

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, 26 September 2022 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R White (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs P Rainbow (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor L Brailsford, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor Mrs B Brooks, Councillor S Carlton, Councillor M Cope, Councillor D Cumberlidge, Councillor P Harris, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor J Kellas, Councillor Mrs R Crowe and Councillor Mrs Y Woodhead

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Mrs L Dales (Committee Member), Councillor Mrs L Hurst (Committee Member), Councillor N Mison (Committee Member) and Councillor M Pringle (Committee Member)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor L Goff

16 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Chairman advised that the proceedings were being recorded by the Council and that the meeting was being livestreamed and broadcast from the Civic Site, Castle House.

18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2022

Minute No. 9 – Community Plan Performance for Quarter 4 – 2021/2022

It was noted that the referred to attachment to the minutes in relation to responses to questions asked by Members had been omitted from the Minutes.

AGREED that, subject to the omission of the aforementioned attachment, the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2022 were a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19 RESIDENT SURVEY OUTCOMES

The Committee considered the report and presentation delivered jointly by the Transformation & Service Improvement Manager and the Transformation Service Improvement Officers, which sought to update Members on the findings from the 2022 Residents' Survey undertaken between May and July 2022 using three elements: an open survey that could be completed by any district resident over 16; a representative sample gathered to sense check the open survey; and a series of focus groups held to gather the views of underrepresented groups.

The presentation provided Members with some of the changes that had occurred since the last Residents' Survey was undertaken in 2018 together with details as to who had completed the open survey. Each slide of the presentation provided an analysis of the responses received to the questions asked with the final slide summarising what was important to residents with a suggestion of where the Council should focus resources.

In considering the presentation Members welcomed the positive results and comments received. In noting the diversity within the area and wards which the Council covered, a Member requested that she would wish to be provided with a further breakdown of the data gathered.

Members noted the comments received in relation to glass recycling with a Member stating that it should be progressed further as the response had been that the public wanted this service to be provided.

In summing up, the Chairman welcomed the positive comments received in relation to the cleanliness within the district. She noted that anti-social behaviour remained an issue, adding that this was being considered by the ASB Working Group, established by the Committee at their previous meeting. In relation to kerbside glass recycling, she confirmed that a meeting of the Committee had been arranged for 17 October 2022 to look specifically at that issue with onward recommendations to the Cabinet meeting in November 2022. She also advised that information in relation to the Newark Town Fund would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee and also requested that an update on the Sherwood Levelling Up funding be brought to a future meeting once a decision had been made on the bid. It was also noted that consideration would be given to a Customer Strategy Working Group, looking to improve the customer experience, at the next meeting.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the above comments on the findings of the 2022 Residents' Survey be noted; and
- b) the findings of the Residents' Survey be used to shape the 2023/2027 Community Plan, to be developed by Officers and Members in early 2023.

20 BASSETLAW AND NEWARK & SHERWOOD COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS & PERFORMANCE UPDATE AND REVIEW OF PRIORITIES

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Public Protection which sought to provide Members with an update on the work undertaken by the Bassetlaw and Newark & Sherwood Community Safety Partnership (BNSCSP). Information as to the current performance was also reported together with an explanation as to the choice of priorities for the current year.

The report set out that the establishment of a Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was a statutory requirement and the responsible authorities that formed that partnership. Further details specific to the BNSCSP were provided and how it

operated in practice. Paragraph 2.5 listed the priorities for 2022/2023 together with the rationale for each one.

In considering the report Members queried how the list of priorities were reached and whether anything more local or specific could be added. The Business Manager advised that they were broad-based throughout the district but that meetings were held every 3 months to look at the Police statistics as to emerging crime and their priorities. It was at this point that more local priorities would be considered. In response to whether Members could feed into those priorities, the Business Manager advised that it was the intention going forward to bring the draft priorities to Committee near year end to ask the Committee for their recommendations for inclusion of items on the priority list.

