

Barnet
mencap

Business Plan



2021-2022

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1

Introduction

- 1.1** The Covid Pandemic continues to have a huge impact on health, society, and the economy. Barnet Mencap, like other organisations across the globe, has had to adapt the way it works to maintain its support for children and adults with learning disabilities, and autism, and their families.
- 1.2** The vaccination programme brings hope that the situation will improve but things will clearly be difficult for some time to come.
- 1.3** Barnet Mencap has made the decision not to develop a new Business Plan at this stage but to extend the current one for another year. It has produced this addendum, setting out some of the key challenges the organisation faces, and what it intends to do about them. The intention is to also spend time during the year, engaging with people with learning disabilities and autism, families, staff, members, and other stakeholders, and produce a Business Plan for 2022-25.
- 1.4** Long standing pressures on Barnet Mencap's budgets, which have led to a series of deficits, have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Barnet Mencap has endeavoured to contain costs but has seen drastic falls in demand for some of its services and income. This has been especially true for adult short breaks and in September Barnet Mencap closed its residential short breaks service at Sherrick House. The Board and staff are very keen to return to a surplus budget this year and restore some financial stability.
- 1.5** The Business Plan sets out the objectives for 2021-22 and the main activities planned for this year. Each service will have its own development plan, which will detail the outputs, the outcomes to be achieved and the resources required to do this effectively. The plan also includes the principal risks Barnet Mencap needs to manage during the year and the resources it needs to undertake its work in 2021-22.

2 Objectives and Activities

2.1 The focus of Barnet Mencap's work in 2021-22 is to re-build services and support following lockdown and to restore a strong financial position. So much has been learned during the pandemic. Barnet Mencap has maintained all the services it could in 2020-21. But as more staff return to face-to-face work, they are excited to use these lessons to make the services even better. The new ways of communicating with people, the increased contact and digital inclusion, will continue. There will be some welcome new features. There is a new venue for some COPs and day breaks activities and Open Door is returning after a four-year gap.

COPs

2.2 COPs is keen to welcome back people with a learning disability and autism who are desperate to be active and see friends again. Lockdown and other necessary government restrictions made it very difficult to sustain face to face support for COPs members in 2020-21. The COPs team has provided online activities and some face-to-face activities for individuals and small groups. This blended approach will be extended this year. It will include group work, but with smaller groups than in the past, while also running online activities.

2.3 The COPs team will develop a community hub at Station Road. This will provide a venue for courses, peer support, and be a base for community activities. Barnet Mencap will share the facilities at Station Road, Hendon with Age UK, and this presents opportunities for collaboration, especially to develop appropriate support for older people with learning disabilities or autism, and for those with dementia. The COPs team is keen to develop this further.

2.4 The COPs team will work to increase membership and find the right balance of providing opportunities for members and non-members that is fair and inclusive.

Day Breaks

- 2.5** The COPS team will also develop day breaks for adults with learning disabilities and autism. This will consist of support for individuals or small groups to be active in the daytime or evenings, across seven days, while also providing short breaks for their family carers. The COPS team is committed to running a revised holiday programme and wants to provide breaks in the UK when it is safe to do so.

Children's Services

- 2.6** The Children's Service has seen a high demand from families and have consistently supported over 400 parent carers in recent years. It wants to increase its capacity to provide information and guidance in a timely way and reduce the waiting list. The team plans to introduce two new models to support parent carers, with 5 courses over the year. It will use Family Links and Early Positive Approaches to Support (E-PAtS), which is devised specifically for the parent carers of children under five.
- 2.7** Barnet Mencap will re-establish the Open-Door Project. Staff will work with the Early Help Team and others to make sure the parent carers of children under 5 can access a range of support and services that help them during this period which is so crucial for the child and for family life.

