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Dear Councillor

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - WEDNESDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 2021

I now enclose, for consideration the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was published.

Agenda No. Item

7. Amended Structure for Planning Development (Pages 2 - 4)

13. Community Plan Performance Report (Pages 5 - 47)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

17 NOVEMBER 2021

AMENDED STRUCTURE FOR PLANNING DEVELOPMENT

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek amendments to the current Planning Development Unit to enable:

- Creation of a new Tree Officer post at NS12, replacing current consultancy support
- To delete an existing full-time vacant Planning Technical Support Officer Post (NS6).

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Members will be aware that the delivery of the planning service often requires an assessment of trees, either through planning applications or requests to do work to those protected as a result of Tree Preservation and/or Conservation Area status. At present, Planning Technical Support Officers (PTSO) undertake this work with input from a consultant Tree Officer, currently provided by North Kesteven District Council. The contract with NKDC is approximately £7,000 per annum.

2.2 Works to trees form only part of what a planning function covers. Planning applications often require existing landscape on a site to be assessed, as well as landscape proposals submitted as a result of a condition to be determined whether or not they are acceptable.

2.3 In addition to the planning service, across the Council there are various strategies and projects underway that a permanent in-house resource could either feed into or have direct input in shaping, such as works regarding the implementation of the Open Space Strategy, our Climate Emergency Strategy & Action Plan, and maintenance of parks and open spaces.

3.0 Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that a new in-house post is created for a Tree/Landscape Officer. A new job description has been created and evaluated which records the varied duties that would be performed by this officer. As well as dealing with tree applications and responses to consultations on landscape impacts/proposals, they would also be able to review the Council's Tree Preservation Orders. In addition, they would also be able to advise other departments within the Council.

3.2 It is proposed to utilise the monies from the deletion of a vacant PTSO post, and the £7K contractual monies.

4.0 Digital Implications

4.1 A laptop and ICT equipment to facilitate working from home will be required.

5.0 **Financial Implications FIN21-22/9510**

- 5.1 The proposal is to delete the vacant PTSO post (£26.2k) as well as utilising the monies currently paid by contract to North Kesteven District Council (£7k) in order to pay for the proposed NS12 Landscape/Tree Officer post on a full-time basis (£44.4k), leaving a shortfall of £11.2k, which we seek approval for, for the increase in budget.
- 5.2 Taking the above information into account, initially there would be an adverse impact on the General Fund of circa £11.2k per annum, however; it is anticipated that this will be mitigated by the means of this post creating wider benefits and opportunities across the authority and reduce the amount of resources required from external third parties in other Business Units. There have already been conversations with colleagues in Environmental Services regarding the possibility of using this resource, it is therefore anticipated that this post will create savings in the form of reduced expenditure to other business units across the council that may utilise the benefits of this in house post. Currently any proposed savings are unquantifiable however; as and when these are identified these will be built into future budget processes.
- 5.3 The figures below are with associated on-costs and incremental increases reaching the top of the scale in 2023-24. For the purpose of this report no pay award or increase in cost for the Council in relation to the Professional Services contract has been included.

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Creating FT Tree Officer Post NS12 (SCP 31 – SCP33)	44,385	45,720	47,266	47,266
Professional Services to NKDC savings if post created	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)	(7,000)
Deleting Vacant Post NS6 Planning Tech Support Officer (PTSO)	(26,233)	(26,783)	(27,342)	(27,342)
TOTAL REQUIRMENT (FAVOURABLE)/ADVERSE	11,152	11,937	12,924	12,924

The Contractual Services budget code would also be reduced by £7,000 and this sum moved to the salary code.

6.0 **Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 These proposals will impact directly on staff however there is no disproportionate or potential adverse impact on anyone with a protected characteristic. The grading of the new post has been determined using the Council's agreed Job Evaluation Scheme to ensure there are no equal pay issues. The recruitment and selection processes will be undertaken in accordance with Council policy and procedures which have due regard for the requirements of equalities legislation.

7.0 **Legal Implications**

- 7.1 The post holder will be required to comply with legislation as set out within the Town and Country Planning Acts and, in particular, the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation (England) Regulations 2012 [SI 2012 No. 605].

8.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

8.1 The creation and recruitment to this post will contribute directly to the plan’s objective of ‘Enhance and protect the District’s natural environment’ and ‘Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents’.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) the Economic Development Committee support the amended structure and associated budget virements (increased salary and reduced Contractual Services) required for the Landscape/Tree Officer post and approve the additional budget requirement for the same and**
- (b) subject to (a) above the Planning Development Business Manager liaise with HR colleagues and Unions as required to recruit a Landscape/Tree Officer on a full-time basis.**

Background Papers

None

For further information please contact Lisa Hughes on Ext 5565

Matt Lamb
Director – Planning & Growth

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

17 NOVEMBER 2021

COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE – YEAR TO DATE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the year to date performance report covering Q1 and Q2 (April to September 2021).

2.0 Background Information

2.1 We are taking a new approach to performance to develop performance management from a counting device and into a tool for change. This is done by analysing data and progress against key activities as well as district statistics, customer feedback and workforce information to create a robust and comprehensive view of performance to drive improvement.

2.2 The principles of the new approach to performance:

- Easy to understand report covering the performance of the whole council. Fully integrating housing into reporting to create a single view of performance,
- Using performance as an engaging and comprehensive tool for learning and improvement,
- Performance to include wider contextual information on the district and key benchmarking to place the Council's work in context, and
- Performance to include customer views and feedback figures as well as data.

2.3 Quarter 1 was not reported to Committee as the development of the new style of reporting was underway. Instead a year to date (combined quarter 1 and quarter 2) report has been developed and is attached as **Appendix One**.

2.4 It is important to note that this report measures performance against the updated Community Plan (as refocused by the Policy & Finance report on 23.09.21) and as such the performance will capture activities not currently mentioned in the Community Plan such as the Levelling Up Fund.

3.0 Proposals

3.1 Committee to review and comment on the Community Plan Performance report attached as **Appendix One** and note the Ombudsman and RIPA reports (**Appendices 3 and 4**).

3.2 Homes & Communities Committee Members to note **Appendix 2** containing additional performance indicators on our tenanted properties.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Digital Implications

5.1 None

6.0 Financial Implications FIN21-22/5170

6.1 None

7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

7.1 Aligns to all objectives

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) Members review the Community Plan Performance report attached as Appendix 1;
and
- (b) Members note the RIPA and Ombudsman reports (Appendices 3 and 4).

Reason for Recommendations

To enable members to proactively monitor the Council’s performance and assess the Council’s progress against achievement of the objectives laid out in the Community Plan.

Background Papers

The Community Plan

For further information please contact Ella Brady on Ext.5279

Deborah Johnson
Director - Customer Services & Organisational Development

Newark and Sherwood District Council Performance Report

2021-22 Q1 & Q2
1 April to 30 September 2021



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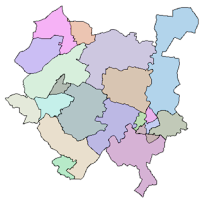
@Newark and Sherwood District Council

Introduction

We, Newark and Sherwood District Council, aim to do everything we can to enable local residents and businesses to flourish and fulfil their potential, as well as encourage visitors to enjoy all that our area has to offer. How we intend to achieve this purpose is laid out in our [Community Plan](#) (2019-2023). This plan was informed by the views of residents and lays out the Council's objectives over four years as well as the activities that will help achieve these objectives.

This report examines how the Council has been performing against the Community Plan. It examines data to look at the performance of key services and delivery against the activities outlined in the plan. This report examines the Council's performance and achievements from 1 April to 30 September 2021 (year to date).

We know the value of understanding our performance as this knowledge allows us to embed and disseminate good practice and quality service delivery as well as identify and tackle areas for improvement. The Council's performance is measured in four parts;



Our District

A basket of data indicators which allow us to examine how our district is performing in key areas, acting as a form of 'health check'.

Page 2



Our Performance

How we are delivering against the objectives we outline in the Community Plan.

Page 3



Our Customers

A look at what our customers are telling us about the services they receive and insight into how we are learning from customer feedback

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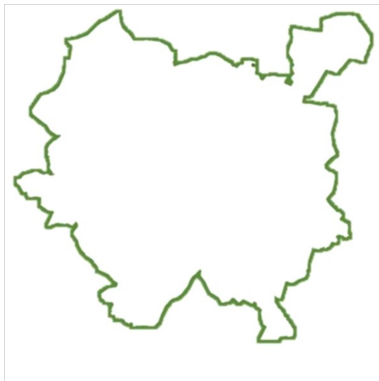


Our Workforce

To understand how the Council's staff are performing and how we are supporting staff. This is important as a positive and motivated workforce is more likely to be high performing.

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About Newark and Sherwood...



A resident population of 123,127 (14.7% of Nottinghamshire's population).
54,992 dwellings of which 10% are owned by the Council (social housing).

The average age is 45.5 years. 5.3 years older than the English average of 40.2 years. 22.4% of Newark and Sherwood's residents are 65+. Higher than the England average of 18.5% and Nottinghamshire average of 21%.

There are on average 1.89 people per hectare within the district. This is sparser than the England average of 4.34 people per hectare and the Nottinghamshire average of 4 people per hectare.

70.4% of the district's working age population (16 to 64) are qualified to a Level 2 or higher. This is 7.8% lower than the England average of 78.2%.

