.6		<b>Regulatory systems are easy to navigate</b>	We will make clear information available about how business need to engage with and use the regulatory system, with an emphasis on creating a light touch approach.	By December 2015

	<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1.7	<b><i>Improved customer access</i></b>	<b>Businesses are able to access information about Council services easily and at first contact wherever possible, at the times that suit them.</b>	We will introduce a dedicated customer contact centre.	October 2014
1.8			Introduce online accounts for businesses, to provide a single place to transact all business with the Council for instance business rates, licencing and environmental health all accessible in one place.	TBC
1.9			We will Introduce online payment options in key services (e.g. Planning and Building control)	April 2015

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## THEME B: A great place to live, work and invest

23. The economic success of an area is associated with its attractiveness as a place to work and invest, but also whether it's a good place to live and to visit. We will focus on enabling businesses and residents to act to ensure that key town centres thrive; regenerating more deprived areas, particularly along the A5 corridor; and delivering high quality infrastructure (including roads) and public realm. This section is divided into two parts: Town Centres; and Growth, Regeneration & Infrastructure.

### Town Centres

24. Barnet originally developed from the semi-urban hinterland to the northwest of London in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The large number of town centres reflects the rural network of villages and small towns that once existed, giving many areas in Barnet a unique "village" feel that is both attractive and cosmopolitan. However, in common with town centres across the country, Barnet's town centres have faced challenges in recent years due to a combination of tough economic conditions and changing shopping habits. The Council has already supported communities in Chipping Barnet, North Finchley and Cricklewood to develop 'Town Teams' to drive improvements locally, and is working with businesses in Edgware. We will continue to support local businesses and residents to sustain, and where necessary revitalise, their town centres. This section sets out the range of areas in which the Council can offer support, along with information on the proposed packages of support available to main, district and local town centres. The Council's Area Committees will be invited to make recommendations as to which town centres in their areas should be classified as "main", "district" and "local".

#### Case studies

##### High Quality Residential development in town centres

As London's population increases, it will be important for the supply of high quality and well-designed family homes that are in good locations and respect the local character, in line with our Local plan, to be encouraged. This includes increasing the number of homes located either in or close to town centre locations, so that the people living in them have access to quality local services and amenities, and also so there are more Barnet residents living close to a local centre, using the businesses there, supporting the local economy and employment, and boosting the sense of vitality and vibrancy in the area.

Examples of the kinds of residential developments that the Council welcomes more of are Gateway House in Whetstone and Imperial Square in North Finchley, at the site of the old Police Depot. These developments are both good examples of making good use of what has otherwise been under-utilised space, will result in real and significant new investment in the local economy, and will secure Barnet's longer term objective of being a great place to live and the best place in London to be a small business.

### Town Teams

The North Finchley Town Team is an independent group of local residents and business people formed from diverse sectors and backgrounds, working together to make North Finchley a better place to live and work. They are a group of people who have experience in fundraising, marketing, community engagement, culture and retail, and will look at any fund (government or private) which will help to bring the ideas to reality. They are currently in the process of delivering a community hub, also called 10 Grand Arcade, with the aim to enhance and showcase the cultural offer in the Town Centre, provide space, promote and support emerging businesses and community events

## How we will deliver this objective

25. The table below sets out the range of activities that the Council will consider to support town centres. This is followed by a summary of the distinctive offers available to Main, District, and Local Town Centres.

	<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
2.1	<b>Thriving town centres</b>	<b>Diverse, distinctive town centres with a sustainable mix of retail, leisure, business and residential uses</b>	We will identify “major”, “district” and “local” town centres in Barnet, building on analysis of evidence and the recommendations of area committees; and refine the offer set out in the next table.	By January 2015
2.2			We will support town teams in key town centres, bringing together local businesses and residents to lead improvements.	Ongoing
2.3			We will work with businesses, the police and community safety team to ensure that the evening economy in town centres maintains and enhances its offer of pubs, restaurants and other activities safely.	Approach agreed by March 2015
2.4			We will promote more high quality residential development in town centre boundaries to increase footfall and boost their vitality	Ongoing from December 2014
2.5			We will consider implementing 20mph zones in town centres where where the local community and businesses request them.	From September 2014
2.6			We will make public realm improvements, including more social spaces and benches, subject to funding and the support of local businesses and residents.	Ongoing from October 2014

