

Our Council Plan 2021 – 2024



Barnsley - the place of possibilities

1. Welcome

Welcome to our Council Plan for 2021 to 2024.

We've created our Council Plan based on our fundamental purpose of working together with our communities and organisations, including the public, voluntary, community, and private sectors, to improve our residents' services and quality of life.

You've helped us to develop this plan through what you said you wanted in 2030, and these themes have shaped our new council priorities. We're extremely grateful to everyone who has played their part in this.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit Barnsley hard, and over the next three years to 2024, we want to build our borough back better and fairer. However, it has also brought out the best in our communities, and we look to the future with enthusiasm and optimism. We've got ambitious plans for change, improvement and growth to allow everyone to be the best they can be because our borough is a place that fosters and grows ambition.

We know that this plan will help us make sure our work makes a real difference for you, how we deliver services better and ensure that we deliver a balanced budget. We want to build and drive forward our role as a modern, inclusive, efficient, productive and high-performing council.

It's time to believe in the possibilities of Barnsley. Everyone has an important role in working together to achieve our vision of Barnsley's future and our long-term ambitions. We're excited to take you on the journey towards achieving our Barnsley 2030 ambitions and what that will mean for us all.

If you love Barnsley as much as we do, you'll be keen to find out about the work we're doing and what we want to achieve by 2024. Read on to find out more.



Leader of the Council
Cllr Sir Steve Houghton
CBE



Chief Executive
Sarah Norman

2. Our story so far

The vision for Barnsley Council is making Barnsley the place of possibilities. We will achieve this through a range of activities and initiatives over the next three years, as well as looking further forward into our future possibilities working alongside our key partners.

The Barnsley 2030 project

In January 2020, we asked people what their future Barnsley could look like by the year 2030, the challenges you feel you may face, and your ambitions for the borough where you live, work or visit.

Our employees, councillors, residents, businesses and partner organisations, offered their views about the future of Barnsley. This feedback has been used to influence this Council Plan through using the Barnsley 2030 themes as our new priorities for the Council.

The Barnsley 2030 vision, 'Barnsley the place of possibilities' builds on our past which has influenced the fabric of the borough and experiences of many Barnsley residents, and the borough's success over recent years. We will also use the vision for the Council Plan to demonstrate our commitment to making it happen.

Our residents and organisations across the private, public, voluntary and community sectors have an important role in working together to achieve this vision of Barnsley's future and our long-term ambitions. By 2030, we want everyone to benefit from, and contribute to, making our borough a thriving place of possibilities.

More information on the Barnsley 2030 project will become available in summer 2021 but be assured that the influence of the project is being felt throughout our new Council Plan.



COVID-19 Recovery

We cannot ignore the impact that COVID-19 has had on our communities, businesses, our partners and our own organisation. This Council Plan will reflect the recovery work underway to ensure Barnsley is a place of possibilities as we build back better and fairer.

We are working with colleagues and agencies across South Yorkshire to undertake a phased return from the pandemic, to understand how we will all live and operate in a borough where lots of things have changed around public health, the economy and our communities.

A phased recovery framework has been developed that all public sector partners will work towards in living with COVID-19 from 2021 and building back fairer.

More information can be found on our COVID-19 advice and guidance webpage, at barnsley.gov.uk/covid-19-advice-and-guidance



3. Our plan for the next three years

The Local Government Association (LGA) undertook a peer challenge review of Barnsley Council in March 2019 and the opening line from the report says:

'Barnsley Council is a high-performing council with clear and tangible ambitions for its residents, communities and stakeholders.'

Our **Be Even Better Strategy** will provide the focus for all our staff to work together as our ambition to be even better never stops. Now it's time to look forward and move into a new phase of our organisation's improvement journey where we strive to be even better.