Members welcomed the flexible and agile approach to the priority setting and queried whether any comments on social media were taken into consideration. The Business Manager advised that the statistical data used to set the priorities was generated by the Police but added that Council Officers were able to gather local intelligence and that such information would be considered in the local priority setting process.

In noting that a performance report based on all crime together with a smaller report based on antisocial behaviour were produced monthly, Members queried whether this was used to detect patterns in crime. The Business Manager advised that Officers were beginning to look at crime patterns and also to monitor any chronological patterns.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the CSP performance and priorities be noted;
- b) the priorities proposed for 2022/2023 be endorsed

*Councillor P. Harris left the meeting at 7pm – part way through the above item and therefore did not participate in the unanimous vote.*

## 21 ASB PRESENTATION BY T/INSPECTOR MATTHEW WARD

The Committee received a presentation on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) by Temporary Inspector, Matthew Ward. He advised that he undertook the setting of his policing agenda on a 3 monthly basis. ASB had been on that agenda for 6 months and would remain on there for the following 3 month period.

Overall, for the past financial year, ASB had seen a decrease of 4% but there had been an increase in the last month of 6%, noting that this correlated with school holidays. The main 3 areas of concern were: off-road biking; swimming in open water; and neighbour disputes. Of the 21 wards within T/Insp. Ward's area, 11 had seen a reduction in ASB, 3 had remained static; and 7 had seen an increase. He noted that there was a known risk that if a specific area was targeted, it could result in the ASB moving to another area.

Swimming in Open Water: in order to address this, the Police were looking into setting up a multi-agency group with consideration being given to the use of dispersal orders.

Off-Road Biking: this was most prevalent in the Magnus and Devon Wards. Evidence and the reporting of incidents were required in order for a funding bid to be made to tackle the issue. Comments on social media were not sufficient to support the funding bid the police require official reports.

Patrols were undertaken weekly in 3 key areas. The location for the patrols was based on incident reporting and risk. Police Officers could also provide intelligence they had gathered about whether something may happen in a specific area.

School Engagement: this was a long-term initiative and offered to primary schools. Currently these were carried out annually, but the Police would be willing to increase their visits noting that the Police's Early Intervention Officers targeted secondary schools. Officers would be maintaining a high-profile presence during the Halloween and Bonfire Night periods as these typically saw an increase in ASB.

In considering the presentation, Members noted that the public often failed to report incidents as the perception was that no action would be taken by the Police and that improvement to communication channels needed to be progressed. T/Insp. Ward noted the comments and advised that there was a push to improve communications.

A Member queried how the issue of speeding might be considered as a priority for inclusion on the 3 monthly policing agenda. T/Insp. Ward advised that priorities were set by statistical information but that anecdotal information could also be considered, which would be the case for speeding. He commented that it was very much a community feeling and would probably be localised.

T/Insp. Ward was asked as to how dispersal orders were managed and monitored so as to ensure that problems were not merely moved to a different location. In response he advised that Newark Town Centre, Balderton and Fernwood all had such an order and that for him to authorise any he would require evidence that ASB was happening at that time. Beat Officers were able to feed into the process, advising where the persons involved had relocated to. He added that when ASB Contracts were issued, work was undertaken with schools and social workers in an attempt to change the behaviour of those involved. However, he noted that this was not a 'quick fix' and could take several years.

Members noted that regular conversations with residents within their wards about their feelings of safety and what reassurances could be given to them about policing in their area. T/Insp. Ward advised that some activity was not visible for operational reasons. He advised that if a resident had any specific concerns to contact his Officers who would be able to speak to him directly.

A Member raised the issue of an increase in his ward of the theft of catalytic converters but despite the incident being reported, the Police did not attend. T/Insp. Ward acknowledged the issue and advised that the reporting of crimes was triaged in the control room. He added that if the person who had reported the crime was

unhappy with the result, they should complain as this may help, in part, to changing the way that crime reporting was dealt with.

In relation to county line drug issues, T/Insp. Ward noted that the increase was due to the Police identifying the issues more easily and not because the number of incidents had increased. He added that it was not a significantly bad situation.

