	<b>Community Leadership Libraries Committee</b>  <b>21<sup>st</sup> November 2018</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Communities Together Network: Annual Report 2018</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Chairman of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	Yes
<b>Enclosures</b>	Communities Together Network Annual Report 2017/18
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## Summary

This report presents the fourth annual report of Barnet's Communities Together Network (CTN). The CTN was initially set up as a borough-wide forum to support community cohesion and resilience following social unrest in 2011. It was formalised in October 2013 to support the Council's commitment and refreshed approach to equalities as a borough wide forum to support community cohesion and resilience in Barnet. In 2016 CTN 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. This was in response to an expressed need for a Borough strategic forum to help the Borough maintain strong community links and partnerships as well as to foster excellent community relationships and community spirit.

This paper provides an account of the CTN's activities over the past year.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. That the Committee note The Communities Together Network Annual Report 2017/18 and approve its publication on the Council's website.**

### **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 An Annual CTN Report is required under the arrangements agreed at Cabinet on 24 September 2013 which gave authority to set up CTN under the 'Communities Together' Action Plan and the approach for promoting community cohesion and monitoring community tensions which included an annual report to Community Leadership Libraries Committee.  
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g7464/Printed%20minutes%2024th-Sep-2013%2019.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=1>

### **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The recommendation to note the report and approve its publication on the Council's website is for reasons of transparency - to give clear information to residents and partner organisations. The recommendation will also help to advance partnership working and equality of opportunity between people from different groups. Fostering good relations between different communities is a statutory obligation of the Equality Act 2010 - and in particular s149 which sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) - which came into force on 5 April 2011.

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 No alternative reporting option is required. Not publishing the report would run counter to the arrangements agreed for CTN and the Council's commitment to transparency.

### **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Following CLLC approval of the report, it will be published on the Council's website and action will be taken to develop a future work programme and to support the key events outlined in the report.

### **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

#### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 This is the fourth CTN Annual Report produced by Barnet Council under the refreshed approach to equalities following the 2010 Equality Act, and it is part of our approach to strengthening community resilience and cohesion.

#### **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT,**

## **Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 There are no resource implications for this report.

### **5.3 Social Value**

5.3.1 There are no direct social value considerations as this paper does not relate to a service contract. However, the purpose of CTN is to build an understanding of what really matters to Barnet's communities and to share information so that Barnet's diverse communities feel informed, included and safe. It also facilitates partnership working in the borough, fostering the potential for people to take on more responsibility for their local areas and to deliver better outcomes for residents and communities in the years ahead.

### **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 The Council has statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 - and in particular s149 which sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) - which came into force on 5 April 2011.

5.4.2 Article 7 section 7.5 in the Council's constitution sets out the responsibility for functions of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee which include, responsibility for civic events, community safety, emergency planning, registration and nationality service, grants to the voluntary sector.

### **5.5 General Public Sector Equality Duties**

5.5.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. The three main aims of the PSED are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

CTN supports the council's ability to foster good relations between people from different groups.

### **5.6 Risk Management**

5.6.1 The CTN developed following civil disturbances in 2011 (which were noticeably less pronounced in Barnet than neighbouring boroughs) to promote good relationships between different communities in Barnet. The multi faith community relationships are an important element in community cohesion.

5.6.2 CTN aims to help members to feel involved, informed and safe in both proactive and reactive activities. It acts to build community resilience and mitigate the risk of community tension by promoting good relationships between Barnet's

diverse communities and by building an understanding of what really matters to Barnet's communities. It facilitates partnership working in the borough and sharing information to foster the potential for people to take on more responsibility for their local areas. It also acts as the community communication arm in the event of any emergency.

## **5.7 Equalities and Diversity**

5.7.1 CTN is part of Barnet's approach to equalities and forms 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.

## **5.8 Corporate Parenting**

5.8.1 As a Local Authority we have responsibility for the children in care and care leavers within our borough. Corporate Parenting is about offering at least the same standards of care as would a 'reasonable parent' and ensuring that the decisions we make as a Council do not affect this cohort negatively. This report does not provide any implications for Barnet's children in care, other than supporting any community group with the aim of supporting children in care and care leavers.

