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Monday, 3 July 2023

Chairman: Councillor P Peacock

Members of the Cabinet:

Councillor R Cozens
Councillor S Crosby
Councillor L Brazier
Councillor K Melton
Councillor E Oldham
Councillor M Spoons
Councillor P Taylor
Councillor R Holloway

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: Tuesday, 11 July 2023 at 6.00 pm

**VENUE: Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark,
Nottinghamshire, NG24 1BY**

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.

If you have any queries please contact Nigel.hill@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk.

AGENDA

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Decision)

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None

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- | | | |
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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.

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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, Nottinghamshire, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 27 June 2023 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chairman), Councillor L Brazier, Councillor C Penny, Councillor M Spoons, Councillor P Taylor and Councillor R Holloway

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor P Rainbow, Councillor S Michael and Councillor S Saddington

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

2 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.

3 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2023

The minutes from the meeting held on 21 March 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 4 AND YEAR END- 2022/23

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance & Finance presented the Community Plan performance report for 1 January to 31 March 2023.

The report examined how the Council had been performing against the Community Plan as well as the data to look at the performance of key services and delivery against the activities outlined in the plan from 1 January to 31 March 2023 and 2022-23 as a full year.

The Opposition Spokesperson highlighted a number of positive actions and achievements detailed within the report which had been achieved by the Council over the past year, expressing her thanks to the previous administration for their hardwork and leadership.

The Cabinet considered the issue of anti-social behaviour acknowledging the pressures on the Public Protection Team and the need for further resources to improve performance within that area.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet review the Community Plan Performance Report attached as Appendix 1.

Reasons for Decision:

Performance management is used to drive improvement by analysing data and progress against key activities as well as building a picture of the context of performance using district statistics, customer feedback and workforce information.

Options Considered:

Not applicable.

5 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2023

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance & Finance presented the provisional financial outturn report to 31 March 2023. The report provided a summary of actual income and expenditure compared to the revised budget and how any surpluses or deficits had been allocated to or from reserves. The report included details of the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA), Capital Programme, provisional and impaired estimated on debtors, usable reserves and the collection fund.

The accounts showed a favourable variance of £0.746m on service budgets with a total additional transfer to usable reserves of £0.565m. The statutory general fund had not varied during the year remaining at £1.500m in accordance with the Medium Term Financial Plan. The financial outturn position for the HRA was a deficit of £0.284. The Cabinet welcomed the report and the strong financial position of the Council.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the final outturn of revenue and capital spending for 2022/23 be noted;
- b) the variation to the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 1.15 be approved;
- c) the capital financing proposals as set out in paragraph 1.16 be approved;
- d) the Capital Programme reprofiling of £28.643m carried forward into 2023/24 as per appendices E and F be noted
- e) the movement in Provisions and Impaired Estimates on Debtors be noted;
- f) the creations of the new reserves, as outlined in paragraph 1.26, be approved; and
- g) the individual contributions to, and withdrawals from, the revenue and capital Usable Reserves be noted.

Reasons for Decision

To consider the provisional 2022/23 financial outturn position on the Council's revenue and capital budgets.

Options considered:

Not applicable.

6 STAR SURVEY 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder for Homes & Health presented a report detailing the results of the STAR Survey for 2022-23. The STAR Survey aimed to establish how satisfied Council tenants were with a range of measures relating to their Council home, tenancy, communal services and neighbourhood. The Cabinet noted that the survey findings had also been reported to the Tenant Engagement Board and the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the concerns raised in the survey regarding anti-social behaviour and complaints had been noted by officers. The Business Manager - Housing Income & Leaseholder Management, explained that the survey was anonymised so while it was possible to see all responses from a particular tenant, it was not possible to identify any tenants, or the area in which they lived, from the data.

