

## Caring for People

This pillar of Our Plan for Barnet has four themes: Tackling inequality, Reducing poverty, Family friendly and Living well

### 1. Tackling inequality

**1.1 This theme has three outcomes: there are equal opportunities for all, and equal access to quality services, based on need; residents live healthy, happy and long lives; and the council makes Barnet the healthiest borough in London where everyone who lives, works or studies locally can achieve their full health and wellbeing potential.**

1.2 The council knows there is a need for structural change and new policies to address inequalities, not just one-off interventions, and as a result, a new Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy is being developed. The State of the Borough report was completed and published on the council's website alongside the Equalities Annual Report 2023<sup>i</sup>; these form part of the evidence base for the new EDI Policy.

1.3 Phase Two of the Resident Engagement Programme on the new EDI Policy was completed in Q3. This engaged people with a range of protected characteristics, through open residents' workshops and targeted sessions with voluntary groups to seek views on the priorities for the new policy. A report for Cabinet on the outcome of the engagement exercise is being prepared in Q4.

1.4 The 2021-22 Residents' Perception Survey showed that disabled residents are significantly less likely to be satisfied across a number of key indicators, compared to residents without a disability. To investigate these findings in-depth, in Q2, the Tackling the Gaps Working Group commissioned a specialised ethnographic research company to conduct a research study to understand the lived experiences of disabled residents. A report on the council's proposed response to this research is scheduled for submission to

the next meeting of the Tackling the Gaps Working Group on 6 March 2024.

1.5 Work continued towards applying for Barnet to be accredited as a "Borough of Sanctuary". On 12 December 2023, the Borough of Sanctuary Strategy<sup>ii</sup> was approved by Cabinet; and the Borough of Sanctuary Network continued to meet in person to develop the council's Borough of Sanctuary application and identify projects to collaborate on throughout the year.

1.6 Digital inclusion is an area of focus within this theme and work in 2023-24 is centred on sustaining the Digital Inclusion Co-ordination services delivered by BOOST (the employment, benefit advice, skills and wellbeing project to help Barnet residents), including improved support for digital skills and improved awareness of affordable connectivity options and devices. A comprehensive Digital Inclusion newsletter went out to partners during Get Online Week (16 to 22 October 2023). BOOST celebrated Get Online Week with a campaign led by the Good Things Foundation. Barnet Council, Barnet Libraries, BOOST and community groups showcased 25 digital skills workshops and events, shedding light on the importance of digital inclusion and empowering residents to get online. The campaign also showcased various digital inclusion offerings including free SIM cards, free broadband, volunteering opportunities and accredited IT courses. In Q3, 213 residents attended support and drop in sessions across the borough, 102 free SIM cards were distributed, and 83 devices were gifted to residents.

1.7 The council aims to make Barnet the healthiest borough in London and key to this is tackling health inequalities so that life expectancy, and the number of years people spend living in good health, is not varied between different areas. Working together with partners,

Barnet's Health and Wellbeing Strategy<sup>iii</sup> has been developed, which is committed to reducing health inequalities and the contributing factors to ill health or "wider determinates of health". The Health and Wellbeing Strategy continued to be delivered in Q3. As well as delivery to support digital inequality and asylum seeker health, delivery highlights this quarter included a Food Summit which cemented the work being undertaken to improve food security and quality and a new round of Prevention Fund projects agreed which will help embed preventative approaches in service delivery being led by different council departments. In addition, the suicide rate in Barnet has fallen for the second year in a row to 4.2 deaths per 100,000 population.

## Performance

1.8 Good performance for this theme, with most indicators showing an improvement on the baseline whilst a couple are performing less well.

### Performing well

- 21 venues in Barnet classed by the Alzheimer's Society as Dementia Friendly – *up from 12 in 2022/23*
- 5,969 people in contact with Social Prescribers/Prevention and Wellbeing Co-ordinators (year to date) – *on track to match 7,521 in 2022/23*
- 288 people have been trained Mental Health Champions in the community this quarter – *on track to match/be up from 300 in 2022/23*
- 83 schools on the Resilient Schools Network – *up from 81 in 2022/23*
- 27% of the eligible population aged 40-74 offered an NHS Health Check who received one – *slightly up from 26.9% in 2022/23*

- 107 businesses involved in Healthier High Streets programme – *up from 52 in 2022/23*
- 96 health and wellbeing events taken place in libraries - *new measure*

### Performing less well

- 49% of people quit smoking after using a Local Authority funded or delivered service – *down from 54.3% in 2022/23*
- 43,005 people have used the Food Bank and Healthy Start – *higher than 36,289 in 2022/23*

### Risks

1.9 Risks for this theme covering EDI and public health (e.g. pandemic type disease) are being managed effectively – none are scored at a high-level (15+).

## 2. Reducing poverty

### 2.1 This theme focuses on delivering the outcomes of reduced poverty in our communities; the council, contractors and local businesses and partners pay the living wage; and residents are engaged in employment.

2.2 Following the launch of Barnet's new financial calculator<sup>iv</sup> in Q1, residents continued to make use of the tool to identify further financial support available to them. As at 31 December 2023, 6,059 residents have fully completed the calculator, with 34% then going on to click through to apply for financial support identified. The Google Translate function has been included in the calculator to make it more accessible, covering all languages listed in Barnet's 2021 Census. In order to further support residents, outreach sessions at Chipping Barnet and Burnt Oak libraries were launched on 5 December 2023 and analysis of data from the calculator continued to understand where support could be targeted in future.

2.3 Following the approval of the updated Social Value Policy<sup>v</sup> at Cabinet on 18 October 2023, the implementation stage commenced on 1 November 2023. This will contribute to reducing poverty and inequalities, supporting the local economy, creating more jobs and learning opportunities, and protecting and improving the environment. One of the objectives for the new policy is a minimum expectation of 5% reinvested in social value initiatives for all contracts above £100k, and the inclusion of Liquidated Damages Clauses (which have been developed by HB Public Law) are

expected to improve compliance in the supply chain, as this enables the council to seek compensation for non-delivery of social value commitments.

2.4 Progress continued towards becoming accredited as a London Living Wage employer in Q3: all non-social care contracts paying the living wage have been identified and only two contracts are now not in line with the living wage; work is continuing to support them to meet the target. In Adult Social Care and Children's Services, the living wage is being paid to a large number of contracts, a mapping exercise commenced to identify the shortfall required to meet living wage and we are continuing to work closely with the Living Wage Foundation to determine the most appropriate route for managing our accreditation. The economic development team are currently developing an employer engagement programme to launch an accreditation awareness campaign with local businesses in Barnet.

2.5 Delivery of the BOOST (employment, benefit advice, skills and wellbeing project to help Barnet residents) three year plan continued in Q3 with the following highlights: in October 2023, Barnet Homes' new cohort of apprentices were inducted and a Health and Social Care recruitment event was held at the RAF Museum which saw 198 visitors and 38 exhibitors; the Mayors Academy for Health and Social Care confirmed that Barnet are the highest performer for jobs and in December 2023, £45k was secured from UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund<sup>1</sup>) to reimburse for the last Business Startup project.