	<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
2.7			We will reduce the number of vacant high street properties across the Borough to amongst the lowest in London.	Ongoing
2.8			We will review the Council's policy on markets and street trading to help successful markets to grow, and to establish new, appropriate, and high quality street trading opportunities.	By December 2014
2.9			We will ensure that Council-wide activity in town centres is co-ordinated to maximise positive benefit and to generate maximum new investment and publicity.	Ongoing
2.10			We will review the Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan to ensure that the impact on town centres is considered when deciding on use of Council land and assets	September 2014
2.11			We will undertake a comprehensive evidence review of the effectiveness of business rates relief schemes in other town centres so the Council can decide whether to implement a scheme in Barnet.	TBC
2.12			We will explore options for securing investment in town centres, including the feasibility and costs/benefits of Tax Incremental Reinvestment Zones which ring-fence an element of business rate growth for re-investment into the town centre.	By July 2016
2.13		<b>Attractive and well maintained public realm</b>	We will explore the potential for expanding the role of the existing 'town keepers'.	By March 2015
2.14		<b>Well-connected town centres</b>	Improve the accessibility of town centres through prioritising extensive and reliable public transport links and improving facilities for cyclists.	By September 2015
2.15			Through the Council's parking strategy, we will ensure that town centres have an adequate number of convenient, high quality parking places which encourage footfall	Ongoing
2.16			We will introduce free WiFi to the borough's town centres	Commencing March 2015

2.17		Supporting town teams to maximise the use of mobile technology and social media, for example phone-based payment and loyalty schemes.	Ongoing
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## Tailoring the Town Centre Offer

26. Given Barnet's large number of town centres, and the need to focus the Council's efforts, we propose creating a tailored offer for each type of town centre as set out below.

Activity	Main Town Centres	District Town Centres	Local Town Centres
<b>Town Teams</b>	Actively supported where there is local demand and potential for them to be operated independently of the Council. This may involve seed funding.	Where there is local demand will receive advice and mentoring from the Council.	Where there is local demand will receive information from the Council.
<b>Funding opportunities<sup>7</sup></b>	Prioritised unless funding has already been allocated for similar intervention in the last two years.	Yes if there is identified local need or if additional capacity required to accommodate local development.	Yes if there is identified local need and seen as priority over main or district town centres, or if required to accommodate expected local development
<b>Support to night time economy</b>	Yes – targeted support focusing on main town centres esp. via planning and police	Yes where there is specific local demand.	Only if identified by the GLA as an area of more than local importance to the evening economy.
<b>Residential Development promoted</b>	Yes –Opportunities actively marketed and promoted to developers and investors	Where there is market demand.	Where there is market demand.
<b>20mph zones</b>	Where there is local demand and funding 20mph zones will be implemented. Promoted by the Council.	Will be considered on a case by case basis according to local need, available funding and residents' wishes.	Will be considered on a case by case basis according to local need, available funding and residents' wishes.
<b>Markets and street trading</b>	Where there is local need will be actively supported by the Council.	Where there is local demand the Council will enable local action and provide information to support locally-led markets.	Where there is local demand the Council will enable local action and provide information to support locally-led markets.
<b>Town Keepers</b>	One for each main town centre if a specific need is identified.	Where there is identified local need and funding is available.	No.

<sup>7</sup> Funding opportunities includes grant funding, such as that recently secured from the Outer London Fund (OLF), as well as funding received through growth such as New Homes Bonus (NHB), Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and "section 106" money (i.e. contributions from developers).

