# Transformation Strategy

1. Introduction

1.1. The change of administration in May 2022 marked the start of work to implement an ambitious programme of manifesto commitments. It also initiated a wide-ranging conversation about how the council needs to transform the nature of its relationship with residents, to one of genuine partnership and involvement, and the way that it works with residents, communities and partners.

1.2. The council has appointed a Transformation Director, who will lead on the development and implementation of a comprehensive programme of work to deliver on the administration's ambitions and put Barnet's residents at the heart of everything we do. The council is also developing its corporate plan, based on a vision for Barnet to be *a council that cares for people, our places and the planet*, built on a foundation of being *an engaged and effective council*.

1.3. This document sets out how all the components fit together, defines the overall approach to transformation for Barnet and articulates the next steps for delivering our transformation agenda.

2. How it all fits together
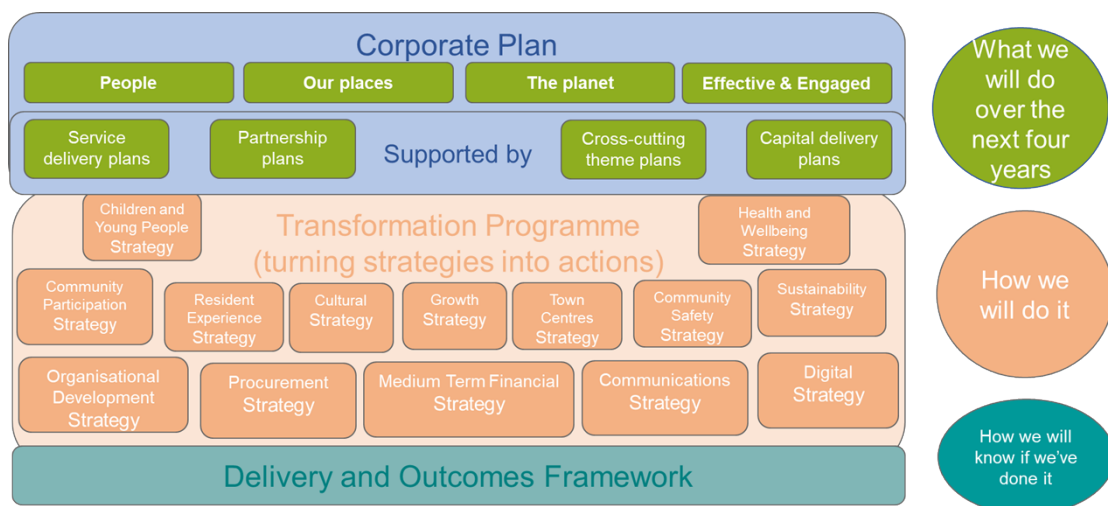
The Corporate Plan

2.1. The Corporate Plan develops the narrative to support that high-level vision and articulate the "what" of the council's ambitions over the next four years.

2.2. Our emerging thinking on the "three pillars" of the vision is:
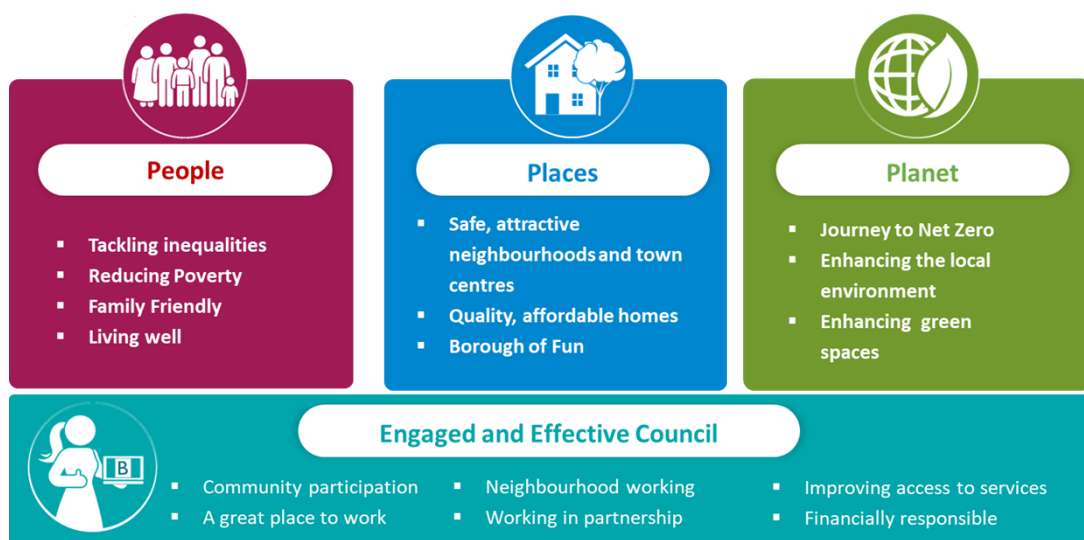
A council that cares for people – represents our focus on services and support to people in the borough. We want everyone in Barnet to have the best start in life, to be healthy, live an active, good life including excellent education, fulfilling employment, good housing, social