The Opposition Spokesperson highlighted a number of positive results from the survey data, noting where those results were higher than the STAR benchmark. The Cabinet welcomed the report and positive survey findings.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the overall positive levels in satisfaction for housing services be noted;
- b) the full STAR Report as attached at Appendix 1 to the report be noted;
- c) Members note there will be a survey in September 2023 following the introduction of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) that in part, potentially replace the current and ongoing arrangements for STAR.

Reasons for Decision

The STAR survey developed and promoted by Housemark has become the standard for tenants and residents' surveys across the housing sector. It aims to establish how satisfied Council tenants are with a range of measures relating to their Council home, tenancy, communal services and neighbourhood. It is not mandatory to run the STAR survey annually, but there has been value in running this survey on a regular frequency to identify key areas for improvement.

Options considered:

Not to consider the results of the STAR survey.

Meeting closed at 6.24 pm.

Chairman



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 11 July 2023

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: Sanjiv Kohli, Deputy Chief Executive, Director - Resources

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report, non-key decision
Report Title	Commercial Plan Update
Purpose of Report	An update on the Commercial Strategy action plan to demonstrate how the Council is responding to the anticipated reduction in funding by making strategic savings and generating additional income.
Recommendations	That Cabinet note the update on the Commercial Plan.
Alternative Options Considered	None
Reason for Recommendations	To share how the Council is seeking to address our forecast financial deficit.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 As a result of changes in the financial climate and anticipated reductions in government funding, the Council forecasted a financial deficit, back in 2021, to impact budgets from 2023/24 onwards. To tackle this deficit the Council identified areas where additional income could be made and/or savings could be achieved without impacting the quality-of-service delivery. The detail of the strategy to address this funding challenge was approved by Policy & Finance Committee on 27 January 2022, in the form of the Commercial Strategy 2022-2026 and its associated Action Plan.
- 1.2 After Members approved the strategy and action plan, an officer group representing a number of services across the authority was set up to identify projects and initiatives that could deliver savings or generate additional income. An action plan was developed and progress against the action plan has been monitored with quarterly meetings with the Business Managers leading these projects. These meetings have involved updating progress on the action plan and continuing conversations around where the Council could be generating income from commercialisation.
- 1.3 It is important to note that “commercialisation” i.e., the identification and realisation of efficiency savings and/or additional income; thereby providing value for money services to our residents, is imbedded in the council’s budget and decision-making processes. Over a period of years, several actions have resulted in increasing the income from our

services. The primary objective has always been to provide improved services to our residents and businesses; with the biproduct being an increase in our income base. The table below sets out some examples of initiatives where there has been a service improvement which has also resulted in an increase in net revenue which has gone towards funding existing and/or new budgetary pressures. For the purposes of illustration, the comparison is between the most recent approved budget, 2023/24 and the reported outturn in 2020/21 i.e., over the last 3 years:

Service	Action	Outturn 2020/21	Budget 2023/24	Increase in Revenue(£)	Increase (%)
Newark Beacon	Brought the management of the serviced offices in-house	Net cost of £68,759	Net Revenue of £62,400	£131,159	190%
Newark Buttermarket	Acquisition, repurposed and refurbished	Net cost of £81,745	Net Revenue of £95,520	£177,265	217%
Lorry Park	Improvements in welfare and improved security	Net Income of £317,795	Net Income of £491,280	£173,485	55%
3 Commercial Units at Beaumont Cross (former Robin Hood Hotel)	Redevelopment and regeneration of key gateway site.	£0	£52,250	£52,250	100%
Total		Net income of £167,291	Net income of £701,450	£534,159	319%

In addition, an increase in the number of homes in the district and an increase in the number of households taking up the garden waste recycling service has increased the gross income to the council from £700,168 in 2020/21 to a budget for the current 2023/24 year of £847,050 i.e. an increase of 21%. This income budget will be exceeded by the year end as the income to 22 June 2023 is already £703,766.