Median gross annual pay for residents is £30,679. This is 2.26% higher than the Nottinghamshire average but 3.42% lower than the England average.

How is our district?

This data tell us something about our district for the year to date (Q1 and Q2). Most of these indicators are not factors we can directly affect, only influence, but they add context to the work we undertake.



767 dwellings completed by March 2021. A 38.9% increase from the previous year.
195 affordable homes completed by March 2021. A 45.5% increase from the previous year.
7,296 dwellings committed or under construction. A 5.8% decrease from the previous year.

The number of planning applications we receive gives an indication of the level of construction planned in the district. Commercial and residential applications have shown a decrease against the same period last year. Minor planning applications have shown a 23.8% increase against the same period last year;

14 commercial planning applications were validated

107 residential planning applications were validated

29 major planning applications were received

633 minor planning applications were received



2,715 people are currently unemployed across the District. This is a reduction of 7% since quarter 1 (April to June 2021).



9.5% of town centre retail premises were vacant in quarter 2 (the town centres measured are Newark, Edwinstowe, Ollerton and Southwell). This is an increase from 9.2% in quarter 1.
4,840 enterprises were registered in our district in 2021. This is less than the 4,875 registered in 2020.

Interactions with the Council

This information shows how busy the year to date (April-September) has been for the Council in terms of customer interactions.

- **426 face to face contacts** were held at Castle House. Contacts remain static between Q1 and Q2.
- **37,189 phone calls** were made to the contact centre. 31.59% lower than the same period last year.
- **15,220 digital web form transactions** were completed by our customers.

Create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contribute to their local area



What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ We launched the Newark and Sherwood Community Lottery in early May to create income for local good causes. We now have over 50 good causes signed up to the scheme and the lottery generated over £9.5k for them in the first 5 months of operation. We are continuing to promote sign up to the lottery to residents.
- ⇒ In early June we celebrated Volunteers Week, publically thanking all the volunteers in the district.
- ⇒ In June we were proud to work with partners to officially unveil the statue of Polish humanitarian hero Irena Sendler in the Fountain Gardens on London Road. Although few people in the UK had heard of Irena, her story was one of monumental importance. The statue was largely funded by the Institute of Polish Remembrance.
- ⇒ During Health Eating Week Local catering students from Newark College made 33 tasty and healthy meals for residents at the Bower Court (a retirement housing scheme in Newark). We organised the event in partnership with Newark College, the County's integrated wellbeing service 'Your Health Your Way' and Morrison's. The aim of the partnership was to bring generations together while also helping the local students with their studies. Some of the fresh ingredients used by students were donated by our Crop Drop initiative where allotment holders donate surplus fruit and vegetables to vulnerable families and school initiatives and additional food was kindly donated by Morrison's supermarket and Brackenhurst Campus at Nottingham Trent University in Southwell.
- ⇒ We opened up applications for our first ever 'Community Chest' scheme inviting bids for community projects aimed at making social housing areas cleaner, safer and greener. Grants of up to £1,000 can be used to support projects which improve amenities in or around social housing areas to achieved a range of aims; from resolving community identified issues, reducing anti-social behaviour around social housing and supporting safety and security. Applications can be made any time and a panel will meet to discuss the applications three times a year.
- ⇒ A Community Fun Day took place in August in Fernwood, as part of a series of activity days for young people in the summer holidays. We worked in partnership with Fernwood Parish Council to organise the free event in a friendly and safe environment offering crafts and games, virtual boxing, bike security marking and even a smoothie-making bike.
- ⇒ We began supporting the Community Speedwatch scheme, providing training to new communities where speeding had been raised as a public concern. 7 communities undertook a programme of monitoring days and further Speedwatch work took place in Southwell, Winthorpe and Thorney.
- ⇒ Work is underway to check that all community flood resilience store contacts are up to date and the store stock and equipment levels are adequate before the winter flooding season. One third of stores have replied and new stock is being purchased.
- ⇒ Flood mitigation works at Southwell are progressing and should be completed by March 2022. Mitigation works at Lowdham have taken place and a feasibility study on a larger flood mitigation scheme is underway.
- ⇒ In line with our digital declaration and to encourage the use of our digital services we have been training involved tenants so they can become trainers and deliver training to other tenants. A digital guide for tenants is being developed and will be made available at the conclusion of the training. The 10 week course is currently ongoing.

Activities continued;

- ⇒ We ran a successful awareness campaign on the EU settlement scheme to engage with EU citizens, encouraging them to check their eligibility and then complete applications if required. The campaign ran until the 30 June and at its conclusion there had been 6,090 applications received from residents of Newark and Sherwood.
- ⇒ We are seeking to enhance and improve the opportunities for tenant engagement. A plan for tenant engagement has been developed and is ready for consultation across our tenant base.
- ⇒ We supported vulnerable children across the district, and those eligible for free school meals, to receive enriching educational and physical activities, quality food and nutritional education during the summer holiday period. We delivered this collaboratively with colleagues by empowering community organisations to continue to reach out to the most vulnerable families.
- ⇒ Working with 2 key providers we delivered over 700 Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) sessions across several areas of the district, providing a balanced and nutritional meal for each child who attended.
- ⇒ We continue to provide nutrition education and signposting support to vulnerable families in the form of recipe cards, healthy eating guides, sugar/food labels/portion size guides and a support services guide signposting to local support.
- ⇒ The Humanitarian Assistance Response Team (HART) Service was stepped down from the end of June 2021 in line with declining referrals and the Government road map for reopening. Requests are now signposted to community groups and organisations for support, however HART will re-engage should demand for assistance escalate.
- ⇒ We celebrated the strength and resilience that older people have shown throughout the pandemic as part of International Day of Older Persons on 1 October. The day was aimed at raising awareness of issues affecting older people but this year we also reflected on the last two years and how the pandemic had affected our community. Our officers were in Newark Market square and Forest Road in Ollerton providing information to people on activities available for them as they grow older. There were stalls providing information and advice on a wide range of services and support including health and care services and voluntary group information.



Food Vouchers: "Huge thank you to all the people who set up the £90 voucher it has helped me so much and I couldn't appreciate it anymore so again thank you."

"Thank you to those responsible for making this scheme possible. This will help me so much as it has been such a difficult year for everyone with the Pandemic"

Our Customers said:-



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Deliver inclusive and sustainable growth



What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ 7 priority projects were identified for funding from the Newark Town Fund. Over the year to date the following work was delivered;
 - The Construction College was formally opened by Newark's MP in June 2021. The centre will support local businesses and self-employed engineers by providing short courses, apprenticeships and programmes for career retraining and gas assessment training.
 - The International Air and Space Training (IASTI) project is moving at pace with a planning application due for submission in early October 2021. The IASTI course opened in September in its current location (Lincoln College) and has nearly 50 students enrolled.
 - Demolition of the Cattle Market is underway to enable delivery of the Newark Gateway Programme, and a planning application was submitted for Stodman Street on the 8 October.
- ⇒ We have worked with partners to pull together a funding bid for the Community Renewal Fund (CRF). The CRF is a £220 million national grant aimed at programs and interventions which can drive innovation in addressing the barriers that people face in accessing skills and local labour market opportunities, business support and place support.
- ⇒ We offer a comprehensive programme of support to ensure sustainable economic growth for local businesses. In the year to date the support included;
 - 25 sessions held giving Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) for businesses
 - 51 occasions where we have provided support for businesses to obtain grant funding
 - 69 local businesses supported with training and mentoring programmes
- ⇒ The Business Training Programme supporting 12 SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) created 8 new jobs as of July 2021 and a business resilience programme was launched in July 2021 running through to December 2022.
- ⇒ The fourth round of the High Street Diversification programme is still open offering businesses small grants focused on diversification of their social media advertising. To date, over the previous 3 rounds of funding, the programme has supported 200 independent high street retail and hospitality businesses within Newark and Sherwood area.
- ⇒ We continue to work with the Town Councils at Newark, Southwell, Ollerton and Edwinstowe regarding allocated budgets from the Welcome Back Fund for each location. Work has begun on purchases to benefit the town centres. This includes new branded flower planters, seats, bins and flowers to be installed in Ollerton and Edwinstowe, new market stall canopies to be purchased and installed in Southwell Market place, and a new promotional video for 12 days of Christmas promoting shop local.
- ⇒ We are planning a 'Future First Expo' for young people on 3 November 2021. This is an interactive event that showcases everything the area had to offer in terms of careers, training and education. It's aimed at individuals wanting to explore new training and employment opportunities especially targeting year 11 to 13 students. We've engaged over 50 local employers and 8 schools are set to participate with an expected attendance of 1,000 pupils.
- ⇒ The Palace at the Castle programme saw the magic of the stage transported to the stunning grounds of Newark Castle over the summer. 13 shows were held at the Castle with a total attendance over the programme of 969.

Activities continued...

