

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Policy & Performance Improvement Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Monday, 1 June 2026 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor N Ross (Vice-Chair)

Councillor A Brazier, Councillor A Freeman, Councillor J Hall, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor R Holloway, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor D Moore, Councillor P Rainbow, Councillor K Roberts, Councillor M Shakeshaft (substitute), Councillor K Smith, Councillor L Tift (substitute) and Councillor T Wendels

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor N Allen and Councillor R Cozens

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor M Pringle (Chair), Councillor C Brooks and Councillor T Thompson

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

The Vice-Chair advised that the meeting was being recorded and live streamed from Castle House.

229 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

230 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 APRIL 2026

The minutes from the meeting held on 13 April 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chair.

231 ANNUAL REPORT - HOUSING SERVICES

The Committee considered the report presented by the Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing which sought to provide Members with an overview of the performance of Housing Services for the year 2025/2026.

The report set out the remit of Housing Services and summarised the outcomes, satisfaction with services, service delivery by diversity strand and identified both areas of strength and those requiring improvement. The report supported regulatory assurance against several consumer standards co-regulated with the Regulator of Social Housing and provided clear internal governance and scrutiny of how the Council's services met those standards.

In considering the report Members welcomed the reported improvements in the service commenting on the work undertaken in supporting tenants back into the workplace together with improvements to the performance in relation to performance in homelessness and temporary accommodation.

Concern was expressed surrounding the average time taken to re-let a council property which stood at 77 days compared to the target of 28 days, commenting that this would appear to be the main area requiring improvement. It was noted that the delays were sometimes exacerbated by the high percentage of major works required to improve the quality and safety of homes before a property was available to relet.

In relation to the investment of c£500,00 to improve the temporary accommodation at Wellow Green, a Member queried whether consideration had been given to a rebuild rather than a programme of improvements to the existing building. The Director advised that a full options appraisal had been carried out and reported to Cabinet with a determination that the proposed improvements to Wellow Green were the most cost-effective way to proceed. She added that LGR and the mapping of other similar facilities in neighbouring authorities had also been considered which had confirmed the decision to invest in the current assets as the best option.

AGREED that the performance of the Housing Services Business Unit be noted.

232 ANNUAL REPORT - HOUSING REPAIRS & EMPTY HOMES

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Housing Repairs & Empty Homes which sought provide the year end overview of performance across responsive repairs, including damp and mould and empty homes. Included within the report was information in relation to areas of strength, improvement and underperformance together with actions taken to maintain assurance and service grip.

The report set out that the 2025/2026 financial year had been a period of significant transition for the responsive repairs and empty homes service. It noted that the implementation of the new housing management system in May 2025 had introduced fundamental changes to workflows, data structures and reporting across repairs, empty homes and customer contact.

In considering the report, Members welcomed the work the Business Manager had undertaken to-date to improve the service delivery within his team and the ongoing preparations and action plans for further improvements and legislative changes.

Concern was expressed in relation to the average length of time it took to answer a call, suggesting that improvements to that would also likely have a beneficial effect on the results of Tenant Satisfaction Measures. In acknowledging the comments, the Business Manager advised that he was looking to restructure his team internally and that the waiting time as reported had already been reduced by 2 minutes. The Business Manager and Director advised that they would review the procedures in place with a view developing an Action Plan to make improvements.

In relation to issues with damp and mould in properties, a Member queried whether these were reported by tenants or whether it had been found during inspections. In response, the Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing advised that action was taken once notification of an issue with damp and mould had been received. She added that the Council were actively checking for any issues at a property when carrying out visits. Members were advised that future reports would include a fuller explanation of the data reported to provide a better understanding of the ongoing works and issues within the business unit.

A Member referred to the aforementioned checking for issues at properties, querying whether there was sufficient resource to deal with any issues which may be found. The Director advised that the checks were part of a Health & Safety Survey, complimented by a Stock Condition Survey, and that it was not a continuous programme of inspections. She added that changes to the regulatory regime had impacted all landlords with ongoing increases in their responsibilities.

In acknowledging the agenda item on Performance Framework, a Member commented that the proposed amendments to targets in relation to telephone call waiting times to report a repair and reletting properties appeared to be unambitious, suggesting that Cabinet be recommended to leave unchanged the existing targets. In response, the Business Manager acknowledged the Member's concerns and advised that the whole of his team continued to be focused on improving the service they provided.

AGREED that:

- a) the year-end performance position for the service be noted;
- b) the progress achieved in the second half of the year, evidenced through validated Q3-Q4 performance data and improved tenant satisfaction outcomes be acknowledged; and
- c) the services forward readiness activities, including horizon scanning and preparations for emerging regulatory requirements such as future phases of Awaab's Law and Decent Homes 2025 be noted.