Similarly, an increase in the number of businesses signing up to the trade waste collection service has increased the gross income from £333,072 in 2020/21 to a budget for 2023/24 of £475,000 i.e. an increase of 43%. This income budget is also likely to be exceeded as the income to 22 December 2023 is already £471,342.

2.0 Current Position:

	2023/24 (£m)	2024/25 (£m)	2025/26 (£m)	2026/27 (£m)
Contribution (to) or from MTFP reserve, before proposed mitigations below	(0.569)	(0.445)	4.853	5.445
Contributions to or (from) other Reserves	0.468	0.200	0.237	0.248
Contribution from Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool	(0.600)	(0.600)	-	-
Dividends from Arkwood Developments Ltd	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.650)

Savings from service reviews	-	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.170)
Savings/efficiencies from making business processes more efficient	-	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.150)
Increased income from the council becoming more commercial	-	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.200)
Rental income from town centre regeneration	-	-	(0.150)	(0.200)
Contribution to/(from) MTFP reserve to offset contributions from reserves in future years	1.201	1.644	(4.140)	(4.324)
Proposed General Fund Funding Gap	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

2.1 Further delays in the review of the local government financing system and in the base line business rates re-set, has meant that the financial deficit that was forecast from 2023/24 onwards (when the Commercial Strategy was approved by Policy and Finance Committee on 27 January 2022) has not occurred. However, officers have continued their work in identifying areas where savings can be made, or additional revenue generated as it is still anticipated that the Local Government Finance Reform and business rate re-set will happen - it is just uncertain as to when this will happen. The most recent view is that it will take effect in 2025/26 and therefore the latest revision of the Medium - Term Financial Plan (MTFP), approved by Council on 9 March 2023, assumes that this Council will experience a funding gap from 2025/26 onwards. The target included in the MTFP for additional revenue/savings is as follows:

2.2 The table shows reductions in expenditure and additional income of £0.300m to occur from the 2024/25 financial year, split over the three target headings.

2.3 The following projects/actions have been identified as generating income and/or achieving savings. They have been broken into three categories: -

- Significant ongoing projects (where largest savings/income is forecasted)
- Ongoing projects (where some savings/income is forecasted)
- Planned projects (projects identified but not started yet)

2.4 Significant Ongoing Projects

Ongoing projects where largest savings/income is forecasted.

Project/Activity	Business Unit Lead	Detail	Expected income (£)
Development of Town Centre Brown Field Land	Corporate Property	Corporate property assessed the small areas of land in town centres (brownfield land not utilised) the Council owned to scope if these areas of land could be developed into contract car parking. As a result of this the area of land next to Newark Hospital (Bowbridge Road) was identified for car parking. Planning permission has been granted and the development expected to be completed by September 2023. The residual land has been valued and is being considered for sale to either Arkwood or the council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) before possibly testing the open market.	£100,000 (Annual rent from car parking spaces after the first year. This is already budgeted for within the MTFP)
Development of Clipstone Holdings	Corporate Property	Clipstone holdings site has now been purchased (freehold) to allow the Council to have flexibility of use and development. The site is being cleared and detailed design of the development is now being progressed with the aim of having a green employment park complemented by modern mixed-use sports facilities, education (a land management economy focus) and well-being provision in partnership with the Clipstone Miners Welfare Trust and YMCA. Site clearance is underway and construction work is anticipated to start on site by Autumn 2023.	£224,000 (Annual rent on completion of Developed Site - expected by 2026)
Industrial Units at Crew Lane, Southwell	Corporate Property	The 6 industrial units on this site have reached end of life and require some investment and 4 of the units are not occupied by tenants as these are not fit for purpose. A feasibility study of the site is being undertaken in order to examine the refurbishment options to modernise the units. This involves utilising the current structures but modernising the units by installing WCs to all plots, small kitchenettes, low-carbon, energy efficient buildings, fire compartmentation works, new door systems and windows. After some market testing, the units will be designed to suit potential new incoming tenants. There is also an opportunity to create a secure external storage area for larger items along the open perimeter of the site.	Additional revenue of £49,615 from 2024/25
Expand the CCTV Partnership	Public Protection	Public Protection looked to increase the number of partners in the shared CCTV services to deliver savings and shared resilience. The current partners are Newark and Sherwood, Broxtowe, and Ashfield. Rushcliffe has now entered a temporary arrangement to join the CCTV partnership. This will be £7,200 per year for a three-year period. The same resource can be used to cover the additional cameras and the additional of another partner reduces the running costs for all current partners.	Reduction in expenditure of £2,400 per annum from 2023/24

