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Monday, 3 February 2025

Chair: Councillor J Hall
Vice-Chair: Councillor L Tift

To: All Members of the Council

MEETING:	Full Council
DATE:	Tuesday, 11 February 2025 at 6.00 pm
VENUE:	Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY
<p>You are hereby requested to attend the above Meeting to be held at the time/place and on the date mentioned above for the purpose of transacting the business on the Agenda as overleaf.</p> <p>If you have any queries please contact Nigel Hill on Tel: 01636 655243 Email: Nigel.hill@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk</p>	

AGENDA

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1. Notification to those present that the meeting will be recorded and streamed online	
2. Apologies for absence	
3. Declarations of Interest by Members and Officers	
4. Minutes from the meeting held on 17 December 2024	4 - 26
5. Communications which the Chair, Leader, Chief Executive or Portfolio Holders may wish to lay before the Council	
6. In accordance with Rule No. 3.1 to receive the presentation or the debating of any Petitions from Members of the Council (if any)	
7. Questions from Members of the Public and Council	
<p>In accordance with Rule No. 3.3.2 the following question has been submitted to the Council from Councillor Roger Jackson:</p> <p>“Due to the fact that only electric cars are to be built after 2030, more and more people will be converting to electric vehicles. Does this Council have any planning policies in place for houses with no off-road parking for their cars, to allow them to create a parking space in front of their house by removing a fence or a wall, especially in conservation areas, so that they can charge their cars?”</p>	
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| (e) | General Purposes Committee - 12 December 2024 | 94 - 96 |
| (f) | Licensing Committee - 12 December 2024 | 97 - 98 |

14. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider resolving that, under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

None

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Full Council** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 17 December 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor J Hall (Chair)
Councillor L Tift (Vice-Chair)

Councillor N Allen, Councillor A Amer, Councillor A Brazier, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor C Brooks, Councillor I Brown, Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Crosby, Councillor P Farmer, Councillor A Freeman, Councillor S Forde, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor R Holloway, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor J Kellas, Councillor J Lee, Councillor K Melton, Councillor S Michael, Councillor D Moore, Councillor E Oldham, Councillor P Peacock, Councillor C Penny, Councillor M Pringle, Councillor P Rainbow, Councillor K Roberts, Councillor N Ross, Councillor S Saddington, Councillor M Shakeshaft, Councillor M Spoor, Councillor P Taylor, Councillor T Thompson, Councillor T Wendels and Councillor T Wildgust

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor L Dales, Councillor D Darby, Councillor P Harris and Councillor T Smith

Prior to the transaction of business, the Council stood in silence in memory of former District Councillor, David Payne.

33 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Chair advised the Council that the meeting was being recorded and streamed online in accordance with usual practice.

34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillors R Jackson and S Michael declared an interest In Agenda Item No. 13 – Notice of Motion – Cross Party Support for Local Farmers and Protection Against the Impact of Recent Budget Changes – given their profession. However, they considered the motion content would not impact directly on their business and their knowledge would help inform the debate.

In the interest of transparency, Councillor J Hall declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 12 - Review of the Statement of Gambling Policy 2025-25 given her employment.

The interests previously declared by Members in Agenda Item No. 14 – Minutes for Noting – were noted.

35 MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2024

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

36 COMMUNICATIONS WHICH THE CHAIR, LEADER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR PORTFOLIO HOLDERS MAY WISH TO LAY BEFORE THE COUNCIL

The Chair announced the winners of the ‘Serving People – Improving Lives’ Awards for staff in 2024. The winners were invited to the Full Council to have their awards represented by the Chair and to celebrate their success with Members.

Team of the Year – Financial Services
Manager of the Year – Jenny Walker
Colleague of the Year – Carina Tona
Apprentice of the Year – Emily Price
Chief Executive’s Award – Improvement and Enforcement Team

Members of the Council paid tribute to former Councillor David Payne.

The Leader of the Council referred to recent changes in Members’ positions with a change in the leadership of the Conservative Group and confirmed the appointment of Councillor S Forde as the new Portfolio Holder for Climate & the Environment.

The Leader of the Council also provided an update on the Government’s White Paper on Devolution which set out a clear direction of travel towards unitary authorities. He advised that further information would be available in the New Year.

37 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCIL (IF ANY)

In accordance with Rule No. 3.3.3, one question had been submitted by Councillor R Holloway to the Council. Details of the question put forward and the response given by Councillor P Peacock are attached as Appendix A to these minutes.

38 POLITICAL COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive which sought to approve the allocation of seats to Political Groups in accordance with Appendix A to the report and to the changes to appointments to Committees as detailed in Appendix B to the report.

The changes were required following the notice given by Councillors L Dales and R Holloway that they had left the Conservative Group on the Council. During the debate on this item, it was clarified that the ‘Global Goals Group’ was an informal one comprising the Green and Liberal Democrat Groups on the Council, but these two political groups remained separate.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the allocation of seats to Political Groups (as set out in Appendix B to the Minutes) be approved; and
- b) the changes to appointments to Committees (as set out in the Schedule attached as Appendix C to the Minutes) be approved.

39 PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2025/26

The Council considered the report of the Assistant Director – Legal & Democratic Services which sought to approve the Schedule of Meetings for the period May 2025 to May 2026. It was noted that there was a more regular pattern of Cabinet meetings going forward, but there would still be a focus on performance elements each quarter.

In respect of the Audit & Governance Committee, the proposed schedule had this committee meeting on a Monday as there was no consensus on a preferred day of the week following a survey of current Members. It was requested that the Committee be given delegated authority to approve their own meeting schedule.

AGREED (unanimously) that the proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2025-26, subject to the Audit & Governance Committee agreeing their own future meeting dates, be approved. The schedule is attached as Appendix D to the minutes.

40 LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2025/26

The Council considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive, Director – Resources and Section 151 Officer, which sought to confirm the continuation of the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025/26 with minor changes in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Department for Works and Pensions. By applying the annual uprating the Council will continue to maintain the current level of support to all Council Tax Support claimants and ensure that the scheme continues to benefit the most vulnerable and low income households. The Cabinet considered the report at their meeting held on 4 November 2024 and had recommended approval.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Council continues to adopt the existing Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for all potential claimants for the financial year 2025/26 and uprates the applicable amounts, premiums, state benefits and disregard criteria in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Departments for Works & Pensions.

41 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2024/25

The Council considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive, Director – Resources and Section 151 Officer, which provided an update on the Council’s treasury activity and prudential indicators for the first half of 2024/25. This activity was reported to the Audit & Governance Committee at their meeting held on 11 December 2024.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Council note:

- a) the treasury management activity; and
- b) the Prudential Indicators detailed in Section 6 & 7 of the report.

42 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY 2025-27

The Council considered the report of the Director – Communities & Environment, which sought approval for the adoption of an amended Statement of Gambling Policy. The current Policy was adopted in January 2022 and therefore required review. The purpose of the Statement of Gambling Policy was to assist the Licensing Authority in determining applications and to provide clarity for applicants, residents and members of the business community.

The draft Statement was approved in September 2024 for a six-week consultation period. Responses were received from the Fire Service and Councillor K Roberts regarding the wording of parts of the Policy. The proposed minor amendments were considered by the Licensing Committee at their meeting held on 12 December who recommended to the Council for adoption. The Policy was attached as an Appendix to the report.

AGREED (with 33 votes for and 2 abstentions) that Full Council adopt the revised Statement of Gambling Policy 2025-2027 in order to allow licensing decisions to be made.

43 NOTICES OF MOTION

Cross-Party Support for Local Farmers and Protection Against the Impact of Recent Budget Changes

In accordance with the Rule No. 3.4.3, Councillor J Lee moved and Councillor P Farmer seconded a motion to the following effect:

“Context:

Following the recent Budget announcement by Chancellor Rachel Reeves MP, significant changes to inheritance tax have been introduced that directly impacts our district’s farming community. Changes, to cap agricultural property relief at £1 million for farms, are a threat to the viability of small to medium sized farms in our district.

This Council should note that the average UK farm size is 213 acres⁽¹⁾ and land values in Newark and Sherwood average £11,000 per acre⁽²⁾, depending on grade and area (source Savills) means the land value alone is £2.3 million and with other assets included most average farms in our area carry a IHT rating of over £3,000,000. The Country Land and Business Association (CLA) puts the total farms affected in the UK at 70,000⁽³⁾.

The resultant changes to the cap could force local farmers to sell portions of their holdings to pay for the inheritance tax burdens.

Selling holdings will impact farmers and the farming community’s ability to produce food and threatens national food security at a time when geopolitical tensions threaten to destabilise global food production capacity. Furthermore, it will also increase our district’s food supply chain in turn increasing the logistical CO2 footprint at a time when global carbon emissions are still on the increase.

Farming also supports environmental objectives such as increasing biodiversity through habitat creation and support for pollinators whilst simultaneously enhancing natural flood management like tree planting and creating and maintaining buffer zones to mitigate localised flooding.

Detail:

The Council recognises:

- The invaluable contribution of farmers to our district, our food security, enhancing the natural environment and the local economy.
- The immediate and long-term risks posed to local farmers and multi-generational farming families by the current Budget measures.

This Council resolves to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves MP, on behalf of Newark and Sherwood District’s farming community and urge a reconsideration of the most recent budget decision to levy inheritance tax on agricultural land and protect family-owned farms from excessive tax burdens that threaten their operations and legacy.”

- 1) Source DEFRA (Statics for agricultural land use in the UK at 1 June 2023. Accessed 4 Dec 2024)
- 2) Source Savills (ww.savills.com). Accessed 4 Dec 2024
- 3) Source CLA

The motion, on being put to the vote, was agreed with 18 votes for, 16 against.

In accordance with Rule No. 5.4 a recorded vote was taken as follows:

Name of Councillor	Vote
Neil Allen	For
Adrian Amer	For
Alice Brazier	Against
Lee Brazier	Against
Celia Brooks	Against
Irene Brown	For
Rowan Cozens	Against
Susan Crosby	Against
Phil Farmer	For
Simon Forde	Against
Andy Freeman	Against
Jean Hall	Against
Simon Haynes	For
Rhona Holloway	Absent for the vote
Roger Jackson	For
Jack Kellas	For
Johno Lee	For
Keith Melton	For
Sylvia Michael	For

David Moore	Against
Emma Oldham	For
Paul Peacock	Against
Claire Penny	Against
Mike Pringle	Against
Penny Rainbow	For
Karen Roberts	For
Neil Ross	Against
Sue Saddington	For
Maurice Shakeshaft	Against
Matthew Spoons	For
Paul Taylor	Against
Tina Thompson	For
Linda Tift	Against
Tim Wendels	For
Tim Wildgust	For

44 MINUTES FOR NOTING

44a CABINET - 4 NOVEMBER 2024

44b POLICY AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE - 28 OCTOBER 2024

Minute No. 49 – Presentation by the Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture & the Arts

Councillor P Rainbow stated that she had asked the Portfolio Holder some questions on the Destination Management Plan but was still to receive a response.

Councillor R Cozens agreed to supply a written response.

44c POLICY AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE - 25 NOVEMBER 2024

44d PLANNING COMMITTEE - 3 OCTOBER 2024

44e PLANNING COMMITTEE - 14 OCTOBER 2024

44f PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 NOVEMBER 2024

44g CABINET - 3 DECEMBER 2024

44h EXECUTIVE SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE - 3 DECEMBER 2024

Minute No.16 – Arkwood Developments Performance Quarter 2

Councillor K Melton referred to the priority given to Biodiversity Net Gain and exemplar properties by Arkwood Developments but expressed frustration that he had been unable to bring forward a motion to the Council proposing that part of the Lowfield Lane site on which planning permission had been granted should be deallocated.

Councillor P Peacock referred to the balanced debate at the Planning Committee on the planning application and confirmed that the proposed motion was procedurally not permissible.

44i PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 DECEMBER 2024

Meeting closed at 7.43 pm.

Chair

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 17 DECEMBER 2024**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

In accordance with Rule No. 3.3.3 the following question was submitted to the Council from Councillor Rhona Holloway:

“On 17th October 2023 at Full Council the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change at the time, Councillor Melton put forward a motion that:

‘This Council would adopt all 17 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for informing the Local Authorities, Policies, Work Programs, Functions and Initiatives’.

As part of that commitment the Council therefore agreed to the following:

- A. *‘Adopt the UN SDGs as a framework for informing our local authority's policies, work programs, and initiatives.*
- B. *Contribute to the achievement of the UN SDGs through delivery of the Community Plan.*
- C. *Actively engage and collaborates with other local authorities, organisations, and community groups to share best practices, experiences, and lessons learned in advancing the UN SDGs.*
- D. *Receive an annual report from the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change setting out the Council’s contributions to the global agenda for sustainable development.*

“By taking this step, we can also demonstrate our commitment to contribute to the global effort to achieve a more equitable, sustainable and resilient world for future generations’

Members are yet to receive any feedback on this motion or the annual report as outlined at D, and there is no mention on the Council’s website of any activities or outcomes of this work.

I would therefore like to ask the Portfolio Holder for Climate and the Environment the following:-

What impact or influence has this motion had on the decisions the Council has made over the last year, what have been the tangible outcomes of adopting this motion and when can we expect to receive the annual report?”

Reply from Councillor Paul Peacock – Leader of the Council on behalf of Portfolio Holder for Climate and the Environment

Below is a summary of some of the activities that Newark and Sherwood District Council have delivered and/or are ongoing that sit within the UNSDGs. In addition to this the authority, without intent, already takes many of these into consideration when writing its reports. It is proposed that an annual update is presented to the Policy, Performance and Improvement Committee, alongside the report it currently receives on an annual basis on progress against the Council’s Carbon Net Zero target.

Goal 1: No Poverty

- We promote through our communication channels and website support for those in financial hardship, sign posting them to organisations that can help.
- Cost of living support: [Cost of living support: Overview - GOV.UK](#)
- Winter pressures and cost of living resource pack: [Winter Pressures & Cost of Living](#)

Goal 2: Zero hunger

- Community Cost of Living Scheme – working in partnership with local food banks to provide food and fuel vouchers £50,000.
- Crop Drop has been running since 2021. We have many allotments which support this by donating excess crops to our food clubs/food hubs each week through harvesting season, ensuring lots of families receive fresh produce. This also includes individuals who grow in their own gardens. We work every year to engage new growers.
- In the district we have several social eating events. This is where residents can go to access a low cost or free hot meal. It helps tackle loneliness and isolation, as well as ensuring people who are struggling with paying for heating and cooking, still get a hot meal. A hugely successful example of this is Laxton, which recently received community funding from NSDC to fund a 6-month social eat pilot. The first event saw 8 people attend increasing to 16 at the second event and in December the Christmas meal saw almost 30 people attend or having a meal delivered.

Goal 3: Good health and well-being

- Door 2 Door Scheme- supporting vulnerable and/or excluded residents with volunteer transport to support social isolation and health and wellbeing, delivered by Newark and Sherwood CVS. £24,000.
- Premier League Primary Stars Programme- supporting 8 local primary schools with highest childhood obesity levels to access support for participation in physical education, extra curriculum activities, healthy lifestyles programmes and social action initiatives including recognising climate change, healthy eating, equality etc., delivered by Nottingham Forest Community Trust. £141,000.
- Trent Vale Trail – surface improvements and creation of 10 mile walking trail, supporting rural connectivity and active travel to encourage healthy lifestyles and social opportunities. £280,000.
- Active Travel Audit – development of an active travel investment strategy to identify high level priority pipeline projects. £44,000.
- See goal 10 community grants for rural areas.
- Breast Feeding Friendly Award - NSDC continues to promote and support cafes and public destinations in undertaking the BFFA training for their staff. This ensures those wishing to breast feed whilst out and about can find a place that they will be welcomed and supported to breast feed without fear of discrimination. Currently NSDC areas have 40 establishments including private, third sector and health participating. All active establishments are available via

<https://www.Nottshelpyourself.org.uk> or e-mail wellbeing@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk.

- Barbers Shop - In 2023 NSDC contacted local barbers' shops to support the conversations they were having around men's health with their customers. The initial pilot focused on information on Prostate Cancer and leaflets and booklets were distributed amongst the shops that agreed to participate. Six monthly visits are undertaken, and feedback requested to influence future support. This has led us to include details and contacts of suicide and mental health services on take away cards. We have also shared free training information for the staff to help them with these conversations. Some shops have requested posters for the windows showing information for passersby. This has been active for 18 months and three rounds of visits. We currently have 18 barber shops active in this support.
- Know Your Numbers Campaign - KYN is a national campaign for blood pressure awareness held every September. This week is the focus of our work on blood pressure but is also part of our health stalls and public contact efforts throughout the year. NSDC has built up local contacts both in-house and external, alongside health services. Each year we have increased the offering and alongside Active4Today, the workplaces we visit have invited other services to join us - sometimes providing access to groups who do not normally engage with health services. This has included diabetic eye screening services, smoking cessation and weight management services. This year's data gathered a notable rise in young people with significant raised blood pressure with the common denominator of consuming energy drinks as a meal replacement. This information will inform partnership work in the new year on education and information about blood pressure and the effects of energy drinks through the Healthy Lifestyles Task and Finish Group N&S.