2.6 As a result of the support given by BOOST, as at the end of Q3, 317 residents have now started work following their participation in

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<sup>1</sup> The UKSPF is the government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF). It provides local authorities funding for communities, places, businesses, people and skills.

employment projects and 53% of residents who undertook BOOST programmes found employment, which has exceeded last year's result where 50% found employment.

- 2.7 To support young people aged 16-24, a range of advice and interventions have been delivered to over 155 young people, resulting in ten moving into education and further training, 38 finding work and five young people starting apprenticeships. Work also continued with parents, charities and youth organisations to support those young people who struggle with finances to access training, transport to college or work and bursaries for resources to help them into employment.
- 2.8 Good progress continued in Q3 on converting the old Argos site in Edgware into a construction and green skills centre in Barnet. The intention is that the centre will be the flagship element of the skills and employment offer for Edgware regeneration programme with strong links to Brent Cross. The site is on track to open in March 2024. Work continued to determine how the vacant front area of the building will be used and whether there is an opportunity for council support services to use the space or open it up to other stakeholders.

### Performance

- 2.9 Mixed performance for this theme, with some indicators showing an improvement on the baseline whilst others are performing less well.

### Performing well

- £1.723m financial support awarded to residents (year to date) – *new measure*

- 34% of residents completing the financial calculator go on to visit webpages to apply for national benefits (year to date) – *new measure*
- 10 locations offering employment support services – *new measure*
- 56 job starts in Growth Sectors – *new measure*
- 43 businesses and partners paying the London Living Wage – *up from 39 in 2022/23*
- 53% residents finding employment after undertaking BOOST programme - *up from 50% in 2022/23*

### Performing less well

- 317 job starts following employment projects (year to date), *down slightly from same time last year (509 in 2022/23)*
- 64 jobs sustained for three months – *down from same time last year (293 in 2022/23)*
- 1150 families in temporary accommodation – *higher than 1108 in 2022/23*
- 78.9% of council tax is collected in year (*previously council tax collection has been reported as a 4-year collection rate; however for this theme the in year collection rate is more appropriate*)
- 69% of Barnet residents are employed – *down from 76.5% in 2022/23*

### Risks

- 2.10 Risks for this theme are being managed effectively – none are scored at a high-level (15+).

### 3. Family friendly

**3.1 There are five outcomes for this theme: there is excellent education for all; children have their best start in life and are ready for learning; children and young people have good social, physical and mental wellbeing; young people are engaged in learning and work post 16; and young people are safe and secure.**

3.2 The latest Family Services Quarterly Update<sup>vi</sup> was presented at the Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 15 January 2024.

3.3 In November 2023, the Young Persons' Perception Survey (YPS)<sup>vii</sup> was launched. This takes place every two years in Barnet and involves interviews with 500 young people to understand how family-friendly they think Barnet is and what their views are of the council and its services. The findings from the last survey were incorporated into our Children and Young People's Plan.

3.4 The last survey revealed that children and young people with a disability are less likely to say they are happy with their local area as a place to live and would like support to help them live happy and fulfilled lives. To support the council in responding to the needs of disabled children and young people, a study was commissioned to capture the voices and experiences of disabled children and young people who live and study in Barnet. Key messages from the report were the importance of creating environments where trusted and peer relationships can flourish; a whole person approach during transitional stages is crucial to disabled children and young people having the right support at the right time; connected parents lead to connected children and that young people want to be included in decision making and creating solutions.

3.5 Following the initial survey in 2021, the second Bright Spots survey for all children in care over four years old and care experienced young adults over 18, was launched in November 2023. The results from the last survey supported the development of services and interventions for children and young people; feedback included that they wanted more time with their family and understanding their care journey.

3.6 In Education, Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS) have continued to support, challenge and monitor schools and settings effectively. 2023 achievement data from Barnet schools showed achievement remains strong compared to the national average – in almost all areas Barnet is in the top quartile, with GCSE and A Level in the top 5% of the country.

3.7 A key focus for this theme is to support children and young people to adopt healthy lifestyles to prevent avoidable illness and improve their social, physical and mental wellbeing, including through integrated health and social care. In October 2023, a mental health and wellbeing campaign for children and young people was launched, including a film featuring young people from Barnet. The campaign was created with a panel of 14 to 21 year olds, who drew on their own experiences to provide unique insight into the realities of the mental health issues affecting Barnet's young people.

3.8 There were three celebration events during Q3: in October 2023, Barnet Youth Justice Service was awarded the Quality Lead Status with a Child First Commendation, the highest rating within the Youth Justice SEND Award. In December 2023, the annual Barnet Foster Carer Festive Celebration and Awards Dinner was held and attended by 39 foster carers, the fostering service staff, senior leaders and councillors. 13 foster carers were presented with an award in recognition of their combined 185 years of service to more

than 206 children and young people. On 20 December 2023, Onwards and Upwards (O&U) hosted the Annual Festive Celebration Event for care experienced young people and unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

- 3.9 In December 2023, the new Child and Family Social Work Apprenticeship Programme was launched, which will commence in September 2024. An apprenticeship pathway into social work gives an opportunity to widen the corridor for those embarking on education and retraining, and as the council wants our workforce to represent the community we serve, people with protected characteristics will be prioritised for this opportunity.
- 3.10 In working towards the outcome of young people being safe and secure, the 2022-23 annual report for the Barnet Safeguarding Children's Partnership<sup>viii</sup> was approved by the Leadership Forum in December 2023. The report went to Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee in January 2024. The Independent Scrutineers undertook their scrutiny visit in January 2024 to scrutinise the multi-agency partnership arrangements, which included the Independent Scrutineers meeting with a panel of young people for the first time.
- 3.11 The draft Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA)<sup>ix</sup>, completed on behalf of the Safer Communities Partnership, was presented to the Safer Communities Partnership Board on 24 November 2023<sup>x</sup>. A draft Serious Violence Strategy<sup>xi</sup> was developed from the SNA findings and agreed by Cabinet on 16 January 2024.

## Performance

- 3.12 Indicators for this theme are available annually in line with the academic year. The 2022/23 data became available during Q3

2023/24 and is reported here in arrears. Performance mostly shows an improvement on 2021/22.

### Performing well

- 70.4% of children reached a Good Level of Development at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage in 2022/23 – *an improvement on 64.7% in 2021/22*
- Barnet achieved a Progress 8 score of 0.64% (meaning pupils made above average progress between primary school and the end of GCSEs in eight subject areas) – *an improvement on 0.49% in 2021/22*
- Barnet achieved an Attainment 8 score of 57.0% - *the fourth best performing local authority in the country*

### Performing less well

- 95.3% of schools achieved Ofsted rating of Good or Outstanding – *less than 98.4% in 2021/22 but above the national average of 89%*

### Risks

- 3.13 Risks for this theme covering children and young people (e.g. education and wellbeing) are being managed effectively. However, two risks are scored at a high-level (15+) – school budget pressures and strain on special educational needs transport. These risks can be found in Appendix E.

