



Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee

13 September 2021

Title	Family Friendly Update
Report of	Chairman of the Committee, Councillor David Longstaff
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	None
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Summary

This report provides an update on progress against the Family Friendly vision set out in the Children and Young People's Plan and asks the Committee agrees for the Council to commission the independent Youth Perception Survey to be undertaken and for the Council to stop taking part in the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities Programme.

Officers' Recommendations

1. That the Committee note the report.
2. That the Committee agrees that the Council commissions the independent Youth Perception Survey to be undertaken in November 2021.
3. That the Committee agrees for the Council to stop taking part in the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities Programme.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The vision set out in the Children and Young People’s Plan 2019-2023 is ‘to make Barnet the most Family Friendly borough, where children, young people and their families are safe, healthy, resilient, knowledgeable, responsible, informed and listened to.’ The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of progress against the vision, looking at each of the outcomes set out in the Children and Young Peoples Plan.
- 1.2 The report provides a RAG rating for a range of measures against each of the outcomes in the Children and Young People’s Plan, as well as against Life Chances. The pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on children and young people, with a greater impact in some of the outcomes and measures listed below. For each of the measures therefore, there is a RAG rating pre-pandemic and post-pandemic and then information and data is provided against each of the measures to show the rationale for the RAG ratings.

Family friendly vision

	Pre-pandemic	Post-pandemic
Children and young people say that Barnet is family friendly	GREEN	GREEN

- 1.3 The Youth Perception Survey is undertaken every two years and involves face to face in-depth interviews with a representative sample of 500 11-18 year olds across Barnet. It is undertaken by an independent research company and results can be compared to both previous years and the Residents Perception Survey.
- 1.4 One of the questions asked in the survey is whether young people feel that Barnet is a family friendly place to live. In the most recent survey in November 2019, 84% of young people thought that Barnet was a family friendly place to live, up from 81% in 2016 and more positive than adults (75%).
- 1.5 One of the recommendations in this report is to agree for the Youth Perception Survey to be undertaken again in November 2021 and this will provide insight about whether the pandemic has impacted on young people’s view of how family friendly Barnet is.

Safe and Secure

	Pre-pandemic	Post-pandemic
A strong children’s social care service that builds resilience		

- 1.6 A report on social care performance comes to each Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee and includes a commentary on the Children’s Assessment Tool data. Evidence from audits, performance reporting and service user feedback shows continued improvement since the good Ofsted inspection in 2019.

1.7 Ofsted undertook a 'focused visit' on 23rd and 24th June looking at services for Looked After Children. This is covered in a separate paper to this committee and also shows continued improvement to these services since the good inspection in 2019.

	Pre-pandemic		Post-pandemic	
Crime figures show children and young people are resilient				

1.8 The measure 'crime figures show children and young people are resilient' remains green/amber.

1.9 The Youth Perception Survey in November 2019 showed that crime remained the biggest concern amongst young people with 57% of young people saying that it was one of their top three concerns. In relation to personal safety, it was knife crime that most young people (71%) were concerned about followed by gangs (52%).

1.10 The evidence shows, however, that Barnet is one of the safest places in London to live and work:

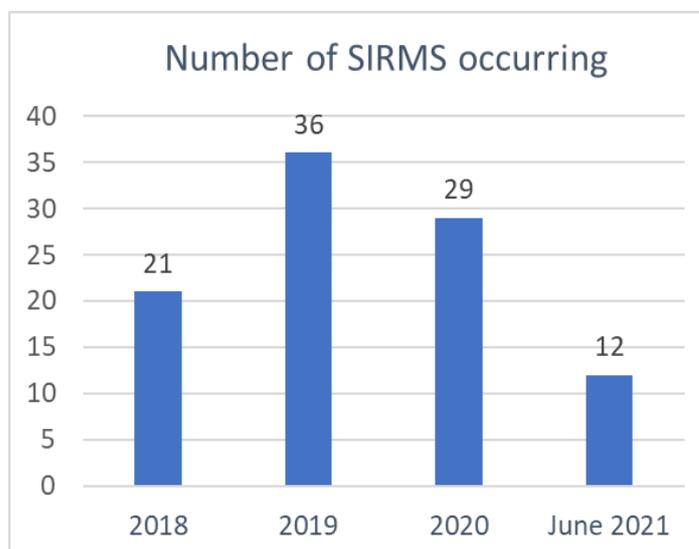
- Crime rates are low at 70.5 per 1000 compared to a London average of 92.9 per 1000.
- Violence with injury is the 3rd lowest in London and violence without injury is the 2nd lowest in London.