Goal 4: Quality education

- Boosting - support for residents in employment to access skills development opportunities and training courses to progress within the workplace, delivered by Lincoln College £170,000.
- Volunteer it Yourself (VIY) scheme- working with young people at risk of exclusion or considered NEET to access practical skills development opportunities via volunteering to refurbish community facilities, delivered by VIY. £90,000.
- Renew- working with economically inactive residents to access training and skills development opportunities including life skills sessions, taster courses, and additional mainstream provision to compliment AEB funded activity, delivered by Inspire Libraries. £143,000.
- We support a number of local secondary schools to be able to access services that would support their relationship and health education curriculum. This includes signposting them to appropriate commissioned services including Sexions our local sexual health service and Intent our stop smoking training programme.
- Golden Thread- Volunteering and educational programme for young people at risk of, or considered NEET aged 11-25 to support employment and skills development, delivered by Newark and Sherwood CVS. £33,000

Goal 5: Gender equality

- Life chances for girls, this is an initiative currently under development, a study leading to an implementation plan for making recommendations of what changes, or work in this area that can be done differently to intervene, improve and advocate the life chances for girls and young women in the district.
- Women in Leadership Course- part of the Boosting Programme offering £150,000 for entire Boosting Programme

Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation

Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy

- Social Housing Decarb Fund Wave 2.1: Decarbonising Social Housing stock, first all those on oil. Air Source Heat Pumps and Solar PV to 102 properties. 102 will be completed by March 2025.
- Devolution funding: includes retrofitting 5 x whole house retrofits and is for; solid wall insulation, loft insulation, “A” rated double glazed windows, high efficiency “A” rated composite doors, air source heat pumps and solar PV.
- LAD3 programme of works 66 properties identified and completed, these have been retrofitted with energy efficiency measures, enabling cost savings on energy bills and to support low-income households in Newark and Sherwood.
- Business Decarbonisation Grant Scheme £85,000.
- Accelerator – business sustainability advice and access decarbonisation solutions, energy audits and grant funding, delivered by the East Midlands Chamber, in partnership with Nottingham Trent University. £75,000 (decarb).

Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth

- Business Grants (productivity/rural) – supporting small business productivity and rural economic growth. £260,000.
- Established Business Advice Service – supporting businesses over 3 years to grow, delivered by Nottinghamshire County Council Business Advisors £30,000.
- Start-up Scale Up Programme – supporting pre-start and early stage enterprises to start up and scale up, delivered by NBV Enterprise Solutions £80,000.
- Grow – support for economically inactive residents to access employment and skills development opportunities including, job search, cv writing, interview skills and volunteering, delivered by Framework Housing Association. £90,000.

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, Technology and Infrastructure

- Accelerator – business advice and access to innovation and technological growth solutions delivered by East Midlands Chamber, in partnership with Nottingham Trent University. £75,000.

Goal 10: Reduced inequality

- See Goal 3 Premier League Primary Stars.
- Alternative Education Programme – supporting residents within the GRT Community to access education and life skills opportunities, working in partnership with local training providers and charities as a multi-agency approach. £35,000
- See Goal 4 VIY scheme.
- Investment in rural community facilities – grants for supporting improvements to community assets and purchase of equipment for rural communities impacted by social isolation, limited access to opportunity or deprivation. This includes some investment in sporting facilities. £500,000.
- See goal 11 capital project development – investment in key levelling up areas.

Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities

- Adventure Guides Project- working with local young people and community to groups to undertake environmental volunteering projects across the district, delivered by YMCA. £24,000
- Investment in Town Centre Lighting Newark– tackling ASB by investing in improved town centre lighting. £130,000
- Investment in Town Centre footfall cameras across the district. £38,000
- Redevelopment of Sherwood Avenue Play Park Newark. £250,000
- Newark and Sherwood Community Grant Scheme – grant funding for local volunteering and social action projects, including purchasing equipment, improving facilities and supporting events and project delivered by local community groups. £65,000
- Capital project development and feasibility – supporting town centre and community regeneration schemes across the district including Forest Corner, Clipstone, Bilsthorpe and Newark Town. £358,000
- Investment in Enterprise Infrastructure and Town Centre regeneration – 32 Stodman street retail units and public realm improvements. £400,000
- Public realm improvements Balderton – delivered by Balderton Parish Council including installation of information boards, cycle racks and benches. £50,000

Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production

- We regularly monitor the energy consumption and carbon footprint of the council. This has led to a review of the utilities in order to fully investigate the opportunities to both reduce our CO2 footprint and save money.
- Also, the decarbonisation scheme will lead to significant reductions in fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

Goal 13: Climate action

- 5 corporate sites now have solar PV installed.
- Decarb strategy has been completed, now validating sites for decarbonisation works.

- Local Area Energy Plan (Reducing the district’s carbon footprint)
- We are in the process of reviewing our utilities to enable us to potentially switch to fully green tariffs potentially saving 587tonnes CO2 per year.
- In the last 2 years we have given away 4,361 trees and planted 1,963 trees and have a significant planting scheme opportunity that we are currently exploring.
- Sherwood Community Tree Nursery- developing the Sherwood Seedbank Nursery site located next to Sherwood Forest, including planting over 10,000 trees grown on site, and coordinating a volunteer programme for local community participation, delivered by Sherwood Forest Trust. £93,000
- Carbon Trust Net Zero Target review. Looking at the feasibility of reducing our 2035 targets and incorporating Housing Stock for 2035, that will inform our decarbonisation decisions.
- The Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) is a pathway broken down into components that show the wider district’s route to achieve net zero. It will list the interventions and where they will have the most impact, for example, heating system installations in this area and public electric vehicle chargers in the district.

Goal 14: Life below water

- Motion for the Ocean activities.
- Work with Severn Trent, the Environment Agency, developers, and other agencies to explore ways to improve the water quality of our rivers and coastal waters.
- The Trent Gateway Masterplan had a Project Steering Group in the development of the vision, comprising of representatives from numerous agencies.
- Three Rivers Project.
- The District Council is working with ecologists, hydrologists, and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to improve the water at Vicar Water Country Park. The works include de-culverting parts of Vicar Water, dredging, and wetland creation at Vicar Dale and beyond.

Goal 15: Life on land Biodiversity

- Biodiversity net gain in planning is carefully managed to ensure a minimum of 10 biodiversity uplift on new developments.
- Plans under way to put together a biodiversity strategy that will lead to working programs going ahead.

Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

We are going for DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) accreditation is the UK benchmark for how housing providers should respond to domestic abuse in the UK.

Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals

We lead and sit within a variety of working groups with different partners in government and private sector, including:

- Notts County Council
- Trent Water
- Environment agency
- River and canal Trusts
- Woodland Trust
- Sherwood Forest Trust
- Notts wildlife trust
- Trent River trust
- Police
- Town Council Parish Councils
- Forestry commission

ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Committee	Conservative	Labour	Independents for Newark & District	Liberal Democrats	Newark & Sherwood District Independents	Green	Independent N/A - Amer	Independent N/A - Brown	Independent N/A - Dales	Independent N/A - Holloway	Total Seats By Committee
Policy & Performance Improvement	4	4	3	1	1	1				1	15
Planning	4	4	2	2		1	1		1		15
General Purposes	6	4	2	1	1	1					15
Licensing	6	4	2	1	1	1					15
Audit & Governance*	4	3	3	1	1						12
Board of Gilstrap Trustees+	2	1					1	1			5
Total Seats by Group	26	20	12	6	4	4	2	1	1	1	77

*Note The Audit & Governance Committee includes one independent co-opted member acting in an advisory capacity

+Note The Board of Trustees of the Gilstrap Charity includes up to four non-voting co-opted Members (Newark Wards)

MEMBERS APPOINTMENTS – 2024/25

(as at 17.12.24)

Chair of the Council	Councillor Jean Hall
Vice Chair of the Council	Councillor Linda Tift

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Strategy, Performance & Finance	Councillor Paul Peacock (Leader of the Council)
Heritage, Culture & the Arts	Councillor Rowan Cozens (Deputy Leader of the Council)
Climate & the Environment	Councillor Simon Forde
Sustainable Economic Development	Councillor Claire Penny
Housing	Councillor Lee Brazier
Health, Wellbeing & Leisure	Councillor Susan Crosby
Public Protection & Community Relations	Councillor Paul Taylor

CONSERVATIVE GROUP

Leader	Councillor Jack Kellas
Deputy Leader	Councillor Roger Jackson

LABOUR GROUP

Leader	Councillor Paul Peacock
Deputy Leader	Councillor Lee Brazier

INDEPENDENTS FOR NEWARK & DISTRICT

Leader	Councillor Rowan Cozens
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LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

Leader	Councillor Peter Harris
Deputy Leader	Councillor Keith Melton

NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT INDEPENDENTS

Leader	Councillor Tina Thompson
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GREEN

Leader	Councillor Emma Oldham
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Note Paragraph 1.1 of the Constitution

1.1 Appointment and Term of Office

- 1.1.1 The Leader is elected by the Council and holds office for a four-year period starting on the day of their election as Leader at an Annual Meeting of the Council, unless their term of office as a Councillor is shorter, in which case the term of office as Leader will be the same as their term of office as a Councillor.
- 1.1.2 The Leader's period of office will cease at an earlier date if they
- i. resign from the office; or
 - ii. are no longer a Councillor; or
 - iii. are removed from office by resolution of the Council.
- 1.1.3 If there is a vacancy in the position of Leader, the Council will elect a Leader at the first meeting following such vacancy.

MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE						
CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENTS FOR NEWARK & DISTRICT	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	N&S INDS	GREEN	IND - NON-ALIGNED
1. N. Allen	1. A. Brazier	1. J. Hall	1. K. Roberts	1.T. Thompson	1. M. Spoons	1. R. Holloway
2. R. Jackson	2. C. Brooks	2. D. Moore				
3. P. Rainbow	3. A. Freeman	3. N. Ross (V/C)				
4. T. Wendels	4. M. Pringle (C)					
SUBSTITUTES	SUBSTITUTES	SUBSTITUTES	SUBSTITUTES	SUBSTITUTES	SUBSTITUTES	SUBSTITUTES
1. P. Farmer	1. L. Tift		1. P. Harris	1.D. Darby	1. -	
2. S. Michael	2. -					
PLANNING COMMITTEE						
CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENTS FOR NEWARK & DISTRICT	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	N&S INDS	GREEN	IND - NON-ALIGNED
1. P. Rainbow	1. C. Brooks	1. S. Forde	1. P. Harris		1. E. Oldham	1. A. Amer
2. S. Saddington	2. A. Freeman (C)	2. D. Moore (V/C)	2. K. Melton			2. L. Dales
3. T. Smith	3. M. Shakeshaft					
4. T. Wildgust	4. L. Tift					
LICENSING COMMITTEE						
CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENTS FOR NEWARK & DISTRICT	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	N&S INDS	GREEN	IND - NON-ALIGNED
1. N. Allen	1. A. Brazier	1. J. Hall (C)	1. K. Roberts	1. D. Darby	1. M. Spoons	
2. R. Jackson	2. L. Brazier	2. D. Moore				
3. S. Michael	3. P. Taylor					
4. S. Saddington	4. L. Tift (V/C)					
5. T. Wendels						
6. T. Wildgust						
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE						
CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENTS FOR NEWARK & DISTRICT	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	N&S INDS	GREEN	IND - NON-ALIGNED
1. N. Allen	1. A. Brazier	1. J. Hall (C)	1. K. Roberts	1. D. Darby	1. M. Spoons	
2. R. Jackson	2. L. Brazier	2. D. Moore				
3. S. Michael	3. P. Taylor					
4. S. Saddington	4. L. Tift (V/C)					
5. T. Wendels						
6. T. Wildgust						

<u>AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</u>						
CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENTS FOR NEWARK & DISTRICT	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	N&S INDS	GREEN	IND - NON-ALIGNED
1. P. Farmer	1. A. Freeman	1. R. Cozens	1. P. Harris (C)	1. T. Thompson		
2. S. Haynes	2. C. Penny	2. S. Forde (V/C)				
3. J. Kellas	3. M. Shakeshaft	3. J. Hall				
4. S. Michael						
<u>BOARD OF GILSTRAP TRUSTEES^</u>						
CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENTS FOR NEWARK & DISTRICT	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	N&S INDS	GREEN	IND - NON-ALIGNED
1. S. Haynes	1. P. Taylor					1. A. Amer (C)
2. J. Kellas						2. I. Brown
<u>MANSFIELD AND DISTRICT CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE#</u>						
CABINET						
1. L. Brazier						
2. S. Crosby						
3. P. Peacock						
<u>TENANT ENGAGEMENT BOARD</u>						
Membership to comprise of the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for housing and three representatives to be appointed by the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee (plus three tenant representatives).						
<u>PLANNING POLICY BOARD</u>						
Membership to comprise of the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for planning policy and three representatives to be appointed by the Planning Committee and three representatives to be appointed by the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee.						

Notes:

1. C = Chair
2. VC = Vice-Chair
- ^ Newark Ward Members not appointed to sit on the Trustee Board as non-voting co-optees.
- # The Mansfield Crematorium Joint Committee is an Executive Function which does not need to reflect political balance and will comprise of Executive Members.

2025	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
May				1 COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS	2
	5 BANK HOLIDAY	6	7	8 PLANNING	9
	12	13	14	15	16
	19	20 ANNUAL COUNCIL	21	22	23
	26 BANK HOLIDAY	27	28	29	30
June	2 POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	3	4	5 PLANNING	6
	9	10 CABINET	11	12	13
	16	17 MEMBER TRAINING	18	19 GENERAL PURPOSES & LICENSING	20
	23	24	25	26	27
July	30 POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	1	2	3 PLANNING	4
	7 <i>AUDIT & GOVERNANCE*</i>	8 CABINET (with PERFORMANCE) / EXECUTIVE SHAREHOLDER	9	10	11
	14	15 COUNCIL	16	17	18
	21	22	23	24	25
	28	29	30	31	

2025	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
August					1
	4	5	6	7 PLANNING	8
	11	12	13	14	15
	18	19	20	21	22
	25 BANK HOLIDAY	26	27	28	29
September	1 POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	2	3	4 PLANNING	5
	8	9 CABINET (with PERFORMANCE) / EXECUTIVE SHAREHOLDER	10	11	12
	15	16	17	18 GENERAL PURPOSES & LICENSING	19
	22 <i>AUDIT & GOVERNANCE*</i>	23	24	25	26
	29	30			
October			1	2 PLANNING	3
	6 POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	7	8	9	10
	13	14 CABINET	15	16	17
	20	21 COUNCIL	22	23	24

2025/26	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	27	28	29	30	31
November	3	4	5	6 PLANNING	7
	10	11 CABINET	12	13	14
	17	18 MEMBER TRAINING	19	20	21
	24	25	26	27	28
December	1 POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	2	3	4 PLANNING	5
	8 <i>AUDIT & GOVERNANCE*</i>	9 CABINET (with PERFORMANCE) / EXECUTIVE SHAREHOLDER	10	11 GENERAL PURPOSES & LICENSING	12
	15	16 COUNCIL	17	18	19
	22	23	24	25 BANK HOLIDAY	26 BANK HOLIDAY
	29	30	31		
January				1 BANK HOLIDAY	2
	5	6	7	8	9
	12	13	14	15 PLANNING	16
	19	20 CABINET	21	22	23
	26	27	28	29	30

2026	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
February	2	3	4	5	6
	9	10 COUNCIL	11	12 PLANNING	13
	16	17	18	19	20
	23 POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	24 CABINET	25	26	27
March	2 <i>AUDIT & GOVERNANCE*</i>	3	4	5 COUNCIL (TAX SETTING)	6
	9	10	11	12 PLANNING	13
	16 POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	17	18	19 GENERAL PURPOSES & LICENSING	20
	23	24 CABINET (with PERFORMANCE) / EXECUTIVE SHAREHOLDER	25	26	27
	30	31			
April			1	2	3 BANK HOLIDAY
	6 BANK HOLIDAY	7	8	9 PLANNING	10
	13 POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	14	15	16	17
	20 <i>AUDIT & GOVERNANCE*</i>	21 CABINET	22	23	24
	27	28	29	30	

2026	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
May					1
	4 BANK HOLIDAY	5	6	7 PLANNING	8
	11	12	13	14	15
	18	19 ANNUAL COUNCIL	20	21	22
	25 BANK HOLIDAY	26	27	28	29

All meetings will start at 6.00pm, with the exception of the Planning Committee which will start at 4.00pm.

*Audit & Governance Committee dates to be agreed **



Report to: Meeting of the Full Council - 11 February 2025

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Brazier, Housing

Director Leads: Sanjiv Kohli, Deputy Chief Executive, Director – Resources and S151 Officer
Suzanne Shead, Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Nick Wilson, Business Manager – Financial Services, Ext. 5317
David Price, Business Manager – Housing Income & Leasehold Management, Ext. 5538

Report Summary	
Report Title	2025/26 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Rent Setting
Purpose of Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To examine the proposed income and expenditure on the HRA for the 2025/26 financial year for both revenue and capital income and expenditure, in accordance with Section 76 (Duty to prevent debit balance on the Housing Revenue Account) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989; b) To provide indicative amounts of income and expenditure for the 2026/27 to 2028/29 financial years for both revenue and capital income and expenditure; and c) To set rent levels and service charges for 2025/26 (with effect from the first Monday in April 2025).
Recommendations	<p>That Council approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the HRA budget for 2025/26, as set out in Appendix A to the report; b) an increase of 2.7% in the 2025/26 rents of all current HRA tenancies will be applied from 7 April 2025; c) the 2025/26 service charges, as set out in Appendix C to the report; and d) the Capital Budget set out in Appendix D to the report are committed expenditure in the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29.
Reason for Recommendations	For Members to approve the proposed HRA budget and charges in rent and service charge levels for 2025/26.

1.0 Background Information

1.1 The setting of the HRA budget and the approval of rent levels must be completed within the required time to notify tenants of proposed changes to rents in accordance with legislation.

