

APPENDIX ONE: COMMUNITIES TOGETHER NETWORK ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

Communities Together Network (CTN) 2016/17 Annual Report to Community Leadership Committee 7th September 2017

1. Summary

This is the third annual report on the Communities Together Network (CTN). CTN is a borough-wide network of local partners, voluntary, charity, community and faith organisations and businesses which come together to discuss issues that are important to local residents. This annual report tells the story of our year; it looks at how the Council has worked with strategic partners through CTN to support delivery of the Corporate Plan. The report also provides examples of how CTN strives to drive change by encouraging good relations between Barnet's diverse communities, and different areas within the council. Finally, the report looks at next steps for CTN and provides links to equalities and community cohesion data.

2. Introduction

We are proud of our diverse and cohesive communities in Barnet who, like the rest of London and the United Kingdom, have faced significant challenges in the past year which have underscored the critical role that voluntary, community and faith groups play in community safety, community participation and engagement, community cohesion, emergency planning and emergency response. These include:

- Murder of Jo Cox, MP
- EU referendum and campaign
- Aftermath of Brexit -uncertainty about right to remain of EEA citizens and a subsequent spike in hate crime
- A catalogue of tragic events in London and the UK

The community response to the Grenfell Tower Fire, the Westminster, London Bridge and Finsbury Park attacks demonstrate how grass roots community groups' local knowledge and ability to mobilise hard to reach groups and provide a rapid response and innovative solutions to local problems should position the Voluntary, Charity and Faith sectors, (VCFS) as core strategic partners in keeping our communities safe, cohesive, healthy and successful.

As the borough's strategic forum for a meaningful, two way conversation with the VCFS, CTN is a key mechanism through which the council can articulate its offer to the voluntary sector and for them to share intelligence on emergent needs of the communities that they represent.

3. CTN: A year in review

The focus for the CTN since the last annual review has been:

- **Operating as a strategic forum**
A key CTN objective is to share information and talk about what matters to communities so that CTN members feel informed and can influence relevant decision making processes. For example, at the open meetings, officers can make a brief presentation and promote the consultation exercise where the Council is developing key strategies which link to the theme of CTN meeting.

Outside the open meetings other opportunities are brought to the attention of the membership through regular email contact so that CTN membership can

get involved in consultation, strategies and events. For example VCFS have been informed of opportunities for involvement with Barnet Multi Faith Festival and the Borough's celebration of Silver Sunday for over 55's. Commissioning and Strategy leads are also encouraged to involve the network in strategy development and the Sports and Physical activity strategy have involved faith contacts to feed into cultural and religious needs into that strategy.

Invitations to attend the themed open network meetings are sent out on social media (Eventbrite). Details of the open network meetings held in 2017 are given in the table below:

Date	Venue	Theme	Agenda
06/03/17	Middlesex	New and Emerging Communities including EEA migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facts and Figures about Barnet Social Integration The Casey Report Reducing migration fund
24/07/17	Salvation Army Hendon	Dementia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dementia in Barnet Alzheimer's Society services - Dementia cafes and Dementia Advisors Wider initiatives in the Council. Dementia Action Alliance How Barnet can be a dementia friendly place
October	TBC	New Policing strategy	TBC

- Responding to emergency issues**

There has been little change to the CTN Reactive/Emergency Response Function. In any incident, the CTN responds alongside the Barnet Resilience Forum. CTN works as the community arm of the Barnet Resilience Forum to provide a communication link, monitor, understand, and reduce any community tension and may also on request, circulate information from strategic partners such as the Metropolitan Police or the Borough Resilience Forum.

The current *threat* level for international terrorism attack in the UK is SEVERE. Except for a brief period following Manchester attack when it was raised to imminent, it has been at this level (since August 2014) Two emergency response sessions of CTN were organised in March and May 2017 in response to terrorist attacks in Westminster London and Manchester. According to the CTN Terms of Reference representation was sought from the steering group and Voluntary, Faith and Community sectors as appropriate.

Five emergency communications have been sent out to the CTN as follows:

Date	Incident	Message
July 2016	N/A	Communication of the Council resolution condemning hate crime to underline the borough's commitment to oppose all forms of religious hatred, intolerance and Hate

		Crime
March 2017	Terrorist attack Westminster Bridge	Condemnation of the attack
May 2017	Manchester Terrorist Attack	Condemnation of the attack
June 2017	London Bridge Terrorist attack	Condemnation of the attack
June 2017	Terrorist Attack Finsbury Park	Condemnation of the attack

- **Partnership working across the Council to promote CTN inclusion**

As the Council moves to more local delivery models through integrated and locality working, CTN can support the Community Participation strategy and the sustainability of community groups and actively engage with the community to help them achieve their goals. CTN helps to sustain Barnet as a resilient and thriving community-led borough by fostering a sense of pride in local areas and encouraging communities to make informed decisions about their local areas, to work together to achieve the outcomes they want, mobilising community strengths and instilling a sense of shared ownership.