During lockdown, crime figures went down:

- 6.2% decrease in violence with injury offences
- 51.7% decrease in knife crime injury non Domestic Abuse related (under 25)

1.11 A Serious Incident Response Meeting (SIRM) is held when a young person under the age of 25 years is either the victim or perpetrator of an incidence of serious violence. The SIRM data below shows that the number of SIRMs reduced from 36 in 2019 to 29 in 2020 and there have been 12 to date this year as of June. In 28 of the 29 cases in 2020 and in all the cases in 2020, the young person in the SIRM was the victim. All SIRMs in 2020 were male.

Table 1 – Number of Serious Incident Response Meetings by year



- 1.12 In relation to youth offending, rates of First Time Entrants (FTE) into the Youth Justice System are reducing and are relatively low compared to London and national.
- Youth Justice Board data shows a 28% reduction in FTE to the Youth Justice System, dropping from 221 to 157 in the period from Jan-Dec 2017 to Jan-Dec 2019.
 - Barnet's FTEs per 100,000 rates were 162 per 100,000 compared to 260 per 100,000 nationally.
- 1.13 Re-offending rates are also reducing and remain low compared to both London and national.

Table 2 – Re-offending rates compared to London and National

	Barnet	London	National
Oct 18 - Dec 18	32.1%	41.8%	38.5%
Oct 17 – Dec 17	33.6%	42%	36%

Education and Learning

	Pre-pandemic	Post-pandemic
High quality learning and resilient schools		

- 1.14 Barnet continues to be known for the quality of its schools. In the 2019-20 school year 96.7% of Barnet schools were good or outstanding; this includes Primary, Secondary, Nursery and Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units, with 41.8% Outstanding. Inspections ceased in March 2020 and have only recently re-started.

Table 3 – % of schools that are good or outstanding

	Primary	Secondary	Primary and Secondary
Barnet	95.5	100	96.5
Inner London	95.3	88.6	94
Outer London	93	88	91.9
England	87.8	76.5	85.9

- 1.15 An annual report on education standards and performance comes to the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee. Recent reports have shown that education performance is consistently amongst the best in the country:
- Barnet is in the top 10% of local authorities for attendance at both primary and secondary.
 - At Key Stage 2, Barnet is 7th in the country for the number of pupils reaching the expected standards in Reading, Writing and Maths combined.

- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils at KS2 for 2019 is in the top 10% of LAs for Maths (8th), GPS (13th), Reading (13th) and in the top 10% for Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined (ranked 9th out of 151 LAs).
- In Key Stage 4 Barnet's Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores in 2019 ranked Barnet as 2nd out of 151 Local Authorities. Barnet's Attainment 8 score increased in 2020 to 60.1 whilst the ranking remained 2nd, the same as 2019.
- Barnet was in the top 5% nationally in both Progress 8 (4th) and Attainment 8 (5th) for disadvantaged pupils.
- The Progress 8 scores for looked after children was better than national and London averages and statistical neighbour LAs. This data relates to the 2018/19 academic year.

1.16 The impact of the pandemic on children's education is well known. During school closures pupils did not learn as much or as deeply as they would have done in school. Pupils', their families' and staff well-being and resilience became less secure. The impact of the pandemic has not been even among pupils and many of those pupils in need are now more in need. There has been 500k allocated by LBB to the Recovery, Reset and Renaissance Project, delivered by BELS with schools.