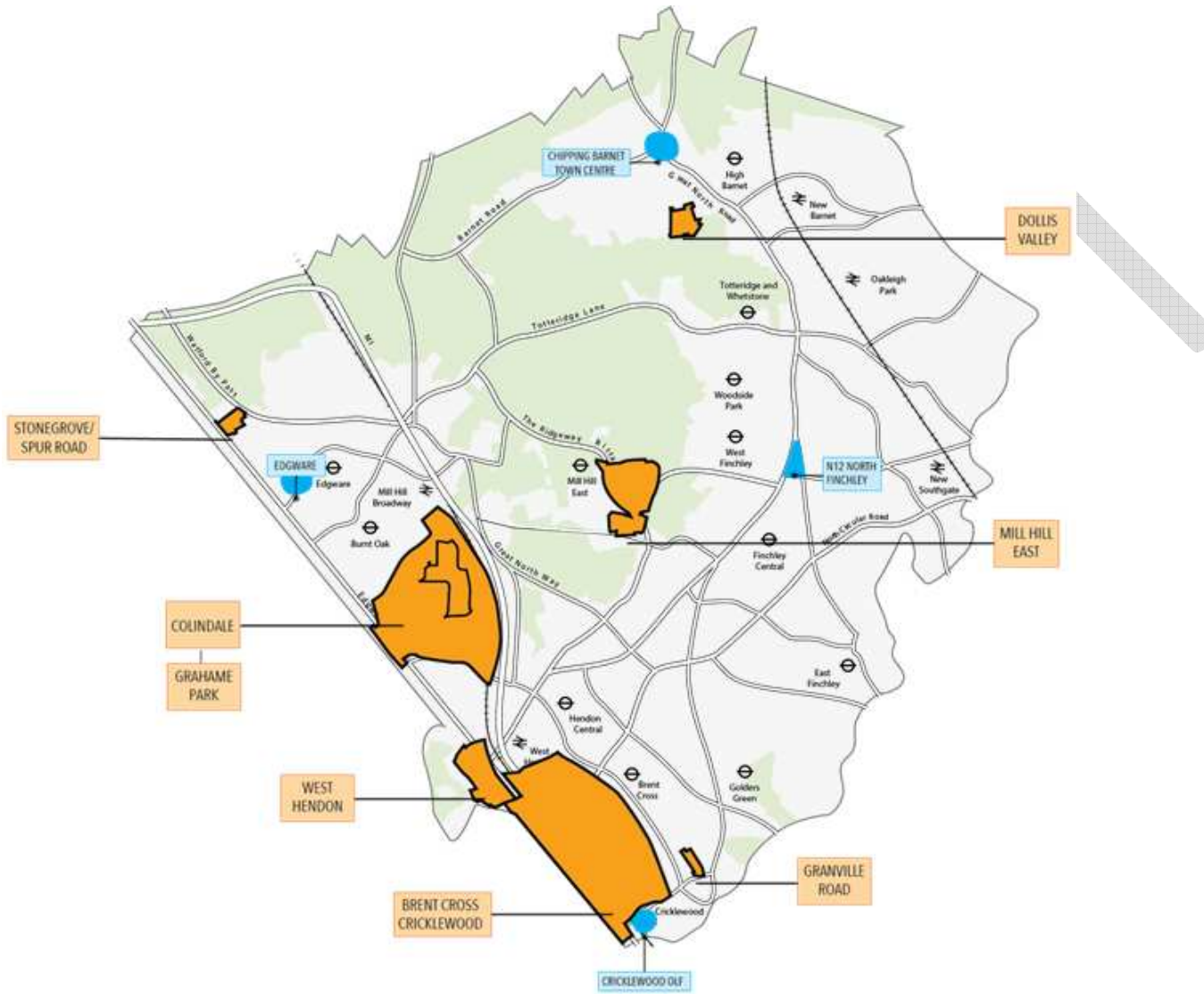


<b>Town centre accessibility</b>	Actively supported, connection to wider infrastructure and transport links promoted.	Supported where there is local demand or identified need.	Where there is local demand or identified need, and seen as a priority over district town centres.
<b>Parking</b>	There should always be available spaces, even during peak usage	There should always be available spaces, even during peak usage	85% capacity at peak periods targeted.