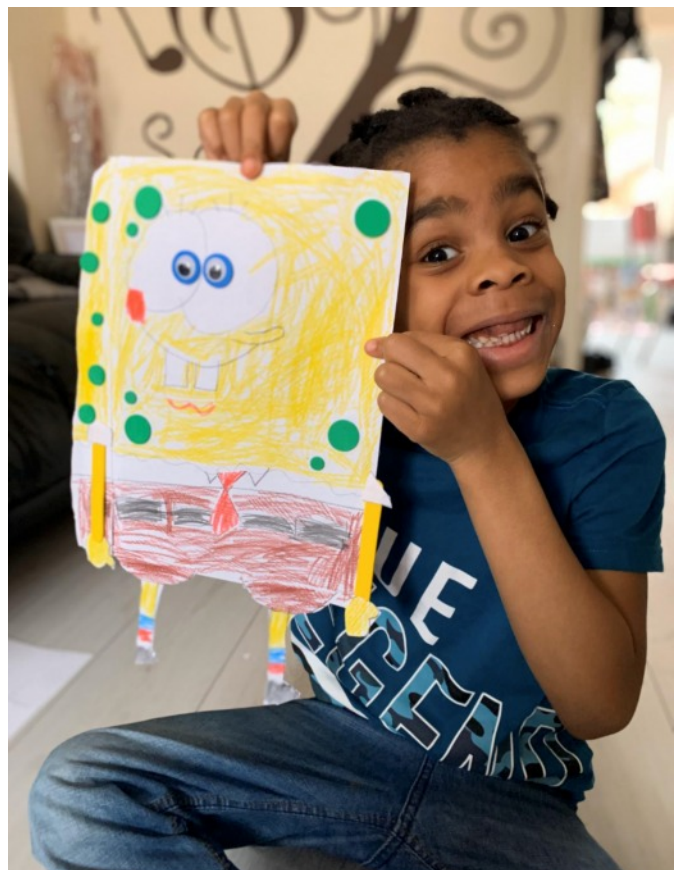


Providing food and supplies to families in the Borough

- 2.8 Barnet Mencap will work with the council and health services to ensure there is appropriate support for children and young people with ADHD. It wants to build on the lessons from last year's pilot project, which explored support in the family home, and short breaks.
- 2.9 Barnet Mencap will continue its Take a Break service and appoint somebody to be the Registered Manager.
- 2.10 We are keen to know what families are thinking after a difficult year. Staff want to work with Royal Mencap, to engage with families of disabled children. Staff will learn what support parent carers want to see in place and work with them to secure the right support for them and their children.

Staffing Structure

- 2.11 We want to use our resources in an efficient and effective way. The children's and adult's community teams will be restructured, with new Coordinator posts established and clear line management reporting lines to the Project Manager.



Drawing in a Take a Break short breaks session

Equality Housing

- 2.12** The Equality Housing model was established 38 years ago. Since then, it has been successful in supporting people with learning disabilities to live as independently as possible, learning skills, remaining safe, having control over their lives, and moving on when they need more or less support. This year though the Equality Housing team will undertake a far-reaching review to see whether the model still meets the requirements of people, their families, commissioners, and the specialist teams in Barnet. It will explore whether more support should be provided in the evenings, at weekends or overnight, and if the service should be registered with the CQC.
- 2.13** The Autism Service will continue to focus on the identification of autistic adults in Barnet. It will use screenings to do this and provide support in person when it is safe to do so. This will include workshops, social and peer support and liaise with other professionals to help people get the support they need. The team will make links with the new Crisis Cafes, and further develop working with the Mental Health services and continue to support suicide prevention initiatives. The Autism Advisors want to fill a gap in the current provision and will work with Mind in Barnet to establish an appropriate counselling service in the borough.
- 2.14** The Autism Service wants to have a long-term future as part of the pre- and post- diagnostic autism pathway. They will do this by working closely with commissioners and the new regional diagnostic Centre.