5.8.2 The CTN is committed to work in partnership with the Young Barnet Foundation and other community and faith groups in Barnet to further support young people under the Council's commitment as a Corporate Parent. Support will be given to this vulnerable group to ensure they receive good education, have a sense of belonging in Barnet, keep healthy both mentally and physically and to stay safe.

## **5.9 Consultation and Engagement**

5.9.1 It was not considered necessary to undertake a formal consultation exercise for this report.

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 As a Local Authority we have responsibility for the children in care and care. At their meeting on 24 September 2013 Cabinet gave authority for setting up CTN under the 'Communities Together' Action Plan and to the approach for promoting community cohesion and monitoring community tensions <http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g7464/Printed%20minutes%2024th-Sep-2013%2019.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=1>

6.2 At their meeting on 24th June 2015 Community Leadership Committee noted the First Communities Together Network Annual report 2015/16 and agreed its publication on the council Website.  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=694&MId=8367&Ver=4>

- 6.3 At their meeting on 24th June 2015 the Community Leadership Committee noted the report on Faith Covenant and Charter with the Voluntary Sector and the Covenant and Charter attached to the report at Appendix A and Appendix B. The Committee RESOLVED that: 1. The Committee, on behalf of the Council, adopts the All Parliamentary Party Covenant for Engagement between Faith Communities and Local Authorities, endorses its principles and authorises officers to carry out the planned actions under the five commitments.
- 6.4 The Committee noted and endorsed the planned actions to further develop and mainstream use of the Council's Charter with the Voluntary Sector.
- 6.5 The Committee supported a referral of the decision to Full Council, in line with the provisions of the Council's Constitution.  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=694&MId=8367&Ver=4>
- 6.6 At their meeting on 28th July 2015 Council adopted the All Parliamentary Party Covenant for Engagement between Faith Communities and Local Authorities, endorsed its principles and authorised officers to carry out the planned actions under the five commitments.
- 6.7 Council noted and endorsed the planned actions to further develop and mainstream use of the Council's Charter with the Voluntary Sector.  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g8339/Public%20minutes%2028th-Jul-2015%2019.00%20Council.pdf?T=>

## **Communities Together Network (CTN) 2018 Annual Report to Community Leadership Committee 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018**

### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This is the fourth annual report on Barnet's Communities Together Network (CTN). CTN is a borough-wide strategic forum to promote dialogue, engagement and participation with a network of local partners in the voluntary, charity, community and faith organisations and businesses. CTN aims to facilitate discussion which allows a wide range of community groups and local businesses to come together to discuss issues that are important to the community.
- 1.2 This report looks at how the Council has worked with strategic partners through the CTN to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, provides examples of how CTN strives to drive change by encouraging good relations between Barnet's diverse communities and looks at the next steps for CTN to further develop and define Barnet's Community Participation Strategy.

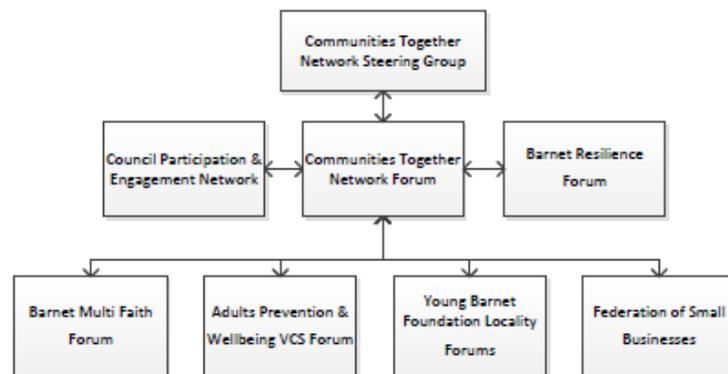
### **2. COMMUNITIES TOGETHER NETWORK**

- 2.1 The CTN was initially set up as a borough-wide forum to support community cohesion and resilience following social unrest in 2011. Since then, the 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.
- 2.2 The central objectives of CTN are to:
  - Provide meaningful, two way conversation between community groups – and the people that they represent, and the council, CCG, police and other strategic partners.
  - 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 (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 and preventing any community tensions.
- 2.3 The 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 CTN Terms of Reference, there has been a drive to improve Voluntary, Community and Faith sector (VCFS) engagement and attendance at the open meetings. The CTN membership list currently lists 644 individuals (497 removing Council officers and Councillors).