Again in relation to the reporting of crime, a Member noted that when using the 101 telephone reporting service, Option 7 was that in relation to crimes committed by which time many callers had rung off. T/Insp. Ward suggested that during the ASB WGs visit to the control room at Police HQ, the issue be raised, noting that there needed to be a push to alternative options for reporting.

AGREED (unanimously) that T/Insp. Ward be thanked for his presentation and attendance at the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee.

## 22 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE Q1

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Financial Services which sought to update Members with the forecast outturn position for the 2022/2023 financial year for the Council’s General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue and capital budgets. The report also provided Members with information as to the performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income and on major variances from planned budget performance, in accordance with the Council’s Constitution.

Details of the General Fund Revenue Projected Outturn for 2022/23 were provided, showing a projected unfavourable variance together with an unfavourable variance for the General Fund Revenue Outturn for 2022/23 as at 30 June 2022. Further detail of the projected unfavourable variance against revised budgets for the HRA Outturn for 2022/23 were also provided alongside the overview of projected Capital Outturn for 2022/23.

In response to the reason as to why there had been a reduction in income from rents due to the average period of time that dwellings remained vacant, the Business Manager advised that he would provide Members with a written response.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the General Fund projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.947m on services be noted;
- b) the Housing Revenue Account projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.444m on services be noted; and

the capital outturn position of £89.994m be noted.

## 23 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE Q1

The Committee considered the report presented by the Transformation & Service Improvement Officer which sought to present to Members the Quarter 1 Community Plan Performance Report (April – June 2022). Members were asked to review the Community Plan Performance Report attached as Appendix 1.

The report set out that performance reporting, going forward, would now be used as a tool for change with the information contained having been sourced by analysing data and progress against key activities, as well as district statistics, customer feedback and workforce information.

In considering the report a Member raised a query in relation to fly-tipping and how this was being dealt with. The Transformation & Service Improvement Officer advised that Officers from Environmental Services were carrying out checks on incidents reports more quickly than in the past with details being kept of the type of waste being tipped, together with the location of the land and what its use was. He advised he would supply a written response as to whether it was commercial or residential waste.

In noting the drop of 5.3% of tenants surveyed as to whether they were satisfied or very satisfied with repairs to tenants' homes, the Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing advised that this was being kept under close review. She added that a new contractor had been engaged and that a 10-month rolling programme of works was now operational which should secure improved access to properties. A survey of tenants was to be undertaken, asking why they did not wish to allow access to their properties and it was anticipated that access to carry out repairs would improve by October 2022. She also advised that a new way of reminding tenants of the contractor's visit had been implemented. It was agreed that an update report on this would be presented to the next meeting of the committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Community Plan Performance Report for Quarter 1, 2022/2023 be noted.

## 24 STAR SURVEY

The Committee considered the report and presentation delivered by the Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing which sought to provide Members with the results of the Survey of Tenants & Residents (STAR) for 2021/2022. It was reported that the aim of the survey was to establish the satisfaction levels of Council tenants on a range of measures relating to their Council home, tenancy, communal services and neighbourhoods.

It was reported that the results of the STAR had been considered by SLT, the Portfolio Holder for Homes & Health and the Tenant Engagement Board, who had recommended that the Repairs & Maintenance Service be an area of focus and to identify areas of service development and modernisation.

The report provided Members with the background as to the collection and collation of data in relation to Tenant Satisfaction Measures and how these were used and aligned to the STAR. Paragraph 3 of the report set out the key highlights of the STAR report with further details being provided in relation to: repairs; ASB; lettings; complaints and queries; neighbourhood; home; empowerment; and value for money.