1.2 The key dates in the budget setting timetable are detailed in the table below:

Council determination of HRA budget and rent setting	11 February 2025
Newark & Sherwood District Council update of rent systems	16 February 2025
Generation of rent cards and letters to notify tenants of variation of their rent levels (tenants are required to be given four weeks' notice of the changes).	By end of February 2025

1.3 Any slippage from these key dates would jeopardise the implementation of rent changes from the first Monday in April 2025, and therefore, pose a risk to the sustainability of the 30-year HRA Business Plan (BP).

2.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered

Statutory Duty

2.1 Section 76 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 requires local housing authorities to set a budget annually for their HRA, and that implementation of the budget proposals will not result in a debit balance (deficit position) at year-end.

2.2 Following housing financing reforms (self-financing) in April 2012 the Council's HRA has been operating within a 30-year business plan. The inputs and assumptions in the Business Plan are key to setting the HRA budgets annually for each year of the HRA's four-year medium-term financial plan (MTFP).

Rent Standard 2020

2.3 In February 2019, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government published a Direction to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to set a Rent Standard which would apply from 2020 for five years. This was published alongside a Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing 2018 (Rent Policy Statement) for the Regulator to have regard to when setting its Rent Standard.

2.4 The Rent Standard 2020 specifies that rents must be set in accordance with the Rent Policy Statement. The Government's Rent Policy Statement allows annual rent increases to social rent and affordable rent properties by maximum of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate published for September of the preceding financial year plus 1%.

2.5 A new rent settlement was expected from 2025; however, government announced a 12-month extension to the current rent settlement with consultation on the social housing rent policy post April 2026 taking place in October – December 2024.

2.6 The consultation sought views on implementing a rent policy providing a settlement of Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate plus 1% from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2031.

2.7 The below table shows the weighted average rents for socially rent properties in December 2024 and impact of applying the maximum permitted increase of 2.7% for 2025-26 as per the rent standard.

Unit Size	Average Rent 24/25	With increase of 2.7% applied
1 Bedroom	£85.83	£88.15
2 Bedroom	£93.94	£96.48
3 Bedroom	£99.52	£102.20
4+ Bedroom	£108.23	£111.15
Weighted Average of number of properties	£94.86	£97.43

Borrowing Cap

- 2.8 As part of the HRA self-financing reforms introduced in April 2012, the Government set a maximum amount of housing debt that each local authority could have. In subsequent years, the government awarded some local authorities limited increases to their housing borrowing limits. On 29 October 2018, the Limits on Indebtedness (Revocation) Determination 2018 revoked all previous determinations that specified limits on local authority housing indebtedness.
- 2.9 Though councils are no longer restricted in how much they can borrow in their HRAs, there is still the requirement for councils to make sure that all borrowing is affordable and proportionate within the context of their 30-year HRA business plan (BP). The Council has used the expert external advice it obtained on the assumptions in the BP to monitor the affordability of future indebtedness.
- 2.10 From the expert external advice obtained the Council has chosen to use the Interest Cover Ratio (ICR) as its borrowing boundary for the HRA. The ICR represents the cover that the HRA has against its interest cost liabilities in any year. The ICR is set to a minimum which provides comfort that if there were a sudden drop in income or increase in operating costs, there would be sufficient headroom to continue to cover debt interest payments. Anticipated future levels of indebtedness are currently viable within the plan based on this ratio and the limits will be approved as part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

30-year HRA Business Plan (BP)

- 2.11 The BP summarises the viability of the Council's plans to fulfil its management, maintenance, and investment responsibilities to its HRA assets over the next 30 years. Key assumptions are made in the BP based on the council's strategic priorities and policies, detailed stock data and other factors.
- 2.12 The assumptions in the BP are key to setting the HRA budgets annually for each year of the HRA's four-year MTFP. The main assumptions that are fed into the HRABP were noted by the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee on 25 November 2024.
- 2.13 Officers monitor relevant government policy announcements and model the implications of these on the HRA BP. Recently these have included increased legislation around building safety, including the Building Safety Act 2022, Fire Safety Act 2021, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order 2005) and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order 2005). The Social Housing Bill which was enacted in July 2023 will continue to bring further changes to the regulatory framework the Council operates within, with changes to consumer standards, increased scrutiny on accountability to tenants, performance, a refresh of the Decent Homes Standard,

embedding the priority of decarbonisation and the introduction of enhanced regulation of the sector having implications for the long-term viability of the plan. Officers will model the impacts of these changes on the BP as further details become available and this will be refreshed when any rent standard is considered for future years.

- 2.14 As per paragraph 2.11 above, a range of scenarios have been modelled into the 30-year business plan. The recommended increase of 2.7% has been modelled into the budgets currently and hence is reflected within the attached appendices. The table below describes the alternative options compared (both annually and 30 year cumulative) against the proposed 2.7%:

Rental increase	Annual difference compared to 2.7%	30-year cumulative difference compared to 2.7%
2%	£0.186m	£8.167m
1.7%	£0.266m	£11.667m

- 2.15 As can be seen from the table above, available resources would be significantly reduced based on the alternative options which would limit the ability of the HRA to be able to meet future responsibilities that may be placed upon Local Authorities from government policy announcements as described at paragraph 2.13 above.
- 2.16 Therefore, a rent increase of 2.7% on current tenants, across all stock types is recommended in this report.
- 2.17 Currently the assumptions made within the BP together with future forecasts of income and expenditure (both capital and revenue) are affordable and sustainable within the 30-year plan, based on the recommendations within this report.
- 2.18 Priorities remain the safety and decency of council homes, modernisation of service delivery, future development of new homes to replace those lost through Right to Buy as well as meeting energy efficient homes by 2030 increasing those serviced by green energy.

Rent Cycle

- 2.19 Rent is currently charged over 48 weeks, giving tenants four “rent free weeks” albeit that the full years rent charge is the same as if charged across 52 weeks. The non-charge weeks for 2024/25 will be weeks commencing 26 May 2025, 25 August 2025, 22 December 2025 and 30 March 2026.

Affordability Considerations

- 2.20 This section provides information regarding the impact of the proposed changes to rent and services charges, as well as data on how tenants pay their rent and the support they receive from Housing Benefit and Universal Credit.

Rent Level Comparable Data

- 2.21 *Table 1* compares data on average rent levels for the private rented sector (PRS) in Newark & Sherwood and in England as at October 2024 to the Council’s average social housing rented stock as at December 2024.

Table 1: Comparison of data on weekly average rent levels for the PRS in Newark and Sherwood, the PRS in England, and NSDC's social rented stock

	Newark and Sherwood Private Rented (as at October 2024)	England Average Private Rented (as at October 2024)	NSDC Social Rented Stock (as at December 2024)
One Bed	£115.62	£253.85	£85.83
Two Bed	£153.46	£283.62	£93.94
Three Bed	£185.54	£315.92	£99.52
Four Bed plus	£279.69	£466.62	£108.23
Average for all categories	£169.38	£311.08	£94.86

2.22 For all sizes of accommodation, the Council's average social housing rents are significantly lower than those in the private rented sector.

2.23 *Table 2* compares 2023/24 data on average rent levels for Private Registered Providers (PRPs) in Newark & Sherwood to the Council's average social housing rents, split for each by whether properties are for general needs tenants or supported housing tenants.

Table 2: Comparison of 2023/24 data on average rent levels for PRPs in Newark and Sherwood and NSDC's social housing rents, split by general needs tenants and supported housing tenants

Type of Accommodation	Social Rent: General Needs		Social Rent: Supported Housing/Housing for Older People	
	NSDC	Private Registered Providers	NSDC	Private Registered Providers
Non-self-contained	-	-	-	£192.78
Bedsit	£65.68	£66.49	£62.61	£128.67
1 bedroom	£72.31	£86.16	£79.97	£118.46
2 bedrooms	£80.51	£101.92	£89.42	£105.94
3 bedrooms	£92.23	£104.33	£96.58	£128.75
4 bedrooms	£100.33	£114.95	-	-
5 bedrooms	£105.80	£109.04	-	-
Average self-contained	£89.09	£100.07	£85.43	£117.08
Average all types	£89.09	£100.07	£85.43	£135.93

2.24 For all sizes of accommodation, NSDC's average social housing rents are lower than those of the PRPs.

2.25 The average 2023/24 social rent levels of £100.07 (general needs tenants) and £135.93 (supported housing tenants) by PRPs in *Table 2* excludes service charges.

Housing Benefit (HB) and Universal Credit (UC)

2.26 A snapshot of data taken in December 2024 estimates that of the 5,392 current tenants, 3,757 (70%) received some help from benefits towards paying their rent. This has increased by 2% compared to this time last year. 1673 (31%) were in receipt of Housing Benefit and 2084 (39%) were in receipt of Universal Credit. The remaining 1,635 (30%) of tenants paid their rent without receiving help from benefits.

- 2.27 Universal Credit (UC) is the Government's working-age benefit which combines six means tested ('legacy') benefits, including Housing Benefit (HB), into a single monthly payment. UC was a central feature of the government's Welfare Reform Act 2012. The Government started rolling out UC in 2013, with the full service commencing in 2018 across Newark & Sherwood.
- 2.28 Since 2018, there has been a steady increase in the number of tenants claiming UC, with around 2,084 tenants receiving help towards their rent from UC. Of the 2,084 UC claimants, around 45% have their rent paid directly to the Council, either due to being in arrears or due to a vulnerability.
- 2.29 UC cases increased significantly during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and have increased again as the DWP works to complete the migration of claimants from legacy benefits to UC by March 2026.
- 2.30 As the number of council housing tenants claiming UC is increasing, the number claiming Housing Benefit (HB) as a standalone ('legacy') benefit is decreasing. Around 2,179 of council households had tenant(s) in receipt of legacy HB in December 2021, compared to the 1,673 currently receiving legacy HB.
- 2.31 Despite the trends outlined above, a substantial number of council housing tenants will continue to receive legacy HB even after all relevant households have transferred to UC. This is because eligible adults of all ages (including older people) can claim legacy HB, whereas only eligible adults of working-age can claim UC. Around 47% of the council's social housing stock is designated for older people.
- 2.32 Around 1,110 of the 1,673 households, or around two-thirds, are entitled to the maximum amount of HB, and around 563 households entitled to partial HB.

Supporting Tenants

- 2.33 We offer a range of support to tenants to help them meet their housing costs and help sustain their tenancy and will continue to provide additional support with cost-of-living challenges:
- We continue with our commitment to not move to evict tenants for rent arrears if they continue to engage with us to address their debt with us;
 - We recognise the importance of supporting tenants at an early stage to sustain their tenancies, especially around rent collection, benefit entitlement and arrears management;
 - We also promote the use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's) where appropriate and refer tenants to partner advice agencies for specialist financial support and advice
 - We have implemented new initiatives such as the Helping Hand Fund which looks to promote positive engagement with tenants through matching arrears payments.
- 2.34 We have also implemented further initiatives from the Tenant Welfare Fund which has targeted tenants who do not receive additional support from HB or UC towards their increase in rent. This could be due to people falling just outside of benefit support or have limited qualification such as single people or couples.

Service Charges

- 2.35 In addition to rent, local authorities can charge for other services they provide (service charges). Section 93 (Power to charge for discretionary services) of the Local Government Act 2003 requires charges to be set such that taking one financial year with another, the income from charges for a service does not exceed its costs of provision.
- 2.36 The Policy Statement on Rent for Social Housing (February 2019) sets out an expectation that service charge increases remain within the limit of rent charge of CPI + 1% to keep service charges affordable. Appendix C details the current (2024/25) and proposed (2025/26) service charges, with proposed increases to current charges of 2.7%. Subsequent paragraphs provide details about the services that tenants are charged for.

Housing-Based Services for Supported Housing and Extra Care Services

- 2.37 The main housing-based support service provided is a community alarm service, to help tenants live more independently. Tenants with lifeline units in their properties can raise an alarm call from anywhere in the home if they require this. Around half of the council's social housing properties have these lifeline units.
- 2.38 Tenants in properties with Careline units currently pay £2.50 per week for the community alarm service and this report proposes to increase £2.56 per week.
- 2.39 In addition to these support services, tenants in the extra care housing schemes receive additional housing management and housing-related services due to their specialist needs. The council currently has four extra care housing schemes. These are at Gladstone House, The Broadleaves, Vale View and the Bilsthorpe Bungalows.

Other Housing-Based Services

- 2.40 Other weekly service charges applied to tenants are for the costs of water and sewerage provided to properties at Vale View (£4.55 per week) and for the costs (where appropriate) of landscaping, lighting and drainage provided to 79 general needs properties.
- 2.41 The council provides several housing-related services for which it does not currently recover the cost of provision through service charges, therefore resulting in costs being met through rent income. Such services include communal cleaning, communal lighting, and grounds maintenance. Work is being undertaken to identify these costs and how they might be separated from the rent charge and identified as distinct service charges. This would help to meet the cost of provision, increase transparency, and meet the expectations of the Regulator.

Consultation with Tenants

- 2.42 The assumptions used in this paper to propose the HRA budget and rent setting for 2025/26 were presented to the Tenant Engagement Board on 19 December 2024.
- 2.43 The tenants who sit on the Tenant Engagement Board were supportive of the assumptions used in the HRA budget and the proposal to increase of rent and service charges by the 2.7%.

Revenue Budget

- 2.44 The budget increases reflect the focus on improving existing services that are important to our customers, repairs, building safety, responding to complaints (and learning from them) whilst always being as efficient and value for money as possible. We are increasing staff resources to better co-ordinate our front-line services and give a better customer experience to tenants. Details of the revenue budget can be found at **Appendix A and B**.

Capital Budget

- 2.45 The Council intends to spend £78.926m from the HRA from 2025/26 to 2028/29. This is made up of £52.354m on existing property investment and £26.572m on additional Affordable Housing.

- 2.46 Major schemes included in the HRA are:

Scheme Name	Summary of Proposed Financing
Kitchen & Bathroom Replacements	MRR and borrowing
Roof Replacements	MRR and borrowing
Heating Renewals	MRR and borrowing
Decarbonisation	Government Grant, MRR and Borrowing
Yorke Drive Estate Regeneration	Borrowing plus external grant
New Phases 6 of the Council House Development Programme	S106 where appropriate, Capital Receipts and Borrowing

- 2.47 Details of individual schemes are shown in **Appendix D**.

Capital Resources Available

- 2.48 External Grants and Contributions can provide additional resources to the Capital Programme and is subject to a detailed bidding process. Officers continue to liaise with external parties to secure the maximum available inward investment to contribute towards the delivery of the capital programme.

- 2.49 There is one grant currently forecast over the medium term which relates to Decarbonisation. It has been assumed that 50% of the budget will be available in grant.

Capital Receipts

- 2.50

	Other Receipt £'m	Right to Buy £'m	Right to Buy 1-4-1 £'m	Total £'m
Estimated Balance @ 1 Apr 2025	0	0.240	0	0.240
Estimated Receipts 2025/26 – 2028/29	0.490	0.921	1.473	2.884

Approved for Financing 2025/26 – 2028/29	-0.490	-0.830	-0.644	-1.964
Unallocated Capital Receipts Balance	0	0.331	0.830	1.160

2.51 The other receipt is the sale of a building on Lombard Street, Newark which is a property within the HRA but not a Council House, therefore is listed separately to the Right to Buy.

2.52 The Right to Buy (RTB) and RTB 1-4-1 figures above relate to forecast RTB sales. The Council signed a Retention Agreement with the Secretary of State relating to retained receipts (1-4-1 receipts) from properties sold under the RTB scheme on the provision of replacement social housing. The guidance now includes increased flexibilities which were announced in July 2024 and the terms have been amended for the financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26, summarised as follows:

- The maximum permitted contribution from RTB receipts to replacement affordable housing has increased from 50% to 100%.
- RTB receipts will be permitted to be used with section 106 contributions.
- The cap on the percentage of replacements delivered as acquisitions each year (currently 50%) has been lifted.

2.53 Local authorities are permitted to retain the share of RTB receipts that were previously returned to the Treasury and during the Autumn Budget it was announced this would continue.

2.54 If the council is unable to spend its retained receipts within five years of receiving them, it must return these to Government with interest of 4% above the base rate (currently 4.75%). Use of the receipts is monitored closely to maximise where practicable and appropriate.

Major Repairs Reserve

2.55 The table below shows the estimated contributions to and the use of the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR) in terms of Capital Financing.

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Estimated Opening Balance	5.375	4.503	4.500	4.500
Depreciation Contribution to the MRR	6.369	6.740	6.790	6.790
Revenue Contribution to the MRR	5.346	1.906	2.023	2.345
Debt Repayments	-5.041	-3.044	-6.046	-9.046
Capital Financing	-7.546	-5.605	-2.767	-4.090
Unallocated MRR Balance	4.503	4.500	4.500	0.500

Capital Financing

2.56 Subject to the approval of the proposals outlined above, the current plan for financing the HRA capital programme is shown below.

HRA	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Government Grants	0.746	0.518	0.815	0.855
Contributions from Third Parties	1.152	0.000	0.000	0.000
Capital Receipts	1.285	0.222	0.254	0.202
RCCO	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Revenue Support	7.546	5.605	2.767	4.090
Borrowing	12.566	17.505	14.197	8.601
Total	23.295	23.850	18.033	13.748

2.57 At the end of the financial year, once all capital expenditure has been finalised (including accrued expenditure) the financing of the Capital Programme is arranged by the Section 151 Officer, in line with the Council's Constitution.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Digital Implications

3.1 There are no digital implications directly arising from this report.

Equalities Implications

3.2 The proposed rent increase would apply to all occupied council social housing, rather than to the tenants themselves or to tenants in specific properties. The proposed rent increase is therefore not expected to discriminate against any of the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010.

3.3 The proposed rent and service charge increases are not expected to adversely impact tenants in receipt of benefits. The increase in rent and most service charges will be met by an increase in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Element.