- 2.4 The CTN is co-chaired by the Council's Community Participation, Engagement and Strategy Lead and its VCFS Development Partner and operates on four levels:
  - 2.4.1 CTN Steering Group has a core membership of strategic partners which comprises of: the VCFS Development Partners - Inclusion Barnet and Groundwork, Barnet Multi Faith Forum, Police, Fire, Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group and Federation of Small Businesses. The CTN steering group 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.
  - 2.4.2 The CTN Open Forum is an open forum which meets 3 times a year to facilitate joint working and networking.
  - 2.4.3 The CTN Bulletin is the form of communication to ensure that the current membership of over 600 receive regular succinct information on local events, Council tenders and consultations and funding opportunities. A bulletin is emailed on a fortnightly basis.
  - 2.4.4 An Emergency Response function linked to the Borough Resilience Forum. Smaller emergency meetings will be convened as necessary selecting representatives from all parts of the membership as necessary, according to the circumstances.
- 2.5 The CTN Terms of Reference were refreshed in consultation with Borough partners, VCFS and adopted at the open meeting in March 2016 as follows:
  - To promote community wellbeing and encourage cohesive and safe communities.
  - 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 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, Council and business sector.
  - To act as a consultative forum to discuss, identify and raise issues of concern.

- 2.6 The CTN works with Voluntary, Community and Faith sectors, (VCFS) to keep our communities resilient, successful, safe, cohesive and healthy. Through the Community Participation Team, the Council is working with grass roots community groups using their local knowledge and ability to mobilise hard to reach groups and provide a rapid response and innovative solutions to local problems.
- 2.7 The CTN offers a meaningful, two way conversation with the VCFS to share information and gather intelligence on emergent needs of the diverse communities in the borough. It will further evolve by building upon the Home Office's Building a Stronger Britain Together initiative as well as the adopting the key elements of the government's Civil Society Strategy launched this August.
- 2.8 Summary of the way CTN works:



### 3. A YEAR IN REVIEW

3.1 This section of the report describes how CTN has operated over the past year.

#### 3.2 CTN Steering Group

Met on 15 January 2018 and reviewed how the CTN had operated over the past year. The Steering Group agreed that the future workplan should include:

- More and better use of data about Barnet's communities, including new and emerging communities.
  - Presentation provided at the July CTN meeting (point 3.10.3)
- Borough Corporate Plan and Priority Spending Review and the role of Resilient Communities.
  - The VCFS was invited to engage on the Barnet 2024 consultations and attend the Leader events through CTN bulletins of 13, 24 August and 7 September (point 2.4.3)
- Supporting Local Consortia and sustaining the VCF Sector.
  - The work of CommUNITY Barnet at the July CTN meeting (point 3.5)

- How to better involve local businesses
      - As demonstrated by David Clare, Chair of the Federation of Small Businesses (point 3.8.2)
- 3.3 The Steering Group will meet again on 13 December 2018 to review the operation of the CTN.
- 3.4 **CTN Open Forums**  
Meetings of the CTN Open Forum are designed to be interactive and to encourage networking and discussion amongst the membership to achieve a solution focused approach to questions, issues and challenges that face communities in the borough.
- 3.5 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 this year the following information was shared (a full break down can be viewed in the next section):
- Colindale Community Trust and how they have used the theory of change model to drive community development in Colindale.
  - CommUNITY Barnet in the use of data to promote health and wellbeing which has provided benefits to Healthwatch Barnet.
  - Mencap on supporting the Borough's objective to reduce hate crime by raising awareness and improving hate crime reporting.
  - Council officers can also make a brief presentation where the Council is developing key strategies which link to the theme of the CTN meeting and promote relevant consultation exercises. Examples include the launch and benefits of the Fit and Active Barnet (FAB) pass and the new Youth Zone.
- 3.6 Since March 2018, the revised fortnightly CTN bulletin is sent to all members by email and promotes local events, Council campaigns, funding and other opportunities. The success of providing succinct information on a regular basis has resulted in the distribution list increasing from 250 to 660 email recipients. The bulletin has informed the VCFS of opportunities for involvement in Barnet's public consultations, involvement in events such as Silver Sunday for over 55's and to apply for Crowdfunded projects. Invitations to attend the themed open network meetings are communicated through the CTN bulletin and sign up is via the social media platform of Eventbrite. It is noted that although the attendances are relatively static, the theme of the meeting attracted different groups.
- 3.7 Two of the three meetings in 2018 were held in regeneration areas. Details of the three open network meetings held are given in the table below:

Date	Venue	Theme	Attendees	Agenda
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15/03/18	Hendon Town Hall	Building a Stronger Britain Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colindale Community Trust Resilient community's development model</li> <li>• Build a Stronger Britain Together campaign and sources of practical support</li> <li>• Hate crime reporting in Barnet. Mencap</li> </ul>
21/07/18	Rainbow Centre Underhill	Building capacity of VCFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Data and how to locate it</li> <li>• Barnet's New and Emerging communities</li> <li>• Networking Workshop</li> <li>• Funding Workshop</li> <li>• Barnet's Fit and Active card (FAB)</li> </ul>
2/10/18	West Hendon Community Centre	Working with VCFS to build resilient communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Barnet's VCS Development Partners resulting in a workshop to prioritise support</li> <li>• Update on the Community Participation Workshops and resulting action.</li> <li>• Future CTN agenda items</li> </ul>

### 3.8 Enabling relationships with the Voluntary and Business Sectors

The Council has used the CTN forum to support improved relationships and to develop collaborative partnership working between the Voluntary, Faith and Business Sector. The CTN bulletin provides timely information to enable the community sector and local businesses to participate in events, consultations and to develop partnerships to apply for funding. The meeting in October provided the opportunity of the Council's Voluntary Community Sector Development Partners to listen to the issues and concerns of the local community and business groups. The CTN meeting in October asked the groups present to prioritise the action plan resulting from issues and concerns raised at earlier workshops. This feedback will now form part of the Council's updated Community Participation Strategy. The support for the work of the CTN can be highlighted in the following case studies:

#### 3.8.1 Young Barnet Foundation, Janet Mathewson, CEO

Young Barnet Foundation has been set up as a placed based, solution focused partnership platform for the local Children and Young People Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (CYP VCSE), wider stakeholders and residents, establish in 2016. We provide both

organisational and sector development support to the Children and young people's VCSE in Barnet. We also offer local funding grants from our specially designed Space 2 Grow CYP Fund to enhance opportunities, activities and services for children and young people across the borough of Barnet. We believe that to meet local needs a partnership approach is required – residents, community (including faith groups) and wider stakeholders. Local organisations, including our faith groups, have a natural local footprint, with deep-rooted and trusted relationships and operate at the heart of our communities. Many may be small but they are a vital ingredient to help us grow stronger, safer, more connected communities. CTN recognises the value of a partnership approach, recognises that we are stronger together and over the last year we, YBF and its membership have developed a closer working relationship with CTN, allowing us to ensure wider coverage/inclusion across the borough. It is a valuable network, allowing us to meet, share, discuss and find ways forward. It further allows the exploration of intergenerational and faith specific opportunities. To further strengthen the CTN, Young Barnet offers Local CYP Community Networks in the 3 newly formed locality areas – 0-19 Hubs, specifically for those delivering to the under 25's. It is anticipated that our partnership will go from strength to strength.

### **3.8.2 Federation of Small Businesses Barnet, David Clare, Chair**

The Federation of Small Business (FSB) is a national organisation offering members a wide range of vital business services including advice, financial expertise and support, as well as providing powerful representation for small business as a whole to both local and national government. The FSB Barnet welcomes our close relationship with many local support agencies and charities, and participation in the CTN has been extremely informative and has helped identify opportunities where there can be mutual benefit. We know that most of our local membership both live and work within the borough and have a vested interest in Barnet being a great place to be. We see partnership as a vital component in improving the prospects of small business and helping to build vibrant communities. At a recent CTN meeting, I met the Chair of Barnet Multi Faith Forum and we discussed issues surrounding improving online communication and their website. As a direct result, I have become involved with BMFF and have seen that close ties between FSB Barnet, BMFF and Barnet Council is helping BMFF in their mission to communicate tolerance, faith and help build social cohesion. Partnership is key and the CTN is a great forum to engage.