## 4. Living well

- 4.1 This theme focuses on positive outcomes for disabled residents and older people; ensuring residents can lead fit and active lives; and working to eradicate domestic abuse and violence against women and girls. This includes working to achieve more disabled people being employed by the council and partners; more older and disabled people, including with mental health needs and learning disabilities, can stay living in their own homes; residents experience high quality, joined-up health and care services, with positive outcomes; residents have a positive experience of social care services; there is social inclusion and representative access of older residents and those with disabilities in council and other services; residents can access and enjoy more opportunities for physical activity and lead more active lives; and working to eradicate domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.**
- 4.2 In Q3, the Disability Employment Co-ordinator continued to establish partnerships including one with Barnet Mencap through collaboration on a weekly job club. Commencing in December 2023 the 12 week programme covers aspects of job readiness such as how to write a CV and how to prepare for an interview. Recent feedback from resident engagement illustrated that this was a helpful forum for adults with disabilities to access employment related support from BOOST, Mencap and their peers.
- 4.3 The inaugural disability employment forum was held in October 2023 and was attended by representatives from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP), Inclusion Barnet, Prevention and Wellbeing Service, Your Choice and Mencap. The group identified

common blockages in Barnet to employing people with disabilities, with the main one being a lack of knowledge among employers about access to work and support to claim.

- 4.4 As part of the Autism Action Plan, following the launch of the Oliver McGowan training<sup>2</sup> in September 2023, the Tier 1 module became available on the council's learning portal and has been completed by 83 people. Preparations continued with the North Central London Integrated Care Board (NCL ICB) who will facilitate Tier 2 training in Q4.
- 4.5 A big factor in keeping people well and healthy is living in a home that suits them. The tender for the new accommodation and support service was issued in Q2 and the evaluation of bids continued in Q3 with completion due in January 2024 and mobilisation in Q4. The first meeting of the new Social Care and Housing Strategy Group agreed the terms of reference and interface with the Homes and Development Board. Activities and priorities are being developed for meetings of the group from Q4.
- 4.6 One of the ambitions of this theme is to ensure that health, social care and associated services are more joined up in order to improve the access, experience and outcomes for residents. In Q3, the Dementia Strategy<sup>xii</sup> action plan was completed alongside partners as part of the Ageing Well workstream of the Barnet Borough Partnership. Some elements of the plan have already been completed including improved information and advice via leaflets and updates to the council and GP websites. The service also continued to work closely with Central London Community Healthcare Trust to ensure that community healthcare is working

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<sup>2</sup> The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism is a standardised training package to ensure that staff across health and social care develop

a common understanding of key issues and that consistent language is used across health and care organisations.

well for people with dementia and their carers. Training is being delivered to practice staff, GPs and to acute staff.

- 4.7 On 10 October 2023 the Mental Health Charter was launched to coincide with World Mental Health Day, and during Q3 the service started collecting signatures and pledges from a wide range of organisations. Performance of the advocacy contract improved in Q3. Waiting lists have reduced and there are plans for further recruitment and interventions to continue to boost the service. The contract is monitored closely by the Care Quality team.
- 4.8 Barnet is working to become a Dementia Friendly Borough and during Q3, around 1,400 people attended Understanding Dementia training. In collaboration with key partners, a number of video case studies about dementia have been released marking the launch of the Dementia Strategy, and Dementia Friendly signage has been included in Chipping Barnet refurbishment and Dementia Friendly programming now forms part of the Creative Communities programme in libraries.
- 4.9 Following the launch of the Engagement and Co-production Strategy<sup>xiii</sup> and Charter for Adult Social Care in November 2022, the Adult Social Care service have introduced a feedback process for residents who have had an assessment or review. Over 100 surveys have been completed since they were introduced in 2023 and themes across different disciplines have been identified and used alongside other information to understand broader themes across resident experience.
- 4.10 The Fit and Active Barnet (FAB) implementation plan continued to be delivered with and by partners in Q3. The Q3 target for leisure centres visits of 394,625 was missed by 55,403. The targets are split equally across all four quarters but Q3 is the quietest in terms of footfall. This reduction in usage is expected to be made up in Q4

which is traditionally the busiest for leisure centres. Visits have increased by 11% compared to the same quarter last year and the end of year target is expected to be met.

- 4.11 As part of this theme, there is also an ambition to, in the long term, eradicate domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG) and make Barnet a borough where everyone can live free from domestic abuse and violence. In Q3, the service supported the United Nations' 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence which is a global awareness raising campaign that takes place every year between 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) and 10 December (Human Rights Day) to call for an end and to prevent VAWG.

#### **Performance**

- 4.12 Performing reasonably well based on the two indicators reported quarterly for this theme.

#### **Performing well**

- 2 libraries accredited as Dementia friendly (year to date) - *new measure*

#### **Performing less well**

- 339,222 visits across Barnet leisure facilities – *slightly below the quarterly target but in line with previous Q3 performance*

#### **Risks**

- 4.13 Risks for this theme covering disabled residents and older people (e.g. safeguarding, mental health) are being managed effectively. However, two risks in Adult Social Care are scored at a high-level (15+) – shortage of community equipment and triage and allocation. These risks can be found in Appendix E.



## 5. Safe, attractive neighbourhoods and town centres

**5.1 This theme focuses on the outcomes of town centres having good business health and vitality; consistent, high standards of cleanliness and care across all parts of the borough; and residents feeling safe.**

5.2 Town centres work in Q3 focused on the continuation of public realm improvements and creative placemaking started in Q1. As well as a variety of ongoing programmes of development and events, the service launched a temporary mural as part of the 100 years of Station Road celebratory programme, piloted a public space area for community events and activities at the Golders Green Crescent junction and secured a further £330,000 of Green and Resilient Funding secured from the Mayor of London, for street trees and sustainable drainage systems, bringing the total grant awarded to £500,000.

5.3 To ensure high standards of cleanliness and care across the borough, the residential street cleansing target of visiting all roads four times a year is on track. In Q1 and Q2, all roads were visited once (and cleansed to at least a Grade B). Towards the end of Q3, the schedule got slightly delayed due to the extra diverted resource required to remove consistent leaf fall (rather than the usual concentrated fall of leaves seen when temperatures dip below freezing). However, any roads missed in Q3 will be visited twice in Q4 to maintain performance against the target. The street cleansing service is also trialling software to improve the efficiency of record management, raising work orders and managing workflow.

5.4 During Q3, 100% of scheduled skips were delivered as planned. Data analysis of the usage of the service has been carried out and a report produced for the Portfolio Holder for Environment and

Climate Change. This indicates reducing levels of usage over time, which may be due to residents having made good early use of the service to deposit unwanted items. Further communications are underway, including on social media, to remind residents of the service available to them and encourage usage, including for the delivery of items suitable for reuse through the service. The next steps in Q4 include a trial to obtain demographic data capture in relation to the council's wider Tackling the Gaps initiative.

5.5 To support high standards of care, the Highways service continued to demonstrate strong performance in effectively managing and addressing all categories of defects throughout the network in Q3. The yearly inspection schedule has achieved 100% performance for completing all planned monthly inspections and for the second quarter, the service exceeded expectations for remedial works, achieving 97.6% against a 90% target. The Highway Investment Strategy has been developed and the outcomes are being built into the council's MTFs budget setting exercise. The strategy sets out the current network position with particular reference to footways and carriageways and identifies a range of investment options for consideration. These options will be assessed by the council management team and Cabinet Members and the intention is to report to Cabinet and Full Council in February 2024.