We have already set out our new priorities based upon the engagement with our communities, residents, businesses and employees from the Barnsley 2030 project and they are:

Barnsley - the place of possibilities

Healthy
Barnsley

Learning
Barnsley

Growing
Barnsley

Sustainable
Barnsley

Enabling
Barnsley

We are a modern, inclusive, efficient, productive and high-performing council



Across these new priorities, we have set out the outcomes that describe our intentions for the next three years, to ensure that we focus on Barnsley as a place of possibilities:

Barnsley - the place of possibilities			
Healthy Barnsley	Learning Barnsley	Growing Barnsley	Sustainable Barnsley
People are safe and feel safe.	People have the opportunities for lifelong learning and developing new skills including access to apprenticeships.	Business start ups and existing local businesses are supported to grow and attract new investment, providing opportunities for all.	People live in great places, are recycling more and wasting less, feel connected and valued in their community.
People live independently with good physical and mental health for as long as possible.	Children and young people achieve the best outcomes through improved educational achievement and attainment.	People have a welcoming, safe and enjoyable town centre and principal towns as destinations for work, shopping, leisure and culture.	Our heritage and green spaces are promoted for all people to enjoy.
We have reduced inequalities in health and income across the borough.	People have access to early help and support.	People are supported to have safe, warm, sustainable homes.	Fossil fuels are being replaced by affordable and sustainable energy and people are able to enjoy more cycling and walking.

Enabling Barnsley

We are a modern, inclusive, efficient, productive and high-performing council

Enabling Barnsley is driven by our **Be Even Better Strategy**, which gives staff the tools and resources to ensure we meet our own stretching targets. In doing this, we hold ourselves accountable in making sure we work together towards making Barnsley the place of possibilities.

Our employees will continue to use the **Values** that are deeply embedded within the culture of the organisation:

			
We always say what we mean. Most of all we're reliable, fair and true.	We all work together towards the same goal – to make Barnsley a better place for the people.	We work hard to provide the best quality and value for money for the people of Barnsley. Only our best is good enough.	We're dedicated to making Barnsley a better place. We take pride in our work.

Our **People Strategy** will support delivery of the Council Plan by ensuring we develop the right supporting organisational culture and behaviours and a modern, agile, healthy, engaged, skilled and innovative workforce to support the delivery of our strategic ambitions, improvements and efficiencies.

As we work towards delivering this Council Plan it's important that we have a set of consistent organisation design principles and design enablers which will help to provide the foundations to build and guide our **Be Even Better Strategy**, as set out in the **Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**. The **MTFS** is a key tool in understanding our financial position and in formulating our ongoing financial strategy and staff are aware of their need to think commercially when designing services, with support from our **Commercial Strategy**.

When undertaking improvement and efficiency reviews or service re-design, our services will refer to **Design Principles** as they develop and design their business case for change. Some of the principles include enabling more people to help themselves, rationalising council buildings, seeking income generation opportunities, create the conditions for economic growth and recovery and consider the needs of communities. Together with the **People Strategy** it is key to identifying how we will align our existing and future resources with **Barnsley 2030** and the priorities and outcomes within the new Council Plan. This will provide us with the framework to deliver a balanced council budget from 2020-2021 to 2022-2023 (with only a modest gap remaining to be addressed in 2023-2024).

Digital thinking and innovation are a key enabler for our **Be Even Better Strategy**, and a series of continuous digital improvements are being addressed through the **Digital Barnsley** strategy. To support this, the **People Strategy** will help to develop our staff's digital skills so that we can fully utilise the new tools, solutions and innovative technologies such as Microsoft Office 365, robotics, artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things as set out in the **Digital Barnsley** programme. A key ambition for Barnsley is to become a digital leader and a digital enabled inclusive economy.