## Growth, Regeneration and Infrastructure

27. Plans are in place to deliver more than 25,000 homes and 1.2 million square feet of employment space in Barnet over the next 15 years, focused particularly around Brent Cross, Colindale, and Mill Hill, but with numerous other developments across the borough. This growth will create new opportunities for business looking to start-up, invest and grow, and for local people to find new jobs and develop new skills. The detailed regeneration plan for Barnet is contained in the **Local Plan, Growth Strategy and Regeneration Strategy**, which have been designed to align with and deliver our broader economic objectives and outcomes.
28. Whilst growth will create significant economic opportunities, it must be supported by appropriate and constantly improving infrastructure if it is to be maintained into the longer term. Businesses rely on high quality communications and transport networks, which need to be comprehensive and well maintained. The regeneration programme provides significant opportunities to upgrade key infrastructure, most notably with improvements to the M1, A406, rail and bus networks through the regeneration of Brent Cross Cricklewood. Our partnership with Re includes significant commitments to improve the maintenance of the highway network, with greater emphasis on preventative work and improving the quality of works by utilities.

# Major regeneration and growth locations in Barnet – August 2014



## How we will deliver this objective

	<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	
2.18	<b><i>Excellence in regeneration and growth</i></b>	<b>New developments take account of the needs of business and the wider community</b>	We will work with the developers of Brent Cross Cricklewood South to ensure it develops as a high-quality new Town Centre for Barnet	Ongoing	
2.19			We will ensure that new developments provide appropriate workspace and home/work space	Approach agreed by March 2015	
2.20			<i>We will attract in a small number of major investments</i> to key developments such as Brent Cross and Colindale (e.g. private sector business, Council offices; MU Campus) to provide employment sites to stimulate and support the development of other emergent clusters of activity.	By April 2016	
2.21			We will improve partnership working with neighbouring boroughs, including West London Alliance Boroughs	TBA	
2.22	<b><i>Fit for purpose infrastructure and transport networks</i></b>		Creation of a network of cycle-ways across the borough, joining town centres, transport hubs, new development sites, and green spaces into a single coherent space	By March 2016	
2.23			Development of a new Brent Cross train station to boost opportunities for growth in this area and make private investment more attractive	On site by 2016/17	
2.24			Develop an evidence base for improving transport accessibility, including East-West	Approach and intention agreed by June 2015	
2.25			<b>Establish 100% coverage of superfast broadband</b>	evaluate the potential to develop high capacity, advanced digital capacities in particular development sites to encourage the development of high tech digital industries in Barnet.	By March 2015
2.26				Achieve high level of super broadband accessibility for commercial suppliers; maximise use of GLA connection voucher scheme;	On-going from June 2014

## THEME C: Skilled employees and entrepreneurs

29. Having a workforce with the right skills, flexibility, attitudes and behaviours is an essential ingredient for economic growth. Yet there are some sectors of the economy where businesses find it difficult to recruit and which may therefore be a constraint on growth - in 2013 the Barnet Business Survey showed us that 43% of local businesses have problems recruiting people with the relevant skills locally. Businesses also report a mismatch between the kinds of skills people in Barnet have and the kinds of skills that they are, and will increasingly be, looking for. There are many influences on the availability of skills in the labour market, and it would be wrong to imply that the Council and its partners can ensure a match between supply and demand. We can, however, take steps to ensure that education and skills provision locally meets the needs of employers; and that those who live or study locally have opportunities to develop the skills the market demands from employees and entrepreneurs.
30. Although Barnet has a generally highly skilled workforce and relatively low unemployment rate, many people remain economically inactive and not benefiting from new employment opportunities. Low pay levels in some occupations mean that many working people are finding it increasingly difficult to progress into higher paid work and are caught in a low wage, low skills cycle.
31. The Council, schools, Barnet and Southgate College, Middlesex University, JCP, and work programme providers, will work with the wider business community to use the levers available to them to support individuals to develop the skills needed to sustain growth. We will listen to businesses so to enable them to find the right people locally with fewer barriers to successful recruitment. We want to use the influence that we have to encourage all residents to have a stake in future growth and to benefit from it directly in the years ahead.
32. Businesses depend on their workforce for success, and benefit if the overall health of the workforce is improved. This section also addresses the public sector's role in supporting employers and workers to deliver healthier workplaces, as well as helping find new pathways to work for those whose health might otherwise make it difficult to enter or re-enter the labour market.