233 LOCAL OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Transformation & Service Improvement which sought to provide Members with an update on recent developments related to the local government outcomes framework. The report outlined the implications on the operations of the Council with particular emphasis on its performance framework.

The report provided Members with a summary of the Local Outcomes Framework (LOF) providing further detail in relation to purpose; framework metrics; and public presentation. The LOF is underpinned by nationally defined outcome indicators spanning key domains such as economic development, health, community, safety, environment and service efficiency. The impacts of the LOF on Newark & Sherwood District Council were provided at paragraph 3 of the report and included: integration; overlaps and enhancements; operational changes; reporting; and strategic alignment.

In considering the report, a Member queried how the performance indicators would be monitored. The Business Manager advised that the usual quarterly performance reports would continue to be presented separately to those of the LOF. He added that the LOF was a standardised protocol for performance reporting across all local authorities and was assessed at central government.

AGREED that the likely impact of the Local Outcome Framework outlined throughout the report be noted.

234 PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2026/2027

The Committee considered the report and presentation delivered by the Senior Transformation & Service Improvement Officer which sought to provide Members with an update on the Performance Framework and indicators that were used to monitor and measure the Council's performance against the Community Plan. The report also provided the Corporate Planning, Performance Management & Assurance Framework and the refreshed performance indicators.

In considering the report Members referred to comments made previously during discussions on the Housing Repairs & Empty Homes Annual report, specifically in relation to the length of time it took to answer the telephone. It was suggested that rather than reducing the targets, further work should be undertaken as to how improvements could be made to ensure the current targets were met. In order to provide clarity for Members, the Director – LGR advised that incoming calls to the Council were dealt with by two separate teams. The Customer Services team received general calls to the main Council telephone number. The Housing Repairs team received calls from tenants who wished to report an issue at their property.

In relation to personal appraisals, Members queried whether they were standardised across all business units and also sought assurances that they were carried out and recorded. In response, Members were advised that new standard forms had recently been introduced and that all appraisals undertaken were reported online to ensure that Personnel could monitor progress.

In referring to KPI Code ECG007B – Newark Town Centre Footfall Count, a Member queried whether this would be expanded to include other areas with footfall counters, namely Ollerton and Southwell. The Senior Transformation & Service Improvement Officer advised that she would raise this with the relevant Business Manager.

In relation to the delivery of homes by Arkwood Development, a Member queried how the targets were set given the variances year to year. In response, Members were advised that delivery of homes was largely dependent on external factors, e.g. land availability.

In acknowledging the above comments, the Business Manager – Transformation & Service Improvement advised that Business Plans were developed annually. Business Managers discussed and agreed targets with their relevant Directors. Business Plans were then presented to the Senior Leadership Team for approval. Targets were then incorporated into performance reports which were then presented to PPIC for scrutiny and onward to Cabinet for approval. However, the Transformation & Service Improvement team continued to hold conversations with Business Managers throughout the year to monitor the targets within their plans.

In closing the debate, the Vice-Chair suggested that the comments made throughout the meeting in relation to telephone waiting times and the re-letting of council houses be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration by the report author. He further suggested that the concerns of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee around the proposed easing of current targets or performance indicators be reported to Cabinet with a recommendation that Action Plans be developed to improve the service provision in both areas.

AGREED that:

- a) the Corporate Planning, Performance Management & Assurance Framework and refreshed performance indicators be noted; and
- b) the comments and recommendations raised by this Committee be included in the future report presented to Cabinet when considering the Performance Framework 2026/2027.

235 APPOINTMENT OF PPI COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES TO:

AGREED that the following Members be appointed to:

- a) Tenant Engagement Board
Councillors: Alice Brazier; Penny Rainbow; and Neil Ross
- b) Planning Policy Board
Councillors: Linda Dales; Rhona Holloway; and Mike Pringle
Remaining vacancy left unfilled at present.

236 UPDATES FROM WORKING GROUPS

i) Heritage & Culture Working Group

NOTED the verbal update of the Chair of the Working Group, Councillor David Moore.

ii) Estates Walkabout Working Group

NOTED the verbal update of the Chair of the Working Group, Councillor Penny Rainbow.

237 CABINET FORWARD PLAN - MAY TO AUGUST 2026

NOTED the Forward Plan of the Cabinet for the period May to August 2026.

238 MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD ON 21 APRIL 2026

NOTED the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 April 2026.

239 PROVISIONAL ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

NOTED the provisional items for future meetings of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee.

Meeting closed at 7.51 pm.

Chair