Succession planning

- 2.15** Barnet Mencap benefits from having an experienced and skilled workforce, and Board. But it needs to plan ahead and ensure there is cover and business continuity through its key positions, and that it has the ability and creativity to continue to develop Barnet Mencap over the next four years and beyond.

Activities

- 2.16** Barnet Mencap's Articles set out three key activities, which are central to the organisation's Mission. It is important that staff, volunteers, and Trustees understand this and work hard to undertake these activities. They will raise awareness of the needs of people with learning disabilities and autism. The staff will strive to ensure that people are included in their local communities and that Barnet Mencap provides and promotes services that people need.

Mission Statement

Barnet Mencap provides services and support for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, and their family carers, and campaigns with them to improve their lives.

Barnet Mencap's Values

Barnet Mencap's work will be guided by its commitment to:

- **PARTNERSHIP** Working together with people with learning disabilities and/or autism and their carers', and valuing the expertise that comes with lived experience
- **EQUALITY** Everyone having the same chances, by challenging discrimination and promoting opportunity
- **PARTICIPATION** The rights of every person to live and participate in the community as full citizens
- **ASPIRATION** Being receptive to people's dream and ambitions and working with them to explore how these might be achieved
- **RIGHTS** Actively enabling people to stand up for their rights and to advocate for themselves
- **INCLUSION** Including people with learning disabilities and/or autism in all aspects of the organisation

2.17 In 2021-22, Barnet Mencap will provide the following services for children and adults with learning disabilities and autism, and their family carers: -

2.18 Activities (See Appendix 1)

2.19 A number of other activities continues to be important to Barnet Mencap and will remain a strong commitment in 2021-22. Barnet Mencap will continue to raise awareness of the needs of people with learning disabilities and autism. It will do this through its extensive programme of training staff in the community and in mainstream services. The Have Your Say group has adapted to work online and will continue its engagement work with a wide range of professionals. It tells them how well their proposals will work for people with learning disabilities and what will improve them. The group will again support the members with a learning disability on Barnet's Involvement Board.



Fundraising in Barclay's Bank

- 2.20** Partnership working is crucial, and Barnet Mencap will actively support the establishment of a learning disability strategic partnership in Barnet. The group will help local VCS organisations, work together to address common problems, and give a platform for a stronger voice and influence than organisations can have on their own in shaping local support and services for people with learning disabilities.
- 2.21** Barnet Mencap is a member of Barnet Healthwatch. It will facilitate support for people with learning disabilities and autism to be involved in the work of Healthwatch and to have their say on local health and social care matters.
- 2.22** Barnet Mencap has been a virtual member of Barnet's Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) since it was established in 2019 and this will continue, alongside Barnet Mencap's representation on Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safer Communities Partnership Board. Staff will also participate in the new MASH/Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Liaison Group. It will further develop its Hate Crime Reporting project, extend the Safe Places project and work with Why Me to introduce restorative justice options in Barnet.
- 2.23** The health of people with learning disabilities and autism, and the inequalities they face when using the NHS, remains a concern. Barnet Mencap will continue its membership of the LeDeR Steering Groups in Barnet and the North Central London (NCL) region and use this to press for changes and improvements in healthcare, based on the lessons from the LeDeR reviews.
- 2.24** The cancer screening film will be promoted across the NCL region, to raise awareness of the importance of screening and to improve the take-up by people with learning disabilities.

- 2.25** The My Health Matters events have been a valuable forum in recent years to promote good healthcare for people with learning disabilities and the intention is to restore this in 2021-22, in conjunction with the Barnet Learning disability Service and other partners.
- 2.26** Royal Mencap will have a new strategy and working with them remains very important to Barnet Mencap. The intention is to continue joint work on family support, Bright Futures, through the Employment team, and liaising around advice and information and membership of Me20 and the North West London Mencap Consortium.