	Pre-pandemic	Post-pandemic
Co-produced SEND strategy and outcomes		

1.17 The SEND Strategy 2021-24 was updated in the light of the pandemic, in partnership with parent carers, children and young people with SEND, schools and settings, health and VCS partners. The SEND Assurance visit from Ofsted and CQC in Oct 20 highlighted how leaders in health, education and social care had changed and adapted ways of working in response to Covid.

1.18 Therapies has continued to have capacity and recruitment issues, which have increased through the pandemic. Actions have been taken to address these issues. There is a separate report to this Committee about the change in the provider for the Therapies service. There has been a successful accelerator bid for an additional £1.5m of NHS funding for the service. An additional 375k of Council Covid funding has also been allocated to tackle the backlog.

1.19 Outcomes for children with SEND are good:

- The percentage of children with SEN Support achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Early Years Foundation Stage is above the national average.
- Educational attainment in 2019 at Key Stage 2 for children with SEN Support for Reading, Writing and Maths combined is in the top 10% (7th) and the proportion of children with an EHC Plan for the same measure is in the top 15% (19th).
- Progress in Key Stage 2 for children with SEN Support in 2019 is in the top 10% for Reading (10th) and Maths (14th) and exceeds national, London and statistical neighbour averages.

- KS2 progress for children with an EHCP in 2019 is in the top 10% for Maths (14th) and in the top 25% for Reading and Writing.
- In 2019 Barnet ranked in the top 10% of LAs for both Attainment 8 and Progress 8 for pupils at SEN Support. In 2020 Barnet was once again ranked within the top 10%.

Health and wellbeing

	Pre-pandemic		Post-pandemic	
Health outcomes show children are resilient				

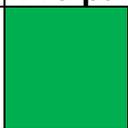
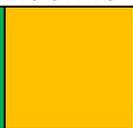
1.20 Children's health outcomes remain generally good with the only red indicators in the Child Health Profile being:

- Population vaccine coverage with MMR one dose (by aged 2) – 2019-20 = 83.4%
- A and E attendances 0-4 years – 2018-19 = 810.0
- HPV vaccine coverage for 12/13 year old girls - 2019-20 = 2.1%
- Family homelessness – 2019-20 = 19.8

1.21 In Barnet, the estimated prevalence of mental disorders (2015) in CYP aged 5-16 was 8.3%, which was the 6th lowest of all London local authorities and lower than London overall (9.3). However, Barnet has a significantly higher percentage of school age pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs (2.61% in 2018) compared to the national (2.39%) and London (2.41%) averages.

1.22 The pandemic has increased the need for mental health support. The Centre for Mental Health has estimated that about 1.5 million children (15% of 5-19 year olds) will need new or additional mental health support (15% of the number of children aged 5-19) as a direct result of the crisis. Mental health services across Barnet responded to the restrictions of the pandemic, stepping up digital online and telephone services. There was an increase in demand to BICS and Kooth. An additional £1.5m of Covid funding has been agreed to roll out Mental Health Support Teams across all schools.

Family and Belonging

	Pre-pandemic		Post-pandemic	
The housing system supports children, young people and families				

1.23 The number of care leavers rose from 259 in October 2018, to 343 in October 2020 meaning that additional housing, both permanent and transitional, is needed. There are also 50 16-year olds and 88 17-year olds in care who will potentially need a housing offer over next 2 years. This issue has been amplified by the pandemic with a requirement for local authorities to house rough sleepers (195 housed in Barnet), and guidance issued by

the DfE that meant the council were unable to move care leavers onto their permanent housing option between April and October 2020.

1.24 As of October, 87 care leavers were banded 2 and awaiting permanent housing. The Care Leaver Housing Protocol set out the target for Barnet Homes of providing long-term housing for 48 new care leavers in 20/21. The target has been increased to 56 for 21/22. 30 additional flats or HMOs are required to accommodate care leavers.