3.4 The increase of state pension of 4.1% and increase of working age benefits of 1.7% in 2025, will compensate for the small number of service charges not fully eligible for increased Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Element.

3.5 As outlined in the report, council housing tenants claiming benefits in need of help with housing costs can request a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) from the council. The Government has not yet announced how much DHP it will be giving councils for 2025/26. Officers recognise the importance of supporting tenants of all ages to sustain their tenancies.

Financial Implications

3.6 All of the financial implications are set out in the body of this report or its appendices.

Tenant Implications

- 3.7 A presentation on the 30-year business plan, budgets and rent setting proposal was presented to the Tenant Engagement Board on 19 December 2024. The proposals were well received including the challenges to the HRA of new legislation, increased health and safety burdens and the refreshed regulatory regime as well as the need to increase resources in services important to tenants – particularly the repairs service.

Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

- 3.8 The implementation of the proposals in this report will directly support the council's HRA to meet multiple objectives of the Community Plan 2023-2027, such as to:
- Improve health and well-being
 - Increase the supply, choice, and standard of housing and
 - Reduce the impact of Climate Change
- 3.9 Some of the actions the council is taking to achieve the Community Plan objectives are:
- Refreshing stock condition information so the Council reprofile capital budgets to provide data driven improvement works inc. lifting the energy performance of homes and looking at green energy opportunities;
 - Build on our successful decarbonisation project, renewing over 100 oil heating systems with air source heat pumps and solar panels as part of the Warm Homes initiative currently in consultation; and
 - Evaluating and embedding recommendations from TPAS on how to build on existing arrangements to engage with and involve tenants in scrutiny and improving housing services;
 - Deliver the Housing Strategy, 2023-2028;
 - Implementing a new Housing Management System to increase efficiencies in our operations, to free up officer time to focus on engagement with tenants

Legal Implications (LEG2425/582)

- 3.10 As set out in the report, the Council is under a statutory obligation to set an annual budget for the HRA. Full Council must set the budget; the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution provide for Cabinet to finalise proposals for the budget and submit them to Full Council, taking into account any recommendations made by Policy and Performance and Improvement Committee.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None

2024/25 BASE BUDGET £	SUMMARY	2025/26 BASE BUDGET £	2026/27 BASE BUDGET £	2027/28 BASE BUDGET £	2028/29 BASE BUDGET £
	INCOME				
(27,350,700)	Rents: dwellings	(27,870,270)	(28,672,650)	(29,678,590)	(30,639,950)
(163,630)	Rents: non-dwellings	(156,190)	(160,880)	(165,710)	(170,680)
(1,198,280)	Charges for services	(1,430,950)	(1,473,900)	(1,518,130)	(1,563,680)
(1,513,790)	Contributions to expenditure	(1,883,370)	(1,849,890)	(1,884,160)	(1,917,910)
(30,226,400)	Sub Total - Income	(31,340,780)	(32,157,320)	(33,246,590)	(34,292,220)
	EXPENDITURE				
6,353,120	Repairs & maintenance	7,735,620	8,217,080	8,314,440	8,434,660
8,210,070	Supervision & management	8,906,430	9,147,460	9,395,390	9,648,590
1,225,450	Rents, rates, taxes & other charges	1,319,560	1,356,950	1,394,310	1,432,890
6,388,080	Depreciation & impairment	6,368,700	6,740,390	6,790,390	6,790,390
26,250	Debt management costs	26,780	27,320	27,870	28,430
368,000	Efficiency savings: prospective revenue initiatives	368,000	0	0	0
22,570,970	Sub Total - Expenditure	24,725,090	25,489,200	25,922,400	26,334,960
(7,655,430)	NET COST OF SERVICES	(6,615,690)	(6,668,120)	(7,324,190)	(7,957,260)
3,955,455	Interest payable/(receivable)	4,243,380	4,636,260	5,172,730	5,483,720
27,300	(Profit)/loss on sale of non-current assets	13,000	7,800	7,800	7,800
(3,672,675)	NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE	(2,359,310)	(2,024,060)	(2,143,660)	(2,465,740)
	APPROPRIATIONS				
(27,300)	(Profit)/loss on sale of non-current assets	(13,000)	(7,800)	(7,800)	(7,800)
119,250	Pension-related costs	123,750	126,230	128,750	128,750
3,580,725	Revenue contribution to/(from) Major Repairs Reserve	2,248,560	1,905,630	2,022,710	2,344,790
0	Contributions to/(from) earmarked reserves	0	0	0	0
0	HRA (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT FOR YEAR	0	0	0	0
(2,000,000)	WORKING BALANCE brought forward (b/f)	(2,000,000)	(2,000,000)	(2,000,000)	(2,000,000)
(2,000,000)	WORKING BALANCE carried forward (c/f)	(2,000,000)	(2,000,000)	(2,000,000)	(2,000,000)

	2024/25 BASE BUDGET £	SUMMARY	2025/26 BASE BUDGET £	2026/27 BASE BUDGET £	2027/28 BASE BUDGET £	2028/29 BASE BUDGET £
	133,470	STORES	137,060	141,000	145,030	149,170
	4,144,970	CENTRAL CHARGES INCL SLA'S	4,326,910	4,488,790	4,600,110	4,713,780
	545,830	HOUSING CHOICE	567,520	582,470	597,820	613,550
	794,870	INCOME MANAGEMENT	988,460	868,600	893,200	917,770
	127,790	INVESTMENT TEAM	78,000	77,800	77,600	77,390
	316,790	COMMUNITY CENTRES	268,330	276,890	285,790	295,050
	186,040	VALE VIEW	213,210	218,880	225,120	231,370
	176,850	STREET WARDENS	174,930	180,630	186,490	192,590
	1,047,550	VOIDS MAINTENANCE	1,240,940	1,094,080	1,123,010	1,152,740
	2,520,990	RESPONSIVE REPAIRS	2,868,260	2,947,270	3,028,650	3,111,050
	1,531,100	TENANCY & ESTATES	1,544,510	1,588,340	1,634,820	1,606,170
	(151,540)	GLADSTONE HOUSE	(239,330)	(245,250)	(252,710)	(260,310)
	1,599,550	COMPLIANCE SERVICES	2,306,140	2,457,070	2,409,230	2,462,620
	(50,310)	BOUGHTON EXTRA CARE SCHEME	(82,040)	(84,080)	(85,700)	(87,550)
	348,440	CARELINE SERVICES	268,280	347,170	356,980	367,040
	25,980	CPOOL/SEWAGE EMPTYING/REPAIRS	26,740	27,530	28,350	29,200
	406,800	YORKE DRIVE SCHEME	391,550	399,390	407,370	415,520
	20,000	COMMUNITY HUBS	19,830	20,230	24,390	24,870
	(21,380,600)	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	(21,714,990)	(22,054,930)	(23,009,740)	(23,969,280)
	(7,655,430)	NET COST OF SERVICES	(6,615,690)	(6,668,120)	(7,324,190)	(7,957,260)

Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) charges for 2025/26

2.70%

Service charge	2024/25 Charge (£)	Proposed 2025/26 charge (£)	Frequency	Other information
<u>CareLine service</u>				
Lifeline alarm monitoring. Advice, contact of next of kin or emergency service if required by tenant	2.50	2.56	per week	All tenants
Sensor rental and monitoring for two to five sensors	1.82	1.50	per week	All tenants. Lifeline customers only
<u>Additional Tenancy Assistance (opt-in service)</u>				
	6.05	6.21	per week	
<u>Gladstone House</u>				
Support Charge	2.50	2.56	per week	
Intensive Housing Management Charge	81.50	83.70	per week	
TV Licence	0.21	0.21	per week	
Meal Charge	44.29	45.48	per week	
<u>Broadleaves</u>				
Support Charge	2.50	2.56	per week	
Intensive Housing Management Charge (Apartment)	82.27	84.49	per week	
Intensive Housing Management Charge (Bungalow)	68.64	70.49	per week	
TV Licence	0.27	0.27	per week	
Meal Charge	55.60	57.10	per week	
<u>Vale View</u>				
Intensive Housing Management Service	93.81	96.34	per week	
Support Charge	2.50	2.56	per week	
Water Charge	4.55	4.55	per week	
<u>Extra Care Bungalows, Bilsthorpe</u>				
Intensive Housing Management Service	120.89	70.49	per week	
Support Charge	2.50	2.56	per week	
<u>Other charges relating to dwellings or tenants</u>				
New build landscaping, lighting and drainage	2.20 - 8.34	2.25-8.56	per week	
<u>Leasehold</u>				
Annual Leasehold Management Fee	146.21	150.15	per annum	
<u>Garages</u>				
Garage Rent	10.57	10.85	per week	VAT added if let to non-council tenant
Garage Plot	49.66	51.00	annually	VAT added if let to non-council tenant
Garage Port	4.71	4.83	per week	VAT added if let to non-council tenant

CODE	SCHEME	EXTERNAL FUNDING	NSDC COSTS	TOTAL SCHEME COST	BEFORE 2025/26 INC FORECAST FOR 2024/25	PROPOSED BUDGET 2025/26	PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27	PROPOSED BUDGET 2027/28	PROPOSED BUDGET 2028/29
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT									
PROPERTY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME									
S91100	Roof Replacements		7,327,210	7,327,210		1,700,000	1,785,000	1,874,250	1,967,960
S91218	Kitchens & Bathrooms		9,575,120	9,575,120		2,221,540	2,332,620	2,449,250	2,571,710
S91300	External Fabric		1,218,000	1,218,000		378,000	300,000	280,000	260,000
S91412	Doors & Windows		1,206,840	1,206,840		280,000	294,000	308,700	324,140
S91500	Other Structural		646,530	646,530		150,000	157,500	165,380	173,650
S91535	Dpc Works		271,540	271,540		63,000	66,150	69,460	72,930
S93100	Electrical		3,448,100	3,448,100		800,000	840,000	882,000	926,100
S93300	Passenger Lifts		220,710	220,710		53,550	54,620	55,710	56,830
S93500	Heating		4,317,630	4,317,630		1,000,000	1,050,000	1,102,500	1,165,130
S93622	Pv Invertors		889,520	889,520		214,200	218,480	222,850	233,990
S93626	Decarbonisation	4,062,368	4,580,328	8,642,696	2,272,426	1,477,980	1,551,880	1,629,470	1,710,940
S93628	EPC		1,724,050	1,724,050		400,000	420,000	441,000	463,050
S95100	Garages, Footpaths, Walkways		220,710	220,710		53,550	54,620	55,710	56,830
S95200	Environmental Works		2,118,840	2,118,840		514,080	524,360	534,850	545,550
S95208	Sewerage Works		30,000	30,000		30,000			
S95252	Flood Defence Systems		10,000	10,000		10,000			
S95254	Estate Remodelling		60,000	60,000		60,000			
S95292	Communal Areas		46,170	46,170		10,710	11,250	11,810	12,400
S95400	Void Works		1,293,038	1,293,038		300,000	315,000	330,750	347,288
S97100	Asbestos		264,860	264,860		64,260	65,550	66,860	68,190
S97200	Fire Safety		1,002,560	1,002,560			318,020	333,920	350,620
S97218	Enhanced Fire Risk Assessments		240,000	240,000		240,000	0		
S97221	Fire Doors Various Locations		645,600	645,600		645,600	0		
S97400	Disabled Adaptations		4,341,120	4,341,120		1,007,190	1,057,550	1,110,430	1,165,950

CODE	SCHEME	EXTERNAL FUNDING	NSDC COSTS	TOTAL SCHEME COST	BEFORE 2025/26 INC FORECAST FOR 2024/25	PROPOSED BUDGET 2025/26	PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27	PROPOSED BUDGET 2027/28	PROPOSED BUDGET 2028/29
S97500	Legionella		344,810	344,810		80,000	84,000	88,200	92,610
S98100	Building Safety		1,396,160	1,396,160		185,690	383,970	403,170	423,330
S98101	Fire Alarm Systems		35,000	35,000		35,000			
S98103	Structural Surveys - Elivated Walkways		150,000	150,000		150,000			
S98104	Scooter Shed		45,000	45,000		45,000			
S98108	Door Entry Systems		50,000	50,000		50,000			
S99100	Property Investment Contingency		240,000	240,000		60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
S99102	Investment Programme Fees		2,605,070	2,605,070		605,020	634,810	665,970	699,270
	SUB TOTAL PROPERTY INVESTMENT	4,062,368	50,564,516	54,626,884	2,272,426	12,884,370	12,579,380	13,142,240	13,748,468
AFFORDABLE HOUSING									
SA1031	Site Acquisition (Incl RTB)	0	2,310,532	2,310,532	710,532	1,600,000			
SA1033	Yorke Drive Estate Regeneration	986,766	17,330,815	18,317,580	3,046,691	5,000,000	10,270,889		
SA1090	Phase 6	0	4,891,000	4,891,000				4,891,000	
SA1092	Phase 6 Cluster 2	0	771,000	771,000	250,000	521,000			
SA1093	Phase 6 Cluster 3	0	1,500,000	1,500,000		1,000,000	500,000		
SA1094	Phase 6 Cluster 4	0	1,500,000	1,500,000		1,000,000	500,000		
SA1095	Phase 6 Cluster 5	0	1,000,000	1,000,000		1,000,000			
SC2002	New Housing Management System	0	856,000	856,000	566,667	289,333			
	SUB TOTAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING	986,766	30,159,347	31,146,113	4,573,891	10,410,333	11,270,889	4,891,000	0
	TOTAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	5,049,134	80,723,862	85,772,996	6,846,317	23,294,703	23,850,269	18,033,240	13,748,468



Report to: Meeting of the Full Council - 11 February 2025

Committee Chair: Councillor Peter Harris, Audit & Governance Committee

Director Lead: Sanjiv Kohli Deputy Chief Executive / Director – Resources and Section 151 Officer

Lead Officer: Nick Wilson, Business Manager - Financial Services, Ext. 5317

Report Summary	
Report Title	Audit & Governance Committee Annual Report
Purpose of Report	This report informs Full Council of the activity undertaken by the Audit & Governance Committee between 27 September 2023 and 31 July 2024.
Recommendations	That Full Council note the report.
Reason for Recommendation	To ensure that the Committee discharges its responsibilities as per its delegated authority within the Councils constitution.

1.0 Background Information

1.1 As part of the bi-annual review of the effectiveness of the Audit & Accounts Committee which was undertaken during July 2019, an action plan was presented to the Audit & Accounts Committee at the meeting in November 2019. One of the actions identified within that plan was to produce an annual report of the activity of the Audit & Accounts Committee, now known as Audit & Governance Committee.

1.2 Section 7.2 of Part C of the constitution sets out the terms of reference for the Committee. This report details how the Committee has discharged those responsibilities throughout the year.

2.0 Activity Undertaken During the Year

2.1 During the year, the Committee discharged its responsibilities as described within the Constitution by:

27 September 2023

2.2 Members were updated with an outcome of a recent Housing Ombudsman investigation.

2.3 A Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review update was provided to Members as is a requirement that Annual Review letters are shared with Members.

- 2.4 Members reviewed the May/June induction training programme for Councillors and considered the ongoing training and development for Councillors.
- 2.5 Members considered the Independent Remuneration Panel regarding the Scheme of Members Allowances for 2023/24 in the context of value for money.
- 2.6 Members received an annual report informing them of the activity undertaken by the Audit & Governance Committee from 22 April 2022 until 14 June 2023.
- 2.7 The Committee received a report setting out the assessment of the Section 151 Officer of the Council's Going Concern status, this is required for the preparation and approval of the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2023.
- 2.8 The Committee also received reports on:
- Annual External Audit Strategy Memorandum 2022/23
 - Projected General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Outturn Report to 31 March 2024 as at 30 June 2023
 - LGA Newark and Sherwood District Council Cyber 360 Report

22 November 2023

- 2.9 The Internal Audit Progress Report for 2023/24 provided a summary of Internal work undertaken during 2023/24 against the agreed audit plan and how this impacts on the Council's overall Governance framework.
- 2.10 The Members received an update on the Council's Treasury Activity and Prudential Indicators for the first half of 2023/24 which was noted and recommended to Full Council on 12 December 2023.
- 2.11 The Committee were informed of counter-fraud activity undertaken since the last update, the Members understood how important the Council's response is to fraud and also the results of any actions taken.
- 2.12 Members received an update on the status of the Council's 2023/24 Strategic Risk Register.
- 2.13 The Committee gave their endorsement to updates to the Council's Constitution to enable Planning Committee to revise the Council's Protocol for Dealing with Planning Matters to allow for public speaking at the Planning Committee.

It was recommended to Full Council that the Council's Constitution be amended as set out in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.4.

21 February 2024

- 2.14 Members were provided with the reports which had been approved at Cabinet on 20 February 2024 :

General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/25

General Fund Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2027/28

Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2027/28

- 2.15 The Committee approved the Internal Audit Plan for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.16 Members received a summary of Internal Audit work undertaken during 2023/24 against the agreed audit plan.
- 2.17 Members received the External Auditor's Draft Annual Audit Completion Report for 2022/23.
- 2.18 The Committee approved the Council's Statutory Accounts for financial year ended 31 March 2023.
- 2.19 The Committee considered the forecast outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets.

This also ensured that the Council has overall financial sustainability for the current financial year compared to the budgeted position.