connection and community. We will work together with people, on providing the right support when needed, fighting inequalities and reducing 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 be "working together to be one of London's most sustainable boroughs". This includes how we will work together with local people, communities, and businesses across the borough to become net zero carbon in Barnet by 2042, and as a council by 2030, what we will do to improve our local environment, for example on air quality and recycling, as well as how we will enhance our green spaces and increase biodiversity.

2.3.   Whilst the three pillars focus on changes and developments in what we will deliver for the borough, the "foundation" of being **an engaged and effective council** focusses more on how we operate as a council. It sets out our aspirations to become a 'listening council' that collaborates, listens and builds a dialogue with residents and communities, working together for a better Barnet, and the ambition to transform how we work as a council, into a council that residents find easy to access, and where we act on their concerns and involve them in decision making. It also encompasses getting the basics right in how we deliver our services and deploy our resources, from effective budgeting and governance, to becoming an employer of choice that embeds our organisational values, and equality, diversity and inclusion in all we do.

2.4.   The Corporate Plan is a high-level document that focuses on key themes, as set out in the diagram below:

People	Places	Planet
▪ Tackling inequalities ▪ Reducing Poverty ▪ Family Friendly ▪ Living well	▪ Safe, attractive neighbourhoods and town centres ▪ Quality, affordable homes ▪ Borough of Fun	▪ Journey to Net Zero ▪ Enhancing the local environment ▪ Enhancing green spaces

Engaged and Effective Council

▪ Community participation ▪ A great place to work	▪ Neighbourhood working ▪ Working in partnership	▪ Improving access to services ▪ Financially responsible

2.5.   The detail will be set out in a range of delivery or action plans, including partnership-based plans, some of which will be related to a specific service and some (such as tackling inequalities) that will be more cross-cutting. These plans will also incorporate detailed service

developments that are consistent with the overall vision, but do not necessarily contribute directly to one of the main themes.

2.6.   The Plan represents the start of our conversation with residents, not the end.

The Transformation Programme

2.7.   The Transformation Programme represents the continuation of that conversation, by articulating the "how" of the aspirations set out in the Corporate Plan and ensuring that our strategies are turned into actions. Many of the themes set out in the three pillars and foundation of the vision are supported by existing or emerging strategies, many of which have associated delivery or action plans. However, some of the more cross-cutting themes, such as Borough of Fun and Reducing Poverty are less well developed and will require further work and coordination to ensure that they are delivered in a cohesive and effective way, to achieve the fundamental shift in approach envisaged by the council.

2.8.   The function of the Transformation Programme is, therefore, two-fold:

1.   To co-ordinate, monitor progress and report on the delivery of the council's priorities; and
2.   To develop and deliver on those cross-cutting themes that will achieve a fundamental shift in how the council operates.

2.9.   To deliver this function, we have identified three planks for the Programme:

Plank 1 – doing different things
Initially focussed on nine high priority projects, including **community skips, cost of living support** and the **governance review**, this will be expanded to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to deliver on all of the ambitions set out within the Corporate Plan.

Plank 2 (the central plank) – doing things differently
Building a programme of activity that will achieve the ambition to deliver fundamental change in how we work with communities and change our relationship with residents.

Plank 3 – getting the essentials right

Recognising that there will be projects going on across the council that are essential to ensuring the ongoing, effective delivery of our services and that should, therefore, have visibility with the council's leadership.

The Delivery and Outcomes Framework

2.10. The Delivery and Outcomes Framework is the means through which we provide assurance that the council's priorities are being delivered as planned and highlight any potential areas of concern. It will focus on the key activities being carried out under each theme and the most appropriate way of measuring the progress and impact of these activities. That will include a combination of *Outcome* Indicators that measure impact (e.g. percentage of residents who report that it is easy to access council services), Key *Performance* Indicators that measure activity (e.g. percentage of customer cases closed within agreed timescales) and a narrative on progress against key deliverables.