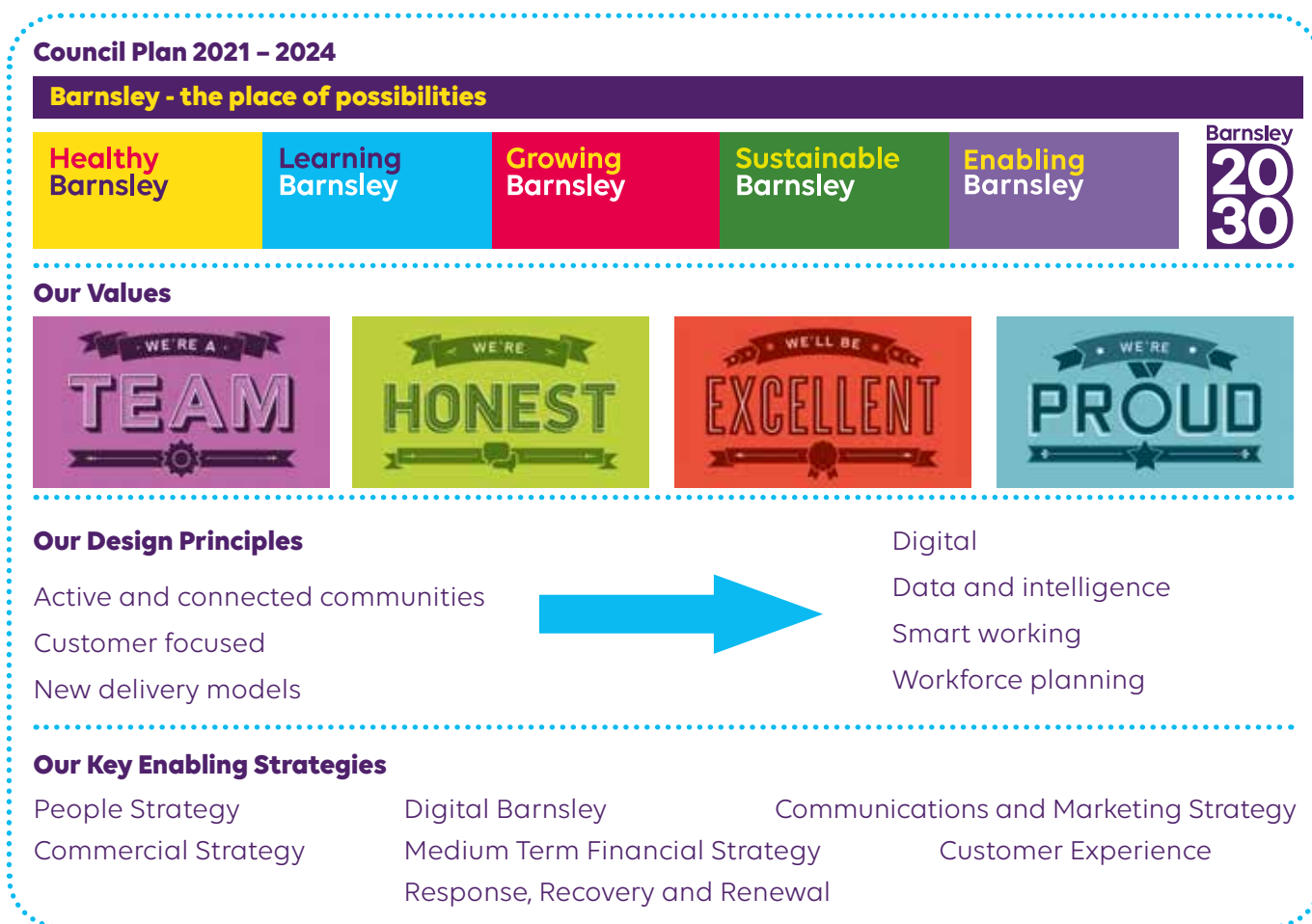
The **Response, Recovery and Renewal** programme is focused on building back better and fairer from the pandemic whilst our **Customer Experience** strategy looks to ensure we provide the best possible experience for all our residents and businesses, however they deal with the council. We listen to what they need and use people process and technology to try and meet their expectations.

And if you love Barnsley as much as we do, you'll be keen to find out about the work we're doing to make it an even better place. Our **Communications and Marketing Strategy** is key to making this happen. All our communications and marketing activity aligns with our priorities, ensuring that we concentrate on providing services where they're most needed and will have the most impact.

Our communications and marketing activity helps you understand what services the council provides you with, how they support you and how you can access them. It also helps showcase Barnsley as a great place to live, work and visit.