5.6 The latest Safer Communities Partnership Board (SCPB) took place on 24 November 2023 where a performance update<sup>xiv</sup> of all activities and statistics of the Community Safety Team, police and partners was presented. The report documented the work to date towards the priorities of the Community Safety Strategy<sup>xv</sup> and highlighted successes of projects and exercises carried out such as the Community Safety Hubs programme, ward walks and the new CCTV control room at Colindale which went live at the end of Q2.

## Performance

5.7 Good performance for Highways and Street Scene services with all indicators meeting the quarterly target or showing an improvement on Q2.

### Performing well

- 100% of highways defects passed to the contractor for repair within 10 days of being notified or identified through cyclical inspection
- 97.6% of highways defects repaired within prescribed timescale – *exceeding the 90% target*
- 100% of residential roads visited once per quarter met cleanliness Grade B or above post inspection
- 100% of scheduled community skips delivered
- 96% of fly tips collected within agreed times – *new measure*
- 53% of complaints upheld for Street Scene services – *better than 61% in Q2*

## Risks

5.8 Risks for this theme covering community safety, highways and street scene services (e.g. operations such as CCTV, contractual arrangements, resourcing and processes) are being managed effectively. However, one risk is scored at a high-level (15+) – response to emergency or incident. This risk can be found in Appendix E.

## 6. Quality, affordable homes

**6.1 The outcomes for this theme are that residents experience regeneration that benefits local communities and improves wellbeing; there is increased supply of new homes in the borough including social rented homes; all council homes are safe, warm and sustainable; private sector licensing schemes are effective and improve quality in the private rented sector; and nobody is sleeping rough.**

6.2 The development of Brent Cross Town continued in Q3, the highlight being the opening of Brent Cross West station in December 2023 and work continued on site. In November 2023, the Planning Committee approved the planning application for Phases 5/6 of the West Hendon regeneration scheme which will add a further 350 units to the scheme (of which 50% will be affordable housing) and a new purpose built health centre.

6.3 Following the bid made in Q2 by the West London Alliance to the Department for Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT) for a 5G innovation region, the council was advised that the bid had not been successful. However, Brunel University (who was a partner in the DSIT bid) have approached the council to collaborate on an EU funded Horizon bid for 5G, which will be worth £18 million. In terms of deployment of the new CCTV Fibre Broadband network, 119 circuits have been deployed with seven outstanding due to either UKPN power faults or CCTV columns requiring installing. It is expected that remaining circuits will be completed by end of March 2024.

6.4 The first 142 homes that the council have acquired in the Colindale Gardens scheme were handed over in October 2023 and the first residents have moved into the properties. Work has continued in

Q3 in preparation for the handover of the remaining 107 homes which took place on 18 January 2024.

6.5 In December 2023, Planning Committee approved the application by Opendoor Homes for the development of 56 new homes at Moxon Street and Whitings Road, including 11 homes for social rent and 18 shared ownership homes. These schemes will contribute towards the commitment to deliver 1,000 new affordable council homes by 2026, taking the total either delivered or agreed at Planning Committee to date to 511.

6.6 Two out of the three performance targets relating to compliance checks were met for Q3, with the third indicator (% of tenanted council properties compliant with the Decent Homes Standard) showing an improvement on Q1 and Q2, but just missing the target (99.8% against a target of 100%). This equates to 16 properties, which currently do not meet the standard. These are all in progress with appointments booked.

6.7 The £52m fire safety programme for council housing stock is complete, except for a small number of properties where access has been difficult, but these are not putting the buildings at risk. Barnet Homes are now delivering the low/medium rise property programme, which has been rephased due to some delays in secondary legislation relating to the Building Safety Act meaning the required approach to leaseholder consultation for relevant works has been unclear. The initial focus of the programme has been on undertaking external wall assessments on blocks which are between 11-18m in height and on completing fire safety improvements to hostels in the stock.

6.8 Following the procurement of a comprehensive online licensing system for the planned selective licensing schemes in Q2, installation was delayed by the contractor but will take place in

February 2024 following the successful completion of testing. As a result, it has not been possible for the designation for the first Selective Licensing Scheme to be signed as this cannot take place without such a system. The consultation for a privately rented property licensing scheme has been reviewed and the findings were approved by Cabinet in December 2023. An application will be made to the Secretary of State for scheme two following at least 12 successful months of phase 1 of selective licensing in Colindale North, Colindale South and Burnt Oak.

6.9 Homelessness and rough sleeping remain challenges for Barnet, as in all London boroughs, but the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy<sup>xvi</sup>, approved at Cabinet on 18 July 2023, sets out how over the coming five years the council will prevent homelessness and support those who face or are at risk of becoming homeless. Several new performance indicators have been introduced to monitor the effectiveness of the initiatives being implemented and the number of homelessness preventions year to date to the end of Q3 was 1028 against a target of 712.

6.10 The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) was triggered from 29 November to 4 December 2023. During this period, 18 rough sleepers were offered emergency accommodation, of which three did not take up the accommodation. At present, there are four individuals accommodated under SWEP who remain in temporary accommodation – three of whom are verified rough sleepers who continue to be accommodated on a discretionary basis, and one who is accommodated as there is reason to believe that they have priority need for housing assistance. In addition, Barnet Homes' latest street count was conducted on the night of 23 November 2023. Through the count, nine people were identified as sleeping rough in the borough, compared to 13 rough sleepers identified at the previous count in September 2023.

## Performance

6.11 Mixed performance for this theme, with most indicators showing an improvement on the baseline whilst a couple performed less well.

### Performing well

- 100% of tenanted council properties with current Landlord Gas Safety Record
- 100% of tenanted council properties had fire risk assessment where required
- 5.3% of repeat homelessness applications (year to date) – *better than 7.5% in Q2*
- 1028 homelessness preventions (year to date) – *better than 712 target*

### Performing less well

- 99.8% of tenanted council properties compliant with decent home standard – *slightly below target of 100%*
- 8.7% of rough sleepers returned to the streets – *higher than 4% in Q2*

## Risks

6.12 Risks for this theme covering regeneration and housing (e.g. new developments, affordable housing, homelessness) are being managed effectively. However, three risks in housing are scored at a high-level (15+) – unsafe/unhealthy living accommodation in private rented sector; increased demand for temporary accommodation; and health safety and compliance issues. These risks can be found in Appendix E.

## 7. Borough of fun

**7.1 This theme focuses on the outcomes of residents pulling together to improve local areas; residents think the council is making the local area a better place to live; achieving London borough of culture status – with residents experiencing a fun borough; and delivering an increased quality and investment in sports facilities, libraries and other public spaces.**

7.2 Key to achieving these outcomes is ensuring there is provision of appropriate spaces, supportive infrastructure and robust structure (policies and strategies) to facilitate opportunities to have fun.