- ⇒ We are working with the Lincoln College Group to support students and those seeking employment through the 'Kick-Start' scheme which partners with a range of organisations across the Newark and Sherwood area. There are 223 placements in Newark with 104 filled to date. This programme was due to close in December 2021 but has been extended until March 2022, and the scheme expects to support a further 200 young people.
- ⇒ We are continuing to facilitate the Employment & Skills Board (ESB) with key partners. Members of this board worked together to design and plan for the Teenage Market which took place in September 2021. There were 15 stalls operational on the day with 1,161 unique visitors going to the teenage market.
- ⇒ We continue to lead, shape, influence or in some cases directly deliver key required infrastructure including;
 - Continuing to work on the design and delivery model of the A1 Overbridge with Highways England and Nottinghamshire County Council.
 - Continuing to plan for the delivery of the Southern link Road with a wide range of partners. This remains a priority as reflected in the Newark Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid in June 2021.
- ⇒ We have started work to deliver the Newark High Street Heritage Action Zone project. The work completed over this period includes;
 - 3 footfall sensors have been installed between May and June to log the footfall in Newark town centre and footfall will be reported on in the next full quarter.
 - A dedicated information page has been created on the Council's website, and
 - An updated Heritage at Risk survey in the HSHAZ area has been undertaken by the Conservation Team, allowing the Council to refine and prioritise buildings for support.
- ⇒ An action plan setting out how we will deliver the Economic Growth and Tourism Strategies was approved in September 2021. It sets out key interventions and timelines and performance against this will be reported.

Business Support Grants: "big thank you to you for providing the grants quickly. You have helped enormously and thanks to this I have been able to keep my business afloat and to keep my staff employed and been able to pay my rent and bills"

Business support programme: "I'd like to take this chance to say thank you for the opportunity to take part in this business support programme. I personally have found it very valuable and I hope it continues for many more businesses as this will very much benefit our whole community".

Events at the Castle: "Brilliant performance of Much Ado About Nothing last night at Newark Castle. Thank you for a fantastic evening"

National Civil War Centre: "Really enjoyed my visit... Some great historic items on display, well set out" – 5 star review on Google



Our Customers said:-



	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	England/ National Average
% of unemployment for 16+ in Newark & Sherwood	8.2%	6.7%	6.1%	5.1%
Percentage of Town Centre retail premises vacant across the NSDC District	Not previously collected		9.5%	-
The performance of our assets which contribute to the economic growth of the district				
	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Current Target
Total number of admissions - National Civil War Centre	New for Q3 20/21	New for Q3 20/21	2,016	2,975
Total number of admissions - Palace Theatre	New for Q1 20/21	0	3,456	6,750
Newark Beacon - % of occupied units	New for Q3 20/21	New for Q3 20/21	86.0%	80%
Sherwood Forest Arts and Crafts - % of occupied units	New for Q1 21/22	New for Q1 21/22	100.0%	95%
Commercial Property - % occupied units	New for Q1 21/22	New for Q1 21/22	97.0%	95%

Exploring our performance...

For both the National Civil War Centre and Palace Theatre the figures are underperforming against target due to the prolonged impacts of Covid lockdowns and continuing restrictions through the period.



Create more and better quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority

What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ Our commitment to providing fit for purpose homeless accommodation is progressing. A contractor has been selected to complete the rebuild work at Seven Hills in Newark and work is underway to temporarily decant residents of the facility, during the works, to our Wellow Green provision.
- ⇒ Our work on preventing rough sleepers returning to the streets saw 6 people move into accommodation units on Northgate in April. The units have a positive environment, supporting those who wish to change and providing them with the opportunity to work towards securing permanent homes. Engagement in this project has kept the majority of our rough sleepers from returning to the streets, reducing their involvement in town centre antisocial behaviour. As the project was completed within timescales we were able to claim the first quarter payment from Homes England to cover revenue costs.
- ⇒ The 'Healthy Start' project is progressing well. We are piloting a project whereby a rent and income conversation is had with all applicants once they've made an offer on a property (rather than previously when this conversation was had at sign-up). This ensures both the prospective tenant and the income team get a head start on ensuring everything is in place for the new tenancy. Should the pilot be successful, we will look to embed this as part of our new tenancy offer.
- ⇒ The early tenancy contact initiative has proved successful, with underlying rent and income related issues being picked up before they escalate.
- ⇒ We met with the Notts and Lincs Credit Union to discuss how we can better work together to increase membership across the district, exploring a number of initiatives aimed at supporting tenants as they establish their tenancy which should contribute towards tenancy success. This work will develop further over the coming months.
- ⇒ 750 non-essential repairs were put on hold during Covid-19 but they have now all been successfully completed. The Responsive Repairs service is now operating on a "business as usual" basis. We have developed a new planning programme of coordinated works, offering greater value for money and a better service for tenants who are now receiving a more responsive service. The team are now starting to review the 3 tier repair response timescales to see if it can be improved on. The performance figures show that since April 2021 100% of appointments made and have been kept and in September the customer satisfaction for repairs was 95%. This means 95% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the repairs service they received.
- ⇒ The handy person service is still on hold as we experience, along with the wider sector, difficulties in recruiting to trade positions. However this is not affecting current service to our tenants and leaseholders.
- ⇒ Arkwood Developments, our development company have a number of units on the Bowbridge road development approaching completion. The show home opened on Saturday 28 May and there are currently 13 reservations in process. The build is on target for all remaining units to be completed by October 2022.
- ⇒ We are looking to enhance the standard a home must meet before it is re-let (known as The Empty Homes Standards) to ensure new tenants receive a good standard of accommodation upon receipt of the property. The desktop exercise started in March 2021 and the pilot scheme started in September. We are aiming to report findings and customer feedback to committees in March 2022.

Activities continued...

- ⇒ In order to provide high quality environments and homes where people wish to live we are reviewing the suitability of sites currently allocated for housing, employment and open space protection to ensure they continue to be deliverable. We consulted on an options report as part of the latest stage of this review and we continue to negotiate with developers on proposals submitted at both pre and full planning application stage in order to seek improvements to details submitted. For example, on the amount and location of landscaping, the layout of housing, parking provision and infrastructure needed for the future community to ensure we are providing high quality environments and homes where people wish to live.
- ⇒ 55 applications for housing proposals were determined, of which 49 were approved. This is fairly consistent with the previous quarter. 8 applications were presented to Planning Committee, including housing proposals, and 278 were approved under delegated authority.

Homeless Support: “thank you to everyone at Newark and Sherwood for their kindness, consideration, compassion and for my treatment everybody down there has treated me with the utmost respect and courtesy, like a human being, not a statistic”

Repair Team: “Incredibly professional, very thorough and did a marvellous job. His sense of humour was refreshing and it was nice to have someone come round to do a job who had a smile on his face”

“what a pleasure it is to be a tenant of Newark and Sherwood District Council, the times I have had reason to communicate with the personnel via telephone, be it my rent or my council tax I have been treated with the utmost, courtesy and respect, nothing was too much trouble”

Planning: “A final thank you to you and all the planning team for help and proactive and practical guidance through this project against the backdrop of what has been the most difficult of times for us all.”



Our Customers said:-

Spotlight benchmarking

Joint fastest Local Authority in the East Midlands for the 'Time taken to process housing benefit new claims and change events' (data from Q4 20/21).



Average time taken was **2 Days**. The England average is 3 days

	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
Average time spent in temporary accommodation (weeks)	N/A	Data not provided	11.5	13.0
Average time (days) to re-let Council properties	15.0	39.3	26.4	18.0
% of rent collected from current tenants as a % of rent owed	98.9%	100.6%	99.1%	99.6%
Average "End to End" time for all reactive repairs	N/A	8.4	27.5	6.0
% of repairs completed at first visit	N/A	96.0%	98.4%	98.0%
% of planning applications (major) determined in time	New for Q1 21/22	New for Q1 21/22	92.0%	90.0%
% of planning applications (non major) determined in time	New for Q1 21/22	New for Q1 21/22	97.0%	90.0%
Average no of working days to process housing benefit change in circumstances	3.3	7.2	7.4	7.0
Average no of working days to process new housing benefit claims	New for Q3 20/21	New for Q3 20/21	18.0	18.0

Exploring our performance...

Average time to re-let was 24.9 days in quarter one and rose to 26.4 days in quarter two.

The end to end repair time was 39.2 days for quarter one and improved to 27.5 days in quarter two. The delay was due to the backlog of works suspended during Covid. The repairs team have now caught up on over 750 repairs and 450 planned works and are expecting this indicator to improve.

How are we performing against our objective to...

Continue to maintain high standard of cleanliness and appearance of the local environment



What we have been doing this quarter;

⇒ Our 'Not in Newark and Sherwood' anti-fly tipping campaign continued to prove successful. We branded our vehicles to make it clear that we would prosecute fly tippers and we carried out a proactive marketing campaign for our bulky waste service, resulting in a 40% increase in customers meaning now have 1,181 customers on our books.



⇒ We undertook 6 prosecutions and carried out 21 investigations with one fly-tipper receiving a £400 penalty when a member of the public reported them for disposing of 600 kilos of garden waste. We installed CCTV cameras in hotspot areas and blocked off two hot spot areas (preventing vehicle entry) to tackle rife industrial fly-tipping. We also made permanent alterations to the Grange Lane hotspot in collaboration with Notts County and VIA. This lay-by was a magnet for fly-tipping and we closed it permanently as part of a district-wide crackdown on environmental crime. We installed bollards along the lay-by, preventing vehicle access to opportunistic fly-tippers. We also put plants along the roadside behind the bollards to enhance the look of the area and improve biodiversity.