### Case study

#### Platforms programme

The Platforms programme is aimed at 16-24 year olds, and supports Barnet young people not in education, employment and training, to find employment. The programme engages with local SMEs to understand the kind of skills local businesses need. Platforms provides a range of opportunities, including matching young people with businesses looking for apprentices and interns, allowing them to build up their skills and experience in a practical way. The main Platform programme has engaged with 290 young people and 160 actively participating.

## How we will deliver this objective

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
3.1	<b>Working with employers to develop a skilled workforce</b>	<b>Employers are well informed and well placed to offer apprenticeship and training opportunities to develop the next generation of the workforce</b>	We will work in partnership with Job Centre Plus, Barnet and Southgate College and other organisations to raise awareness of apprenticeship and other training opportunities available to local employers	Ongoing from July 2014
3.2		<b>Residents are able to access the employment and training opportunities being created through Council regeneration and development programmes and other contracts</b>	We will work with development partners to maximise apprenticeship, local labour and training opportunities through regeneration and development	Ongoing
3.3			We will adopt a Supplementary Planning Document to ensure skills and enterprise promotion are incorporated into new developments, for example through local labour agreements	From November 2014
3.4			We will introduce a jobs brokerage service for some of our key regeneration schemes and other major developments	From March 2015
3.6			We will work with the construction sector skills council to reflect best practice in our local construction employment models in support of future job growth	
3.7			We will implement the London Procurement Pledge when placing contracts helping to enable Youth employment within the Borough through apprenticeships, graduate placements, and positive engagement with those furthest from the labour market.	From 2015

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
3.9		Employers are confident of the local labour market supply. Their needs are known and skills gaps identified to inform job matching, further and higher education provision and careers advice to schools	We will produce strong Local Labour market information through the Council's insight function and the development of the Barnet Observatory	Ongoing from July 2014
3.10			We will work with education providers to ensure provision responds to labour demands with appropriate career pathways	Ongoing from July 2014
3.11			We will use the opportunities presented by the borough's regeneration programmes to create jobs that, wherever possible, are filled locally.	
3.12			We will promote the delivery of employability skills through education providers as part of the preparation for employment	
3.13	<b>Supporting residents to develop the skills they need to succeed</b>	<b>Young people well qualified and job ready to pursue chosen career pathway</b>	We will promote opportunities for schools and employers to work together to develop young people's skills and understanding of career pathways through schemes such as "let's Talk Shop"	
3.14			We will work with providers to develop and deliver a strong offer of alternative pathways for young people in Barnet	
3.15			We will define an employability offer for care leavers to ensure that all care leavers are equipped for work	
3.16			The Council and its partners will explore options to provide and develop apprenticeships and work placements for people of all ages	
3.17			We will identify and support vulnerable people and those at risk of being not in education, employment or training (NEET) to ensure they make a successful transition to EET	

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
3.18		Career choices informed by high quality advice and good understanding of the needs of employers	We will promote information sharing between schools and between schools, local employers and other organisations, building on existing schools communications mechanisms.	
3.19		Local provision in schools and colleges reflects the needs of the local, regional and national economy	We will support providers in the delivery of Careers Information, Education, Advice and Guidance that aligns with the most current labour market trends and market demand (see 3.18).	
3.20			We will provide accessible Labour Market Information and information on borough regeneration opportunities to providers to inform curriculum development	
3.21		Workless residents supported into sustainable employment	We will work with the Benefits Cap Task Force to deliver our response to the welfare reforms and enable more residents to work.	
3.22			We will work with providers and the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) contract holders to provide a well-coordinated re engagement offer for 16-18 year olds	
3.23		Those on low pay supported to progress	We will develop a skills escalator model through the West London Alliance to deliver in-work support for improving skills and job progression.	
3.24			We will explore how to tap into the expertise of older/retired residents with business experience in providing business mentoring to local SMEs (e.g. through the business hub CIC).	
3.25	<i>Encouraging a culture of entrepreneurship</i>	Residents are aware of self-employment as an option, and know how to find the help they need to start a successful business	We will run an 'Innovation Barnet' competition in conjunction with Middlesex University (attracting external sponsors – self financing) to help promote business innovation and entrepreneurship in Barnet	By end 2016