7.3 Development of the draft Community Assets Strategy continued in Q3, with the focus on working with the Estates team to evaluate financial impact of the proposed Community Asset Strategy, as well as devising ways to track the benefits of the work delivered within those assets; the findings will be included in the Social Value/ Community Investment report in summer 2024.

7.4 Implementation of the Civic and Community Events Policy<sup>xvii</sup> continued in Q3, enabling community groups to apply for grant funding through the council in order to put on community events with the aim of fostering community cohesion and celebrating the culture of our borough. In Q3, 40 events took place celebrating occasions such as Silver Week, Black History Month and Winter Festivals.

7.5 The Events in Parks Policy<sup>xviii</sup> was approved at Environment Committee in March 2023 and continued to be implemented during Q3. 60 events took place in parks during Q3, with estimated attendance of over 58,000 people. The review of the process for all types of events across the council, (with the aim of making holding

an event in Barnet easier while upholding the required safety standards) continued in Q3 to fully consider all recommendations.

7.6 Good progress on the outcome of achieving London's Borough of Culture status – with residents experiencing a fun borough - has been made in Q3. The Borough of Culture bid for 2027 was submitted to the GLA at the end of November 2023 and an interview with the GLA to assess the bid is taking place on 7 February 2024. The draft Culture Strategy has been finalised and is due to be published and launched by June 2024. Barnet Legends public art and cultural trail which commemorates cultural figures in the borough has been initiated and will be launched in June 2024 and planning work has begun for the London Festival of Architecture which will celebrate 20 years this year. Work with the Parks and Open Spaces team on a built project in Copthall will take place as well as a community grants and libraries programme.

7.7 The council has made a commitment to create and provide new and enhanced opportunities for all residents to have an opportunity to get involved in the many great sports and physical activities across the borough. Key activities in Q3 to achieve this included a series of consultation activities throughout November and December 2023 on the proposed development of West Hendon Playing Fields. The consultation closed on 17 December 2023, and the results are being collated, with a summary of feedback available on the dedicated engagement platform (CommonPlace).

7.8 Work commenced during Q3 on the council's first fully inclusive and accessible play area designed to support the needs of all users and ages, located in Victoria Recreation Ground (New Barnet) called Fair Play Barnet. The new play area, considered to be the first of the kind in the country, opened in February 2024.

- 7.9 A new playground was completed in Barnet Playing Fields. The playground is funded from Section 106 monies from nearby developments and was designed through a public consultation exercise.
- 7.10 In addition, a report which detailed the Outline Business Case to redevelop Finchley Lido Leisure Centre was approved by Cabinet in November 2023.

### **Performance**

- 7.11 Good performance for this theme, with indicators showing an improvement on Q2.

### **Performing well \***

- 60 events in parks organised by charities or community groups – *better than 10 in Q2*
- 518 events and activities delivered at libraries – *better than 320 in Q2*
- In Q3, there were no planned events in parks organised by the council, jointly with the Mayor or Leader, by a commercial organisation or privately

*\* Note that the number of events fluctuates depending on the time of year*

### **Risks**

- 7.12 There are currently no strategic or service risks for this theme.

### 8. Journey to net zero

- 8.1 The outcomes for this theme are that Barnet council operations is net zero by 2030; Barnet borough becomes net zero by 2042, with a reduction in carbon emissions in the short term; residents and businesses benefit from green opportunities, skills and employment; and there is an increase in greener travel.**
- 8.2 In Q3, the work to update the council's carbon baseline for 2022-23 was completed and confirmed an overall reduction in carbon emissions. Since the initial baseline in 2018-19, the council has reduced Scope 1-3 emissions (excluding Supply Chain) by around 29%, with two thirds of this originating from electricity emissions. An annual sustainability report is being drafted which will provide a breakdown of this reduction and is expected to be completed in Q1 2024/25. Work is also ongoing to further analyse emissions to identify areas where biggest impact on reductions can be made going forward.
- 8.3 Progress in delivering the actions from the Sustainability Action Plan continued through the individual themes to reach net zero as an organisation. Notably, in the Built Environment theme, retrofit programmes have continued to progress for both residential and non-residential buildings.
- 8.4 The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme has continued in Q3: following installation, heat pumps are live at four sites for PSDS1, with the expected handover of the scheme due in Q4. PSDS3a has a planned project completion date for all sites in March 2024, with a programme of works provided by the contractor, outlining works completion for each site. An application for PSDS3c has been submitted for the next phase of the programme, comprising of 10 schools, with the outcome expected in March 2024.
- 8.5 In working towards becoming a vocal climate leader, the launch of the next phase of activities in response to the Citizens' Assembly recommendations took place on 29 November 2023 with attendance from participants, Councillors and community representatives. The next phase of delivering recommendations is a community response through Action Groups: working with community groups and residents a training session for all those involved is planned for 17 January 2024, with Citizens' UK confirmed as being involved and supporting with capacity building across the Action Groups.
- 8.6 The BarNET ZERO Challenge launched in December 2023 in partnership with Middlesex University with sponsorship from Natwest, Microsoft UK and Hammerson. This is an innovation challenge for anyone who works, lives or studies in Barnet to win up to £5,000 seed funding for an idea that supports the delivery of recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly. The challenge received over 100 initial ideas and the next phase will see participants develop these into deliverable proposals before panellists review and shortlist finalists, before opening up for public voting.
- 8.7 The Net Zero Decision Making Tool continued to be rolled-out across the organisation, further embedding sustainability within the council's decision-making process. Additionally, the tool has been promoted through the Microsoft Innovation and Collaboration Forum with 58 other councils expressing interest and signing up to discuss the shareability of the LBBs Power App and its distribution wider.
- 8.8 As part of becoming a net zero borough, the council wants to minimise the production of waste across the borough and enable all residents to have access to sustainable waste disposal choices. A

Reuse Behaviour Change project in collaboration with the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) launched in January 2024.

- 8.9 Following the approval of the council's Reduction and Recycling Plan 2023-25<sup>xix</sup> by Cabinet on 5 September 2023, the plan was submitted to the GLA in Q2, and in Q3, a range of actions to support waste reduction, recycling, reuse and repair have begun to be implemented. A Flats Behaviour Change Trial launched on 27 November 2023 to improve recycling and implement food waste collections at four flats sites and will run for 16 weeks. Also, work has commenced on the development of an online map to display locations across the borough for reuse, repair, furniture recycling and water refills.
- 8.10 In working towards the outcome of residents and businesses benefitting from green opportunities, skills and employment, in Q3, work continued on the BarNET ZERO Business Pledge, which is to be launched in Q4. This is a way for businesses, charities and community organisations to make a public commitment to do their part in tackling climate change and becoming more sustainable. A Sustainability Business Support Programme pilot in North Finchley was approved and will run from April 2024 to March 2025. It has a target of supporting up to 50 small and medium sized enterprises/businesses (SMEs) with one-to-one visits from experts who will provide audits/carbon reduction action plans focused on individual business operations.
- 8.11 In supporting the decarbonisation of the transport network, in October 2023, a Transport Decarbonisation Study was completed in partnership with City Science to set a decarbonisation pathway for the borough and support the identification of priorities within the forthcoming Transport Strategy to enable us to deliver net zero ambitions. To encourage greener travel choices, a programme of

work to increase electric vehicle charge points across Barnet continues.