It is planned to involve CTN to build community capacity and, in addition to the open CTN meetings, officers are working collaboratively with strategic partners to support the involvement of CTN in the following areas:

- Promoting engagement in the development of a Borough Arts strategy
- Space hive platform for fundraising
- Community Directory

Adults Social Care and Health

- Dementia
- Silver Week activities to celebrate the contribution of residents aged 55 and over
- Community involvement in service design and delivery- Adults Engagement summit

Children and Family Services

- Presentation to Youth Practitioners Forum on Community Cohesion and the work of CTN in July 2017
- Participation in UNICEF children's rights project

Public Health

- Early intervention and prevention with Public Health to promote health screening and vaccination projects reduce stigma and look at local ways of working through the wellbeing hub.

- **Building relationships with the faith sector and the Barnet Multi Faith Forum(BMFF)**

The council collaborated with BMFF, its strategic partner on faith (and other organisations) to plan and organise Barnet Multi Faith Festival, Celebration Barnet, and Unity in the Community. The Festival was a celebration of interfaith sport, food, culture, music and dance. It took place on May and was attended by 1200 residents including Mayor of Barnet, Faith leaders, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, , Theresa Villiers MP, GLA member Andrew Dismore and Barnet councillors and raised the profile of Barnet's Nepalese/Ghurkha community who are Hindu.

The Festival received grant funding of 15,000 from LBB £5,000 and Big Lottery £10,000. It celebrated the cultural diversity of the Borough demonstrated what can be achieved when diverse religious groups in the borough work together in harmony. The event celebrated different groups in the borough and the rich diversity of cultural and religious traditions and beliefs to build trust and community cohesion by working together.

Work has also focussed on strengthening relationships with Barnet's diverse Muslim communities:

- Islamic Association of North London
- Somali Bravanese Welfare Association
- Hendon Mosque and Ayesha's school

- **Monitoring social cohesion and good relations between Barnet's diverse communities**

Barnet is a growing and diverse borough. Demographic data about Barnet can be found in Barnet's Equalities and Cohesion data summary and links are available at Annex 2 to this paper.

Barnet's strategic equalities objective measures perceptions about community cohesion through analysis of the Residents' Perception Survey (RPS). The Spring 2017 RPS shows that satisfaction with Barnet remains high - 82% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live This is 2 percentage points above the London average.

The 2016 RPS survey showed a reduction from 84% to 81% since Autumn 2015 in the percentage of residents who agree that the local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together.

The Spring 2017 RPS shows that percentage of residents who feel that people do not treat each other with respect and consideration has increased by 18 percentage points (from 19% to 37%) since Spring 2016. The most recent RPS survey was carried out between 20/04/17 and 17/05/17 and the perception is likely to have been heavily influenced by Westminster terror attack in March 2017.

Feeling safe and included are important features of a cohesive community and RPS data suggests that the majority of people in Barnet feel safe in their local area:

94% of residents reported that they feel safe in their local community during the day (Spring 2015 most recent data); and 74% of residents feel safe in their local area after dark (Autumn 2016)

Satisfaction with the local area has also fallen from 85% to 82% since the Autumn 2016 survey.

It will be important to keep these social and community cohesion indicators under review and assess any further impact on Autumn 2017 RPS survey

The December 2017 meeting of the CTN Steering Group will have an opportunity to review how the refreshed CTN has operated over the past year. Areas for potential discussion and improvement could include:

- Priority Spending Review and the role of Resilient Communities
- Supporting Local Consortia and sustaining the VCF Sector
- How to better involve local businesses

The Steering Group will also set a future work plan, which will identify community issues and how CTN can share practical solutions and be involved in delivering the priorities of Barnet's Corporate Plan.

Annex One

Background, Establishment and Development of CTN

1. Background

CTN was initially set up as a borough-wide forum to support community cohesion and resilience following social unrest in 2011

In 2016/17 CTN has broadened its community cohesion focus to operate as a strategic forum to support the objectives of the Community Participation Strategy and The All Party Political Group for Faith's Covenant on Faith Action. CTN's terms of reference and operating model were refreshed in consultation with Borough partners and VCS and faith sectors to broaden CTN remit and these are attached at Annexe Two.