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
3.26	<i>A healthier workforce</i>	<b>Stronger economy and improved mental health through supporting those with mental health needs to remain in/back to work</b>	The Public Health team will support 5 of the larger local employers with the London Healthy Workplace Charter.	By March 2015
3.27			We will build on the experience of the “Future Path” initiative to support those with mental health problems back to work, to improve the identification and treatment of mental health in employment services and to support those in employment who have concerns about mental health	Ongoing from October 2014

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## THEME D: Improving Access to Markets

33. Whilst it is the private sector that will generate the lion's share of growth in Barnet in the years ahead, the Council, along with our wider public sector partners, is a major buyer of services through our procurement and commissioning functions, and that the public sector supply chain is a significant contributor to the Barnet and national economies. Barnet manages over 1000 contracts worth a total of £1.1bn, including 10 contracts worth more than £17m. Around 20% of the Council's contracts by value are with locally-based suppliers.
34. There are some sectors of the economy, particularly the care sector, where the Council is a dominant player in the market, and plays a real role generating private sector growth, jobs, and driving incomes. The Council will ensure that local businesses and suppliers can access our supply chain in a straight forward, transparent way, and will give clear signals to the market about our commissioning intentions and processes, supporting local businesses and employment, and stimulating local economic growth.

### **Case Study: working with suppliers**

In 2013 Barnet identified it had a requirement for the provision of maintenance and installation services. The value of the contract meant that a quotation exercise was required. Five suppliers were identified from a pan London supplier database who had capability to provide the service and supply required, all suppliers being small niche providers. These five suppliers were invited to quote using the authority's eportal system. Use of the portal highlighted areas of development for the portal to support supplier's use.

Barnet as a result has a contract in place with a local supplier, based within London Borough of Barnet, that covers the provision of metalworks and maintenance of existing metalwork structures. This supports both the local economy and wellbeing of the local community. As the main user of these services is Greenspaces which is available for all in the community to use.

## How we will deliver this objective

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
4.1	<b>Local and small businesses can access Council contracts</b>	<b>Local businesses supported to compete effectively for contracts</b>	The Council and its partners will develop business mentoring, training courses and forums on winning and sustaining contracts with the Authority to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises	From September 2014
4.2			We will increase the number of local businesses and voluntary sector organisations trading within the London Borough of Barnet.	From October 2014
4.3			We will develop and facilitate Local Business Development Boards of local suppliers to increase the visibility of opportunities and encourage local business to work together to respond to them.	From September 2014
4.4			The Council will actively encourage organisations within the borough, including voluntary and community groups as well and business and residents, to provide services to the council and to each other. This is known as the 'ecosystem approach'.	From October 2014
4.5			We will increase the % of local businesses that are satisfied with the way the Council and its delivery partners support them in bidding for future work.	From September 2014
4.6			We will develop an accreditation programme entitled "Doing business with the London Borough of Barnet" for providers within the Council's supply Chain	From September 2014
4.7			<b>Small businesses collaborating to access contracts</b>	We will match of Council tenders to local companies, Small to Medium Enterprises and voluntary sector organisations in order to maximise their opportunity of winning business and encourage local businesses to participate in tendering for contracts with the Council.