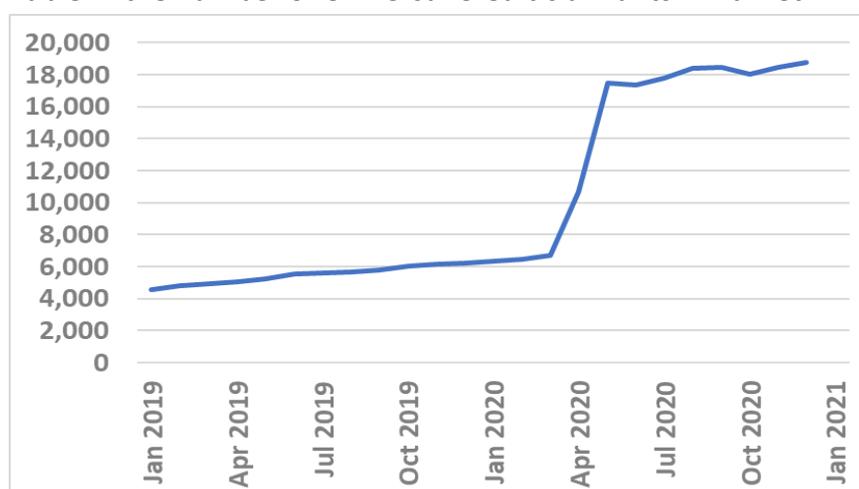
1.25 With regard to family housing:

- There has been a decrease in the number of families living in temporary accommodation (1,235 in May 21, down from 1,493 in April 20) but an increase in the number placed outside Barnet (513 in May 21, up from 458 in April 20).
- There has been a slight increase in the number of lettings to families with 550 lettings in 2021, up from 455 lettings in 2020.
- There has been a decrease in the number of families on the waiting list for permanent housing from 1797 in April 20 to 1623 in May 21.

	Pre-pandemic	Post-pandemic
Revenues and benefits support families' resilience		

1.26 The number of Universal Credit claimants is the best indicator of underemployment in the borough. Table 4 below shows that there was a 7-10% unemployment rate at the end of 2020, which is three times higher than same quarter in previous year.

Table 4- the number of Universal Credit claimants in Barnet



1.27 The increasing number of families that are now reliant on benefits is also shown in the increase in the number of families that are eligible for Free School Meals, which increased from 8,693 in January 2020 to 10,486 in January 2021, an increase of 21%.

1.28 A report on the Covid 19 Winter Fund Scheme came to the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee on 5th May 2021. Through this scheme 33,867 vouchers were given out to support vulnerable families with children particularly affected by the pandemic where alternative sources of assistance were unavailable.

Culture, communication and co-ordination

	Pre-pandemic		Post-pandemic	
We involve children and young people in decision making				

1.29 The Family Services quarterly update report that came to the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee on 7th June 2021 included an update on the service user engagement and child participation activities taking place across Barnet Family Services and outlined the proposed development of this workstream.

- 1.30 The most recent Youth Perception Survey in November 2019 showed that:
- 60% of young people in Barnet feel that the Council involves them when making decisions, up from 46% in 2016
 - 69% of young people in Barnet feel that the Council listens to them, up from 39% in 2016.
 - 67% of young people in Barnet feel that the Council does something about the things that concern them, up from 47% in 2016.
 - 60% of young people in Barnet feel that the Council keeps them informed up from 40% in 2016.

	Pre-pandemic		Post-pandemic	
Revenues and benefits support families' resilience				

1.31 As set out above, children and young people's participation and involvement in decision-making continues to develop and evidence from Youth Perception Survey is that more young people feel that they are being listened to and are involved in decision making.