⇒ We were successful in applying for money from the Litter Binrastructure Fund, a grant scheme run by environmental charity WRAP, to invest in additional bins across the district. The £20,066 grant enabled us to purchase 56 bins for laybys along some of our busiest roads.

⇒ 230 Green Champion Volunteers took part in 34 litter picking events across the district in association with 'Keep Britain Tidy', collecting 248 bags of waste. We also installed 18 volunteer litter bins in the district, with a further 478 bags of litter being collected from them.

⇒ The Action Day Team recommenced activities following the disruption caused by the pandemic. The team are deployed into target areas to undertake street scene activities and improve resident satisfaction. In addition to this the Street Scene team have continued to play a leading role in the cleansing side of the Safer Streets 2 project. This is a project to improve areas of high crime and anti-social behaviour. The next Day of Action is planned for Southwell in October and mini days of action have taken place at Yorke Drive and Winthorpe Road Estate. Working with Via, and actively encouraging partnership working, our Street Scene team dedicated over 35 hours of additional work to the Safer Streets 2 work areas. In depth planning has been carried out in readiness for a day of action in Clipstone to take place in the next few months.

⇒ Our Community Protection Officer patrols continue to be prioritised to identify problem areas, with Riverside Park being a focus of activity during the last few months.

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Activities continued...

- ⇒ Targeted interventions to address repeated environmental neglect were delivered in collaboration using Community Protection legislation. Three formal Community Protection notices were issued to homes on an estate in Boughton and other enforcement action has been taken in Southwell, Clipstone and Fernwood.
- ⇒ A one year pilot project to increase enforcement of littering has been developed in partnership with the enforcement agency Waste Investigations, Support and Enforcement (WISE). This is due to commence in October. The project will increase our focus on tackling environmental crime and the officers will have the powers to issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to those who blight our communities with litter, graffiti, fly-tipping and dog fouling.
- ⇒ We took over the contract to manage the green spaces associated with our social housing stock, enabling us to employ 3 additional apprentices. The team have already received positive feedback from customers (70% of tenants surveyed in September 2021 were satisfied or very satisfied with their ground maintenance service) and have achieved a very high grading for all areas of activity including the newly acquired housing land.
- ⇒ We ran a successful 'Bark in the Park' event at Vicar Water Country Park Clipstone in June. The day was aimed at helping improve dog welfare and responsible dog ownership, as part of our ongoing PAWS campaign which promotes responsible dog ownership and tackles dog fouling. Amongst the services on offer was free micro-chipping, dog grooming tips, health checks and neutering vouchers. Pupils at Farnsfield St Michael's C of E Primary School also took part in a poster competition called "Pick up the Poo" to encourage more dog owners to clean up their dogs' poo and dispose of it correctly. The posters were put up in hot spot areas where there are known issues with dog fouling.
- ⇒ In September we ran 2 green festivals in our parks to increase awareness of recycling as part of our post-Covid recovery activities and in early October we attended a community event delivered by Reach on recycling and a Green Week in Harby. We also recommenced our programme on raising awareness of recycling and green issues in schools and undertook 14 visits in the last 3 months.

Grounds Maintenance: "the grass cutting service is greatly improved"

"the staff are lovely, always friendly, always greet you with a smile and work tirelessly to keep the area in such incredible condition. Please thank each and every one of them for their hard work and smiles."

Waste Operatives: "thanks to the bin collectors, they have collected my assisted bin and have done a sterling job during the pandemic"

"this crew really stood out, they came and emptied the bins quietly, no shouting around, they were calm quite and professional."



Our Customers said:-



Image of graffiti removal

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	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
% fly tipping incidents removed within 72 hours	New for Q3 20/21	New for Q3 20/21	69.0%	75.0%
No. of fly tipping incidents	624	759	787	700
No. of fly tipping enforcement actions	628	382	800	710
% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	36.7%	33.7%	Waiting for External Data	34.0%
No. of missed bins (per 100,000 population)	40.7	51.3	46.3	55
Total number of garden waste subscriptions	New for Q3 20/21	New for Q3 20/21	16,621	15,272
% Level 1 graffiti incidents removed within 36 hours	New for Q1 20/21	25.0%	88.0%	90.0%
% Level 2 graffiti incidents removed within 14 days	New for Q1 20/21	66.7%	91.0%	90.0%
% of failing sites - street and environmental cleanliness - Litter	N/A	0.7%	1.2%	3.0%
% of failing sites - street and environmental cleanliness - Detritus	N/A	0.7%	1.6%	2.0%

Exploring our performance...

The number of fly tipping incidents in quarter 1 was 410 and in quarter two this reduced to 377. Although the number of incidents reduced the weight and size of tips increased. The average time to remove a fly tip was 45 hours in quarter two as the larger ones required additional resources adversely effected the overall figures.

We are waiting external data to confirm our recycling rate for quarter two but the recycling rate for quarter one was 39.7% exceeding the target of 34%.



Enhance and protect the district's natural environment

What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ We have planted 6,000 of our target of 10,000 trees (target to be achieved by 2023). Feasibility has been agreed and awaiting Committee approval to plant a further 6,000 trees at Vicar Water and the Tree Giveaway in now underway for district residents.
- ⇒ Implementation of the local transport plan and associated projects is progressing with engagement with Notts County Council on a range of transport related activity including;
 - Work on procurement of a service provider to develop a business case for the Newark Cycle Town project which aims to increase options for sustainable travel contributing to the aim of Newark becoming a 20 minute town. The option includes a folding-bike hire offer in the town and integrating cycle 'hubs' with existing transport infrastructure. Agreement in principle has been secured for two sites with two additional locations still requiring confirmation. Over the course of the summer officers have engaged with local businesses, seeking expressions of interest to partner in the project and potential sources of match funding.
 - Working with County colleagues to provide local insight for building the business case for 'Travel and Transport Hub' projects proposed under the Rural Mobility Fund (RMF).
 - Working with County colleagues in the development the Nottinghamshire Bus Service Improvement Plan in accordance with the requirements of the National Bus Strategy.
 - We continue to work alongside partners and developers to ensure a joined up approach to the delivery of road development projects in and around Newark. These include ongoing development of the preferred route and design of the A46 Newark Northern Bypass, securing funding for delivery of the Newark Southern Link Road (bid to round one of the Levelling Up Fund submitted in June) and the new A1 overbridge.
- ⇒ We drafted a masterplan for Forest Corner and shared it with our partners at NCC for their consideration. The proposal is for this masterplan to be considered as a strategic project by the new Sherwood Place Board.
- ⇒ The solar PV feasibility study is now complete and we have a comprehensive report on payback, costs and carbon savings for the installation of solar PV on selected corporate and leisure buildings. A business case is being taken to November Policy & Finance Committee.
- ⇒ As part of our progress towards our 2035 carbon neutrality target we began to develop our Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan. As part of the Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan we have committed to the implementation of electric vehicles within our owned fleet of vehicles. A pilot has been undertaken and we currently have 2 electric vehicles in use.
- ⇒ We took an update report to Leisure and Environment, Economic Development and Home and Communities Committees in September 2021 updating on what has been achieved since December 2020 (when the climate emergency strategy and associated action plan were approved).
- ⇒ We have made progress in identifying additional sites for Electric Vehicle charge points, with 4 each planned in Newark and Southwell. This will bring us to 15 points across the district once installations are complete in Autumn 2021.
- ⇒ We have committed to consider a reduction in Taxi Licencing fees for low carbon vehicles including hybrid or electric vehicles and vehicles with lower emissions. We currently licence 68 Hackney Carriages of which 4 are hybrid and 1 full electric.

Activities continued...

⇒ Two members of the Council's Street Scene team spent the day constructing a greenhouse at the Parkgate Academy in Ollerton. An 'eco warrior' group were appointed to encourage and oversee the school's environmental activities and the group secured funds from a Tesco grant, enabling them to buy a greenhouse for their environmental endeavours.



⇒ As part of the National Waste and Resources Strategy we will be mandated to collect more waste streams than at present, potentially requiring a larger fleet. Work is underway to explore the impact of this, as well as our commitment to electrification of the fleet, on the Brunel drive Depot site.

⇒ As part of our commitment to exploring a range of carbon reduction and energy efficiency projects across a range of our corporate and leisure buildings. We have obtained quotes for the replacement of the biomass boilers and gas boiler at the Newark Beacon with a low carbon alternative as the current heating system is due for replacement. LED lighting upgrades across all of our corporate and leisure sites are also being considered and costed as part of this.

⇒ We have been allocated £724,850 of funding to deliver a project which improves the quality of homes by increasing the EPC ratings of properties to enable cost saving for householders and carbon reduction as well as creating green jobs via use of Regional Energy Hubs. We have, in partnership with Eon, developed the LAD2 programme of works due for completion on 31st December 2021. This programme entails works on 53 properties from the private market and 20 properties from the Council's housing stock. This project will provide low income households with up to £10,000 of environmentally friendly home improvements, such as insulation and the installation of solar PV, to improve the EPC ratings of properties.

⇒ The new Residential Cycle and Car Parking Standards and Design Guide has been adopted. It encourages all residential developments to provide secure and undercover cycle parking provision in accordance with the recommended standards and recommends that each dwelling with a garage/ dedicated parking space within its curtilage be provided with an electric vehicle charging point.

Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and increase feelings of safety in our communities



What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ Since April, we installed 9 mobile CCTV cameras across the district in response to anti-social behaviour reports, and upgraded 3 fixed cameras to give evidential quality images. We also reviewed the placement of 73 public realm CCTV cameras and the analysis with crime data confirmed that they were in the right places.
- ⇒ To increase patrols, engagement and support within the community we appointed two additional temporary Community Protection Officers. Shift patterns were extended to cover 13 hours of the day to increase visibility and rapid response to issues. Weekly task setting meetings continue to be held with the police to identify problem areas and prioritise resources to areas that require interventions.
- ⇒ We had 2 nights of action focused on Covid secure standards within hospitality following the easing of lockdown restrictions. Our officers visited more than 50 bars, pubs and restaurants on Saturday 17 April following the return of hospitality. Over these days we served 2 fixed penalty notices at premises in Ollerton and Edwinstowe. We also focused on particular problems in Southwell, Clipstone and Newark. We also had 2 nights of action in Newark during August and September.
- ⇒ Working in partnership with the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and the local Neighbourhood Policing team we developed phase 2 of the Safer Streets programme. The programme covers 3 localities (LSOAs) in Newark and the programme is progressing well. Our priorities for Safer Streets 2 are; vehicle crime, burglary, bike theft, environmental improvement and community engagement.
- ⇒ The interventions undertaken to date as part of Safer Streets 1 and 2 includes; the installation of more street lighting, increased ANPR and CCTV, joint patrols, the introduction of secure cycle shelters and stores, target hardening and increased neighbourhood watch activity. This work has paid off. At the end of September we found that crime was down more in Newark and Sherwood than anywhere in Nottinghamshire with 738 (17%) fewer offences in 21/22 to date compared with 19/20 (pre-Covid). As follows; burglary was down 33%, robbery was down 76% and theft was down 30%.
- ⇒ After a spate of anti-social behaviour in the Balderton and Newark areas, which saw the Parish Council's offices being broken into, residents feeling intimidated and reluctant to sit in their own gardens, and the cruel, catapult-inflicted abuse to a variety of birds, we worked with a range of stakeholders to introduce a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). The PSPO, which covers Newark town centre, Balderton lakes, Coronation Park and the lakeside shopping centre in Balderton will last for 3 years and gives designated officers a number of powers to tackle this anti-social behaviour. New signage has been erected around the restricted areas to act as a deterrent and an update on its effectiveness will be brought back to Committee.
- ⇒ Following a series of illegal encampments, we enacted plans to help prevent illegal encampments and direct the transient population to the areas put aside for them. We identified 21 at risk sites across the district, 15 of which we own. We assessed the sites according to risk, with 5 being identified as high risk, 8 as medium and 8 as low. Instead of erecting barriers, we elected to use bunds (earth mounds created to provide natural barriers) and plant trees to tackle the issue. These natural barriers will also support our climate emergency agenda by providing a haven for wildlife.

Activities continued...

⇒ We delivered activities to divert antisocial behaviour at Vicar Water Country Park, Sconce & Devon parks, Fernwood, Balderton and Collingham as follows:

Fernwood Community Engagement Day in response to a spike of young people related ASB in the area. Activities included; interactive games such as virtual boxing, members of the Fire Service attended to deliver information about fire safety, the 'Legacy Graffiti Project' which focused on respect following some targeted hate crime incidents and a Community Safety stall which encouraged sign up for the local Speed Watch and Neighbourhood Watch groups.

A wildlife event at Balderton Lakes was held to raise awareness of water safety and the vast array of wildlife in the area. Nottingham Fire and Rescue service provided water safety advice and delivered a number of water rescue demonstrations. Community Safety, PAWS, the Wildlife Trust, the RSPCA and the Police all held stalls to provide information and advice on the vulnerability of our local wildlife and wildlife crime. Children took part in a mini beast trail, Men in Sheds explained how to make mini beast homes and how to encourage the wildlife into our gardens and Andy, fisherman for the day, engaged the younger population on angling.



⇒ We carried out additional work with the secondary schools in Newark on wildlife crime. We also developed a wider programme of diversionary activities to tackle wildlife crime with partners and a delivery plan is in place for the rest of the year covering the whole district.

⇒ In June we launched the new Chatham Court Community Hub and worked with tenants to set up a new tenant association to help in making the area a better place to live by giving them a safe space to raise their concerns with us. A variety of partners attended to talk about safer streets and improving the community.

⇒ We tackled the rise in cycle theft by installing 22 secure street pods in locations around Newark. Each pod holds two cycles, making a total of 44 new secure spaces. We also provided additional storage for residents who live in flat blocks. 2 secure cycle 'hangars' were installed at Tithe Barn and Chatham Court in Newark, while existing cycle storage was upgraded from one large store, to individual compartments for up to 12 bikes. We gave away 65 high quality GPS tracking devices worth more than £100 each to cyclists as part of our Safer Streets campaign. These energy efficient devices link to smart phones, enabling the owner to trace their bikes and alert the police to where the bike is being kept. We also held free bike marking sessions as part of our work to reduce cycle theft, identify stolen bikes and assist in owner recovery.

⇒ In June we launched the new Chatham Court Community Hub and worked with tenants to set up a new tenant association to help in making the area a better place to live by giving them a safe space to raise their concerns with us. A variety of partners attended to talk about safer streets and improving the community.

**Measuring
Success**



	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
% Reduction in anti social behaviour - Newark & Sherwood District	7.4%	-75.0%	-20.0%	0.0%
% Reduction in all crime - Newark & Sherwood District	1.6%	20.0%	17.0%	0.0%
% of businesses in the district with 4 or 5 stars for food rating	New for Q2 21/22	New for Q2 21/22	89.5%	English average 75%
% of businesses in the district with a 0 (major improvement necessary) star food rating	New for Q2 21/22	New for Q2 21/22	0.18%	English average 0.13%
Fixed Penalty notices (number issued)	43	18	11	No target set
Community Protection notices/warnings (number issued)	20	15	1	No target set
All other notices/warnings (number issued)	10	9	4	No target set



Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents

What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ Dukeries Leisure Centre's new pool was completed and opened to the public on 30th June. The build was completed within budget and the new facility has already generated new memberships. 117 additional memberships were secured in June and at the end of September this had increased to an additional 668 memberships (adult and junior combined).
- ⇒ Following the downturn brought on by Covid, Active 4 Today's membership began to increase again and the Company is now operating at 70% of live members against its pre-Covid numbers. This is great performance as the national average is still quite low at only 55%.
- ⇒ Transfer of the operational management and TUPE transfer of staff of Southwell Leisure from the Southwell Leisure Centre Trust to Active4Today took place on 1 October. This will provide greater resilience to the small site, ensuring it is able to continue to provide excellent facilities for residents within the area.
- ⇒ Our support of Newark Hockey Club continues. Our proposal to replace the existing artificial turf pitch has progressed and draft agreements have been prepared to secure approvals to proceed with the refurbishment and deliver a new pitch in time for the 2022/23 hockey season.
- ⇒ Through our Warmer Homes initiatives, we are replacing solid fuel with gas heating systems for a number of properties where other initiatives have not been viable, such as Fairholm park home site with over 40 park homes. Our Energy and Home Support Team have also started to support a further 2 park home sites (Harrow Lane & Forest House Park in Ollerton) in a similar way, helping another 48 residents to access affordable warmth this winter.
- ⇒ The Max Literacy funded project engaged with 220 children in Year 10 and their English teachers at Newark Academy to develop their creative writing skills in preparation for their GCSEs. The project included a visit to the resource centre, 3 visits to the National Civil War Centre and 6 workshops.
- ⇒ An outreach visit to Cleethorpes Academy helped us to engage with 120 children who couldn't otherwise visit the National Civil War Centre and we livestreamed lessons to a Worcestershire school enabling us to connect a further 180 secondary school students to the history of the British Civil Wars.
- ⇒ We are working as part of Newark Cultural Consortium to deliver the cultural programme (known as 'Newark Creates') for the High Street Heritage Action Zone Project. The 'Newark Creates' programme includes; a heritage poetry trail featuring significant historic buildings within the town, a family play day, a pop-up dance day and a Twilight event hosted at Newark Castle. 3,040 people attended and/or participated in these events.
- ⇒ In July we were awarded £200 and we set up a Mental Health Art Group at Ambleside Community Centre, Ollerton.
- ⇒ The Park Run and Junior Park Run at Sconce and Devon park, Newark restarted in July. Over quarters one and two Newark Park run attracted 2,129 runners and 202 volunteers supported the event. The Junior Park run saw 1,617 runners and 564 volunteers.
- ⇒ Our outreach days at Newark Castle and Vicar Water, and our Heritage Open Day events at the Castle and Resource Centre engaged over 900 people through music, art, performances and tours.

Activities continued...