2.5 Ongoing Projects

The following projects have been identified as beneficial and are in progress or have been implemented but are not currently generating a quantifiable income or saving.

Project/Activity	Business Unit Lead	Project description	Progress update
Promotion of Income Generating Services	Communications	Promotion and marketing of income generating services based on a seasonal calendar, and train front facing staff on marketing our commercial services as part of customer contact.	Communications are working with the relevant business units to implement marketing plans with a view to growing services such as garden recycling, MOT, Truly Beauty, Heritage and Cultural facilities and Newark Beacon. Future campaigns are also planned, and outlined in the relevant business plans, with other business units including Planning.
Extending the Lorry Park	Corporate Property	Look to extend Newark Lorry Park (with more parking spaces and services) on a new site as part of the Towns Fund, SisLog/Gateway project.	New report issued from Capita to ascertain funding opportunities from investment market for the lorry park (and SisCLog/Gateway) is due shortly. This will inform overall financial viability. The target is to increase overall net revenue.
Tablets for Mobile Officers	Planning Development	Officers able to use tablets/mobile on site visits to deliver time efficiencies.	All 14 mobile officers now have tablets and can use this device on site visits/ assessments to input into their case file saving each officer time on every case. This time saving is being reinvested in the service to focus on improvements such as speed of application assessment.
Third Party Contract for CCTV	Public Protection	Consider taking on third party contract for CCTV. This means we monitor CCTV for others as a chargeable service, utilising their infrastructure and we monitor their CCTV.	We have explored parish councils that might want us to monitor their CCTV for them and discussed how much this would cost as a service. There are 2 parish council's showing interest. This is ongoing and an outcome is expected in Spring/Summer 2023.
Contract Review	Transformation	Review of contracts for supplies and services for rationalisation and joint procurement e.g., amalgamate contracts across sites and/or services to enable savings via joined up procurement. Potential amalgamations on contracts like cleaning of Council assets, repairs, and utilities.	A review of contracts has been undertaken and most contracts highlighted for rationalisation or joint procurement sit within the Corporate Property business unit. Where savings are anticipated, a benefits realisation review will be completed to determine the true level of any savings as they aren't easy to identify now due to the numerous amounts of contracts applicable. Contract identified are mainly regarding building management such as cleaning contracts, utilities and security. One contract rationalisation has already been undertaken regarding payments at our lorry park and implementation of the rationalisation/joint procurement for the other contracts identified will commence from Spring/Summer 2023.