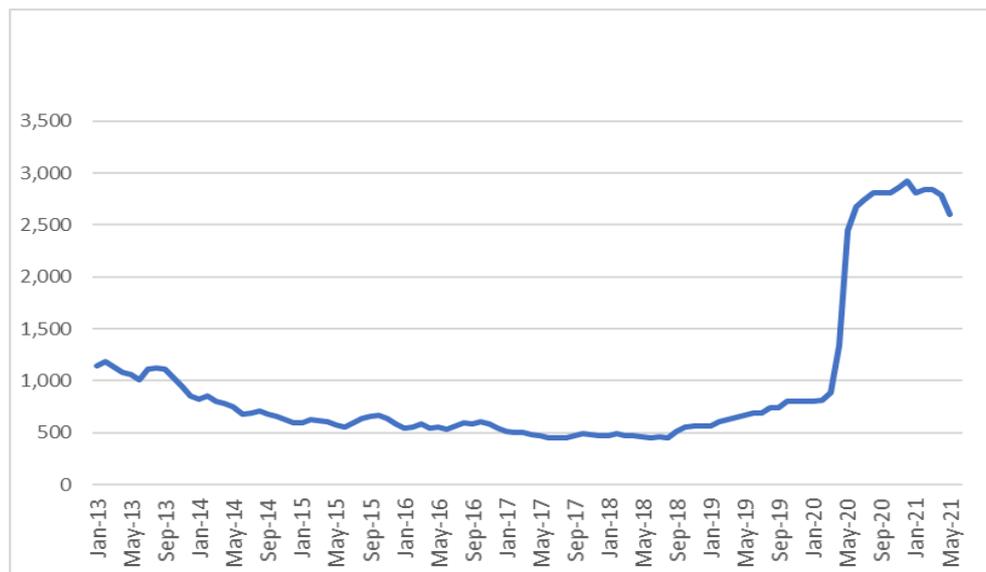
1.32 The UNICEF programme has specific requirements, such as on member training, and significant reporting requirements with little flexibility to achieve the certification. The Child's Rights Officer required to undertake this work left and has not been replaced. Continuing with the programme would require recruiting to this role as well as paying £25,000 per year to be part of the programme until the certification has been achieved. It will take a minimum of a further two years to get the certification.

Life Chances

	Pre-pandemic		Post-pandemic	
Young people are supported on a pathway to high quality employment				

- 1.33 Overall, the number of Barnet young people aged 16 and 17 who are not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET) has been low. In January to March 2020 it was only 1.0%, the 5th lowest in London. 1.5% were NEET or 'not known' the best in London.
- 1.34 Young people have however been disproportionately affected by the pandemic in terms of employment. The table below shows that the number of young people that are out of work went from 810 in February 2020 to 2820 at the beginning of 2021.

Table 5- the number of 18-24 year olds in Barnet that are out of work



	Pre-pandemic	Post-pandemic
Disproportionality in outcomes for different groups of young people is diminished		

- 1.35 The North London Disproportionality Dataset shows, for 2019, the ratio of black pupils in Barnet attaining the expected standard at KS2 and 4 compared to white pupils is low. Black pupils in Barnet are more than twice as likely to have a fixed term or permanent exclusion than white pupils and more than five times as likely to receive a youth caution or court sentence that white children.
- 1.36 The unemployment rate amongst black people has been at least twice as high as the rate for white people for at least two decades. Furthermore, BAME millennials are almost forty-seven percent more likely to be on zero-hour contracts. Those from BAME backgrounds have also been impacted disproportionately by the pandemic in terms of employment.
- 1.37 Men from 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds' reported a 14% deterioration in mental health from the pandemic while white males reported 6.5%. Contributing factors included bereavement, loneliness and worries about coronavirus and misinformation.
- 1.38 Table 6 below summarises all of the RAG ratings post-pandemic

Table 6 - How do we know if we are family friendly? Post-pandemic

Outcome	Measure	Rating
FAMILY FRIENDLY VISION	Children and Young People say that Barnet is family friendly	
SAFE & SECURE	Strong Children's Social Care Service that builds resilience	
	Crime figures show CYP are resilient	
EDUCATION & LEARNING	High quality education and resilient schools	
	Co-produced SEND strategy and outcomes	
HEALTH & WELLBEING	Health outcomes show children are resilient	
FAMILY & BELONGING	The housing system supports CYP and families	
	Revenues and benefits support families' resilience	
CULTURE, COMMUNICATION & CO-ORDINATION	We involve CYP in decision making	
	UNICEF badges	
LIFE CHANCES	Young people are supported on a pathway to high quality employment	
	Equalities– disproportionality in outcomes for different groups of young people is diminished	