- 2.20 Members approved the Treasury Management Strategy, incorporating the Borrowing Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Prudential Indicators updated in accordance with the latest guidance, to be taken to Full Council on 8 March 2023.
- 2.21 The Committee also received reports on:
- Capital Strategy 2024/25
 - Investment Strategy 2024/25
 - Housing Ombudsman Annual Review Update
 - Gifts and Hospitality Annual Report
 - Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) Annual Report
 - Whistleblowing Policy Annual Report
 - Review of Significant Issues in the Annual Governance Statement
 - Update on the LGA Newark and Sherwood District Council Cyber 360 Report

24 April 2024

- 2.22 The Committee received a summary of Internal Audit work undertaken during 2023/24 against the agreed audit plan. The report contained details of reports issued in the last quarter together with a summary of all report considered during the financial year.
- 2.23 The External Auditor issued an Annual Audit Completion Report (ACR) in compliance with the International Standards on Auditing. The significant findings from the audit are reported in the Annual Audit Completion Report, together with the action taken in respect of these findings. The report also gave the auditor's opinion on the Statement of Accounts.
- 2.24 The Members were presented with the Ethical and Fossil Fuel Investment policies of the Investment Banks used by the Council, to ensure sustainable and ethical investments in line with the Council's policies.
- 2.25 Members received an update highlighting the Council's 2024/25 Strategic Risk Register and they were provided with the current status.

- 2.26 The Committee received the updates to the Council's accounting policies in relation to the close down of the 2023/2024 financial year.
- 2.27 The Committee also received reports on:
- Underlying Pension Assumptions for 2023/2024 Statement of Accounts
 - Underlying Valuation Assumptions for 2023/2024 Statement of Accounts
 - Annual Review of the Council's Constitution
 - Review Arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints regarding Councillors
 - Update on the LGA Newark and Sherwood District Council Cyber 360 Report

31 July 2024

- 2.28 Members were updated on the changes required to the Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy which would ensure the Council meets the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

The report also provided Members with the outcome of the completion of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment.

- 2.29 The Committee were presented with the Customer Feedback half year report.

The Council acknowledged the significance of listening to residents' views regarding the services they receive. The customer feedback policy facilitates the capture, investigation, response, and learning from customer feedback, contributing to the improvement and development of Council services in the future.

- 2.30 The report outlined to the Committee the appended Productivity Plan with the aim of providing Elected Member oversight prior to being submitted to Central Government during July.

- 2.31 The Committee received the report that set out the assessment by the Section 151 Officer of the Council's Going Concern Status.

An assessment of the Council's Going Concern is required for the preparation and approval of the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2024.

- 2.32 Members reviewed the Council's draft Statutory Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2024.

The Council's external auditors, Mazars, to commence the audit of the accounts in September 2024. On completion there is a requirement that the external auditor provides details of all the errors within the financial statement. This report is the Audit Completion report and is brought to the Audit & Governance Committee in December along with the final audited Statement of Accounts for approval.

- 2.33 Members had the opportunity to review the Annual Treasury Outturn report, to be presented to Council on 15 October 2024.

The Council delegates responsibility for the implementation and regular monitoring of treasury management policies and practices to the Audit & Governance Committee and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Section 151 Officer, who acts in accordance with the Council's policies and practices.

2.34 The Committee also received reports on:

- Assessment of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit Function and the Audit and Governance Committee
- Annual Internal Audit Report
- Internal Audit Progress Report 2024/25
- Provisional Financial Outturn Report to 31 March 2024
- Fraud Risk Assessment
- Counter-Fraud Activities from 1 October 2023 to 30 April 2024
- Code of Conduct Annual Report for the Period 1 April 2023 – 30 April 2024

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 As can be seen from the account of the year, the Committee has discharged its responsibilities as per the Constitution.

3.2 The Committee has added value to the organisation, by having appointed an Independent member to the Committee. Adding skills to the Committee which benefit the whole organisation as further scrutiny over the reports presented to the Committee is achieved.

4.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

4.1 Legal Implications (LEG2425/7411)

Full Council is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report, which is for noting only.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Audit & Governance Committee report 11 December 2024 - <https://democracy.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/documents/s21419/Item%207%2011.12.24%20Audit%20and%20Governance%20Annual%20Report.pdf>



Report to: Meeting of the Full Council - 11 February 2025

Committee Chair: Councillor Peter Harris, Audit & Governance Committee

Director Lead: Sue Bearman, Assistant Director - Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

Lead Officer: Sue Bearman, Assistant Director - Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, Ext. 5935

Report Summary	
Report Title	Revision to the Council’s Constitution
Purpose of Report	To propose amendment to the Council’s Constitution in respect of annual budget meetings.
Recommendation	That Full Council adopts the amendments to the Constitution proposed in the report and shown as tracked changes in Appendices 1 and 2 .
Reason for Recommendation	To ensure the Constitution is up to date and fit for purpose.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Full Council adopted a revised version of the Constitution in May 2022 when the Council moved to Executive Arrangements (the Cabinet System). Since that date, some minor amendments and updates have been made.
- 1.2 Audit & Governance Committee is responsible for overview of the Constitution, and the Work Programme includes an annual review. In April 2024 the Committee agreed for an in-depth review of certain aspects of the Constitution to be undertaken at informal workshops with the findings to be reported back to Committee. On 11 December 2024 the Committee received a progress report and considered the first recommendation of the informal workshop.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 Audit & Governance Committee noted that the Full Council Procedure Rules for the Council’s General Fund Budget and Precept or Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent Setting would benefit from greater clarity, in relation to motions for amendment. The rules are silent on whether motions for amendment are to be circulated for all Members of Full Council prior to the meeting, other than to say that the Chair has discretion on how to deal with such motions. Members are referred to some minor proposed amendments which are shown as tracked changes in **Appendix 1** to this report.

2.2 Audit & Governance Committee recommend that the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules would also benefit from clarification, primarily because it is not currently explained that the procedure set out in paragraphs 12 to 16 is a statutory provision that is only applicable if the Annual Budget meeting is held before 8 February in any year. Members are referred to some minor proposed amendments which are shown as tracked changes in **Appendix 2** to this report.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

3.1 Legal Implications (LEG2425/6610)

Full Council is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report. Adoption and alteration of the Constitution is a function reserved to Full Council. The statutory provision referenced at paragraph 2.2 of the report is included in **Appendix 2**.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Council's Constitution is published on its website - <https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/constitution/>

Audit & Governance Committee Report 11 December 2024 - <https://democracy.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/documents/s21432/Item%2016%2011.12.24%20Review%20of%20the%20Constitution.pdf>

- (a) Written notice of a motion to move an amendment of the Cabinet’s proposals for the Council’s General Fund Budget and Precept or Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent Setting, must be delivered to Democratic Services **not later than midday 3 working days before the Council meeting at which it is to be considered** for Financial Comments to be added. The Section 151 Officer will comment whether the alternative proposals are reasonably calculated and sufficiently deliverable as to be robust and sustainable in the medium term and continue to ensure that reserves are maintained at an adequate level which protects the Council’s financial standing. Once Financial Comments have been added, the amendment will be circulated at the earliest opportunity for all Members of Full Council and where possible published on the Council’s website. Motions received after ~~that the~~ deadline will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. ~~The Chair has discretion on how to deal with m~~Motions under this Rule will be dealt with in the order in which they were received unless this proves unworkable for any reason, in which case the Chair has discretion on how to deal with Motions.

10. Full Council will consider the final proposals of the Cabinet and may:-
 - a. adopt them without amendment;
 - b. amend them after a motion to amend, in relation to which the Section 151 Officer must have provided Financial Comments, is put by the Leader and seconded;
 - c. refer them back to the Cabinet for further consideration in accordance with paragraphs 12 to 16 below; or
 - d. substitute its own proposals in their place providing the procedure set out in Part D of the Constitution regarding Written notice of a motion to move an amendment of the Cabinet’s proposals for the Council’s General Fund Budget and Precept or Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent Setting, has been complied with.
11. If the Council accepts the Cabinet proposals with or without amendment the decision shall be effective immediately.
12. Where the Budget Decision Meeting takes place before 8 February in any financial year the provisions in paragraphs 13 to 16 below are applicable (The Local Authorities (Standing Orders (England) Regulations 2001/3384 Schedule 2).
13. If the Cabinet proposals are not accepted, the Chief Executive will inform the Leader of the Council’s objections and require him/her to reconsider the Cabinet’s proposals. The Leader will have five clear working days from receipt of the notification to submit a revised proposal or inform the Council of the Cabinet’s disagreement with the objections.
13. The Council’s decision will become effective on the expiry of five clear working days after notification of the Council’s objections unless the Leader submits revised proposals and/or formally objects in that period.
14. If the Leader wishes to submit revised proposals and or disagree with the objections of the Council, written notice will be given to the Chief Executive to that effect prior to the date upon which the decision is to be effective. The written notice must state the reasons for the revised proposals and/or the disagreement. Where such notice is received the Chief Executive shall convene a further meeting of the Council to reconsider its decision and the decision shall be effective pending that meeting.
15. The Council meeting must take place within ten working days of the receipt of the Leader’s written notice unless the Chair of the Council and Leader agree that the matter can wait until the next programmed meeting of the Council. At that Council meeting the decision of the Council shall be reconsidered in the light of any revised proposals submitted and the reasons for those revisions and / or the Cabinet disagreement and reasons for that disagreement which shall be available in writing to the Council.

16. The Council shall at that meeting make its final decision on the matter on the basis of a simple majority.



Report to: Meeting of the Full Council – 11 February 2025
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance
 Director Lead: John Robinson, Chief Executive
 Lead Officer: Nigel Hill, Business Manager Elections & Democratic Services, Ext. 5243

Report Summary	
Report Title	Political Composition of the Council and allocation of seats on Committees
Purpose of Report	To inform the Council of the political composition of the Council following a further change, and to consider allocation of seats on Committees and changes to the Audit & Governance Committee.
Recommendations	That the Council: (a) approve the changes in the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the matrix at Appendix A to the report; (b) approve the changes to the appointments of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee and other Members to Committees as per the schedule to be circulated once changes are confirmed by political groups; (c) endorses the Constitution review work outlined in paragraph 2.7 of the report.
Reason for Recommendation	To ensure the Council complies with Section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees & Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

1.0 Background Information

Political Composition

1.1 Section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to consider the political composition of the Council. The Act, together with Local Government (Committees & Political Groups) Regulations 1990, require local authorities to allocate seats on Committees of a local authority on a proportional basis, in accordance with the number of seats on the Council held by each political group.

- 1.2 Councillor J Lee gave notice on 16 January 2025 that he had left the Conservative Group on the Council and advised that he would sit as an Independent non-aligned Member.
- 1.3 This has resulted in a change in the political composition of the Council which now is as follows:

Political Group	Membership	Percentage of Council (rounded)
Conservative	11	28.21
Labour	10	25.64
Independents for Newark & District	6	15.38
Liberal Democrats	3	7.69
Green	2	5.14
Newark & Sherwood Independents	2	5.14
Cllr Amer	1	2.56
Cllr Brown	1	2.56
Cllr Dales	1	2.56
Cllr Holloway	1	2.56
Cllr Lee	1	2.56

Audit & Governance Committee

- 1.4 In October 2024, the Council hosted a team of senior councillor and officer peers as part of the national Corporate Peer Challenge programme. The peer challenge focused on 5 core elements: local priorities and outcomes, organisational and place leadership, governance and culture, financial planning and management, and capacity for improvement. The final report of the Corporate Peer Challenge team has been received and shared with all Members, and an action plan is intended to be developed and progressed with input from Cabinet, Policy & Performance Improvement Committee and the Audit & Governance Committee.
- 1.5 One of the areas for improvement identified by the Peers was the effectiveness of the Audit & Governance Committee. The Peers suggested a number of improvements including role, remit and elected member understanding and involvement.

2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 As with all the recommendations from the Peer Challenge, it is important that they are given thoughtful consideration and not simply accepted at face value. In due course, it is proposed to review the wider role and responsibilities of the Audit & Governance Committee. This would include reviewing the size of the Committee and whether the functions should be divided between two separate audit and governance/standards committees in future.
- 2.2 Given the change in composition set out in paragraph 1.2, a recalculation of seats to political groups is required. The current number of seats is set out in the table below:

Committee	No. of Members
Policy & Performance Improvement Committee	15
Planning Committee	15
Licensing Committee	15
General Purposes Committee	15
Audit & Governance Committee	12
Board of Gilstrap Trustees	5
Total	77 seats

2.3 Based on the new political composition the following calculations can be made in terms of allocation of seats on Committees:

			<u>Rounded</u>
Conservative	77 x 28.21%	21.72	22* 23
Labour	77 x 25.64%	19.74	20
Independents for Newark & District	77 x 15.38%	11.84	12
Liberal Democrats	77 x 7.69%	5.92	6
N&S District Independents	77 x 5.14%	3.95	4
Green	77 x 5.14%	3.95	4
Ind N/A (Amer)	77 x 2.56%	1.97	2
Ind N/A (Brown)	77 x 2.56%	1.97	2* 1
Ind N/A (Dales)	77 x 2.56%	1.97	2* 1
Ind N/A (Holloway)	77 x 2.56%	1.97	2
Ind N/A (Lee)	77 x 2.56%	1.97	2
			77

*Following discussions with groups and the Independent Non-aligned Members.

2.4 As a result of Councillor J Lee becoming an Independent Non-aligned Member, the Conservative Group loses three seats overall. If the Council were minded to allocate two seats to Councillor J Lee as an Independent Member, it is proposed that he is given seats on the Licensing and General Purposes Committees. It is proposed for the third seat to be re-allocated on the Audit & Governance Committee.

2.5 In order to enable the Audit & Governance Committee to be representative of the wide political representation at Newark & Sherwood, it is proposed to allocate the seat to Councillor R Holloway as an Independent Non-aligned Member. The matrix at **Appendix A** to the report reflects this change.

2.6 It is further proposed to appoint Councillor R Holloway as Chair of Audit & Governance Committee and to consider appointment of a new Vice Chair following Councillor S Forde's recent appointment as Portfolio Holder for Climate & the Environment. A revised schedule of Member Appointments will be circulated once political groups have advised of their changes in committee memberships.

2.7 In terms of a wider review of the Council's governance arrangements, an informal working party of Audit & Governance Committee has been established to review the Council's Constitution. The working party has asked Officers to consider whether two

separate committees are needed going forward for Licensing and General Purposes functions. The Leader has also requested a review of the membership of the Planning Policy Board, to reflect the wide diversity of representation at Newark & Sherwood and ensure geographical representation is balanced too. It is proposed therefore to consider the Planning Policy Board membership at this informal working party. This workstream will progress in parallel with the Peer Challenge Action Plan.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

3.1 Legal Implications (LEG2425/270)

Full Council is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report. There is no legal requirement for Non-aligned Independent Members to be allocated Committee seats.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Corporate Peer Challenge Report <https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/councilpriorities/>

24 April 2024 Audit & Governance Committee <https://democracy.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/documents/s19652/Item%2012%2024.04.24%20-%20Annual%20Review%20of%20the%20Constitution.pdf>

APPENDIX A

ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Committee	Conservative	Labour	Independents for Newark & District	Liberal Democrats	Newark & Sherwood District Independents	Green	Independent N/A - Amer	Independent N/A - Brown	Independent N/A - Dales	Independent N/A - Holloway	Independent N/A - Lee	Total Seats By Committee
Policy & Performance Improvement	4	4	3	1	1	1				1		15
Planning	4	4	2	2		1	1		1			15
General Purposes	5	4	2	1	1	1					1	15
Licensing	5	4	2	1	1	1					1	15
Audit & Governance*	3	3	3	1	1					1		12
Board of Gilstrap Trustees+	2	1					1	1				5
Total Seats by Group	23	20	12	6	4	4	2	1	1	2	2	77

*Note: The Audit & Governance Committee includes one independent co-opted member acting in an advisory capacity

+Note: The Board of Trustees of the Gilstrap Charity includes up to four non-voting co-opted Members (Newark Wards)

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Cabinet** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 10 December 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chair)

Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Crosby, Councillor L Brazier,
Councillor E Oldham, Councillor C Penny, Councillor P Taylor and
Councillor J Kellas

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor N Allen, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor J Lee, Councillor
S Michael, Councillor P Rainbow, Councillor N Ross and Councillor
S Saddington

APOLOGIES FOR
ABSENCE:

206 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Leader advised that the proceedings were being audio recorded and live streamed by the Council.

207 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor L Brazier declared an Other Registerable Interest in Agenda Item No. 14 – Levelling Up Fund 3 Programme Update – as a Member of Ollerton & Boughton Town Council.

Councillors S Crosby, J Kellas and P Taylor declared Other Registerable Interests in Agenda Item No. 6 – Proposal to Site the ‘Kidney Stones’ as Castle House, Newark – as Members of Newark Town Council.

Councillor J Kellas advised that he was Trustee of Nottinghamshire and Newark District Scout Group, but not the organisation not of the Scout Group that had been successful in receiving community grant funding as detailed at Item 9 on the agenda.

208 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Leader welcomed Councillor J Kellas to his first meeting of the Cabinet after being appointed as the new Leader of the Conservative Group on the Council. Councillor R Cozens paid a personal tribute to Councillor R Holloway for her service on the Cabinet.

209 ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ORGANISATION EXTENSION APPLICATION (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Heritage & Culture presented a report which updated Members on the progress of the National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) programme and proposed that the Heritage & Culture Business Unit applies for the available extension funding for 2026-27.

The funding agreement was overseen by the independent Board which included the Portfolio Holder and the report gave examples of the projects delivered to date. It was proposed to submit an application to Art Council England for the maximum available funding of £309,000 for 2026-27 confirming that the activity would be broadly in line with 2023-26 plans which had been agreed by the Board. The detailed plans for the additional year would continue to build on the strengths and successes of the original three-year programme.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- (a) approve the submission of the extension application by 19 December 2024;
- (b) approve the extension of the three staff for £137,000 funded by the Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation, to be added to the establishment for 2026-27; and
- (c) approve a budget in 2026-27 of the remaining £172,000 of the £309,000 funded by the National Portfolio Organisation Grant.