- ⇒ Crop Drop is coming to a close as the summer/autumn growing season has almost finished. We started Crop Drop in April, working with 8 large allotments, and a group of 6 volunteers who deliver the crops around the district. Crop Drop has been very successful, providing fresh vegetables to over 200 families in Newark & Sherwood including; the Ollerton and Clipstone Food Clubs, families in Bilsthorpe, the Bean Block Café (run by Sure Start), Barnby Road School (where over 40 families claim free school meals), students and their families at Newark College facing hardship and Beaumont House Hospice. We recruited another 3 market gardens in Southwell, Upton and Collingham to support the scheme in 2022, thus increasing our numbers to 8 allotments and 3 market gardens being involved. We also added the crop drop to a number of social eating events in the district, most recently a social event at DeLacy Court which targeted vulnerable, lonely tenants and a cook and eat session with a local primary school in Newark. Crop Drop was also incorporated into the HAF programme in some of our areas and children were given marrows, squashes and courgettes with recipe cards to take home to cook with their families.
- ⇒ Membership to the Food Club in Ollerton increased to 85 with around 50 families accessing food provision weekly. Clipstone Food Club membership increased to 57 at its peak and 30 families still rely on the service. We are now looking at setting up a satellite service to provide food parcels to families in Edwinstowe. Whilst some families have now gone back to work after being furloughed we anticipate that demand will continue in the next few months as changes in Universal Credit come into effect and prices for food and fuel look to continue to increase.
- ⇒ Roll out of Saturday Night 'Fakeaway' is being planned at a local primary school in Newark. Once a month all families, regardless of their household incomes, will be encouraged to cook and eat together. Ingredients will be sourced locally with a small charge to ensure the activity is sustainable. A group of parents are looking at applying for funding for the first month through the Community Food Fund.
- ⇒ Our work to improve the facilities on offer in Newark by supporting the YMCA are progressing. The construction of the main Community and Activity Village building is well under way with an anticipated completion date of Spring 2022. The outdoor sports facilities remain very well used.



Spotlight benchmarking

62.9% of adults (aged 18+) are classified as overweight or obese (data from 2019/20)
4th lowest of our geographical neighbours. The national average is 62.8%.

Measuring Success



	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
Number of User Visits - Active 4 Today excl. Southwell Leisure Centre.	460,469	79,552	267,688	350,000
Live Leisure Centre Membership Base (Juniors & Adults) excl. Southwell Leisure Centre.	8,855	5,931	6,547	8,000

Exploring our performance...

The number of A4T user visits for quarter 1 was 100,316 and in quarter two this increased by 66.8% to 167,372. The number of visits is still lower than target which is a lasting impact from Covid however the quarterly increase in visits is a positive sign. There is a significant decrease in the membership base across all sites in comparison to August 2019.

Moving forwards all measures will include Southwell Leisure Centre (SLC) as SLC transferred to Newark and Sherwood District Council as part of a partnership arrangement that will protect leisure provision in the town. The centre is being run by our leisure provider, Active4Today, as of 1 October 2021.

In this section of the report we look at a few key measures of customer interaction to monitor how we interact with our customers, and we look at what our customers are telling us about the services they receive. We analyse these comments and show how we are learning from customer feedback.

Key customer measures	Quarter 2 19/20	Quarter 2 20/21	Quarter 1 21/22	Quarter 2 21/22	Target 21/22
Website - number of users	207,751	257,598	114,341	209,403	200,000
Engagement rate with posts issued on Facebook and Twitter combined	New for Q1 21/22	New for Q1 21/22	385,132	635,100	Trend
Website - number of digital Web Form transactions	New for Q1 21/22	New for Q1 21/22	8,408	15,220	Trend
Telephony - Average length of time to answer call (seconds)	New for Q4 20/21	New for Q4 20/21	61.0	125	25.0
% Invoices paid within 30 days - Whole Council	96.2%	N/A	94.0%	96.6%	95.0%
% effective response to Careline calls within 180 seconds (industry standard)	New for Q1 20/21	98.5%	98.4%	98.0%	99.0%
% Business rate collection	55.2%	Data Not Provided	31.0%	51.5%	49.0%
% Council tax collection	52.8%	43.2%	24.5%	52.5%	48.8%
Average number working days to process new council tax applications	New for Q3 20/21	New for Q3 20/21	18.1	19.2	18.0
Average number of working days to process council tax change in circumstances	New for Q3 20/21	New for Q3 20/21	5.1	4.6	7.0
Average number of working days to process housing benefit change in circumstances	3.3	7.2	3.1	7.4	7.0
Average number of working days to process new housing benefit claims	New for Q3 20/21	New for Q3 20/21	17.2	18.0	18.0

Exploring our performance...

Customer services took, on average, 125 seconds (after choosing the option from the recorded message) to answer customer service calls in quarter two. This is lower than optimal performance. This is because customer services are currently experiencing a high staff turnover and the training of new staff has meant fewer advisors are available to take calls.

Monday mornings were identified as a peak for call volume. To reduce these high call volumes, and thus improve the pick-up time for customers, the team worked with communications to deliver a social media campaign to raise awareness of the Monday morning peak diverting customers to the website or alternative times to call (unless the query is urgent).

Customer Feedback

Over the year to date we have received 56 compliments, 186 complaints and 21 suggestions.

Compliments

Compliment volumes stayed comparable between Q1 and Q2 however this is lower than the Q4 period when 42 compliments were received. Teams attracting the highest volume of praise included;

- Housing Maintenance and Asset Management with 21.5% of all praise. Within this staff conduct was the main theme with 42% of compliments followed by the quality of repairs work with 33% .
- Housing and Estates Management received 17.9% of all praise. Compliments for the Humanitarian Aid Response Team and staff conduct were the main themes.
- Waste and transport received praise for waste collections, speedy delivery of new bins and staff going above and beyond.
- Street Scene and Grounds Maintenance received positive feedback from residents for the quality of work carried out in all weathers.
- Tourism featured in quarter two with 8.9% of quarter two's praise regarding the Steam Punk Festival in Newark. Customers praised the event's organisation and requested a repeat of the event.

Looking across all compliments received the main theme for the period, with 39.3%, was staff attitude (positive and assistive). This is consistent with the 2020/21 Q4 compliment themes. Other areas attracting high praise included;

- Quality of grounds maintenance in our streets and open spaces,
- Positive feedback on the Steam Punk Festival (supported by our Tourism team),
- The work of HART (the Humanitarian Aid Response Team) and,
- The quality of repair work carried out in tenant homes.

Complaints

186 complaints were received over quarters 1 and 2. Not surprisingly, the services receiving the most complaints are those that have the greatest interaction with customers, namely; Waste & Transport, Housing Maintenance & Asset Management, Council Tax, Housing & Estates Management and Street Scene/Grounds Maintenance.

Waste & Transport received 44 complaints (23.66%). However, this is 36% fewer complaints compared to the same period last year. The main complaint themes were; non delivery of new bins, missed bins, communication and staff conduct.

Council Tax received 35 complaints (18.8%). The main complaint themes were; complaints over the tax rate applied, arrears payments and communication issues. Communication issues included complaints around non receipt of bills, balance requests and update of details on the system.

Analysis of this customer feedback enabled us to identify and tackle some specific issues;

Area of improvement...

Housing maintenance and asset management complaints have increased compared to the same period last year. However it is worth noting that there was a 34% reduction in complaints between quarters 1 and 2 this year.

Recurring themes included;

- time taken to complete repairs,
- quality of repairs,
- quality of customer service, and
- quality of services delivered by contractors.

What we have done to improve...

- Contractors have been instructed to do toolbox talk to their staff focussing on communication with tenants and customer service skills.
- Repair Response times for responding to damp and mould have been reviewed and we now have a designated repairs coordinator to deal with damp and mould. They regularly reviews cases to ensure works are carried out on time.
- If multiple attendances have been required to complete a repair this will be flagged and the work reviewed.
- The Careline team have received more training on advising tenants on repairs.

Area of improvement...

Customers were dissatisfied with the delivery of garden waste bins. There were delays in the delivery of new bins and a lack of communication around delivery.

Customers also raised issues with poor communication during signing up to the Garden Waste scheme.

What we have done to improve...

Unfortunately due to a shortage of delivery drivers, and the impacts of Covid, garden waste bins were unavailable for a period (they are now back in stock). During this time customers were still able to order and pay for a garden bin but after ordering they were informed of the delivery delay. Reflecting on customer feedback we now communicate if bins are available and any expected delays on the website at the point of order so customers are fully informed before they order.

The wording in the garden waste renewal process has been amended to make the form more user friendly and further development of the online form is planned to be completed before the next renewal cycle.

Tenant Satisfaction

Every quarter tenant satisfaction surveys are undertaken by Viewpoint to understand how we are performing for our tenants. Surveys are carried out on a random sample of tenants who received one of our key services. In quarter one and two 1,614 surveys were conducted over 13 service areas in total, and the average service satisfaction across the areas was 93% (aka 93% satisfied or very satisfied). This is comparable to the score received in the same period last year. Services receiving higher than average satisfaction include Major and Minor Adaptations to tenant homes, Careline services, Gas servicing and lettings, and areas where actions were identified were;

Complaint handling

67% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied. 3 surveys were carried out and 1 respondent was dissatisfied at not having received the outcome of their complaint at the point of survey.

Antisocial Behaviour

70% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied. 30 tenants were surveyed over quarters 1 and 2. Performance between the two periods performance declined by a marginal 2%. As a landlord we cannot always control the outcome or solution of an ASB issue as ASB responsibility predominantly sits with the Police and the Courts. However, we can control the experience of the customer reporting ASB and the process for handling ASB cases. As such, there is an ongoing project working with involved tenants to review and improve the ASB process.

Right to Buy

83% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied. 2 surveys were carried out in quarter one and 4 surveys in quarter two. The satisfaction rate in quarter one was 50% and 100% in quarter two. Significantly improving on the low satisfaction from Q1. The issue identified in quarter one was one of the two respondents being dissatisfied with advice on ownership of PV solar panels.

