



Policy & Resources Committee 22 February 2023

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| Title | Approval of the corporate plan: “Caring for people, our places and the planet: our plan for Barnet 2023-2026” |
| Report of | Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee |
| Wards | All |
| Status | Public |
| Urgent | No |
| Key | Key |
| Enclosures | Annex A: corporate plan 2023-2026 (Word version) |
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Summary

Since May 2022, this Committee has taken a number of reports on the implementation of the Councils priorities and development of a new corporate plan – that has now concluded.

The corporate plan is an important document for residents, our staff and our partners. It sets out the strategic vision of the borough, as well articulating what we will focus on and how we will transform how we work to deliver both high quality services and the outcomes we are seeking to achieve over the life of the plan. It articulates an aspiration for how the borough will be different as a result of delivering this long-term agenda and provides a framework for how we will continuously engage and communicate with residents and with partners.

Policy & Resources Committee are now asked to agree the content of the plan (see Annex A) and to refer the plan to Council in 28 February for approval and adoption as council policy.

Officers Recommendations

That the Committee agrees:

1. The proposals and content of the corporate plan 2023-2026 (Annex A)
2. To refer the corporate plan to council (28 February 2023) for adoption
3. To delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make final formatting and non-material changes to the corporate plan prior to submission to council for adoption

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 Since May 2022, the council has taken a number of reports to this Committee on the articulation of council priorities and the development of the corporate plan. That work has now concluded, and the plan is presented to Committee for approval.
- 1.2 The plan sets out a strategic vision for the Borough, built on the pillars of “***caring for people, our places and planet***”. In the plan we set out the key priorities and specific areas of focus – tackling inequalities, community participation, achieving Net Zero and becoming a borough of fun – we will undertake over the life of the plan to deliver this vision:
 - **A council that cares for people** – We want everyone in Barnet to have a good quality of life; to be healthy and active, with access to excellent education, fulfilling employment, good housing, social connection and community. We will work with others to provide people with the right support when needed, to fight inequalities and reduce poverty.
 - **A council that cares for our places** – We are an ambitious London suburb – a vibrant and fun place to live, work and visit. We will champion and develop our town centres and neighbourhoods, creating safe, clean, and welcoming places with quality homes that people can afford. As a borough of fun, we will be a *destination*, a place to visit, live and enjoy ourselves, where people connect to each other and feel a sense of belonging.
 - **A council that cares for the planet** – We will work together with local people, communities and businesses across the borough to become net zero carbon in Barnet by 2042, and for the council by 2030.
- 1.3 The pillars are underpinned by a foundation of:
 - ***Engaged and Effective*** - We will become a ‘listening council’ that collaborates, listens and builds a dialogue with residents and communities, together working for a better Barnet. In doing so, we will transform how we work as a council, into one that residents find easy to access and where we act on their concerns and involve them in decision-making. Supporting this ambition, we want to become an employer of choice.
- 1.4 The plan also includes the high-level outcomes we are seeking to achieve over the life of the plan. We intend to publish a more detailed Outcomes Framework which contains the performance indicators we will use to establish how we have made a difference to residents and communities.

1.5 Figure 1 below, demonstrates the pillars and foundation work together:



1.6 To support the development of the plan the council commissioned Collaborate to run engagement workshops. These took place over the latter part of 2022 and in doing so Collaborate engaged, members, VCSF groups, residents, staff and the Barnet Partnership Board. The workshop tested reactions to the vision and considered what the ambitions and desired outcomes for each of these themes should be. More detail from those workshops in the Transformation Strategy (see separate item on the 22 February Policy & Resources Committee agenda).

1.7 A word version of the corporate plan is attached at Annex 1. Note that we are in the process of preparing a designed version. This, and a summary document, will be presented to Council for approval on 28 February.

2. Reasons for recommendations

2.1 The corporate plan is an important document for residents, the organisation and our partners. It sets out the strategic vision of the borough as well articulating what we will focus on and how we will transform how we work. It provides a framework for how we will engage with residents and communicate with partners. And as importantly, by capturing a wide range of service delivery including statutory responsibilities it provides clarity and direction for staff.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

3.1 None. The corporate plan articulates a long-term agenda for the future of the Borough and identifies key activities we will deliver to achieved that. It provides a means to translate political priorities into council policy to ensure that the council's aims are clear to staff and residents.