### **3.8.3 Inclusion Barnet, Caroline Collier, CEO**

Inclusion Barnet is a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation which delivers disability services and nurtures inclusive communities through partnership working. An example is that we currently manage and deliver two partnership libraries, we lead on Barnet Giving and have now been appointed as the Council's Voluntary Community Development Partner. Inclusion Barnet has participated and hosted many Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) networks over the past few years and found that participation in these networks are an invaluable way of building connections, disseminating information and gathering intelligence. At a recent network meeting, we provided the sector with information about our new Touchpoint

service which is being funded by the Big Lottery to provide support to people with additional needs in Barnet. Our presentation led to a dozen local organisations being aware of the service and able to refer and provide useful input on our service design. Through our contact at the Council, we were provided with an expert Public Health employee who used her council volunteering time (ESV) to help with the evaluation design. Inclusion Barnet is now looking forward to the opportunity to continue to use the CTN to further workshop the delivery of the Community Development Partner contract as we believe that this network brings together a unique blend of stakeholders who can provide representative input and insight into the needs of the VCS in Barnet.

### **3.9 Responding to emergency issues**

3.9.1 The CTN works as the community arm of the Barnet Resilience Forum to provide a communication link, to monitor, to 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. In 2018 there has been little requirement to react under the CTN Reactive/Emergency Response Function.

3.9.2 The current threat level for international terrorism attack in the UK is Severe. This has remained substantially unchanged since 2014, except for a few days in May and September 2017 when the threat level was raised to Critical following UK terrorist attacks. Since the previous CTN annual report (September 2017) it has not been necessary to send out emergency communications to CTN members.

### **3.10 Enabling a more cohesive Barnet**

3.10.1 Barnet's diverse communities have been brought together through the CTN to make partnerships with the wider voluntary community sector and local businesses. The on-going challenges of tackling any form of hate crime has developed the building of special relationships built on creating positive messages and stronger relationships in areas where issues may occur.

3.10.2 Through the Government's 2016 Counter-Extremism Strategy, Barnet has received funding to enable the development of facilitating and fostering good relations between diverse groups in Barnet to ensure extremism is challenged and has no ability to flourish.

3.10.3 The CTN has helped ensure Barnet VCFS are well equipped to deal with any form of Hate Crime reporting against disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation. A presentation was led by Barnet Mencap who informed CTN attendees how to report Hate Crime, where the Hate Crime Centres are located and what channels should be used to report Hate Crime. The CTN Steering Group in January requested to understand the way the borough is changing and how this would help VCFS with funding applications. A short piece of work was carried out by the Community Participation Team to identify who the new and emerging communities and

this was presented to the CTN members in July 2018. Emphasis is on how these groups can be welcomed and be integrated into Barnet's diverse community. The use of this data together with a much wider range of data that the Council can make available, such as the JSNA, can allow the CTN members to construct appropriate services that can attract national or local funding.

3.10.4 In March, the CTN members received a presentation from the Home Office Counter Extremism Unit on Building a Stronger Britain Together (BSBT). This initiative was launched in 2016 to provide a range of financial and in-kind support to community and faith groups to help enable cohesive partnership working. The initiative supports civil society and community organisations who work to create more resilient communities regardless of race, faith, sexuality, disability, age, and gender. It further helps groups to expand their reach and influence, by offering two forms of support, through a competitive bidding process. The initiative resulted in six applications from Barnet. These projects were initially unsuccessful, but with a more guided approach and support from the Council's Community Engagement Team, we anticipate more CTN members will successfully apply for both funded and in-kind support.

3.10.5 The CTN enables relationships with the wider faith sector through the Barnet Multi Faith Forum (BMFF) in their capacity as the borough strategic partner for faith communities. The CTN's support of their events through the circulation of the CTN bulletin contributes to enabling community groups to participate or attend BMFF events. The BMFF executive membership has expanded through relationships made through this network as is demonstrated by David Clare's case study in 3.9.2.

3.10.6 The CTN monitors social cohesion and good relations between Barnet's diverse communities through the Council's Resident's Perception Survey (RPS). The 2017 RPS indicated:

- An increase from 81% to 84% since Autumn 2016 in the percentage of residents who agree that the local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together.
- Feeling safe and included are important features of a cohesive community and RPS data suggests that 24% of people feel that 'people not treating others with respect and consideration' is a problem.
- 75% of people feel that they strongly belong to the local area, which remains in line with Autumn 2016 and is still above the National average (plus 13 percentage points).

#### **4. THE NEXT STAGE**

4.1 This report will be shared with the CTN Steering Group at their meeting on 13 December and an action plan will be agreed for the coming year.