Reasons for Decision:

The Open Doors programme links to Objective 7 in the community plan, to celebrate and invigorate community spirit, pride of place and a sense of belonging through heritage, culture and the arts, enabling the Heritage & Culture Business Unit to reach more audiences and increase cultural engagement.

Options Considered:

The extension application is not mandatory, however if the Council does not apply for the extension year there will be a gap in funding and activity will not be able to continue. Not applying would also be to the detriment of any future NPO application, which is anticipated to cover the period 2027-2030.

210 PROPOSAL TO SITE THE 'KIDDEY STONES' AT CASTLE HOUSE, NEWARK

The Portfolio Holder – Heritage, Culture & the Arts presented a report which set out the outcomes from the public consultation following on from a previous in principle decision by the Cabinet to site the Kiddey sculptures at Castle House. The Cabinet considered the responses from the public consultation and the comments from the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee, following their consideration of this item at their meeting held on 25 November 2024.

The cost to deliver the scheme was forecasted as £81,240 when the first report was presented to the Cabinet on 4 June 2024. That was based on latest cost from April, so given inflation a new cost estimate of £87,430 was noted, however this was subject to the works being tendered and completed.

It was reported that subject to any Cabinet decision, Newark Town Council and the District Council would need to enter into a formal agreement for leasing the Kiddey structures. The principles for such an agreement were set out in the report.

AGREED following a named vote (with 6 votes for, 1 against – Cllr Kellas and 1 abstention – Cllr Oldham) that Cabinet:

- a) consider the report on the public consultation on the Kiddey sculptures at Appendix B to the report;
- b) consider the comments from the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee at Appendix A to the report;
- c) confirm the earlier, in principle decision taken on 4 June 2024, to site the Kiddey sculptures at Castle House, Newark;
- d) add a sum of £87,430 to the capital programme funded by the Change Management Reserve, to fund the installation at Castle House; and
- e) give delegated authority to the Director - Communities & Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to enter into an agreement with Newark Town Council for a loan of the Kiddey Sculptures.

Reasons for Decision:

The recommendations align with the Community Plan objectives in relation to heritage and culture, particularly the specific actions around increasing the quantity and quality of public art in the district.

Options Considered:

The Kiddey Stones are part of Newark's heritage. For around 40 years they have been under tarpaulin in the town's cemetery. Without funding and a suitable location to site the stones, it is highly likely they will continue to remain away from public view. However, it is an option not to invest in the project.

211 TENANT ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder – Housing invited the Tenant Engagement Officers to present to the Cabinet progress made in relation to tenant engagement arrangements and new activities in the District, and the ongoing work towards maximum compliance with the social housing consumer regulation regime. The Cabinet welcomed and thanked officers for the informative presentation.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) review and note the responsibilities of the Council (both Members and officers) as a housing authority in relation to consumer regulation;
- b) note the progress and planned engagement with the Tenant Participation Advisory Services (TPAS) on creating a new, strengthened tenant engagement structure;

- c) note how feedback and insight from the tenant engagement survey 2024 will be used alongside Tenant Satisfaction Measures performance and learning from complaints, to inform the workplan for service improvement for next 18 months;
- d) note that the results of the TPAS re-engineering project will be reported to the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee in June 2025 to scrutinise the detailed action plan, proposals for implementation and endorse for approval by the Tenant Engagement Board and Cabinet; and
- e) approve and endorse a bespoke training session for all Members, to be led by the Tenant Engagement team, to raise awareness and understanding of the Council's obligations regarding tenant engagement and the broader consumer regulations.

Reasons for Decision:

To keep Members updated on progress towards maximum compliance with the Consumer Standards and to highlight how we are aiming to achieve this within the tenant engagement team.

These recommendations align to objective 2, and 8 of the Community Plan. Specifically:

Objective 2 - Explore further ways to seek out imaginative and effective ways to engage with and involve tenants; Design and implement a 'New Housing Management System' for Council owned homes, to provide a modern system and better user experience for both tenants and staff; Embed and evaluate our new 'Repairs Online' service.

Objective 8 - Plan and implement arrangements to respond to new regulatory inspections and requirements.

Options Considered:

Continue with current methods and structure – this would impact the ability of the Council to meet the Consumer Standards, as set out in the Regulator of Social Housing's regime, and potentially result in a worse rating upon inspection.

This option has been discounted since compliance with the standards is a regulatory requirement.

212 YORKE DRIVE REGENERATION UPDATE (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Regeneration & Housing Strategy presented a report which updated Members on the Yorke Drive Regeneration Scheme. The report set out the background to the project and its evolution since the original concept in 2012. The report also detailed the complexities behind the scheme and the external impacts on the project. The report presented three scenarios at section 2.3 for the delivery of social housing within the scheme and projected costs. Some costs had been excluded from

the report and included in an exempt appendix given they were commercially sensitive.

The Cabinet indicated their full support for the project and delivering the scheme for the residents of Yorke Drive.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) as landowner, promotes a scheme which will deliver 207 units with an initial split of 133 market and 74 social units;
- b) alongside this, continue to negotiate with Homes England to maximise the affordable housing on the scheme through grant funding and a further report will be brought forward at the appropriate time;
- c) increase the HRA Capital budget by xx (financed by the Major Repairs Reserve) to xx to allow for future inflation and contingency;
- d) the Revenue loss of xx due to the change from Affordable Rent to Social Rent and a reduction in units from 100 to 74 be noted; and
- (e) give delegated authority to the Director - Housing, Health & Wellbeing in consultation with the Director – Resources / S151 Officer and Portfolio Holder for Housing to negotiate and enter into the development agreement and subsequent JCT agreements, subject to planning permission, costs remaining within the approved budget envelope and risk profile.

Reasons for Decision:

To continue the delivery of the Yorke Drive Regeneration Programme, a key action within the Community Plan and delivering overarching transformation for the Bridge Ward.

Options Considered:

Alternative options are considered within the body of the report.

213 COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME UPDATE (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Regeneration & Housing Strategy presented a report which gave an update on the Community Grant scheme delivery for 2024-25 to date, and budget setting proposals for 2025-26 to 2028-29. During 2023/24 a review of the grant scheme criteria led to a range of changes ineligibility, grant value and prioritisation which were approved by the Cabinet in October 2023.

The first round of the community grant scheme for 2024-25 received 29 applications of which 16 were successful. Five of these grants were allocated funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund. The successful applications were listed in the report. It was proposed that the £100,000 budget for the scheme continue for 2025-26 onwards.

Councillor J Kellas raised the eligibility criteria in relation to small parish councils being

excluded from this funding opportunity. The Portfolio Holder agreed to discuss this further.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) notes the delivery of the Community Grant Scheme in 2024-25 to date; and
- b) continue to budget for the Community Grant Scheme for 2025-26 to 2028-29.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure that funding can be allocated to community groups, supporting communities to be sustainable and thrive.

Options Considered:

To withdraw the community grant scheme – this alternative has been discounted due to the demonstrable positive impact the scheme has on the local community – empowering local groups and developing community capacity and resilience.

To amend the community grant scheme criteria and prioritisation – this alternative has been discounted as the scheme criteria and prioritisation have only been in place for one year (approved Oct 2023) and continue to reflect the Council’s community plan objectives.

214 REVISED CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Public Protection presented a report which set out the purpose and revision of the Contaminated Land Strategy. The strategy was a legally required document which detailed how land would be inspected for contamination across the district.

The new strategy provided as an appendix to the report had undergone a full review, taking into account the most up to date statutory guidance available on assessing contaminated land. The strategy also recognised that the majority of assessments and remediation were now completed via the planning process through land redevelopment.

The Business Manager – Public Protection advised that the Environment Agency had submitted a late comment requesting a minor change to the section on their role and adding a further link to a national guidance document. It was confirmed that these changes would be made following approval of the strategy.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Contaminated Land Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

Reasons for Decision:

This is a legally required strategy that must be in place to set out how contaminated land is identified across the district.

Options Considered:

Not appropriate, the existing strategy is out of date and not in line with current statutory guidance.

215 PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRUNEL DRIVE DEPOT SITE (KEY DECISION)

The Director – Communities & Environment presented a report which put forward proposals for the future development of the Brunel Drive depot site, Farrar Close and the glass recycling facility at the Lorry Park, following a strategic review of the Council's future needs.

The report set out a comprehensive background to the proposals and the Appendix gave a detailed analysis of the Brunel Drive site and Farrar Close. The analysis specifically looked at trying to accommodate all the Council's current and future needs from the site, a permanent glass bulking facility, ten new food waste vehicles, new staff vehicles and better visitor access to the museum store. The appended analysis identified four potential Master Plan options which could be accommodated in three phases. Two of these options were discounted from the outset and options three and four covered in full the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) approve the future development plan (Option 4) as set out in the attached study at Appendix A and described in the report;
- b) approve that a planning application is prepared and submitted for the permanent siting of the glass bulking facility at the Lorry Park in Newark;
- c) approve a first phase investment of £669,000 including contingency, inflation, and fees, at Brunel Drive and Farrar Close and equivalent budget being added to the Capital Programme for 25/26, in line with the timescales and phasing set out in the report; and
- d) give delegated authority to the Directors of Communities and Environment and Housing, Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders, to tender and deliver the phased programme of investments in line with the indicative timescale set out in the report.

Reasons for Decision:

The recommendations align with the Community Plan objectives in relation to the environment and climate change, whilst waste and recycling always features at the top of any resident polling about the services provided by the Council which matter most to them. The proposals are the most cost-effective in the circumstances and are legislatively and operationally deliverable. They facilitate effective changes in the use of buildings which are no longer required. They also facilitate the Council's ability to accommodate the long-term delivery of new services from the existing site, including food waste, and in time may open up exciting opportunities to enable public access

into the Council's museum store. Whilst there has been a prolonged impasse in terms of national waste and recycling policy and how that is to be funded, the previous Government stated they would not be funding new depots or changes to depots with the rollout of a kerbside food waste collection service and there is no real reason currently to believe that stance will change. As such, Councils will need to arrange and fund their own requirements, which is what these proposals do.

Options Considered:

The study appended to this report sets out that it is not operationally, legislatively, or financially cost-effective for the Council to try to accommodate all of its future needs on the existing Brunel Drive and Farrar Road sites., as well accommodating the glass bulking facility on that site.

The Council could look to purchase a wholly new site, but this would be financially prohibitive and is not necessary given the ability to accommodate much of the Council's operations on the existing site, whilst taking advantage of some buildings on the site which are no longer required or soon could be surplus to requirements.

The Council could look to find an alternative site for the glass bulking station now situated on the Lorry Park. However, this would require the purchase or lease of additional land and the additional construction of a glass bulking facility, which already exists on the Lorry Park. This option would carry unnecessary additional costs. Furthermore, suitable locations are likely to be very challenging to find in order to meet the Environment Agency's permitting regime and planning permission. Efforts to find an alternative site to the Lorry Park in 2023 did not yield a suitable alternative.

The Council could forego the income generated through a glass bulking site and simply take the glass to the Veolia Materials Recovery Facility at Mansfield. In this way the Council would preserve the much-requested kerbside glass recycling service, but would lose a significant quantum of the forecasted £165,000 annual income being generated through the current model, which offsets some of the costs of providing the service.

216 14 MARKET PLACE, NEWARK (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Economic Growth & Visitor Economy presented a report which informed Cabinet of project progress in respect of the 14 Market Place, Newark property, and provided recommendations for final use. Since March 2024, officers had been drawing up a specification based on the creation of a single residential unit at upper floors and commercial shell at ground floor with basement storage. This had identified a need for an uplift in the capital programme budget to £373,000.

The proposals for Newark College taking the tenancy of the ground floor and developing and activating the building for community use, along with the funding proposals were detailed in the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note and support the proposed approach to create a usable community space at ground floor and single residential apartment at upper floors for long-lease sale to the market;
- b) approve amending the existing committed Capital budget from £353,000 to £373,000 in order to cover the costs of delivering a) above;
- c) delegate to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director – Resources authority to enter into a lease with the Lincoln College Group (LCG) for use of the ground floor and basement as a Community Information Hub for a minimum period of 3 years and to proceed with the long-leasehold sale of the apartment at upper floors, including the imposition of any necessary service charges for both uses approved;
- d) delegate to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director – Resources authority to include within the terms of c) above a rent-free and service charge free period of 12 months, with rent for subsequent years being jointly sought by the LCG, CVS, and this Council from any revised Newark Long Term Plan for Towns (LTPfT) which shall be capped at a maximum of £9,000 per annum until 31st March 2029; and
- e) subject to c) and d) above to conclude necessary fit-out costs for the Community Information Hub, providing the envelope remains within the revised capital budget of £373,000.

Reasons for Decision:

The use of the building for community space and residential will enable worthwhile use of a key asset within the Council's property portfolio in line with town centre strategy.

Options Considered:

There is an option to 'do nothing' and mothball the building. This option has been discounted as it is a prime retail unit within Newark Town Centre and regenerating the site for future uses is a focus for the economic growth of the town.

217 TOWNS FUND PROJECT UPDATE

The Business Manager – Economic Growth & Visitor Economy presented a report which provided an update on Newark Town Fund and Long-Term Plan for Town (LTPfT) Programmes. Since the last update report presented to the Cabinet meeting on 4 November 2024, the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee had received a detailed update on projects, outputs and various case studies on 25 November 2024, and the LTPfT had been confirmed in the Autumn Budget Statement.

The report gave a summary of the Towns Fund projects and provided an update from the Town Board. The Cabinet referred to the number of apprenticeships being generated by the YMCA Community and Activity Village and how these were defined.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note and welcome the progress and achievements of Newark Towns Fund projects; and
- b) note the future of Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme following the Autumn Statement in October 2024.

Reasons for Decision:

To update Members on Newark Town Fund and Long-Term Plan for Town Programme.

Options considered:

None, the report just details the projects finding which have delivered significant investment.

218 LEVELLING UP FUND 3 PROGRAMME UPDATE (KEY DECISION)

The Director – Planning & Growth resented an update report in respect of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) 3 Programme. The update report published after the initial agenda, reflected the further discussions that had been held with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to agree in principle the draw down of a deliverable portion of the LUF 3 grant in advance of confirmation of an extension beyond March 2025, and proposed wider recommendations.

The update report presented key recommendations to enable the ongoing delivery of the Ollerton and Clipstone regeneration projects, as well as giving a wider update on the programme. It was noted that a further report may be required at a future meeting, dependent on the finalisation of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the report, including the updates associated with the LUF 3 Programme;

Ollerton Project

- b) approves a capital budget of £500,000, financed initially by borrowing, to be replaced by the LUF 3 grant when received, to enable essential project development works associated with the Ollerton scheme, prior to the Council receiving a Memorandum of Understanding, as detailed in section 1.6 of the report;

Clipstone Project

- c) approves a capital budget of £200,000, financed by borrowing initially, to be replaced by LUF 3 grant when received, to enable essential project development associated with the Clipstone scheme

(Phases 2 and 3), prior to the Council receiving a Memorandum of Understanding, as detailed in section 1.9 of the report;

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- d) approves an amendment to the existing delegation to the S151 Officer, Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Resources and Director of Planning and Growth, to include the acceptance of a partial (or full), LUF 3 grant of up to £20m, via an MoU, as detailed in sections 1.12 and 1.13 of the report; and
- e) notes the existing and proposed financial commitments immediately eligible for repayment by MHCLG, subject to a finalised partial, or full MoU, as detailed in section 1.13 of the report.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure Members are aware of the recent updates and developments associated with the LUF 3 programme, and to enable ongoing progression of both schemes for delivery within potential Government timescales. Without access to further funding, there is an elevated risk that both projects are unable to meet spend timescales detailed within this report.

It is recommended that the Council enters into an initial MoU with MHCLG at the earliest opportunity, to enable existing upfront investment to be eligible for repayment from LUF 3 Grant, in turn reducing the level of financial exposure for the Council.

Options Considered:

It remains an option for the Council to refuse to accept any future LUF 3 grant or decide not to provide further forward funding. This approach is not recommended as it would represent a missed opportunity to deliver genuine and impactful transformative change in the communities of Ollerton and Clipstone. Without additional forward funding, risk is elevated for both projects, particularly regarding timescales to deliver against LUF 3 funding requirements, potential loss of community and partnership momentum, and increased costs due to further delays.

219 INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT (KEY DECISION)

The Director – Planning & Growth presented a report which updated Cabinet on matters set out in the 2023/24 Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) and sought approval to consult with Parish Councils and Parish Meetings on various issues relating to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Meaningful Proportion, where contributions were retained for local neighbourhoods.

It was a national requirement for the Council to produce an annual IFS setting out the current position on developer contributions which were either monies secured through CIL or onsite infrastructure provision secured through S106 agreements as part of planning applications. The 2024 IFS was attached as Appendix A to the report with a summary being presented in the report. It was noted that the most important projects were the A1 Overbridge at Fernwood and the Tolney Lane Flood

Alleviation Scheme. The Director – Planning & Growth advised that a further report on the A1 Overbridge would be brought to the Cabinet if required.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) approve the publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement, which has been produced in accordance with the legislative requirements, before the end of the calendar year; and
- b) approve consultation with Parish Councils and Parish Meetings on CIL meaningful proportion issues as set out in section 2 of the report.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure that the District Council is operating in accordance with the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Regulations.

To discuss with Parish Councils and Parish Meetings various issues related to CIL meaningful proportions.

Options Considered:

None, there is a statutory requirement to publish the IFS by the end of the calendar year.

It was considered whether or not consulting the Parish Council and Parish Meetings was necessary, but it is felt if the Council is formulating procedures, it would be appropriate to involve those impacted. In order for the Council to change the payment schedule consultation is required.