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
4.8		Local business know what the Council will be tendering for in future and have time to develop expertise and partnerships	Council procurement web portal to be established with forward pipeline that is easy to navigate	October 2014
4.9			The Council and its delivery partners will provide expertise in market development and management to establish the ability of the Local Supply Chain to meet future Authority requirements and understand any gaps in the local supply.	From October 2014

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## THEME E: Facilitating business growth

35. If we are to meet our aim of ensuring that *Barnet is the best place in London to be a small business*, it is essential that businesses have access to the information and support they need to succeed and grow. We recognise, though, that private enterprise often works best when government steps out of the way; and that advice and guidance are best given by those with hands experience of the realities of starting up, running and expanding a business. This is the spirit in which our approach to creating the environment for economic success has been developed.
36. The Council will therefore consider the potential for pump-priming the creation of a social enterprise to deliver business support, including advice, mentoring and networking, working with existing business networking organisations. We recognise that business knows best what it would find useful, and would particularly welcome views on the scope of a potential social enterprise, and the most effective way to ensure that it offers good value for public money. The table below sets out some of the potential functions of a new organisation for consideration. If a social enterprise is not the most effective, or cost-effective, approach we would welcome alternative suggestions. Some of the actions set out below do not have timescales as they are dependent on the outcome of a decision regarding the potential social enterprise.

### How we will deliver this objective

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
5.1	<b>Businesses enabled to grow and thrive</b>	<b>Businesses engaging with each other, the Council, and the wider community</b>	With Re, develop approach to small business support, possibly through the creation of a <b>business support social enterprise</b> , which will topvide a central point of contact for business engagement , mentoring, advice and networking.	Firm proposals for consideration by December 2014; implementation depending on scope.
5.2			<b>Promote business engagement</b> and networking opportunities	
5.3			We will provide a clear <b>central point of contact</b> and portal to other services, significantly <b>improving current levels of provision of business information</b> , support and guidance through a digital platform 'hub' providing information and signposting to maximise the use of existing business support services, and a physical presence through various 'spokes' comprised of incubator units, where wrap around services would include access to advisors and training sessions.	

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
5.4			We will develop <b>mentoring</b> , drawing on the skills of Barnet's many highly skilled retired businesspeople	
5.5			Develop an approach to <b>corporate social responsibility (CSR)</b> by the Council and its supply chain, reflecting our strong belief that economic growth can benefit communities and the cultural life of the borough, and that all groups in the community should have equal opportunities to gain from growth,	
5.8			<b>Provision of appropriate and affordable workspace</b> for small and micro-businesses, making use of available Council assets, and located in accessible town centres and development areas. These would have different models of operation to reflect local needs and opportunities, for example easy-in/out office space, meeting room facilities;	
5.9			Active use of the planning system to ensure new mixed use developments have the right mix of affordable, accessible and flexible workspace, including opportunities to work and run a business from home.	Planning system reviews and actions agreed by November 2015
5.10			Explore the case for introducing of <b>micro-loans for SMEs</b> if there is a failure in the market.	Option Appraisal completed by September 2015
5.11			<b>Introducing consultancy services for Trading Standards</b> , Licensing and Environmental Health, and training opportunities for food handling and hygiene.	Term of Re partnership
5.12			<b>targeted support towards businesses with ambition and growth potential</b> in order to ensure the Borough has a growing population of vibrant small businesses within the key future economic growth sectors (finance and professional; digital; creative, hospitality and leisure; care sector, green industries). This relates to the so-called 'vital 6%' of high- growth private sector firms, responsible for a disproportionate share of net job creation and in driving innovation, The presence of these firms will also act to attract in other associated business investment.	

Code	Strategic Objective	Outcome	Action	Timescale
5.13	<i>Connecting businesses and universities</i>	Close working relationship between business and higher education creating value and jobs	We will develop an approach to <b>Knowledge Transfer</b> that bring together the expertise of universities with the skills of entrepreneurs to boost growth opportunities, as envisaged by the West London Alliance Jobs, Skills and Growth programme.	

## Corporate Social Responsibility

37. While each business will want to make its own decision about whether and how to invest in the local community, the Council is sometimes asked by local businesses and community groups how they can make the biggest difference. We will make it easy for those businesses in Barnet that want to “give something back” to do so. The Council will work with CommUNITY Barnet and other groups to ensure that businesses have the information they need to target any community-focused activity to best effect.

## Ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to gain from growth

38. An important principle embedded throughout this document is that all people in Barnet, no matter what their background or circumstances, should have equality of opportunity to succeed and gain from the growth of the economy here and nationally.

39. We have identified a number of key groups in the borough who will be given additional focus in the delivery of the proposals set out in the report to ensure the opportunities arising from of growth can be accessed by all. These are:

- **Young people and those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs):** Barnet has a low proportion of young people not in education, employment or training compared to London. Following the economic downturn youth unemployment rose substantially, and although it is now falling again it remains important to ensure that young people are accessing work and training as this sets them on a positive path.
- **Lone parents:** In Barnet 15.6% of those claiming out of work benefits are lone parents. Claimants are concentrated in deprived areas to the west of the borough and are particularly disadvantaged in London because of the high cost of childcare provision.

- **Disabled people and people with long term health conditions:** In Barnet 46% of the total number of claimants of incapacity benefits were related to mental health issues (May 2010). Of these, 98% have been claiming benefits for at least 12 months, and nearly two-thirds have been claiming for at least five years. Around 93% of those in Barnet receiving secondary mental health services are not in paid employment (Jan 2014).
- In Barnet 10.6% of clients with a **Learning Disability** of working age were in employment in 2009/10, above the national average of 6.4%. There are many challenges in finding work placement and employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities. Learning from the 'PSA16' and 'Right 4 Work' projects indicates that people with disabilities, in particular those with mental health problems and a learning disability, require intensive 1:1 support to prepare for, find and keep work.
- **Black and Minority Ethnic groups:** Unemployment for Black and Minority Ethnic Groups (BAME) tends to be consistently higher than the overall average unemployment rate. The Barnet Economic Insight Report (2011) indicates that in 2006 BAME unemployment rates were close to the Barnet average, but there has been a sharp rise since, peaking at 18.3% compared to Barnet's overall average of 9%.
- Those **groups living in areas of greater economic disadvantage** (as set out in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation), and the approximately 15% of the population may have been impacted by **changes to the welfare system**, should be enabled to access opportunities to gain from growth just like anyone else so that they do not get left behind as the wider economy recovers, for through employment and skills initiatives.

40. An equalities Impact Assessment will be conducted as a part of the wider development and delivery of our approach to supporting economic success.

## Listening to and working with residents, businesses and partners

41. We understand the need to listen carefully to what others have to say, and to learn from elsewhere about how to develop a successful approach to enabling economic success. We welcome views from local businesses, residents, and our delivery partners on how the public sector can best facilitate success in developing enterprise, employment and growth in the borough.

- **Business engagement:** In developing the approach set out in this report we have drawn extensively on messages businesses have given us through exercises such as the Barnet Business Survey (2013) and the Business Breakfast Programme. Furthermore, many of the objectives set out here will involve deeper on going dialogue with business over the coming years in order to be made into reality.
- **Partner engagement:** Barnet Council is only one part of the picture. The wider public sector, including Job Centre Plus, Middlesex University, colleges and schools, the NHS and the police also play an important role, as do the Council's delivery partners Regional Enterprise (Re) and Capita. By working together and coordinating our efforts to we will maximise the benefit of our actions to local businesses.

- **Resident engagement:** Barnet residents (many of whom also work and run businesses here) and the investment and consumption decisions they take that will have a huge impact on the success of the local economy. It is vitally important that our approach supports them to prosper and to gain from growth.

## Measuring success

The report sets out an approach which aims to maximise the positive impact of the public sector on the local economy, and ensure that Barnet's businesses and entrepreneurs have the space and support they need to thrive. The agreed objectives and actions will be measured and reported on an annual basis, by combining key economic indicators (for example 3-year business survival rate, the number of new apprenticeships, or the unemployment rate), with progress updates from senior officers responsible for delivering some of the specific programmes and projects set out here (for example business hubs, or new approaches to developing town centre growth). The approach will be updated in five years, or sooner if circumstances require.