- 8.12 In Q3, the Air Quality Action Plan 2023-28<sup>xx</sup> has been finalised and was published at the end of January 2024 (to coincide with Clean Air Night). The plan outlines the actions that the council will deliver between 2023 and 2028 to reduce concentrations of pollution, and exposure to pollution; thereby positively impacting on the health and quality of life of residents and visitors to the borough.

### Performance

- 8.13 Good performance for this theme, with both indicators achieving the quarterly target.

### Performing well

- 473,902 kilowatt hours of charging undertaken across the network – *better than 205,841 kilowatt hours in Q3 2022/23*
- Barnet's placed based emissions for 2021 were published by the Greater London Authority in Q3 2023/24 and were 1,127 kilo tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions – *better than 1,215 kilo tonnes in 2019*

### Risks

- 8.14 Risks for this theme covering sustainability and net zero (e.g. sustainability strategy, public sector decarbonisation scheme) are being managed effectively. However, one risk is scored at a high-level (15+) – environmental sustainability. This risk can be found in Appendix E.



## 9. Enhancing the local environment

**9.1 There is one overarching outcome for this theme which is to make neighbourhoods clean and green. To deliver this, the key activities are to deliver a range of flood risk improvements such as the annual programme of gulley cleanses, and to move to shift to a circular economy – where people reuse, recycle and repair as many things as possible.**

9.2 In Q3, the Highways Gulley Programme continued to progress to schedule, with an average completion rate of 99%, well above the annual target of 90% for scheduled gulley cleaning. As at the end of Q3, out of the 22,348 gulley cleans planned for the year, 16,948 have been successfully completed, representing 72% of the gulley cleans year to date. The Highways team is working closely in partnership with the third-party contractor TKJV to proactively manage any potential dips in performance, thereby ensuring that monthly targets are consistently met and any challenges are effectively addressed.

9.3 Following the approval of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2023-29)<sup>xxi</sup> by Cabinet on 5 September 2023, a range of flood risk preventions have been delivered during Q3, such as the preparation of reports for Cabinet on the Sustainable Drainage Systems Strategy and Land Drainage Bylaws Proposals, which were approved at Cabinet on 16 January 2024 and are now being implemented; topographical, traffic and utility surveys were carried out at The Greenway and under the Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Programme, at the first scheme, Muswell Hill Critical Drainage Area, construction progressed and completion is now expected to take place in March 2024 due to delays caused by difficult weather conditions during the winter months.

9.4 To work towards the shift to a circular economy, in Q3, work has continued to design a Reuse Behaviour Change project in collaboration with the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) which launched in January 2024.

9.5 The service is also reviewing current policy on the size of waste bins provided to households, to assess potential benefits for waste reduction and increased recycling participation.

### Performance

9.6 Performance was mostly good, with two indicators showing an improvement on the 2022/23 baseline and one indicator narrowly missing its target.

### Performing well

- 1,135 trees planted up to end of Q3 2023/24 – *better than 635 in Q3 2022/23*
- 100% of task orders for gulley, catchpit and soakaway cleaning completed on time – *better than 90% in 2022/23*

### Performing less well

- 99% compliance with managing performance for the annual gully cleansing programme – *slightly below the 100% target but better than 90% in 2022/23*

### Risks

9.7 Risks for this theme covering local environment (e.g. flooding) are being managed effectively – none are scored at a high-level (15+).

## 10. Enhancing green spaces

**10.1 This theme focuses on the outcomes of having improved quality and provision of parks and open spaces, playing fields, woodlands and small green spaces; Barnet being an increasingly biodiverse borough, with diverse fauna and species; and the council planting 1000 trees a year, with more trees in areas with lower canopy cover.**

10.2 Key to delivering these outcomes is the development of a new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and a Nature Recovery Strategy. In Q3, a stakeholder engagement plan was drafted with Land Use Consultants (LUC), who were appointed in Q1 to develop these strategies, with engagement activities anticipated to commence from January 2024.

10.3 LUC have also begun to undertake assessments of the borough's Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC). Further site assessments will be conducted in Spring 2024. Progress has commenced with the completion of 12 surveys completed so far.

10.4 There is also an ambition to create an award-winning strategic tree planting programme that aims to tackle inequalities and supports climate resilience. Implementation of the new Tree Policy<sup>xxii</sup> continued in Q3, and a total of £624k external funding awarded via the Forestry Commission and DEFRA (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs) to support delivery of the council's Tree Planting Programme. In Q3, a total of 1135 trees were planted against the annual target of 1000. Additional trees were planted at the regeneration sites in Ballards Lane and Mill Hill Broadway, Cherry Tree Woods and on behalf of the Friends of Halliwick Park. In addition, 82 residents took up the opportunity to have a tree planted at individual residential sites as part of the Trees for Streets

sponsorship, where residents can request and sponsor a tree in the local area.

### Performance

10.5 No indicators were due to report in Q3 for this theme.

### Risks

10.6 There are currently no strategic or service risks for this theme.

### 11. Community participation

#### 11.1 There are two outcomes for the Community participation theme – that residents feel informed about what the council does; and the council acts on the concerns of local residents and involves them in decision-making.

11.2 To help residents feel informed about what the council does, improving transparency is a key objective. In Q3, the health check against the Transparency Code and a review of published data were completed. The findings were that all statutory data sets were published, but there were some gaps identified in a small number of non-statutory data sets. These are being updated by relevant services. Processes have been implemented to ensure ongoing compliance with the council's commitment to transparency, including proactive monitoring of published data using a dedicated dashboard. This work has enabled 29% of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to be answered with published data in Q2, as well as enabling residents to self-serve and access required data directly, by-passing the need to submit an FOI request.

11.3 Listening to residents is also an area of focus and following the Leader Listens events which have taken place, an annual report has been completed which sets out an overview of the successes and learnings from the previous year of Leader Listens, as well as recommendations to improve the programme. This was discussed with the Leader in January 2024 and a new programme of sessions will be scheduled which are likely to have a stronger synergy with community engagement and community cohesion work.

11.4 To help achieve the outcome of acting on residents' concerns and involving residents in decision-making, the council has adopted new governance arrangements, with additional ways that residents can become involved in meetings, at Annual Council on 23 May 2023.

Following the enablement of the hybrid meeting functionality at Hendon Town Hall in Q2, 50 participants (council staff and partners) joined meetings remotely in Q3; subject to proof of concept and stability of hybrid meeting system, the intention is to roll out remote participation to residents in Q4.

#### Performance

11.5 There was one indicator reporting in Q3 for this theme.

- 29.0% of FOI requests answered with published data – consistent with performance for Q1 and Q2 2023/24 (28.0% and 29.0% respectively)

#### Risks

11.6 Risks for this theme covering community participation (e.g. council meetings) are being managed effectively – none are scored at a high-level (15+).