220 NEW LOCAL PLAN FOR NEWARK AND SHERWOOD (KEY DECISION)

The Director – Planning & Growth presented a report which updated the Cabinet on progress with the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD, set out proposals in relation to the development of a new Local Plan for Newark & Sherwood, and proposed amendments to the Local Development Scheme to reflect these.

The report proposed two timetables be prepared for review, committing the Council to prepare a review as soon as possible. Both were based on assumptions which presented risk, but it was considered that whilst the systems may be different (a local plan under current regulations or one under new regulations) the overall task of preparing a plan for the district meant that the preparation work undertaken would not be wasted.

In considering the report, the Cabinet referred to future housing targets, a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, and the importance of community involvement in shaping the future plan.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the report;

- b) approve the preparation of a new Local Plan for Newark & Sherwood; and
- c) adopt amendments to the Local Development Scheme as set in Section 2 of this report and Appendix A, to come into force on 17 December 2024.

Reasons for Decision:

To allow Cabinet to note progress on the Plan Review;

To agree to begin preparation of a new Local Plan for Newark & Sherwood so that the Council can demonstrate to the Planning Inspector that it is committed to producing one; and

To allow the Council to publish an amendment to the timetable so that the Local Development Scheme can be updated to comply with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and appropriate regulations.

Options Considered:

The Inspectorate has requested that the Council confirm its position on Plan Review, therefore in order to meet these requirements it is necessary to review the Local Development Scheme.

221 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

AGREED (unanimously) that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

222 YORKE DRIVE REGENERATION UPDATE (KEY DECISION)

The Cabinet considered the exempt report in relation to the Yorke Drive Redevelopment Programme.

(Summary provided in accordance with Section 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972).

223 ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ORGANISATION EXTENSION APPLICATION (KEY DECISION) - EXEMPT APPENDIX

The Cabinet considered the exempt appendix to the report on the Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation Extension Application which contained the Human Resource implications.

(Summary provided in accordance with Section 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972).

Meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Chair

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Cabinet** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 21 January 2025 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chair)

Councillor R Cozens, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor C Penny, Councillor P Taylor and Councillor J Kellas

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor N Allen, Councillor P Harris, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor R Holloway, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor J Lee, Councillor K Melton, Councillor S Michael, Councillor P Rainbow and Councillor K Roberts

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor S Crosby and Councillor S Forde

224 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Leader advised that the proceedings were being audio recorded and live streamed by the Council.

225 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Sanjiv Kohli – Director – Resources and Deputy Chief Executive declared an Interest in Agenda Item No. 9 –Lowfield Lane Disposal, as a Director of Arkwood Developments Limited.

226 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 3 DECEMBER AND 10 DECEMBER 2024

The minutes from the meetings held on 3 December 2024 and 10 December 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to Minute No. 210 – being amended to reflect a recorded vote in full.

227 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair advised that the final report following the Corporate Peer Challenge had now been received and would be published later in the week. He added that an action plan to take forward the report recommendations would be considered in due course.

228 2025/26 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND RENT SETTING (KEY DECISION)

The Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing and Business Manager – Financial Services presented a report which examined the proposed income and expenditure on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the 2025/26 financial year for both revenue and capital, in accordance with Section 76 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The report also provided indicative amounts of income and expenditure for the 2026/27 to 2028/29 financial years for both revenue and capital income and

expenditure, and proposed rent levels and service charges for 2025/26, with effect from the first Monday in April 2025.

The setting of the HRA budget and the approval of rent levels would be presented to the Full Council Meeting in February 2025, which would allow the required time to notify tenants of proposed changes to rents in accordance with the legislation.

AGREED (with 5 votes for and 1 against) that Cabinet recommend to Council at its meeting on 11 February 2025:

- a) the HRA budget for 2025/26, as set out in Appendix A to the report;
- b) an increase of 2.7% in the 2025/26 rents of all current HRA tenancies will be applied from 7 April 2025;
- c) the 2025/26 service charges, as set out in Appendix C to the report; and
- d) the Capital Budget set out in Appendix D to the report are committed expenditure in the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29.

Reason for Decisions:

To advise Members of the proposed HRA budget and charges in rent and service charge levels for 2025/26 and for these to be recommended to Council at its meeting on 11 February 2025.

Options Considered:

Various modelling was undertaken to assess the impact of different rent levels on the viability of the HRA 30-year business plan to arrive at the recommendation above.

Consideration was also given to varying increases between general needs and supported (sheltered and extra care) accommodation but no rationale was found to support this, alongside the equitable nature of any decision to do so.

229 DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER

The Chief Executive provided the Cabinet with an update on the latest position in respect of local government reform following the Government's White Paper on Devolution published in December. He reported that further clarity was awaited from the Government, but unitary authorities were to be created across the country in two tranches in April 2027 and April 2028. He confirmed that Nottinghamshire County Council had not requested a postponement of their elections scheduled to take place on 1 May 2025.

He added that the indicative Government timetable was for draft proposals for unitary authorities being submitted in March, and final proposals in the autumn. Given the tight timeframe, Members would be invited to various briefings and workshops to identify potential options for unitary Councils.

230 IMPLEMENTATION OF AN INFORMATION SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Business Manager – ICT & Digital Services presented a report which outlined the design and implementation of the Information Security Management System (ISMS) for the Council. The purpose of the ISMS was to protect the Council's information assets from various threats, ensuring confidentiality, integrity and availability.

In respect of next steps for the ISMS implementation, the Cabinet emphasised the importance of Member training to raise awareness.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve the Implementation of the Information Security Management System for the Council.

Reason for Decision:

To align with the community plan objective 8: To be a top performing, modern and accessible Council.

Community trust in the Council to manage and use their data in a secure and compliant way, whilst demonstrating transparency.

Options Considered:

Various alternative frameworks and the option to take no action have been evaluated. However, this international standard for information security is mandated by the Council for procuring systems and technology, where applicable.

231 LOWFIELD LANE DISPOSAL (KEY DECISION)

The Chief Executive presented a report which sought to agree revised terms for the disposal of land at Lowfield Lane, Balderton, to Arkwood Developments. It was reported that in January 2022, the Policy & Finance Committee agreed to the exclusive disposal of land at Lowfield Lane, Balderton to Arkwood Developments Ltd, for the sum of £4.4m. Since January 2022, there had been a number of matters that had impacted on the scope and viability of the development. Give those matters, following the granting of planning permission on 11 November 2024, the Council received a revised offer letter from Arkwood Developments Ltd on 13 December 2024 which proposed a revised offer to purchase Lowfield lane.

The revised offer (attached as an appendix to the exempt report given it was commercially sensitive) was made as a result of a number of changes to the proposed scheme for the site through the planning process and wider market conditions which were outside of the company's control. In order to demonstrate best value, the Council had commissioned two further valuations of the land which were based on the planning consent granted. These were included as appendices to the exempt report.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve the revised sale price of £XXXXXX for the land at Lowfield Lane, Balderton as detailed in the report, subject to confirmation from Nottinghamshire County Council on the Green

Adoption at £XXXXXX; any adjustment in the offer in relation to the Green Adoption sum to be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance and Finance for decision following consultation with the Cabinet.

Reason for Decision:

In order to ensure that the Council secures the best consideration for the land which was previously purchased by the Council for residential redevelopment on the basis that it was both a largely allocated housing site and was entirely within the Newark Urban Area where the principle of residential development is acceptable.

Options Considered:

The Council could refuse the revised offer outright and request Arkwood to proceed to complete the sale on the original terms or seek to negotiate a higher sale value somewhere between the original and revised offers. Neither of these options are considered realistic, deliverable or in the Council's interest. Arkwood has set out its position that it is entitled to terminate the contract for sale in the circumstances if the revised offer is not accepted; Officers consider this position to be justified as the viability of the development has been materially affected due to the factors set out in exempt Appendix A. The revised offer exceeds the independent valuations obtained and detailed at paragraph 2.6 above, therefore it is not considered necessary to seek to negotiate a higher sale value.

The Policy & Finance Committee report of 27 January 2022 explored the alternative option of selling the land on the open market; this option was rejected as it did not deliver the Council's strategic aims of both housing delivery, and financial sustainability relative to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan provided by Arkwood's involvement. In addition, as the Council's wholly owned company, Arkwood does not seek as high a commercial return as other developers and is therefore able to deliver a more diverse mix of housing including lower value units which generate lower returns, but which are much needed in the community. The position on this alternative option has not changed, in particular with reference to the independent valuations referenced at paragraph 2.6 of this report. The Council's Acquisitions and Disposals Policy allows for disposal to be negotiated with a single party such as Arkwood. There is also a risk that by going to the open market the Council could fail to secure a buyer at all if Arkwood withdraw interest.

The Policy & Finance Committee report of 29 June 2017 confirmed the land purchase based on use for strategic residential development, as most of the land was already allocated for that purpose. The proposal offers the best disposal value that can reasonably be obtained, together with associated benefits of delivering much needed housing especially considering new targets now being introduced by Government, and the Medium-Term Financial Plan benefits already set out in this report. There are no alternative uses that would offer a viable and comparable return which achieves Best Value to the Council as landowner given the constraints of the site.

232 UPDATE ON JUBILEE BRIDGE - CONDITION OF BRIDGE AND USAGE

The Development Manager – Corporate Property presented a report which provided the Cabinet with an update on the current condition of the Jubilee Bridge and set out some options for the Cabinet in respect of future maintenance and ownership.

The report conveyed the findings of the Principal Bridge Inspector which was conducted in June 2024. This report advised that the bridge was in generally sound condition with no significant defects in urgent need of repair, with some minor maintenance / repairs being required. Based on this report, the report advised that the planned refurbishment could be deferred until 2030. Given that, four options were presented to the Cabinet for consideration. Costings for some of these options were excluded from the open report and included in an exempt version of the report given their commercial sensitivity.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve:

- a) option 3 as set out in the report, to continue to carry out annual safety inspections and the required remedial maintenance, until the next Principal Bridge Inspection is due in 2030 at a cost of up to £XXXXXX; and
- b) the Capital budget be reduced from £333,500 to £XXXXXX which will decommit £XXXXXX from the Asset Maintenance Reserve.

Reason for Decision:

To ensure the bridge remains in a safe condition, the most viable option to the Council, based on the current condition of the bridge.

Options Considered:

Option 1 - Pay Commuted sum to Nottinghamshire County Council to have the bridge adopted and to remove future liability of the bridge from NSDC.

Option 2 - To retain the bridge and to carry out a bridge major refurbishment.

Option 3 - Continue to carry out annual safety inspections, remedial and recommended maintenance, until the next Principal Bridge Inspection is due, 2030.

Option 4 - Close the bridge and decommission.

233 MOTION FOR THE OCEAN - ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Director – Communities & Environment presented a report which provided the Cabinet with a detailed update on the Council's Motion for the Ocean commitments, activities to date and future plans. The Leader of the Council read a statement from the former Portfolio Holder, Councillor E Oldham acknowledging the Council achievements to date following the adoption of the Motion for the Ocean.

The Cabinet considered the hugely successful activities undertaken to date, and potential options for future initiatives which would require budget provision. It was considered that any decision on allocating further funding to Motion for the Ocean activities be deferred pending the impending review of Community Plan priorities.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet defer any decision on the allocation of funds to further Motion for the Ocean activities given the impending review of Community Plan objectives.

Reason for Decision:

To further consider allocation of budgets linking into the review of Community Plan priorities.

Options Considered:

Alternative options in relation to Motion for the Ocean activities were set out in detail in paragraph 6 of the report and summarised at paragraph 7.

234 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

AGREED (unanimously) that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

235 LOWFIELD LANE DISPOSAL (KEY DECISION)

The Cabinet considered the exempt report in relation to the Lowfield Lane Disposal.

(Summary provided in accordance with Section 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972).

236 UPDATE ON JUBILEE BRIDGE - CONDITION OF BRIDGE AND USAGE

The Cabinet considered the exempt report in relation to the Jubilee Bridge in Newark.

(Summary provided in accordance with Section 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972).

Meeting closed at 7.00 pm.

Chair

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Planning Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Thursday, 16 January 2025 at 4.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Councillor D Moore (Vice-Chair)

Councillor A Amer, Councillor C Brooks, Councillor L Dales, Councillor P Harris, Councillor K Melton, Councillor E Oldham, Councillor P Rainbow, Councillor S Saddington, Councillor M Shakeshaft, Councillor T Smith, Councillor L Tift and Councillor T Wildgust

ALSO IN

Councillor N Allen

ATTENDANCE:

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillor A Freeman (Chair) and Councillor S Forde

The Planning Committee Chair had submitted his apology for absence for this meeting, the Planning Committee Vice-Chair therefore took the Chair for the duration of the Planning Committee meeting.

97 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Chair informed the Committee that the Council was undertaking an audio recording of the meeting and that it was being live streamed.

98 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillors L Dales and K Melton declared an other registrable interest for any relevant items, as they were appointed representatives on the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board.

Councillor Harris declared an other registrable interest regarding Agenda Item No. 6 – St Stephens, Fosse Road, Brough, Newark, NG23 7QE (24/01603/FUL) and No. 7 - St Stephens, Fosse Road, Brough, Newark, NG23 7QE (24/01603/LBC) as he was a Member of the Diocese Board of Finance who own the building. He confirmed that he would leave the meeting when the two applications were being considered.

Councillor Saddington declared a personal interest regarding Agenda Item No. 5 – Land to the West of Main Street, Kelham (23/01837/FULM(MAJOR)) as she was known to the applicant and family for many years and had nothing to do with the application.

99 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2024

The minutes from the meeting held on 5 December 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

100 LAND TO THE WEST OF MAIN STREET, KELHAM - 23/01837/FULM (MAJOR)

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Planning Development, which sought the proposed ground mounted photo voltaic solar farm and battery energy storage system with associated equipment, infrastructure, grid connection and ancillary work.

A site visit had taken place prior to commencement of the Planning Committee, on the grounds that there were particular site factors which were significant in terms of the weight attached to them relative to other factors if they would be difficult to assess in the absence of a site inspection.

Members considered the presentation from the Business Manager – Planning Development, which included photographs and plans of the proposed development.

A Schedule of Communication was circulated prior to the meeting which detailed correspondence received following publication of the agenda from the local residents and the applicant.

Mrs K Green, local resident, spoke against the application.

Mr J Cooke, agent for the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

Members considered the application, and it was commented that the site visit showed the dangerous position of the access onto the site as the road speed was 50mph. The road had bends which prevented good visibility splays, which would be problematic with traffic turning into the site. It was reported that there had recently been a fatal accident on that stretch of road. Reference was made to a similar application in Derbyshire, which had been refused due to 55% of BEST and most versatile land. The application affected 92% on this land. It was considered that the cumulative impact from two other approved applications at Staythorpe and Averham, which were not yet in situ. It was considered that these three sites taken together represented a large area of land for industrial use in a rural area and change of landscape for the area.

It was further commented that the application sacrificed Grade 2 agricultural land, 92% BMV land which was significant, and which currently had the potential for food production, which was considered as important as green energy production. It was felt that the loss was not outweighed by the benefit and the Planning Committee was seeing an increase in 49.9 megawatts applications.

A Member commented that given the current climate with not much sun or wind questioned whether this form of green energy was adequate given that the main source of energy was from gas. The impact on Kelham bridge through the increase in construction vehicles was raised. Flooding was also raised regarding Averham which was believed to have been caused by removal of soil on the Southern Relief Road, it was questioned whether the change of use may cause further problems. The loss of this green field site for dog walkers was also raised, the only place to walk was along the heavily used A617. A Member commented on the cumulative impact and the industrialisation of the landscape in the area. The impact on heritage assets was also raised and the impact on the listed Kelham Hall and church and two areas of natural

beauty.

A Member commented on the large scale of the application and of this being concerning and that applicant hasn't been more measured in the application. The biggest concerns related to the visual impact for residents and the impact on conservation areas and local listed buildings.

Clarification was sought regarding where the cabling would go and the duration for that work to take place. The Senior Planning Officer confirmed that the cabling would be laid under the public road, which would cause disruption for worst case scenario six months.

The Business Manager – planning Development informed Members that this was an archaeological site and on google earth strip trenches could be seen. It was confirmed that archaeology was still prominent and there was potential to find further settlements which would tell the continued story of Kelham. It was confirmed that detailed conditions would need to be attached regarding this. The heritage point was explained to the Committee and the dilemma with the NPPF which stated the need to way up the harm against the potential benefit.

In answer to a Members concern regarding glare from the panels, the Senior Planner confirmed that a glare assessment was not required as the panels would face south away from residential receptors and given that the location of the panels would be set in from the roadside boundary it was considered that the impact on road users would be visible. It was advised that the highway authority nor the Environmental Health Officer did not object to the proposals on that basis. The hedgerows were also taken into consideration and the road was therefore considered far enough away from the site for any potential glare.

A Member commented that whilst digging the road up to lay the cables was better than digging residents' gardens, the cumulative impact from the three sites could have an impact on that area through construction for over eighteen months. It was considered that cumulative impact was a material consideration.

A vote to approve the application was taken and lost unanimously.

AGREED Proposer Chair and Seconded Councillor M Shakeshaft (unanimously) that contrary to Officer recommendation Planning Permission be refused for the following reasons:

- (i) Loss of BEST and most versatile land;
- (ii) Cumulative impact of the development; and
- (iii) Impact on heritage assets.

The wording for the reason of refusal to be delegated to the Business Manager - Planning Development.

In accordance with paragraph 18.5 of the Planning Protocol, as the motion was against Officer recommendation, a recorded vote was taken.