2.11. The purpose of the Outcomes Framework is to answer the "so what?" question, the presumption being that the successful delivery of defined activities and objectives will have a positive impact on outcomes for residents. The challenge will be to ensure that there is a clear baseline, against which that impact can be measured. The council's Insight and Intelligence function will have a key role to play in articulating that baseline.

3. **Building the Transformation Programme – Three Planks**

3.1. In many ways, the Transformation Programme is already well underway, with plenty of enthusiastic activity going on across a number of themes. A Portfolio Management Office (PMO) has been established within the Programmes, Performance and Risk service. Additional project management support and strategy support officers have been recruited and a finance business partner has been allocated to the Programme. Additional specialist support, for example on communications and change management, will be brought into the team as required.

3.2. Work is well underway to pull all of this activity together into a cohesive programme and build on it to deliver the step change in our approach that is required.
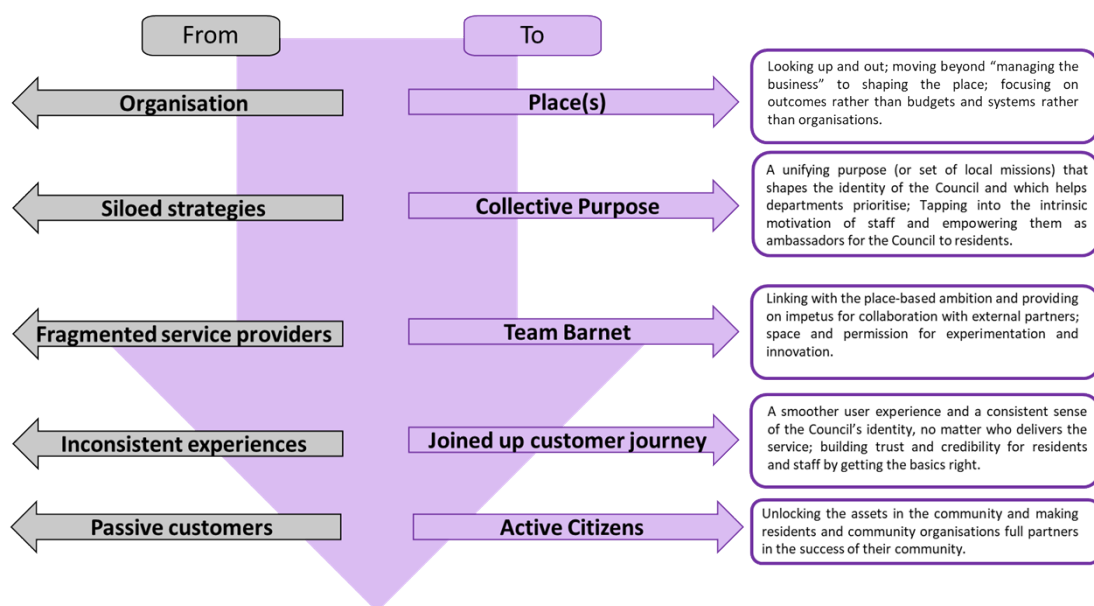
Doing different things

3.3. A number of "mobilisation projects", representing the administration's immediate priorities, were identified in July and a group of officers has been working together since then to ensure early delivery. Within individual services, there has been plenty of activity going on to build the emerging priorities set out in the Corporate Plan into service delivery plans. The PMO has been liaising with managers across the organisation to catalogue this activity and project management support is being provided from within the programme team, as required.

3.4. The intention for this plank is that we will build a tracker document to ensure that all Corporate Plan commitments have been allocated and that plans are in place to deliver them within appropriate timescales, or to flag those commitments for which a plan is required.

Some prioritisation will be required to ensure that they can be delivered within financial and resource constraints. For most of these projects, a light-touch monitoring and reporting process will be introduced. We will also draw out more significant, transformational or cross cutting programmes of work that will require a higher level of support and coordination, along with more in-depth progress reporting. These will include things like **tackling health inequalities**, **community wealth building**, the development and implementation of an **anti-poverty strategy**, how we will become a **Borough of Fun**, and our programme to get to **Net Zero**. The initial list of transformation projects will be confirmed during Spring 2023 and will develop further over the life of the programme.