So how do all these innovative strategies fit together? The diagram below presents the golden thread across all these plans and strategies.

Our Be Even Better Strategy



In addition to the range of activities taking place within the council, we will also be working with partners to contribute to a more equitable, just and sustainable economy. We will develop a framework and approach with our public, private and voluntary sector partners towards building and holding wealth in our communities and places, sharing the benefits of our economy with everyone, and to using our natural resources sustainably.

This is called our Inclusive and Sustainable Economy Framework, and will shape all our decision making and future investments. Our partners will be encouraged to adopt a similar co-designed approach to their own investment decisions and expenditure.

4. Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination in society and in the workplace. It sets out ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone.

The Act also sets out a range of duties that public bodies, like the council, must adhere to. These duties make up what is called the Public Sector Equality Duty. The three aims that state the council must strive to are to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic¹ and those who do not, and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 requires public bodies to prepare and publish one or more objectives that will help them to achieve any of the things mentioned in the three aims of the Equality Duty. Authorities must publish objectives at least every four years and these objectives must be specific and measurable.

Our equality objectives are integrated throughout our **Council Plan**. Our Plan is supported by a range of work we will deliver in order to meet our equality objectives and this means our objectives will be monitored and regularly reviewed and are at the heart of everything we do. We undertake Equality Impact Assessments to understand the needs of people and the impact of our work. These assessments are a structured way of predicting what impact our activity might have on equality. We then use evidence from the assessment to help us to design services and our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and across Barnsley is described in our Equality Policy.

We have four equality related objectives which are linked to the appropriate outcomes as described in the 'Our plan for the next three years' section. We also have an inward facing equality objective that relates to our workforce taken from our **Enabling Barnsley** priority; 'We are a modern, inclusive, efficient, productive and high-performing council'. We will publish an annual Equality Report to show how we are achieving our equality objectives.

The four equality objectives:

Healthy Barnsley	People live independently with good physical and mental health for as long as possible.
Learning Barnsley	Children and young people achieve the best outcomes through improved educational achievement and attainment.
Growing Barnsley	People have a welcoming, safe and enjoyable town centre and principal towns as destinations for work, shopping, leisure and culture.
Sustainable Barnsley	People live in great places, are recycling more and wasting less, feel connected and valued in their community.

1. Protected characteristics are types of characteristics that could potentially lead to people being discriminated against. These characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

5. Risk management

Risk management is the process by which risks, concerns and issues are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the council's Governance Assurance Framework and is a key part of business processes to deliver improvement.

Effective and efficient risk management is critical to the success of any organisation alongside a robust Council Plan performance framework. It is an important tool for senior management to ensure that the organisation's priorities and outcomes are achieved, and its responsibilities discharged. How organisations deal with risk can have a major impact on the achievement of the key business goals and organisational outcomes.

Local Government Association (LGA) undertook a peer challenge review of Barnsley Council in March 2019 and recommended that the corporate risk register should be reviewed to ensure that the risks within it truly reflected the key issues relating to the council's business and future development. The peer challenge presented an opportunity to consider the council's approach to strategic risk management, but also to consider the wider process of risk identification and management.

A new approach to risk management has been developed, which uses existing and familiar systems to employees in the council. The new risk management approach focuses on an assessment of confidence, unlike traditional risk systems which focus on the avoidance of failure.

Alongside the Council Plan and associated performance framework, our **Be Even Better** and **People Strategy**, council employees will have the most effective tools to ensure the organisation works together making Barnsley the place of possibilities.



6. How will we measure success?

Our Council Plan will reflect the recovery process through the critical success factors that will make the plan a success, and we will track progress on recovery through quarterly reviews with senior officers in the council, cabinet members and then share the results with you, the public, through our 'How we measure performance' web page.

We will also publish snippets of information through our social communications each quarter when we release our latest report. This makes us accountable to you, the public we serve.



7. Tell us what you think

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**Thank you for reading
our Council Plan.**

Please visit [barnsley.gov.uk](https://www.barnsley.gov.uk) to find out more.

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