The central objectives of CTN are to:

- provide a meaningful, two way conversation between community groups – and the people that they represent, and the council, CCG, police and other strategic partners. This is with a view to having early sight of emerging issues for our diverse communities, share information on the support that is available in the borough, encourage and facilitate partnership working and clearly articulate the council's commitment and offer to the voluntary sector.
- build an understanding of what really matters to Barnet's communities and to share information between partners so that Barnet's diverse communities feel informed, included and safe.
- form part of the council's response to the third aim of General Public Sector Equalities Duty PSED (set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) - to foster good relations between people from different groups.
- promote community cohesion through providing a space to develop good relationships and by monitoring, understanding, reducing and preventing any community tensions.

2. CTN Terms of Reference

CTN terms of reference were refreshed in consultation with Borough partners and VCS and faith sectors and adopted at the open meeting in March 2016 as follows:

- To promote community wellbeing and encourage cohesive and safe communities by sharing information and talking about what matters to communities and residents
- To operate at a proactive and reactive level in response to emergency incidents, so that emergency services and the voluntary, faith and community sector can work together to monitor, understand, reduce and prevent community tension
- To allow Borough strategic partners to have early sight of strategic issues affecting the voluntary, faith and community sector
- To facilitate and promote joint working between the voluntary, faith and community sector and the statutory and business sector
- To act as a consultative forum to discuss, identify and raise issues of concern

3. How CTN operates

CTN is co-chaired by Barnet Council and CommUnity Barnet, with support provided by Barnet’s Strategy Officer for Community Participation and the Equalities Lead.

The refreshed Communities Together Network operates at three levels:

- CTN Steering Group: a core membership of strategic partners which will meet annually to review how CTN operates and set the strategic direction of the future work plan.
- CTN Open Forum: an open forum to facilitate joint working and networking.
- Emergency Response: an emergency response function linked to the Borough Resilience Forum.

The diagram below shows CTN model of operation/engagement. The CTN steering group will meet annually in December to review CTN operation and plan the programme of work for three open meetings each year which will follow a standard format. Smaller emergency meetings will be convened as necessary selecting representatives from all parts of the membership as necessary, according to the particular circumstances.



4. CTN Membership

CTN membership is open to all voluntary, community, faith groups and businesses in Barnet as well as council officers and the borough strategic partners including police fire education and health. Councillors are also welcome to attend and to refer issues to CTN.

In line with the new CTN Terms of Reference, there has been a drive to improve VCS engagement and attendance at the open meetings. CTN membership list currently includes approx. 230 individuals from approx. 170 organisations (including 160 from Voluntary, Charity and Faith Sectors).

The table below outlines membership to different elements of CTN.

	CTN Steering Group	CTN Open Forum	CTN Emergency Response
Membership	Assistant Chief Executive , LBB Children & Young People, LBB Adults & Social Care, LBB	Steering Group Open invite to all voluntary, faith and community groups operating within	As required by the Borough Resilience Forum, but usually via e-mail correspondence

	CTN Steering Group	CTN Open Forum	CTN Emergency Response
	Community Participation Equalities, LBB Resilience and emergency planning, LBB Community Safety, LBB CommUnity Barnet Groundwork Barnet Multi-Faith Forum Barnet Homes RE: Barnet Police London Fire Brigade Public Health CCG Middlesex University Barnet and Southgate College Department of Work & Pensions Cllr Longstaff, Chair of CLC Cllr Barry Rawlings	Barnet	

Annex 2

Barnet Equalities and Cohesion Data Summary

A full Equalities and Cohesion Data Summary was updated in January 2016 and is published on the equality page of the council's website at <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/dam/jcr:926a6a16-9a19-4cae-b689-40ada234bb0f/Equalities%20and%20Cohesion%20data%20summary.pdf>

The Equalities and Cohesion Data Summary shows that Barnet is now the most populous London Borough with a growing number of children; young and older people from our diverse communities as well as new residents, especially in the Regeneration areas in the West of the Borough.

Barnet's population is projected to become proportionally older because the over 65's age group is growing at a faster rate than the 0-15 and 16-64 age bands. Barnet is becoming increasingly diverse and the borough's white population is projected to reduce by 3% to 58% by 2021 with a corresponding 3% increase in ethnic minority groups. Barnet reflects the major religious groups in the UK and is home to the largest Jewish population in the UK who make up 15% of Barnet Residents and 0.5 % of the population of England and Wales (Census 2011).