Customer Services

89% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied. The average was 91% for quarter one and 88% for quarter two. The most significant reason for dissatisfaction is tenants not receiving a call back. The customer services team are working on ensuring housing staff make contact with tenants.

Legionella

91% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied. 56 tenants were asked in the year to date and the issue identified was poor communication.

Major works to tenants homes

92% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied. The issue identified in quarter 2 was 3 tenants being dissatisfied with major works as for two of these tenants the work had not been finished and one felt it could have been done quicker.

Repairs

93% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied. Work has been done to improve satisfaction with repairs. Namely; we addressed our priority response times to enable us to get to priority requests quicker, we restocked our vans to carry a wider range of materials to enable repairs to be carried out, where possible, without a return to base for materials and we now have a dedicated repairs call line which will be manned by technically trained people to better diagnose repairs and follow-ons required.

The resident panel is a group of 758 Newark and Sherwood residents from across the district who share their views on the area and their experience of our services. Involvement in the panel is voluntary and all members must be over 18. Panel members are asked to share their views on a range of topics from Council's services to development proposals and plans for service improvement.

A 12 question online survey was circulated to the Resident Panel (680 aka 90% of the panel engage with online consultation) in January 2021 to help the Council;

- Understand the experiences of residents and use this information to help the Council's review its priorities and plan for recovery from the pandemic.
- Understand what is happening in the community to enable the Council to shape its services to deliver against community need.

In February 2021 we asked our panel members to get involved with 'Newark Creates,' a four year cultural programme led by Historic England, in partnership with National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England. This programme is part of Newark's High Street Heritage Action Zone project. To inform the development of the programme we carried out a survey to learn about how people of all ages engage with the cultural activities that take place in Newark to help shape the future cultural programme so that it promotes and celebrates Newark's heritage and culture and helps people to feel proud of where they live. This survey was promoted to the panel as well as on our website and 1,178 responses were received in total.

March 2021 we asked our resident panel to review 3 test pages on our new website considering the look and feel, readability and ease of use. The feedback from the panel was used to shape the final design the most notable changes as a result of the feedback where to make the navigation clearer.

A positive and motivated workforce is more likely to be high performing. To understand how our staff are performing and how we are supporting them we look at key indicators and recent activity.

Staff Update

Staff who had been primarily working from home during the pandemic commenced with a phased return to the office on 19 July with staff coming in 1 in 4 days on a rota to reduce numbers in the building. We took a cautious approach and paid particular attention to infection rates within the organisation, the district and the country. We also maintained our safe system of work.

We review our arrangements regularly and continue to listen to staff feedback. In August 2021 office based staff were surveyed to find out about their experiences returning to work post 19 July 2021. This feedback was used to inform a review of office working practices, namely when the next stage of transition would commence, and to shape future return to work plans. 230 responses were received. A 55% response rate (based on 414 office based staff). The survey showed that staff are feeling supported and connected to their colleagues however the comments highlighted several areas for improvement. The most significant themes were staff requesting greater flexibility and more home working in future and the majority of staff asked for the phased approach to be continued.

We have also developed new hybrid working guidance and held staff forums to determine what our next steps would be and what our “new normal” would look like. The forums were well received and attended and the outcome being explored for hybrid workers is 2-5 days per week in the office with a team day at least once a fortnight. The aim is for this working pattern to be embedded across hybrid workers at all locations but our different offices may need to develop their own models as their operational requirements differ. Our “new normal” is scheduled to commence on 15 November but this will be dependent on wider factors.

Key staff measures	Quarter 2 19/20	Quarter 2 20/21	Quarter 1 21/22	Quarter 2 21/22	Target 21/22
% of staff turnover	2.5%	2.5%	3.0%	4.0%	14%
Average number of sick days per employee (FTE) per year	3.7	2.2	1.7	3.5	3.0

Covid-19 measures	Q1	Q2
Number of staff who tested positive and were absent sick	4	10
Number of staff tested positive for Covid-19 and could continue to work from home	1	13
Number of staff tested positive for Covid-19 and could not work from home	2	17
Number of staff self-isolating and could continue to work from home	14	37
Number of staff self-isolating and could not work from home	20	44

Staff Turnover

Staff turnover in quarter 2 increased slightly to 4%. This remains within the annual target. The country is recovering from the effects of the pandemic and the national employment rate has risen to 75.2%. The vacancy rate across all sectors has increased meaning that some employees have felt that there is less risk attached to moving employment now. Despite the slight increase in leavers the Council continues to experience a high level of growth, with 49 new employees joining the authority in the first 6 months of this financial year. We have reviewed how we conduct exit surveys and are now offering interviews to those individuals who we would have liked to retain, and those in areas of high turnover to inform our retention strategies going forward.

Sickness Absence

Sickness for the Council in quarter two was 3.48 days per FTE against a target of 3 days. This is higher than the compared to 2.15 days in the same period last year when we were in lockdown. This is an increase in the number of working days lost of 355. This was largely due to the increase in long term absences (62% of absences being long term). These were attributed to a number of reasons including post-operative recovery and other clinical issues. There was also some mental health-related absence but none of the absences were work-related and HR continue to work closely with managers to deal with these absences.

Quarter 2 also saw a marked increase in Covid-related service disruption following the lifting of all national restrictions on 19 July. We retained a safe system of work in our offices and for staff undertaking Council work but with the lifting of national restrictions we have seen increased numbers. This demonstrates the knock-on impact of the changes in the community.

The service areas most impacted continue to be Environmental Services and Housing Maintenance where many employees were unable to work from home due to the nature of their work. This, alongside staffing shortages, continues to pose an issue. Whilst the Council has continued to experience a high level of growth in quarter two, we found that we were receiving far fewer quality applications for job roles, particularly LGV drivers and professional/technical roles. As such we have often had to re-advertise job vacancies. This is reflective of the situation within local government as the private sector are able to offer higher salaries for many roles.

Housing Measures for Homes & Communities and Housing Advisory Group

Indicator Name	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
Amount of current arrears as a % of annual rent debit	2.45%	2.24%	1.88%	2.30%
Amount of Current Arrears	£508,545	£528,158	£440,921	£400,000
Former tenant arrears as a % of annual rent debit	1.19%	1.03%	1.05%	1.30%
Number of Notices to Quit served at temporary accommodation for rent arrears	0	0	0	Trend
Number of all tenants who have been evicted for rent arrears	5	0	2	10
% of all tenants who have been evicted for rent arrears	0.10%	0.00%	0.04%	0.36%
Asset Investment - % of properties meeting the Decent Homes standard	100.0%	100.0%	No Data Provided	100.0%
Number of properties who have refused Decent Homes works	-	-	No Data Provided	No target set
Customer satisfaction with ASB	84.0%	83.0%	69.0%	90.0%
Customer Satisfaction with Allocations	89.0%	94.0%	99.0%	95.0%
Customer Satisfaction with Customer Access Services	85.0%	90.0%	N/A	95.0%

Housing Measures for Homes & Communities and Housing Advisory Group

Indicator Name	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
Tenant satisfaction with landlords complaints handling	-	-	100.0%	90.0%
Customer Satisfaction with Right to Buy Service	100.0%	92.0%	83.0%	90.0%
Customer satisfaction with Investment Works	77.0%	90.0%	90.0%	95.0%
Customer Satisfaction with Disabled Adaptations	97.5%	95.0%	97.0%	95.0%
Customer Satisfaction with Gas Servicing	94.0%	95.0%	96.0%	95.0%
Customer Satisfaction with Responsive Repairs	92.0%	95.0%	93.0%	95.0%
Percentage of complaints resolved within agreed timescales	-	-	No Data Provided	No target set
Avg time spent in temporary accommodation (weeks)	N/A	No Data Provided	11.5	13.0
Average time (days) to re-let Council properties	15.0	39.3	26.4	18.0
Number of Empty Properties having major works (at quarter end)	17	12	26	Trend
Number of Empty Properties ready to let (at quarter end)	13	52	14	Trend
% effective response to careline calls within 180 seconds (industry standard)	-	98.5%	98.0%	99.0%

Housing Measures for Homes & Communities and Housing Advisory Group

Indicator Name	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
% of rent loss through dwellings being vacant	0.60%	1.00%	1.06%	0.60%
% careline installations within 10 working days	-	97.0%	88.7%	100.0%
No. complaints relating to fairness and/or respect relative to hsg stock	-	-	1	Trend
No of failed introductory tenancies	0	0	3	0
Number of Red warning notices issued	14	6	7	Trend
Number of Orange warning notices issued	3	8	6	Trend
Number of Yellow warning notices issued	5	15	4	Trend
Number of Notices to Quit issued	0	7	4	Trend
Number of Legal Proceedings (Possession) undertaken (breach of tenancy)	1	0	1	Trend
Number of evictions (ASB)	0	0	0	Trend
Number of new ASB cases (Tenants)	148	131	49	Trend
Tenancy turnover	6.8%	3.0%	7.2%	7.50%