## 12. Working in partnership

**12.1 The aim of this theme is to further develop as an organisation that builds relationships, empowers our partnerships and acts as an enabler of discussion and change achieving the outcomes of partners telling us they feel like valued equals in their relationship with the council; and the voluntary and community sector flourishing and being seen as a beacon for London/the UK.**

12.2 The Barnet Together Alliance, established in 2018, is a long-term, cross-sector partnership with the council, which increases development and capacity building support for Barnet's vital Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector, enabling the borough to strengthen, innovate and thrive. The aim of the partnership is to help create and deliver more borough-wide services and opportunities, based on real partnership and active collaboration. Work continued in Q3 to engage with partners and support their work.

12.3 In Q3, the council worked in partnership with New Citizens Gateway to provide online training for partners from across the sector on issues related to asylum seekers and refugees. This training enabled partners to understand the unique challenges faced by asylum seekers, refugees and services and to identify how we can work together to support them. Colleagues are looking at how we can further this training to other partners and across the council to ensure a borough-wide partnership based response to responding to challenges faced by those seeking sanctuary in Barnet.

12.4 The Barnet Partnership Board is a strategic partnership that brings together public, private and voluntary organisations in the borough. It acts as a steering committee to review public services, monitor

the delivery of the council's corporate plan and to share resources, knowledge, best practice, challenges, and opportunities. In Q3, a review of the Barnet Partnership Board commenced to ensure it can facilitate effective partnership working and collaboration. An options paper has been produced assessing the benefits of moving to a Local Strategic Partnership. Proposals include producing a refreshed terms of reference, updating the format of the meeting to take place in-person and quarterly, expand to additional members and co-produce an updated forward plan with partners on themes that are best suited to collaborative working. An assessment is currently underway and a decision will be approved by the next Partnership Board meeting scheduled for the 7 March 2024.

### Performance

12.5 No indicators were due to report in Q3 for this theme.

### Risks

12.6 Risks for this theme covering partnership working are being managed effectively – none are scored at a high-level (15+).

## 13. Neighbourhood working

### 13.1 This theme focuses on the outcome of residents and community groups telling us they are being listened to and encouraged to participate in shaping their communities.

13.2 To work towards this, activities have included the Grahame Park pathfinder project (part of the transformation programme and Community Participation Strategy) which is being used as a concept piece to create an established Neighbourhood Working model that can be deployed throughout the borough. Following on from activity in Q1 and Q2, the Reimagine the Concourse engagement project continued in Q3, with two vacant commercial units identified to be used as a cafe and a service hub to provide a base from which the council and its partners can provide face-to-face access to services, including housing, the police and benefits advice. Work is underway to progress the design and conversion of the units.

13.3 The Estate has also been an early site for the Met's adoption of the "Clear Hold Build" initiative, which is designed to Clear an area of criminal activity through intensive policing, Hold the position by working with partners to prevent other criminals from filling the void, and Build community resilience to reduce the risk of future criminal activity. The Clear phase, called Operation Dakota, ran to the end of December 2023 and resulted in over 300 arrests, relating to over 500 individual offences, as well as the seizure of Class A drugs and numerous offensive weapons.

13.4 The Grahame Park Co-ordinating Group (GPCG) has also been involved in work to review and revise the Social Life framework and develop a youth strategy in conjunction with Common Vision – both commissioned through the council's regeneration partner, Notting Hill Genesis (NHG). These will help to ensure that the council and

other partners, are all working towards the same goals and needs of the community, and can collectively evidence what has happened and the outcomes that are being delivered.

13.5 The GPCG is a key stakeholder for the revised framework being developed by Social Life, and the youth strategy being developed by Common Vision – both commenced through the council's partner Notting Hill Genesis (NHG). These will help to ensure that the council and other various partners, are all working towards the same goals and needs of the community, and be able to collectively evidence what has happened and if possible, the outputs delivered.

13.6 Neighbourly Lab provided a final report of the East Barnet project. It provided some valuable insight into the range of diversity of community assets that are used and valued by residents. It also made some clear recommendations, and the team are considering how to take these forward. The community mapping undertaken for this project provided a comprehensive picture of the assets in the ward. It would be useful to replicate this exercise in other wards to help develop the council's understanding and insight.

### Performance

13.7 No indicators were due to report in Q3 for this theme.

### Risks

13.8 Risks for this theme covering neighbourhood working are being managed effectively – none are scored at a high-level (15+).

## 14. Improving access to services

### 14.1 This theme focuses on the outcome of residents finding it easy to access council services.

14.2 To deliver this, good progress has continued in Q3 on delivering the Resident Experience programme with a wide range of improvements and enhancements to technology and processes.

14.3 The second phase of improvements to the contact centre platform went live in Q3. This allows for routing of repeat callers to proactively manage where issues are not resolved first time. Functionality has also been added to proactively route residents requiring extra support and the ability for customer service advisors to proactively identify signposting for digital inclusion and other initiatives. The impact of this is evident in the customer satisfaction scores: satisfaction with the telephony experience remaining high at 93.1% (just below the Q2 result of 93.4%).

14.4 A continuous improvement board has been established with the council's strategic contractor Capita to manage Revenues and Benefits improvements to better monitor and track impact. Contacts for Revenues and Benefits services are among the highest received, hence the focus on improvement in these areas.

14.5 In Q3, development started on new designs for the council's website. These were designed in consultation with residents and services to provide more flexibility and visual layouts. It is currently planned these will be live by end of March 2024. This includes an upgrade to website infrastructure. Work continues with individual service areas to review content to ensure it is accessible to all residents and written in plain English. Additional capacity is being added to the council's web team to accelerate this work. This has

been evidenced by a 10.6 percentage point increase in web-satisfaction between October (68.0%) and December (78.6%) 2023.

14.6 The re-design of the web has been tested and signed off and will be rolling out over the coming months. This will enable more visual, commercial and flexible content to be added to improve the resident experience and begin to rationalise the number of different websites that residents engage with. Work continued to support Planning with the roll out of Digital Planning service, with the design phase completed and implementation of changes beginning over Q4. Barnet also held a successful get online week in October 2023 running 25 events to support residents get online and raise awareness of the support available.

14.7 Co-location of teams has begun as a pilot covering BOOST, Customer Services and the Financial Support team. Initially they will co-locate at Burnt Oak and Chipping Barnet to complement the existing outreach. The teams are now capturing demand data in a more consistent way so they can signpost residents to the right support, where residents need more in-depth support across services. There has been an initial focus on reducing failure demand. In addition, a review of the space in Colindale, working with Housing Options is underway to improve the resident experience when visiting the Colindale offices.

### Performance

14.8 Mostly good performance for this theme, with one indicator performing less well in Q3.

### Performing well

- 93.1% of residents who contacted the council satisfied with telephony experience – better than 92.0% in 2022/23 and above 89.0% target

- 72.5% of residents satisfied with service on the web – *better than 66.1% in 2022/23 and above 65.0% target*
- 76.9% of cases resolved by self-service – *better than 69.0% in 2022/23 and above 50.0% target*

#### **Performing less well**

- The accessibility performance score on the web was 71.6% - *a decrease from 88.2% in Q2. A website re-platform took place during Q3 which caused the software that measures this indicator to not recognise the parameters that had previously been put in place, reducing the score considerably. This was compounded by a code change in Google Translate which affected every page on the website.*

#### **Risks**

14.9 Risks for this theme covering accessibility are being managed effectively. However, two cyber security risks are scored at a high-level (15+). These risks can be found in Appendix E.