Doing things differently

3.5. Many of the individual activities that are going on across the organisation will contribute to achieving the change in approach that will deliver on our vision. However, a more cross-cutting approach is needed, if we are to achieve the fundamental step change envisaged by the Corporate Plan and build a solid foundation of being an engaged and effective council.

3.6. The following diagram (courtesy of Collaborate) sets out the nature of that change and fundamentally defines our transformation agenda:

Five shifts in thinking and approach

From	To	
Organisation	Place(s)	Looking up and out; moving beyond "managing the business" to shaping the place; focusing on outcomes rather than budgets and systems rather than organisations.
Siloed strategies	Collective Purpose	A unifying purpose (or set of local missions) that shapes the identity of the Council and which helps departments prioritise; Tapping into the intrinsic motivation of staff and empowering them as ambassadors for the Council to residents.
Fragmented service providers	Team Barnet	Linking with the place-based ambition and providing on impetus for collaboration with external partners; space and permission for experimentation and innovation.
Inconsistent experiences	Joined up customer journey	A smoother user experience and a consistent sense of the Council's identity, no matter who delivers the service; building trust and credibility for residents and staff by getting the basics right.
Passive customers	Active Citizens	Unlocking the assets in the community and making residents and community organisations full partners in the success of their community.

3.7. The above shifts represent a spectrum, and it is important to recognise that different parts of the organisation are currently at different places on that spectrum – the aim is to build on existing good practice and ensure that the whole organisation is moving in the desired direction.

3.8. It is proposed that a three-step approach be taken to achieving our ambitions:

Discovery – investigating what is already happening across the organisation and what best practice can be learned from elsewhere. Implementing pathfinder or pilot projects to test

potential options for development. Utilising Insight and Intelligence, and engagement activities to define desired outcomes and what needs to change to achieve those outcomes.

Development – designing a target operating model for the future, using appropriate co-design methods, and defining the pathway(s) for achieving it.

Delivery – implementing changes that will move us towards the target operating model.

3.9.   This central plank will not be a linear programme, with a rigid set of tightly defined projects. It is, at heart, a cultural change programme, so it is envisaged that the approach will be iterative, with discovery, development and delivery evolving and moving at different speeds across different activities – it is more of an agenda than a programme in the traditional sense. This approach will enable active engagement with staff, residents, communities and partners, so that they can participate in achieving the change we want to see.

3.10.   To frame the central plank, there will be two key workstreams, based on building that solid foundation of being an engaged and effective council:

Engaged Workstream – focussing on the council's aspirations in respect of engaging with our communities and residents – changing our relationship with residents, increasing trust with our communities and creating an on-going conversation, building on our established approaches in children's services and adult social care – as well as how we organise our services to deliver a more place-based approach and provide a more effective front-door to joined-up, resident-focussed customer journeys.

Effective Workstream – focussing on how we operate as a council. It will encompass embedding our organisational values, and equality, diversity and inclusion in all we do, so we become an employer of choice, being creative in how we deliver our services and deploy our resources in partnership with others, and making the best possible use of our financial resources.

3.11.   Whilst the focus will be on developing the themes set out within the engaged and effective council foundation, through the emerging projects set out in the following section, it will also be essential to create appropriate links into the people, places and planet themes, to ensure that they are delivering in line with the ethos of the engaged and effective foundation.

3.12.   Discovery work is also underway and initial discussions have been held with officers at Camden, Enfield and Barking and Dagenham councils to explore their approaches to community participation, neighbourhood working and community safety hubs. Learning from these discussions will be considered as individual projects are developed.

3.13.   A more narrative reporting approach will be taken for the doing things differently plank, particularly in the early stages. The challenge here is for the programme team to "join the dots" between all of the activity that is already in train and make sure it is heading in the right direction and properly coordinated. Alongside this, the team needs to carry out more discovery work, identifying and investigating good practice from within the council and elsewhere, and engaging with the right people to define our ambitions more clearly. From this, we will be able to identify what else needs to be done to drive the overall transformation agenda and develop more detailed plans to deliver this.

Getting the essentials right

3.14. The council's priorities naturally focus on areas of development that have a direct impact on residents' experience of, and opinions on, the council. However, there are also a number of key projects and programmes being delivered across the organisation that are essential to maintaining the excellence of our core services. The definition of "key" projects is set out in the council's project management guidance and takes into account factors such as value, risk and breadth of impact. It would include projects such as the replacement of the council's finance and HR systems, re-designing services returning from Capita and the consolidation of the depot. It will also include programmes of work established to respond to changing legislation and Government policy, such as the Adults Social Care Reform and the recently published "Stable Homes Built on Love" children's social care strategy.