In considering the presentation Members commented that the outcome of the survey had, on the whole, been positive. They queried whether contactors were routinely showing their ID when entering tenants' houses, adding that it should be standard practice. The Director confirmed that this had been raised with the contractors. In relation to necessary gas safety checks, she added that all tenants had been written to advising of a change in contractor and that all checks would be booked in advance with the tenants notified of the date and time.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the overall positive levels in satisfaction for housing services be noted;
- b) the full STAR Report attached at Appendix 1 be noted;
- c) the feedback from the Tenant Engagement Board to consider the Repairs & Maintenance Service as an area of focus for the Directorate in 2023/2024 be noted; and

the changes from 2023 onwards with the introduction of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures that, in part, replicate the current arrangements for STAR be noted.

## 25 TENANT ENGAGEMENT BOARD

The Committee considered the verbal update from Councillor Penny Rainbow, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee and a Member of the Tenant Engagement Board.

She advised that the first meeting of the Board had taken place on 25 August 2022 where principles and standard agenda items were agreed, these being performance and complaints. In relation to performance this would focus on gas servicing and how this could be improved with a view to getting early access to properties to carry out the works. The STAR results were also considered and it was agreed that the repairs service would be reviewed. The Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment for Effective Complaint Handling and associated action plan was also considered and how the role of the Ombudsman might be better promoted together with how a tenant might make a complaint about housing services. It was agreed that information be provided on the recorded message that tenants heard when they telephoned the service. It was noted that tenant satisfaction measures were being introduced with further updates to come. The Consultation & Engagement Strategy and associated action plan were endorsed, approved and recommended to Cabinet.

26 UPDATE ON ASB WORKING GROUP

The Committee considered the verbal update of Councillor Ronnie White, the Chairman of the Committee and the Chairman of the ASB Working Group.

She advised that the group had met on three occasions with the fourth one scheduled the following day. They had received and discussed a broad overview of ASB, where the hotspots were in the district and what tools were available to the Council to assist in tackling the issue. They had visited the CCTV Control Room at the Nottinghamshire Police HQ and also had a more in-depth discussion in relation to ASB itself and statistical information.

Councillor White advised that there were clear themes emerging from the group:

- i. How the work of the Community Protection Officers could be maximised to have a positive impact on ASB throughout the district.
- ii. How to pursue a collaborative and partnership focussed approach to reduce ASB where possible.
- iii. Exploration of whether it is possible to optimise the use of current CCTV further.
- iv. Tackling ASB with education.
- v. Trying to improve the rate of reporting incidents by promoting the issue and how it might be made easier.

It was further noted that: a visit to the Control Room at Nottinghamshire Police HQ had been arranged; that the Community Safety Charter was to be considered by the group; review the issue of ASB in housing stock; how to progress working in partnership with schools; and engagement with the relevant Portfolio Holders.

27 UPDATE ON DIGITAL TOOLS WORKING GROUP

The Committee considered the verbal report of Councillor Simon Haynes, the Chairman of the Digital Tools Working Group.

He advised that two meetings of the group had been held. They had looked at the current equipment being used; whether additional training was required to enable better and more efficient utilisation of equipment; better use of available software e.g. Microsoft Teams.

Councillor Haynes provided information as to the hardware available currently to Members these being: iPads which were considered not fit for purpose in terms of Member requirements; a Microsoft device (similar to an iPad) being trialled by Councillor Linda Dales with positive feedback; and a Dell Laptop. He also advised that there were two other options which were for Members to: either bring their own device, currently being trialled by Councillor Skinner; or to utilise their mobile phones which Councillor Haynes stated he would be trialling.

It was noted that any recommendations agreed by the group would be presented to the Committee for consideration. They would then be forwarded to the Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development for onward recommendation to Cabinet noting that any changes to Members' devices would be actioned after the May 2023 elections.



Councillor Haynes advised Members that he would welcome any comments which the group could then consider and that the next meeting was scheduled for the following day.

28 MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2022

NOTED the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 12 July 2022.

29 CABINET FORWARD PLAN - SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2022

NOTED the Forward Plan of the Cabinet for the period September to December 2022.

30 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

NOTED the items for the future meetings on 17 October and 28 November 2022.

Meeting closed at 8.11 pm.

Chairman