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 Following committee approval, the corporate plan will be referred to Council (28 February 2023) for adoption.
- 4.2 Communications activities to support the roll out of the plan are being developed. The content of the plan forms the basis of our strategic communications (e.g. communications campaigns) which will be delivered over the life of the plan. The corporate plan makes clear our intention to achieve a step change in resident and community engagement. This will be delivered through the corporate plan and specific strategies such as the Community Participation Strategy (agreed in CLLC in October 22) which sets out guiding principles and identifies a number of path finder projects we will be undertaking to deliver that step change.
- 4.3 The Corporate Plan will also be delivered through the Transformation Strategy, and service specific delivery plans and projects.

5. Implications of decision

Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The new corporate plan will set out the council's corporate priorities, this will include a new outcomes framework that will be developed to monitor performance.
- 5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**
 - 5.2.1 The delivery of the corporate plan will be reflected in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the MTFS is a financial articulation of the council's corporate policies, plans and objectives.
 - 5.2.2 There is no expectation that the delivery of the corporate plan will place the General Fund or other ring-fenced funds under pressure. Delivery of the plan will be monitored robustly and if emerging, adverse impacts arise the council will seek to mitigate these within existing resources
 - 5.2.3 The Sustainable Commercial Strategy is in development. This will set out how the council will use its leverage through procurement to support to delivery of the corporate plan. This will run across all procurements and the monitoring of the delivery of social value outcomes.
 - 5.2.4 As we deliver the plan there will be organisational implications. This is more fully considered in the Transformation Strategy (see separate item on the 22 February Policy & Resources Committee agenda). We are also developing a staff engagement strategy explicitly to bring more closely together, the corporate plan, the transformation strategy and organisational development and ensure that staff feel well equipped to deliver the long-term agenda.
 - 5.2.5 Impact on sustainability will be considered in delivering all aspects of the Corporate Plan, and as such there will be close alignment of the outcomes with the Sustainability Action Plan.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 The council's Constitution, Article 7 Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, sets out the functions of the Policy and Resources Committee, which includes to be responsible for developing the corporate plan and recommending it to Full Council for adoption.

5.3.2 There will be significant legal implications arising during the implementation of the activities to deliver the corporate plan which will be addressed as they arise.

5.4 Insight

5.4.1 The corporate plan will be informed by 'what works' and will be driven by the needs of our residents. Data insights will be used to support evidence-based decision making. Further, the development of the Insight and Intelligence Hub work programme has been aligned to the corporate plan.

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 The corporate plan supports the aims of the social value policy and the social values outcomes we are seeking to achieve.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 Risk management considerations will be an integrated part of the development of the corporate plan, and related delivery plans. The council has existing plans in place.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.7.1 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the decision-making of the council.

5.7.2 Decision makers should have due regard to the public-sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited on each of the proposals as they are developed. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that Council has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public-sector equality duty are found at Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

5.7.3 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, 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.

5.7.4 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having

due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- d) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- e) Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- f) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

5.7.5 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

5.7.6 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- g) Tackle prejudice, and
- h) Promote understanding

5.7.7 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race,
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

5.7.8 The public sector equality duty considerations are key for the development of our programme of activity as well as our Corporate Plan.

5.7.9 In the Corporate Plan, we give a very clear commitment to tackle inequalities and will embed equalities considerations into everything that the council does. We will also take protected characteristics, including seldom heard voices, into consideration in any engagement activity. In our development of the priorities, we will be carrying out

Equality Impact Assessments as applicable for each individual project area.

5.7.10 As a part of our Corporate Plan, we will also note our values as a council ('caring, learning, inclusive, collaborative'), out of which 'inclusive' is focused on EDI.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. This duty has been considered in the development the priorities. This is especially relevant for our children and young people activity - striving for outstanding outcomes for our children and young people will benefit care leavers.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 In producing the plan, we have undertaken 6 engagement workshops and the plan itself articulates a clear commitment that we will have active and continuous engagement with residents, children and young people and communities as we deliver the priorities and associated work programmes. Across services there are plenty of examples of how policy development and services already engage with residents and communities. The firm expectation with the plan (and the Community Participation Strategy) is that we do more of this.

5.10 Environmental Impact

5.10.1 The council has already committed to an ambitious target of becoming a Net Zero council by 2030 and for Barnet to achieve this before as a place as soon as possible after this (but no later than, 2042) and by creating a "caring for the planet" priority we are very deliberately positioning environmental impact and sustainability as a corporate priority. Impact of actions within the Corporate Plan will be assessed against our Sustainability Action Plan to ensure cohesion and alignment to our targets.

6. Background papers

6.1 Policy & Resources Committee 29 September 2022 - [Progress on the Implementation of Council's Priorities](#)

6.2 Policy & Resources Committee 13 December 2022 - [Progress on Development of the Council's Priorities](#)