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to agree that the Council commissions the independent Youth Perception Survey to be undertaken in November 2021 because it is two years since the last Youth Perception Survey. The survey of more than 500 young people provides insights into the views of young people across Barnet as to whether progress is being made against the vision to be family friendly, what is important to young people and what young people are concerned about. This year it will provide insights into the impacts that Covid has had on how young people feel.
- 2.2 Members are asked to agree for the Council to stop taking part in the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities Programme because the programme has specific requirements, such as on member training, and significant reporting requirements with

little flexibility to achieve the certification. Continuing with the programme would require recruiting a new Child's Rights Officer as well as paying £25,000 per year to be part of the programme until the certification has been achieved. It will take a minimum of a further two years to get the certification. Children and young people's participation and involvement in decision making continues to develop and there is not sufficient added value from being part of the UNICEF Programme to justify the continued funding commitment.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The alternative is not to commission the Youth Perception Survey. This is not recommended because it would not realise the benefits set out above.
- 3.2 The alternative is to continue to be part of the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities Programme. This is not recommended because the added value from being part of the Programme is not sufficient to justify the funding commitment.

4 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 If it is agreed to proceed with the Youth Perception Survey then this will be undertaken by ORS, working with secondary schools in Barnet, during November and December. A presentation on the findings from the survey will come to the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee in March 2022.

5 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Family Friendly is a key part of the Barnet Plan for 2021-2025 with the vision of "Creating a Family Friendly Barnet, enabling opportunities for our children and young people to achieve their best". This report provides an overview of progress against this vision and the Youth Perception Survey will provide further evidence of how young people feel about living in Barnet.

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

- 5.2.1 The funding set out in this report to address additional needs arising from Covid through the Recovery, Reset and Renaissance Project and through rolling out the Mental Health Support Teams to all schools has been allocated from the Council's Covid funding and has been agreed at Policy and Resources Committee.
- 5.2.2 The funding for the Youth Perception Survey is from within existing resources and requires no additional funding.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 Local authorities have specific duties in respect of children under various legislation including the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004. They have a general duty to

safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area and, if this is consistent with the child's safety and welfare, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing services appropriate to the child's needs. They also have a duty to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing services appropriate to the child's needs, provided this is consistent with the child's safety and welfare. They should do this in partnership with parents, in a way that is sensitive to the child's race, religion, culture and language and that, where practicable, takes account of the child's wishes and feelings. Under the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities must consider how the child or young person can be supported to facilitate their development and to help them achieve the "best possible educational and other outcomes".

5.3.2 The Council's Constitution, Article 7 notes that the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee has 'Responsibility for all matters relating to children, schools and education.'

5.4 Insight

5.4.1 A range of data has been used to inform this report on progress against the family friendly vision. The Youth Perception Survey will provide further insight about the views of young people across Barnet.

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 None

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The Council has a duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;

- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

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

The report includes an assessment of progress against the measure that differences in outcomes for different groups of young people are diminished.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 In July 2016, the Government published their Care Leavers' strategy Keep on Caring which outlined that the "... [the government] will introduce a set of corporate parenting principles that will require all departments within a local authority to recognise their role as corporate parents, encouraging them to look at the services and support that they provide through the lens of what a reasonable parent would do to support their own children.'

5.7.2 The corporate parenting principles set out seven principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows: 1. to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people; 2. to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings; 3. to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people; 4. to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners; 5. to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people; 6. for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and; 7. to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

5.7.3 This report includes an assessment of progress against the housing system supporting care leavers being placed in suitable housing.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 The Youth Perception Survey will involve interviews with more than 500 young people across Barnet.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None