Councillor	Vote
C Brooks	For
L Dales	For
P Harris	For
K Melton	For
D Moore	For
E Oldham	For
P Rainbow	For
S Saddington	For
M Shakeshaft	For
T Smith	For
L Tift	For
T Wildgust	For

Councillor P Harris having declared an other registrable interest, left the meeting at this point.

Councillor A Amer entered the meeting at this point.

101 ST STEPHENS, FOSSE ROAD, BROUGH, NEWARK, NG23 7QE - 24/01603/FUL

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Planning Development, which sought the change of use from a place of worship to a dwelling with a single storey side extension.

A site visit had taken place prior to commencement of the Planning Committee, on the grounds that the impact of the proposed development was difficult to visualise.

Members considered the presentation from the Business Manager – Planning Development, which included photographs and plans of the proposed development.

The Business Manager – Planning Development read out a number of amendments to the ecology conditions contained within the report as follows:

- Condition 15 to include additional wording for photographic evidence of the installed boxes and any other approved enhancements to be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority.
- Condition 19 to be amended to “No removal of hedgerows, trees or shrubs shall take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds’ nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.”
- Condition 22 to be amended to: “No work of any type involving the existing roof structure (including the belfry) shall in any circumstances commence unless the Local Planning Authority has been provided with a confirmed

receipt of either: A copy of a licence issued by Natural England, pursuant to Regulation 53 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 authorizing the approved works to proceed; or a statement in writing from Natural England to the effect that it does not consider that the approved development requires a licence.”

- Condition 23 amended: “The development shall be carried out in accordance with the bat mitigation strategy contained within the Bat Survey Report Revision B dated September 2024 by LM Ecology, or any amended version required by Natural England for the purpose of granting a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The compensatory bat roost required as part of the mitigation strategy shall be provided prior to first occupation of the dwelling hereby approved and shall thereafter be retained for the lifetime of the development.”
- Added to the informative note for BNG: “The Biodiversity Gain Plan should be submitted via the Planning Portal, as an application for approval of details reserved by condition following grant of planning permission. If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.”

Mr M Cooper, the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

Members considered the application and commented that there would be a high degree of harm to the listed building. The scope of changes to the interior were alarming and the removal of the three stained glass windows was regrettable. The challenge to preserve the building for the future was vital and if the application was refused what would the building be used for. It was recognised that heritage harm could be balanced against the benefits of bringing the building back into use.

It was commented that if Collingham Parish Council were allowed to have a look inside the building that would help them with their knowledge of the building.

Concern was raised regarding the bats and the loss of trees to gain access to the building. The Business Manager – Planning Development confirmed that the retention of the trees was important, and discussions had taken place with the applicant to minimise the loss of trees on site. The engineering element however was difficult to construct the entrance without some tree removal. A small roost of bats had been found in the small belfry. One bat entrance tile was to be included on the south facing roof to compensate for the lost roost and two surface mounted bat boxes in the east and west gables of the conversion were proposed and two tree mounted bird boxes were to be installed within the site.

AGREED (with 11 votes For and 1 Abstention) that Planning Permission be approved subject to the conditions contained within the report as amended in line with changes proposed to conditions 15, 19, 22 and 23, and to the informatives as reported by the Business Manager - Planning Development.

102 ST STEPHENS, FOSSE ROAD, BROUGH, NEWARK, NG23 7QE - 24/01604/LBC

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Planning Development, which sought the internal and external alterations to facilitate use of former place of worship as a dwelling.

Members considered the presentation from the Business Manager – Planning Development, which included photographs and plans of the proposed development.

The Business Manager – Planning Development reminded Members that listed building consent works required consideration of section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Members considered the application acceptable.

AGREED (unanimously) that Planning Permission be approved subject to the conditions contained within the report.

Councillor P Harris returned to the meeting at this point.

103 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK – IMPLICATIONS ON APPLICATIONS RELATING TO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Planning & Growth, which provided an update on the implication of the updated National Planning Policy Framework and highlighted the standing advice that Planning Policy was providing in relation to housing proposals.

The Chair indicated that the meeting duration had expired therefore a motion was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Dales to continue the meeting for a further hour.

AGREED that the report and the standing advice provided by Planning Policy be noted.

104 APPEALS LODGED

AGREED that the report be noted.

105 APPEALS DETERMINED

AGREED that the report be noted.

Meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Audit and Governance Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Wednesday, 11 December 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Harris (Chair)
Councillor S Forde (Vice-Chair)

Councillor P Farmer, Councillor A Freeman, Councillor J Hall, Councillor J Kellas, Councillor S Michael and Councillor T Thompson

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor C Penny and Councillor M Shakeshaft and Mr C Richardson (Non-Voting Co-Optee)

112 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

Other than the Council recording in accordance with usual practice, there were no declarations of intention to record the meeting.

113 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

That no Member or Officer declared any interest pursuant to any statutory requirement in any matter discussed or voted upon at the meeting.

114 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2024

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

115 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2024/25

The Committee considered the report from Philip Lazenby, Director of Audit (TIAA) providing a summary of Internal Audit work undertaken during 2024/25 against the agreed audit plan.

The report provided details of all reports issued within the first part of the financial year 2024/25, with an additional 4 audit reports completed since the last Committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Members considered and commented upon the latest internal audit progress report and noted its content.

116 EXTERNAL AUDITORS AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services presenting the External Auditor's Progress Report for Newark and Sherwood District Council for 2023/24.

The representative from Mazars, Mark Surridge, present at the meeting had provided the report at Appendix A.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) Members received and noted the External Auditors Audit Progress Report for 2023/24; and
- b) Members noted the adjustments to the draft audited financial statements set out in the report.

117 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services informing Members of the activity undertaken by the Audit and Governance Committee between 27 September 2023 and 31 July 2024.

The report provided a summary of the activities, to then be taken to February's Full Council.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted the report.

118 PROJECTED GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2025 AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services updating Members with the forecast outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets. The report showing performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income.

The report was provided to Members as a slimdown version as it had already been to Cabinet.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Committee noted the General Fund projected favourable outturn variance of £0.719m;
- b) the Committee noted the Housing Revenue Account projected favourable outturn variance of £0.33m to the Major Repairs Reserve;
- c) the Committee noted the Capital Programme revised budget and financing of £49.67m; and
- d) the Committee noted the Prudential indicators at Appendix A.

119 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2024/25

The Committee considered the report from the Assistant Business Manager for Financial Services to provide an update on the Council's Treasury Activity and Prudential Indicators for the first half of 2024/25.

The report advised no breach to indicators and to expect interest rate levels to go down.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Treasury Management activity be noted and recommended to Full Council on 17 December 2024; and
- b) the Prudential Indicators detailed in Section 6 & 7 of the report be noted.

120 OUTCOME OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATION

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Customer Services to inform Members of the outcome of an investigation where the Ombudsman found fault with the Council.

A resident had complained to the Ombudsman that the Council was slow to act in respect of statutory noise nuisance. This was regarding noise levels at a licensed premises in Newark.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault and made recommendations to remedy the injustice caused by the faults identified, of which these recommendations have been accepted and implemented.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted the report and the lessons learnt.

121 OUTCOME OF HOUSING OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATION

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Customer Services to inform Members of the outcome of an investigation where the Ombudsman found fault with the Council.

A resident had complained to the Housing Ombudsman regarding various issues relating to the Council's handling of repairs and requests for adaptations to their property.

The Housing Ombudsman determined there to be maladministration in one area and service failure in three, several recommendations were made and the orders and recommendations have been accepted and implemented.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted the report and the lessons learnt.

122 HOUSING OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW UPDATE

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Customer Services to inform Members of the publication of the Housing Ombudsman Annual Review Report 2023-24.

The report confirmed that as the Council had not had five or more cases determined by the Housing Ombudsman during the period April 2023 to March 2024, there was

not an individual report for Newark and Sherwood District Council however, it was important that members were aware of the publication.

Any cases that do come up are taken to both Policy & Performance Improvement Committee and Audit & Governance Committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted the report and the role of the Housing Ombudsman Service in dispute resolution and effective complaint handling.

123 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT

The Committee considered the report from the Safety and Risk Manager providing an overview of the Council's current 2024/25 strategic risk register allowing Members to review strategic risk management arrangements.

The report advised that the contents of the Strategic Risk Register were reported to Members in April 2024 and that the contents of the current risk register has not changed since this last report and continues to have 9 strategic risks.

A table in the report provided the contents of the 2024/25 risk register, as agreed by SLT. An update report will be brought to the Audit & Governance Committee in 6 months.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted the content of the report and highlighted any issues of concern relating to the Strategic Risk Register.

124 UPDATE ON THE LGA NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL CYBER 360 REPORT

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for ICT & Digital Services providing the updated results of LGA Newark and Sherwood District Council Cyber 360 Report.

The report advised that the Corporate Information Governance Group (CIGG) continue to progress the review of the Cyber 360 action plan which is 75% complete, updating elected Members.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members reviewed, commented upon and noted the update on the LGA Newark and Sherwood District Council Cyber 360 Report.

125 GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION - ENABLING REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND PROXY VOTING AT LOCAL AUTHORITY MEETINGS

The Committee report from the Business Manager for Elections and Democratic Services was to consider a formal Council response to the government consultation on remote attendance at meetings and proxy voting.

The report to submit a formal Council response to the Government consultation given its potential impact on governance arrangements.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Audit & Governance Committee considered the draft response to the Government consultation, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

126 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

The Committee considered the report from the Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer providing an update on progress with a review of the Constitution following the Committee's first informal workshop.

The informal workshop was held on 17 October 2024, with 7 Committee Members in attendance. Officers from Legal & Democratic Services presented issues and updates for Members to consider in relation to the following:

- Petitions Scheme
- Motions
- Annual Budget Meeting arrangements
- Licensing and General Purposes Committee
- Contract Procedure Rules
- Acquisitions and Disposals Policy
- Local Code on Corporate Governance
- Some miscellaneous amendments

They agreed an additional meeting was required as not possible to complete the discussion in the time allotted and this to be arranged in the New Year.

The Annual Budget meeting arrangements would however be considered for recommendation to Full Council in February.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) progress be noted; and
- b) revisions to the arrangements for the Annual Budget meeting are presented to Full Council for adoption.

127 REVIEW OF POLICIES - ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY, GUIDANCE FOR DEALING WITH IRREGULARITIES AND ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING POLICY

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services presenting the following updated policies – Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, Guidance for Dealing with Irregularities and Anti-Money Laundering Policy.

The revised documents had no substantive changes proposed, with any updates shown as tracked changes for ease of reference.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Committee approved the revised policies attached at Appendices A, B and C to the report.

128 CONDUCT AND PUBLIC SERVICE

The Committee received the report from the Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer to consider implementation of the Full Council resolution 'Conduct and Public Service' made on 15 October 2024.

Following this Committee meeting, arrangements to be put in place for Committee Members to attend an informal workshop.

AGREED (unanimously) that: the Members of Audit & Governance Committee consider at an informal workshop and that proposals are presented at the earliest opportunity to Committee for formal consideration: -

1. Whether to align the Council's Code of Conduct exactly with the Local Government Association Model Code
2. Whether the Council can adopt any recommendations or good practice from the Local Government Association's Civility in Public Life report and Debate not Hate Campaign
3. Review and Update the Council's Social Media Protocol for Members, taking into account Local Government Association guidance

129 ANNUAL REPORT DETAILING EXEMPT REPORTS CONSIDERED BY THE AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Committee report from the Business Manager for Elections and Democratic Services to consider the list of exempt business considered by Audit & Governance Committee for the period 27 September 2023 to date, and which if any, reports could be released into the public domain.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted the report and for all exempt business to remain confidential as advised by report authors.

130 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The Committee considered the joint report of the Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services, Monitoring Officer and the Business Manager for Financial Services which attached the Committee's Work Plan for consideration.

The Committee noted to include the Statement of Accounts to the February Agenda as part of the Work Plan.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Work Plan be noted.

131 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

AGREED (unanimously) that under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of

exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

132 UPDATE ON THE LGA NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL CYBER 360 ACTION PLAN

The Committee considered the exempt report from the Business Manager for ICT & Digital Services providing an update on the LGA Newark and Sherwood District Council Cyber 360 Action Plan.

133 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 19 FEBRUARY 2025

134 REQUEST MEETING DATE CHANGE FROM 23 APRIL 2025 TO PREVIOUS WEEK ON 16 APRIL 2025 DUE TO ROOM USAGE FOR ELECTIONS

The Committee considered the request to change the meeting date for the April 2025 Audit and Governance Committee from 23 April to the previous week on 16 April due to room usage for Elections.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Audit & Governance Committee to meet on 16 April, to allow the room usage for Elections.

Meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

Chair

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **General Purposes Committee** held in the Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Thursday, 12 December 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor J Hall (Chair)

Councillor N Allen, Councillor A Brazier, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor D Darby, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor S Michael, Councillor D Moore, Councillor K Roberts, Councillor S Saddington, Councillor M Spoor, Councillor P Taylor, Councillor T Wendels and Councillor T Wildgust

APOLOGIES FOR Councillor L Tift (Vice-Chair)

ABSENCE:

35 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Chair advised that the proceedings were being recorded by the Council and that the meeting was being livestreamed.

36 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

NOTED that Councillors M Spoor and P Taylor declared other registerable interests in Agenda Item No. 5 – Community Governance Review – Newark Town Council as elected Members of Newark Town Council.

37 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2024

The minutes from the meeting held on 12 September 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

38 NEWARK COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Business Manager - Elections & Democratic Services presented a report which sought approval for the Terms of Reference, including a timetable to undertake a Community Governance Review of Newark Town Council.

It was reported that the Council were seeking to undertake a community governance review of Newark Town Council to ensure the ward boundaries and electoral arrangements remained effective and convenient for the local community. The draft Terms of Reference and map were appended to the report for Members.

Members considered the report, noting the list of consultees. The Business Manager - Elections & Democratic Services confirmed that Members would be kept informed of progress. No changes would be made to either the District or County ward boundaries.

AGREED that the Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix A to the report, be approved for the first stage of public consultation.

39 REVISION TO COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Public Protection which sought to advise Members of the rationale for the revision to the format of the statistical and performance reports.

In presenting the report, the Business Manager noted the Members' concerns and comments from the previous meeting. She advised them that the Licensing Team were currently undergoing a transformation review. The review was seeking to: upgrade the licensing system; install and set up the public access system for licensing; to move away from paper-based licensing applications, wherever possible; and to continue to develop the payment system to allow customers to self-serve their application fees etc.

In considering the report a Member reiterated his concerns from the previous meeting. He stated the importance of receiving the information to ensure Members were kept informed as to what was happening within the district. He acknowledged the need for change to the reporting format to assist the resource issue within the Licensing Team but commented that the proposed revised format did not provide with sufficient information.

In response to whether it would be possible for the new online application process to be linked into a national database e.g. DVLA whereby when the applicant entered their Driving Licence No. it would automatically populate the form with any driving related endorsements they had received, the Business Manager advised that this would not be possible. Officers would still be required to carry out separate checks. She added that warning screens could be included in the online process to remind applicants that they must declare all relevant convictions and/or endorsements.

In referring to the weekly planning lists which were circulated to all members of the Council, a Member queried whether it would be possible for the Licensing and General Purposes Committees' Members to receive a similar weekly update following the completion of the aforementioned upgrade to the licensing system. The Business Manager confirmed that this would be possible when the new system was operational.

In response to the legal implications, the Council's Principal Legal Officer reiterated her comments contained within paragraph 3.3 of the report in relation to the proposed changes and the current reporting arrangements.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the rationale for the report changes be noted; and
- b) approval of the new format and information provided be deferred pending further discussions with Members and Officers.

40 UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE AND ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

The Committee considered the report of the Senior Licensing Officer, which set out the range and number of license applications received during the period April to June 2024 in relation to Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers, Private Ambulance Drivers together with House to House and Street Collections.

AGREED that the report be noted.

Meeting closed at 6.48 pm.

Chair

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Licensing Committee** held in the Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Thursday, 12 December 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor J Hall (Chair)

Councillor N Allen, Councillor A Brazier, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor D Darby, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor S Michael, Councillor D Moore, Councillor K Roberts, Councillor S Saddington, Councillor M Spoor, Councillor P Taylor, Councillor T Wendels and Councillor T Wildgust

APOLOGIES FOR Councillor L Tift (Vice-Chair)
ABSENCE:

40 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Chair advised that the proceedings were being recorded by the Council and that the meeting was being livestreamed.

41 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

NOTED that in the interest of transparency, Councillor J Hall declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 4 - Review of the Statement of Gambling Policy 2025-27 given her employment.

42 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2024

The minutes from the meeting held on 12 September 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Having declared an interest in the following item, the Chair removed herself from the meeting and Councillor P Taylor chaired the meeting for this one item.

43 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

The Committee considered the report of the Senior Licensing Officer which sought to provide Members with feedback following the public consultation of the Statement of Gambling Policy.

The report set out that the consultation period had lasted for a period of six weeks and during that time, two representations had been received. These had been included within Appendices A and B to the report.

In considering the report, a Member raised concerns in relation to the ever increasing number of people gambling online and that the Council, as the Licensing Authority, had no control over that.

AGREED (unanimously) that the draft Statement of Gambling Policy be supported and forwarded to full Council for approval and adoption.

44 REVISION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS

Having previously considered an identical report on the General Purposes Agenda, the Committee determined as follows:

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the rationale for the report changes be noted; and
- b) approval of the new format and information provided be deferred pending further discussions with Members and Officers.

45 UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE AND ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

The Committee considered the report of the Senior Licensing Officer which provided Members with details of the various activities undertaken by the Licensing Team in relation to the different types of licensing matters covered by the Licensing Act 2003.

AGREED that the report be noted.

Meeting closed at 7.00 pm.

Chair