Housing Measures for Homes & Communities and Housing Advisory Group

Indicator Name	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
% of issues actioned within 4 weeks of walkabout	100.0%	N/A	93.0%	100.0%
% of rent collected from current tenants as a % of rent owed	98.9%	100.6%	99.1%	99.6%
Number registered for My Account	2,846	4,253	2,072	Trend
% of Right to Buy Sales completed against all applications	-	-	34.4%	Trend
Amount of Rent collected	£11,089,999	£11,773,970	£11,703,767	£11,750,000
Average "End to End" time for all reactive repairs (CALENDAR days)	N/A	8.4	27.5	6.0
% of emergency repairs completed within target	99.8%	100.0%	100.0%	93.0%
% of routine repairs completed within target (non urgent)	98.9%	92.8%	95.8%	95.0%
% of all reactive repairs completed within target time	99.4%	95.0%	94.6%	No target set yet
% of repairs completed at first visit	N/A	96.0%	98.4%	98.0%
Number of properties without a valid Gas Servicing certificate	6	16	47	5
Energy Home Support - Number of private sector residents participating in the District's fuel poverty alleviation schemes	-	-	No Data Provided	-

Housing Measures for Homes & Communities and Housing Advisory Group

Indicator Name	Year to Date Quarter 2 19/20	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Target 21/22
Average number of days to process major planning applications	-	-	146	Trend
Average number of days to process minor planning applications	-	69	61	Trend
Number commercial applications	-	17	14	Trend
Number of residential applications	-	116	107	Trend
Number planning applications major	-	26	29	Trend
Number planning applications minor	-	511	633	Trend
% Reduction in all crime - Newark & Sherwood District	1.6%	20.0%	17.0%	0.0%
No of New ASB reports to the Council (Non tenants)	137	162	44	Trend
Average no of working days to process housing benefit change in circumstances	3.3	7.2	7.4	7.0
Average no of working days to process new housing benefit claims	-	-	18.0	18.0

Annual Indicators – Included for information

Indicator Name	19/20 Q4 Value	20/21 Q4 Value	20/21 Q4 Target
% of rent arrears written off	0.30%	0.37%	0.40%
% of tenants satisfied with landlord / overall service (STAR)	-	87.5%	Trend
% of tenants who felt staff were able to deal with their problem (STAR)	-	87.1%	91.0%
% of tenants satisfied with the quality of their home (STAR)	-	85.7%	90.0%
% of tenants satisfied with supported housing services (STAR)	-	87.5%	88.0%
% of tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood (STAR)	-	90.0%	87.0%
% of tenants satisfied that their views are being taken into account (STAR)	-	81.8%	82.0%
% of tenants who feel they are kept informed about things which affect them (STAR)	-	N/A	85.0%
% of tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service (STAR)	-	82.0%	85.0%
% of tenants satisfied with the grounds maintenance, such as grass cutting, in their area (STAR)	-	-	New for Q4 21/22
Tenant satisfaction that landlords listens to their views and takes notice of them	-	-	New for Q4 21/22
Tenant satisfaction with landlords engagement with tenants	-	-	New for Q4 21/22

Indicator Name	19/20 Q4 Value	20/21 Q4 Value	20/21 Q4 Target
Tenant satisfaction with landlord actions to keep communal areas clean and safe	-	-	New for Q4 21/22
Tenant satisfaction with landlord contribution to the neighbourhood associated with their home	-	-	New for Q4 21/22
Change in NSDC stock size	-	25	Trend
% of properties with an energy efficiency (SAP) rating of C or above	*	*	New for Q4 21/22
Number of properties delivered through the HRA Development Programme	-	-	New for Q4 21/22
Number of Dwellings Completed	552	767	Trend
Number of dwellings committed or under construction	7,749	7,296	Trend
Affordable homes completed	134	195	Trend

* Ongoing work to collate the SAP EPC data as there appear to be some certificates missing and reconciliation is in progress. Consultants are in place to assist in obtaining new EPCs. PI will be populated in the coming periods

OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Each year the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) produces an Annual Review Letter for local authorities detailing the number and type of complaints and decisions made relating to each authority. The annual review letter for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 for Newark & Sherwood District Council is attached to this report as an Appendix.

2.0 Annual Review (April 2020 to March 2021)

2.1 The statistics provided with the Annual Review Letter show that for this period, the LGO received eleven complaints relating to services provided by this Council and made decision on eight complaints. This compares to ten decisions being made in 2019 -20

2.2 The received and decided figures are different due to a number of reasons including:

- The complaint may have been received during 2020/21 but a decision will be made in 2021/22 (or even a later year) and therefore this figure will show in a later years report
- The complaint did not relate to a service delivered by NSDC e.g. highways and transport.
- The complaint was classed as premature.

2.3 Likewise, the received figures the LGO provide never align with the figures the Council hold. This is because the LGO numbers include enquires from people who the LGO signpost back to the Council but never contact us. These are captured in the “closed after initial enquires” figures. There is no way of identifying who these customers are. The table below details the categories of the complaints received and the decisions made in each Ombudsman category.

Ombudsman Category	Received by the LGO	Decided by the LGO
Benefits and Council Tax	2	1
Corporate/Other Services	1	3
Environmental Services	3	
Planning and Development	4	4
Housing	1	
Highways & Transport	1	
Total	12	8

2.4 The table below shows the outcome of each decision

Ombudsman Category	Closed after initial enquiries	Upheld	Referred back for local resolution	Total
Benefits and Council Tax	1			1
Corporate/Other Services	2	1		3
Planning and Development	3		1	4
Total	6	1	1	8

2.5 Further details regarding the nature of each complaint is in the table below. The details are anonymised and brief in content in order not to be able to identify the details of the complaint or the associated property.

2.6 The one upheld complaint related to a decision made regarding a parish council code of conduct complaint. Having initially assessed the complaint, the LGO was of the view that a settlement of the complaint could be achieved at the assessment stage, by the Council reconsidering the complaint by reviewing additional evidence. The Council reconsidered the complaint and reached the conclusion that its initial decision remained the same which was that a breach of conduct had not taken place. As we agreed to review the complaint, the LGO considered that this represented a suitable resolution to the complaint and therefore would not investigate. This complaint was classed as upheld with no further action required. The complainant raised a further complaint with the LGO who decided not to investigate this and it was closed after initial enquires.

2.7 Table of Complaints

Ombudsman Decision	Ombudsman Reference Number	Ombudsman Category	Summary of initial complaint	Ombudsman Decision	Decision Reason	Ombudsman Remedy
1	20000707	Planning and Development	Incorrectly interpreted the conclusion of the planning inspectorate	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged maladministration /service failure The Council followed the right process and considered the relevant matters	
2	20000937	Corporate and Other Services	Handling of complaint regarding conduct of parish councillor left complainant feeling vulnerable	Upheld	Injustice remedied during LGO consideration	New appeal/review or reconsidered decision
3	20004506	Corporate and Other Services	The Council failed to deal appropriately with a complaint about the conduct of a parish councillor - links to complaint 20000937	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged maladministration /service failure No evidence of fault in how the Monitoring Officer reached their decision	
4	20004988	Planning and Development	Assessment of planning application for a development near the complainants home	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged maladministration /service failure The Council properly considered the application before granting permission, the Ombudsman was unlikely to find fault by the Council	
5	20005831	Benefits and Tax	The council tax refund received was much less than been expected	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged maladministration /service failure Insufficient evidence of fault by the Council to justify pursuing the complaint further	

6	20007079	Corporate and Other Services	The Council failed to deal appropriately with a complaint about the conduct of a parish councillor	Closed after initial enquiries	Other reason not to investigate Insufficient evidence of fault, has not caused injustice, investigation would not be a good use of limited public resources and the LGO cannot investigate the actions of a parish council or councillor as they are outside of the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.	
7	20011745	Planning and Development	Impact of planning decision on parents property	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged maladministration /service failure The Council properly considered the application before granting permission, the Ombudsman was unlikely to find fault by the Council	
8	20012299	Planning and Development	Complaint not passed on to the Council therefore no information available	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	

Authorisations made under Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act

- 1.0 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) governs the use of covert surveillance by public authorities. Local authorities are only permitted to rely on RIPA where covert surveillance is undertaken for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime and only where such action is necessary, proportionate, justified and compatible with human rights. Since 1 November 2012 local authorities have been required to obtain judicial approval prior to undertaking RIPA covert surveillance. Additionally, since this date local authority use of directed surveillance under RIPA has been limited to the investigation of crimes, which attract a six month or more custodial sentence, with the exception of offences relating to the underage sale of alcohol and tobacco.
- 2.0 Under the legislation, it is the responsibility of the designated Senior Responsible Officer, which for the Council is the, Assistant Director - Legal & Democratic Services to ensure regular reports to Members on the Council's use of RIPA. The Council's usage of covert surveillance has always been low and it should be noted that there have been no authorisations of RIPA covert surveillance by the Council for several years. This is in line with the majority of Local Authorities nationwide.
- 3.0 The last inspection of the Council's use of RIPA took place virtually by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) on 24 February 2021. The Council passed this inspection with very positive comments from the Inspectorate.
- 4.0 There have been no use of covert surveillance nor any applications to the Courts for RIPA authorisation to conduct any directed surveillance in 2020 or 2021 to date.
- 5.0 There have been no use of covert surveillance nor any applications to the Courts for RIPA authorisation to conduct any directed surveillance in 2020 or 2021 to date. No applications to court or use of covert surveillance has been carried out by the Council since before the Act came into force in 2020.