3.15. It is proposed that monitoring and reporting on these key projects should form part of the overall arrangements for the transformation programme. This will ensure appropriate visibility with the council's leadership and help to make sure that development and delivery of these projects is carried out in line with the council's aspirations and priorities.

3.16. As with the "doing different things" plank, it is intended that a light-touch monitoring and reporting process will be used, based on simple highlight reports, which will be drawn together into a dashboard. It is not intended that the transformation programme will duplicate or replace existing reporting or governance arrangements for these projects, only that it will draw the relevant information together into one place.

4. **Doing Things Differently – Emerging Projects**

Engaged Workstream

4.1. The Engaged Workstream will encompass the three themes of:

Community participation – turning the newly agreed Community Participation Strategy into action, sharing good practice from across the organisation (including from Adults, Family Services and Regeneration), and ensuring that effective and appropriate participation methods are embedded into all of our activities.

Neighbourhood working – building on our existing place-based teams and the Making Every Contact Count approach to secure more cross-council working, with employees feeling that they are empowered to act as ambassadors for the whole council, and extending that approach to embrace our partners.

Improving access to services – implementing our Resident Experience Strategy to ensure an accessible "front door" for all residents that opens into a consistent, joined-up and resident-focussed journey through our services.

4.2. There will be a high degree of interaction between these three themes, for example by ensuring effective community participation in co-designing the front door and resident journeys and by ensuring that our place-based teams are able to unlock that front door for the residents that they come into contact with.

4.3. We will also need to ensure that developments under other themes are properly linked into the overall direction of travel and present a coherent service offer to residents. For example,

this will include ensuring that the piloting of community safety hubs under the "safe, attractive neighbourhoods" theme is linked in with the wider "front door" developments. It will also include how we approach regeneration across the borough, to increase the focus on resident engagement and benefits for local people.

4.4. Five emerging cross-cutting projects have been identified that will help us to develop and test our approach across the full range of our services:

1. Grahame Park Estate Neighbourhood Working
   The council is involved in a high level of activity across the Grahame Park Estate and it is considered that there is an opportunity to strengthen the coordination of these activities in order to work more effectively with the community and with partners to meet the needs of residents on the Estate.

2. Digital Place-making
   This programme will deliver a change management capability to realise the smart cities infrastructure potential of all council assets. The programme will enable the utilisation of real time place data for service transformation, will create corporately owned connectivity infrastructure to ensure that public sector digital service innovations can be delivered at best value, and will enable the council to generate income whilst also supporting digital inclusion.

3. Resident Experience Programme
   Accelerating our work on implementing the Resident Experience Strategy and building on the implementation of a new contact centre platform, to transform residents' experience of dealing with the council, particularly for those with more complex enquiries.

4. Community Hubs
   Taking the learning from the pilot Community Safety Hubs and from other councils to develop a longer-term strategy for delivering face-to-face access to services across the borough.

5. Place Management
   Working with front-line staff to develop a model for managing the delivery of "on the ground" services to defined places across the borough. The focus will be on how services are coordinated and how staff across those services are empowered to be ambassadors for the council and a first point of contact for residents.

Effective Workstream

4.5. The Effective Workstream will encompass the three themes of:

A great place to work – actively valuing our staff and putting the council's values (Caring, Learning, Inclusive, Collaborative), as well as our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Workplace Wellbeing, strategies at the centre of everything we do, so we can continue to deliver for Barnet residents and make the council an employer of choice.

Working in partnership – developing our approach to collaboration with our partners across all sectors to make the best use of our collective resources, knowledge and skills for the benefit of Barnet residents.

Financially responsible – contributing to the ongoing development of our Medium-Term Financial Strategy by developing more cross-cutting approaches to cost-reduction, exploring more creative options in respect of income generation and ensuring that our new Procurement Strategy supports that approach and helps us to realise our aspirations in terms of sustainability, social value and community participation.

4.6.   Again, these themes are inextricably linked with each other and connect to the themes set out in the people, places and planet pillars. In particular, financially responsible underpins the whole programme, by ensuring that we are able to prioritise our resources to deliver on the commitments we have made to Barnet residents, as set out in our Corporate Plan.