A stand during
Hate Crime
Awareness Week



3 Principal Risks & Uncertainties

- 3.1** The Covid pandemic has had an enormous impact on health, society, and the economy. The vaccination programme offers hope that the UK can avoid repeating the cycle of lockdowns and the high level of restrictions that were necessary in 2020-21. But Covid will present risks and uncertainties throughout the next twelve months. There is likely to be an impact on the way Barnet Mencap delivers services; on the health and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities, and autism, and their families; and on the workforce.
- 3.2** Staff will continue to adapt the way they work and organize support. Barnet Mencap will always follow government guidance and its own risk assessments when deciding whether support is provided in person, on a one-to-one basis or in small groups, or via the telephone and online. Where staff are working with people directly, they will be provided with the personal protective equipment they need. Staff will follow guidance on face coverings, social distancing, and hand hygiene, and support people with learning disabilities and autism, who are able to, to also adhere to the rules. Staff will have clear Covid risk management plans that detail how to minimize infections, support people who are ill, and how to report incidents of Covid.
- 3.3** The pandemic has affected the lives of people with learning disabilities and autism, and their families. Banet Mencap wants to better understand this impact and to work on a multi-agency basis to respond to what is happening. The lack of familiar services – daycare and short breaks – have led to people with learning disabilities being at home for long periods and put huge pressure on them and their families. It means that learning disability practitioners will again have to identify what support is needed and the models to be developed for the future.

It is already clear that many people are isolated, more anxious, less active. Barnet Mencap's staff will work towards re-establishing people's good health, wellbeing, and safety, and work with others to address this across the borough.

- 3.4 The marked shift to online communication, whether in healthcare, retail, or services, has deepened digital inequalities. Staff will work to tackle this, and promote digital inclusion, building on the initiatives of 2020-21. Like many other organisations Barnet Mencap's support will be a blend of online and face to face, with a strong commitment to the latter.
- 3.5 Staff will continue to provide direct personal support for people with learning disabilities and autism. But many staff will continue to work from home and combine this with being in the office. The regular testing for staff will continue. Vaccines have already been offered to most staff and the programme will be extended to include everyone this year. All staff will be given information and encouraged to be vaccinated. It is evident that some staff are hesitant about the vaccine and Barnet Mencap will have to manage the legal and ethical challenges this presents.

Finances

- 3.6 The Covid pandemic will affect Barnet Mencap's budgets, which have been under a lot of strain in the past five years. Barnet Mencap is strongly committed to achieving a surplus budget in 2021-22. A lot of work has been done to help staff set the budgets, to monitor and review them, and this will continue. The pandemic will present risks around income if services cannot be delivered. Staff and Trustees will monitor budgets and take prompt remedial action in order to achieve a surplus and maintain financial stability for the longer term.

- 3.7** There is a context of general economic uncertainty that results from the pandemic and Brexit, and the effect this has on public finances. The Board will continue to develop its strategic approach to securing the funding Barnet Mencap requires as it responds to the growing need for support by children and adults with learning disabilities, and autism, and their families. The Board is committed to working with Barnet council and health services to provide services and support for people with learning disabilities and autism. It is also keen to have diverse income streams so that it can achieve its charitable objectives and secure the long-term future of the organisation.

Contracts and Tenders

- 3.8** A number of Barnet Mencap's key contracts are due to expire in the next two years. The organisation is strongly committed to preventative approaches and wants to provide advice, and information for children and adults with learning disabilities; accommodation and support; peer and social support; and employment. Barnet Mencap is keen to use the evidence, data, and its insights to identify the support people need. It will pursue opportunities to bid for these services as they are tendered by the statutory services.