## 15. Financially responsible

**15.1 This theme focuses on the outcome of the council being able to balance our budget without cutting services, for which the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and budget monitoring are critical to delivery.**

- 15.2 The Q3 2023-24 Chief Finance Officer report<sup>xxiii</sup> was presented to Cabinet on 6 February 2024 and the recommendations within it were approved or noted as required.
- 15.3 The next updates from Finance on 2023-24 monitoring will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2024 (2023-24 Financial Outturn Monitoring) and Cabinet on 18 June 2024 (2023-24 Revenue and Capital Outturn).
- 15.4 The proposed budget for 2024/25 and the council's MTFS for 2024-30 was presented to Cabinet on 6 February 2024. It showed a balanced position for 2024/25 with no use of reserves and was approved by Full Council on 27 February 2024.
- 15.5 Work with peers and London Councils to lobby government for more support is ongoing. To highlight the serious financial challenges currently facing London local government, London Councils, on behalf of all 32 London Boroughs and the City of London, have written to the representations to the Government to set out our priorities for the forthcoming Spring Budget.

### Performance

- 15.6 No indicators were due to report in Q3 for this theme.

### Risks

- 15.7 Risks for this theme covering balanced budget and MTFS are being managed effectively. However, six risks are scored at a high-level

(15+) – increased overspend to meet (ASC) statutory duties; audit actions not implemented; variations to budget for parking; affordability of capital programme; affordability of Brent Cross West; and revenue overspend. These risks can be found in Appendix E.



## 16. A great place to work

**16.1 This theme has three outcomes: that staff feel valued; staff tell us they feel proud to be part of Team Barnet; and the council is a truly inclusive employer (including in the way it recruits and develops staff). The ambition is for the council to be an employer of choice, that attracts the best staff and people feel proud to work for the council.**

16.2 In Q3, development and promotion of the employee brand continued. Work also continued on the Conditions for Success project in Children’s Services, which aims to improve the working environment and working practices for staff in the directorate. In Q3, engagement with key stakeholders across the organisation and different service areas has taken place to establish the day-to-day issues faced by staff which may be preventing them to easily enter the building and to sit down to do their job. A log of identified issues has been compiled which have been assigned to key areas of the business to work towards a solution.

16.3 This process has also flagged some potential opportunities to make the building more compliant and user friendly for EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) requirements; the list of issues is being worked through with Facilities Management, who are planning to undertake a review of the building to flag up any other requirements.

16.4 The EDI action plan, which was developed in 2022-23, continued to be implemented in Q3 and monthly monitoring is in place via the EDI Steering Group. The action plan was audited in Q3 and confirmed that the Steering Group was established and was being used as a positive mode of reviewing the actions and progress of the action plan.

16.5 Finally, to support staff in maintaining a good work life balance and in looking after their physical wellbeing and mental health, the Workplace Wellbeing Strategy has been reviewed to ensure it remains relevant. The draft Workplace Wellbeing action plan has been sent to stakeholders and the Workplace Wellbeing Group (WWG) met in January 2024 to ratify the plan. As part of the feedback, it was agreed that the WWG be reset to a more strategic focused group and to include workplace safety, as well as wellbeing.

### Performance

16.6 No indicators were due to report in Q3 for this theme.

### Risks

16.7 Risks for this theme covering the workplace are being managed effectively. However, one risk is scored at a high-level (15+) – recruitment to and retention of roles in key sectors. This risk can be found in Appendix E.

## References

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<sup>i</sup> Barnet Annual Equality Report and State of the Borough Report:  
[Equality and diversity | Barnet Council](#)

<sup>ii</sup> Borough of Sanctuary Strategy:  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s81193/Appendix%20A%20Borough%20of%20Sanctuary%20Strategy.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Health and Wellbeing Strategy:  
<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-11/Barnet%20Joint%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Strategy%202021%20to%202025%20-%20full%20document.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> Barnet financial calculator:  
<https://benefits.inbest.ai/barnet?multiLang=true&subpartner=barnetwebsitesite>

<sup>v</sup> Social Value Policy:  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s80339/Appendix%201%20-%20Social%20Value%20Policy%202023-2026.pdf>

<sup>vi</sup> Family Services Quarterly Update:  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s81468/Quarterly%20FS%20Update%20Committee%20Report%20Final.pdf>

<sup>vii</sup> Young Persons Perception Survey:  
<https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/young-persons-perception-survey-2023>

<sup>viii</sup> Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report:  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s81460/BSCP%20Final%20Annual%20Report%2022-23.pdf>

<sup>ix</sup> Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment:  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s80934/SVD%20SNA%20November%202023.pdf>

<sup>x</sup> Safer Communities Partnership Board Update:  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=457&MId=11407&Ver=4>

<sup>xi</sup> Serious Violence Strategy:  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s81523/Appendix%20B%20-%20Barnet%20SCP%20Serious%20Violence%20Strategy%202024%20-%2002027.pdf>

<sup>xii</sup> Barnet Dementia Strategy:  
<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/Dementia%20Strategy%202023-2028.pdf>

<sup>xiii</sup> Engagement and Co-production Strategy:  
<https://admin.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/Engagement%20and%20Co-production%20strategy%20and%20charter%20Nov22.pdf>

<sup>xiv</sup> Barnet Safer Communities Partnership - Performance Update:  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s80924/Jun-Sep%20SCP%20Dashboard.pdf>

<sup>xv</sup> Community Safety Strategy:

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<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-10/Barnet-Safer-Communities-Safety-Strategy-2022-2027.pdf>

<sup>xvi</sup> Homelessness and Rough Steeping Strategy:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s79127/Appendix%20B%20-%20Draft%20Homelessness%20and%20Rough%20Sleeping%20Strategy%202023-28.pdf>

<sup>xvii</sup> Civic and Community Events Policy:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s76270/Civic%20and%20community%20events%20policy%20CLLC%20070223.pdf>

<sup>xviii</sup> Events in Parks Policy:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s76675/Appendix%20A%20-%20Events%20in%20Parks%20Policy%20Final.pdf>

<sup>xix</sup> Reduction and Recycling Plan:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s79667/Appendix%20A%20Barnet%20RRP%202023-2025.pdf>

<sup>xx</sup> Air quality action plan:

[https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/barnet\\_zero\\_air\\_quality\\_action\\_plan\\_0.pdf](https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/barnet_zero_air_quality_action_plan_0.pdf)

<sup>xxi</sup> Flood Risk management Strategy:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s79706/Appendix%20B%20-%20Local%20Flood%20Risk%20Management%20Strategy.pdf>

<sup>xxii</sup> Tree Policy:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s76705/Appendix%20A%20Barnet%20Tree%20Policy%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>xxiii</sup> Chief Finance Officer report (Q3 2023-24):

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s81924/CFO%20Financial%20Monitoring%20Report%20Q3%202023-24.pdf>