4.7.   Four emerging projects have been identified that will help us to develop and test our approach:

1. Organisational Development Programme
    We have great staff, who are committed to delivering excellent services and we need to build on their existing skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to enable them to actively participate in developing themselves and their services to deliver the transformation agenda.   We have a comprehensive and clearly defined Organisational Development Strategy, but we need to do further work to ensure that there is a clear narrative on how it will deliver the changes in organisational attitudes and behaviours that are required to support achievement of the council's aspirations. Critical to this will be actively engaging staff in the transformation agenda and ensuring that we support all of our colleagues in achieving the five shifts in thinking and approach that define that agenda.

2. Conditions for Success
    Originally envisaged as a means to improve the system within which children's social care workers operate, the focus of this project is on creating a workspace and environment where all of the supporting infrastructure is in place to allow them to thrive in their role, with reduced barriers and an appreciative employer resulting in a happy workforce who have the time to give. The project will cover a range of issues, including approaches to recruitment, working environment, communications and streamlining of processes. It is envisaged that this model can then be used as an example to create success in other areas of the council and help to make us an employer of choice.

3. Joint Working with Neighbours and Partners
    To support us in becoming more financially sustainable, we need to be open to opportunities to work more closely with neighbouring authorities and our partners to make more efficient use of our scarce resources by pooling our skills and knowledge, sharing management costs where appropriate, and collaborating on service design and delivery.

4. MTFS Cross-cutting Initiatives
    Our prudent approach to budgeting, through the Medium-Term Financial Strategy has served us well over the years but has tended to focus on a service-by-service methodology. As the council's financial position becomes ever more challenging, we need to develop a more cross-cutting approach, potentially considering, for example, rationalisation of support services and introducing a structured approach to support whole-service reviews. Whilst some work has already been done on fees and charges, a

more fundamental review of our approach to income generation is needed and options such as sponsorship and developing a more commercial mindset need to be explored.

5. Transformation as a journey

5.1. These emerging projects will not in themselves achieve full "transformation". What they will do is set us on the journey to transforming the council by providing opportunities to test out different approaches that involve:

1. Looking up and out to shape our **Place(s)**
2. Empowering staff to act as ambassadors for the council by developing a clear **Collective Purpose**
3. Providing an impetus for collaboration within the council and with partners to create a sense of **Team Barnet**
4. Working together to get the basics right and deliver **Joined up customer journeys**
5. Making residents and community organisations full partners in the success of their community by supporting them in being **Active Citizens**

5.2. In setting us on this journey, these projects will enable us to try out different ideas, work out what might be acting as a barrier to change and assess what additional interventions are required to overcome those barriers.

5.3. These approaches will also be applied to the themes that sit within the three pillars of caring for people, our places and the planet:

Pillar	Theme	Key Feature of Approach
People	Tackling inequalities	Cross-service working
	Reducing poverty	Cross-service working and working in partnership, particularly on employment and growth
	Family Friendly	Co-production with children and young people, parents, carers, schools and early year providers
	Living well	Co-production with people who draw on care and support, carers, residents including those who are older, disabled or living with a long-term condition
Our Places	Safe, attractive neighbourhoods and town centres	Cross-service and partnership working, with business sector participation
	Quality, affordable homes	Community participation and partnership working
	Borough of Fun	Co-production with arts and culture sector
The Planet	Journey to Net Zero	Citizens' Assembly
	Enhancing the local environment	Cross-service working and community participation
	Enhancing green spaces	Community participation

5.4. To help us on this journey, it will be essential to develop a "coalition of the willing" by engaging all senior managers in the process and enabling them to take a leadership role in the development and implementation of these projects and the delivery of the corporate plan themes. The main vehicle for achieving this will be the Think Tank group of directors and assistant directors. Other mechanisms will be developed to facilitate the active participation of other managers and staff on this journey.

5.5. We will know that we have completed this journey when:

1. Staff tell us they have the tools and permission they need to take responsibility for addressing residents' issues and getting things sorted;
2. Residents tell us that it is easy to contact the council and get their issues resolved, no matter how complex those issues are;
3. Staff tell us they feel proud to be part of Team Barnet;
4. Residents and community groups tell us that they are being listened to and encouraged to participate in shaping their communities;
5. Partners tell us that they feel like valued equals in their relationship with the council; and
6. Residents, staff and partners tell us that the council has proved through its actions that it is a council that cares for people, our places and the planet.