Staff supporting a
funky hat
fundraising day

4 Resources

- 4.1 Barnet Mencap's income is based mainly on contracts with the council, and grants.
- 4.2 Barnet Mencap continues to develop the way it manages its resources. Staff will have clear responsibilities for managing the budgets and will have systems to do this effectively, including timely data and the forums to report and escalate any concerns about its income and expenditure. Barnet Mencap will complete its work to make better use of Sage, to make budgeting easier, and implement the recommendations of its pay review.
- 4.3 Fundraising will be a higher priority for staff and volunteers across the organisation. The Fundraising Coordinator will lead initiatives, applying for grants, organizing community and events fundraising and helping to identify where additional funding is required. The Fundraising Group will continue to support the Coordinator. Group members will encourage the buy-in from staff, volunteers, and families, so they can be active and creative in raising money for Barnet Mencap.
- 4.4 Barnet Mencap is strongly committed to supporting its workforce. The success of its services depends on the skills, knowledge and motivation of staff and volunteers. The pandemic, a growing demand for support, and adapting the way they work, has put a lot of pressure on teams in the past year.
- 4.5 Staff capacity needs to be increased to manage the additional demand. This will be achieved, where possible, at contract reviews, or through grant applications and the proceeds of community fundraising. Training, including management training, will continue to be a priority for staff and Trustees.

- 4.6** Staff wellbeing and good mental health is vital. Barnet Mencap will work with staff to identify and tackle the difficulties they face and to promote staff wellbeing. More will be done too to strengthen the commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, again working with staff to ensure that these values are embedded in service delivery and in workforce development.
- 4.7** The risks surrounding the pandemic, and the need to curtail services and activities at the office, meant that very few volunteers were active in 2020-21. Volunteers are very important, though, to Barnet Mencap. Every effort will be made to involve them again in the work of the organisation as soon as it is safe to do so.
- 4.8** The lease on Barnet Mencap's office will be re-negotiated and renewed in 2021. Sherrick House's lease will end in March and the expectation is that Barnet Mencap will use Station Road, Hendon from April as a venue for COPS activities, day breaks and Take a Break in the school holidays.



Tom mowing his lawn on a sunny day in lockdown

5 Governance

- 5.1** The Board of Trustees will continue to use the Charity Governance Code in 2021-22. This document helps the Board to assess its own performance, and to find evidence, against the principles of good governance set out in the Code. The Board will develop its Work Plan to meet the Code's requirements.
- 5.2** The Board will develop a Training Plan and support Trustees to develop their skills and knowledge using a range of learning formats.
- 5.3** The Board will continue with its sub-committee structure, which has improved the Boards oversight and scrutiny of the budgets, policy, and performance. The new key Performance Indicators will be agreed by April 2021.
- 5.4** The Board will continue to focus on recruiting and training Trustees, so the Board has the necessary skills and diversity for good governance.
- 5.5** The Board will particularly focus on developing its engagement work with Members, beneficiaries, and staff to ensure their views are reflected in Barnet Mencap's strategic objectives and so that the Board can be confident in the quality assurance reports it receives. It will do this by continuing to receive user satisfaction surveys, meeting with the Advisory Council, and attending staff meetings. It will also seek new ways to expand its engagement with all its stakeholders
- 5.6** The Risk Register will continue to be used to identify the main risks facing Barnet Mencap. It includes the measures in place to mitigate the impact of the risks. It will be considered at all meetings of the Board and sub-committees and updated based on the latest assessment of the risks.

6 Contact Barnet Mencap

Barnet Mencap is always keen to hear from its members, people who use our services, professionals, or anyone with a question or a comment about our work. The services change and improve all the time. The feedback we get from people helps us to do this.

Over the next year Barnet Mencap will be implementing the actions set out in the Business Plan. The feedback we get during this time will help to tell us whether we are getting it right.

Barnet Mencap can be contacted at:

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Appendix 1

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
£45,000	Information, Advice and Guidance for parent carers	Staff provide information, advice and guidance for the parent carers of disabled children; as well as workshops. The service is commissioned by Barnet council.	<p>Parent carers will have the advice and information they need to support their child and maintain family life. They will feel confident that their child is able to thrive in education, socially and are healthy, and know how to access the support they need.</p> <p>Parents have improved economic circumstances, are supported with appeals and disputes and are signposted to other services.</p>
£35,000	Parenting Programmes	<p>Staff will run 5 parenting programmes in 2021-22.</p> <p>The Children's Team, with parent carer co-facilitators, will introduce Early-Positive Approaches to Support (E-PAtS) as part of the support 'offer' for parent carers.</p> <p>Staff will also be involved in the SEND Partnership Board, forums to develop the Local Offer, and the Early Help Hubs.</p>	<p>Parent carers learn skills that help them in their role and increase their knowledge about their child's behaviour, health, eating and sleeping patterns.</p> <p>Parent carers feel more confident in their role and their ability to access support when they need it. They also develop connections with other parent carers, and often sustain these after the course has ended.</p>

Appendix 1

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
£54,700	Short Breaks for Children and young people	<p>Take a Break provides short breaks for disabled children and their families. The breaks take place in the community or the family home, and at Station Road, Hendon during school holidays</p> <p>A new Registered Manager will be appointed.</p> <p>Short breaks will be provided for individual children and small groups, and include activities in the school holidays.</p>	<p>Children develop new interests; parents get a short break from their caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Children have opportunities to develop skills, make friends and have fun. Parent carers are able to have time for themselves in a way that best suits them</p>
£48,500	Leisure and Learning Projects	<p>The Community Opportunities Project (COPs), which comprises Springboard and Fit2gether, will facilitate leisure and learning projects and develop peer support as part of the Bright Futures contract. The programme will be re-established as the Covid restrictions ease.</p> <p>COPs will provide support for more members.</p> <p>There will be a wide range of leisure and learning activities including drama, bowling, yoga, walking and Zumba and online activities.</p> <p>COPs will develop a new venue for activities at Station Road, Hendon.</p>	<p>People have had fun and learnt skills. They report the benefits of meeting new people, feeling fitter and less isolated, as the Covid risks are reduced.</p> <p>People will have improved physical and mental health.</p>

Appendix 1

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
£24,500	Awareness-Raising	<p>Two different people will be supported on Barnet's Involvement Board this year. There is a programme of training sessions and meetings of the Have Your Say group.</p> <p>It is estimated that there are 1,507 people with moderate or severe learning disabilities in Barnet aged 15-80+ (Joint Strategic Needs Analysis 2015-20). Barnet Mencap engaged with almost 500 people in 2017-18.</p>	Mainstream services have a better understanding of people with learning disabilities and autism, what is important to them and the support they need. People with learning disabilities directly deliver this message.
£357,000	Housing and Support	<p>Equality Housing's Community Link Workers will provide support for tenants in their own homes, in the shared houses, and as part of an outreach service.</p> <p>The team will review the Equality Housing model and work with Barnet Learning Disability Services to identify and support the move of 3 tenants.</p> <p>Staff will also provide a housing management service for the three houses, and collect rents.</p>	Tenants live as independently as possible in the community; they do this by learning and maintaining skills, and taking opportunities to develop friendships and relationships through work and volunteering.
£134,000	Working for You	Working for You will develop its advice and information service and reach new people	People with learning disabilities and autism obtain the information they need to make decisions about their lives.
£32,000	Employment	The team will help 12 people to get jobs and support a total of 20 people	People maintain a strong position in the labour market and do not fall further behind.

Appendix 1

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
£20,000	Day Breaks for Adults with learning and/or other disabilities	Staff will provide a daytime service on 144 days. There will be 4 holidays.	People learn new skills and try new activities. Their family carers are satisfied that the short break helps to sustain them in a caring role.
£80,000	Autism Service	To work with the commissioners to explore how the new regional diagnostic service will work. To set up a counselling service with Mind in Barnet.	The Autism Service is part of the new pre/post autism pathway. People can access counselling.
£35,000	Hate Crime Reporting	To develop Safe Places Work with Why Me? To establish Restorative Justice models in Barnet	People will feel confident that Safe Places are welcoming and able to offer some support. People can access Restorative Justice if they want it.