Project/Activity	Business Unit Lead	Project description	Progress update
Service Reviews	Transformation	Undertake two projects streamlining internal Council processes using business process re-engineering, namely using a defined methodology to redefine processes to identify efficiencies and remove duplication, resulting in service efficiencies	There are five service reviews identified within the Transformation and Service Improvement Business Plan for delivery in 23/24. Each service review has a different focus and two are focused on improving efficiency. Both service reviews are due to start in Spring 2023.
Ticketing System	Heritage & Culture	Ticketing system and website for theatre and National Civil War Centre to market services and future proof online sales.	Procurement was undertaken and the tender was awarded to Spectrix with an expected go live date for the new ticketing system and website of late March.
Develop the Weddings and Events Offer	Heritage & Culture	Develop the events and wedding offer at the National Civil War Centre, Palace theatre and Castle.	The development of this offer has been embedded into the role of a member of staff and progress to date includes a wedding license application being submitted for the NCWC/Theatre. However, the offer continues to be impacted by the ongoing Tudor Attic repairs which impact on the team's ability to plan and book events.
Specialist in-house resource	Planning Development	Get in-house resource for specialist advice such as a tree officer, archaeology officer or conservation officers. This creates saving as the Council don't have to 'buy-in' this specialist and allows the Council to 'sell' this service to other authorities and/or private companies.	This idea is being explored to identify areas for cost savings. Planning is also considering the possibility of 'growing your own' in terms of providing existing staff with specialist training.
Grounds Maintenance Contracts	Environmental Services	Increase the number of external Grounds Maintenance contracts to include playground inspections etc.	Additional contracts have been obtained from many areas, including current SLA additions. Recent discussions are bringing an agreement closer to significantly extending the current Newark Town Council SLA contract length which will further guarantee income for future years. Depending on future growth in contracts, there may be a necessity for additional expenditure in order to service the additional contracts.

2.6 The following projects have been identified but due to capacity have not currently been progressed past scoping/development stage. However, they will however remain under review to develop if necessary.

Project/Activity	Business Unit Lead	Project Description	Project update
Fees and Charges	Transformation & Finance	Annual review of fees & charges that are non-statutory and look for new areas for charging such as selling consultancy skills, car park development, planning consultancy and environmental health advice.	The annual review of fees and charges was completed for 2023 and areas for 'new' charging were identified. The most viable areas will now be scoped out further.
Cinema and Live Shows	Heritage & Culture	Consider expansion of the offer at the theatre to include cinema and live shows online within the Palace Theatre. Develop a business case to explore the viability.	Research on this project began in 2022. Heritage and Culture got in touch with a company to help advise and understand costs to then look at business case on what financial benefits can be raised. However, there has been no further progression due to competing priorities.
Use of Consultants	Transformation	Map use of consultants across the authority with an aim of rationalising and understanding what is needed. Considering questions such as should we have a shared contract for repeated services and would an officer be more efficient.	This activity is the second step after the contract review. Now that the council's contracts have been reviewed the next step will be to work with HR and Finance to explore the use of consultants (using contract information).
Bin Purchasing for New Developments	Environmental Services	Scope the possibility of enacting a planning requirement on developers to purchase residual, recycling and garden waste bins for all new properties. This would theoretically produce savings on bin purchases whilst also possibly driving uptake on garden recycling.	Development purchases brings in circa £40k per annum (a figure which has remained constant since 2019), and therefore this activity is worth exploring when the team has capacity.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendation's, 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.

Financial Implications (FIN22-23/4768)

- 3.1 From the table at paragraph 2.1 (an extract from the approved MTFP from 9 March 2023) this shows an anticipated £0.300m reductions in Council net expenditure in 2024/25, increasing in later years to £0.520m in 2026/27 profiled over three main headings.

3.2 The table below shows from paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 above, in summary, the details of the items, that have not been currently budgeted for, which would contribute towards the MTFP targets.

	Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28
Clipstone	£0	£0	£224,000	£224,000	£224,000
CCTV Partnership	£0	£2,400	£2,400	£2,400	£0
Crew Lane	£0	£49,615	£49,615	£49,615	£49,615
Grounds Maintenance Contracts	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000
Total	£40,000	£92,015	£316,015	£316,015	£313,015

3.3 As can be seen from the table above the Council is on track to achieve the £0.300m target during years 2025/26 and is some way towards meeting the £0.520m target for 2026/27, albeit more work needs to be completed for year 2024/25. It is anticipated that through the budget setting process for 2024/25 (starting in July 23) the required additional savings will be found.

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.

Commercial Strategy, Report to Cabinet, 27/01/2022



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 11 July 2023

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: Sanjiv Kohli, Deputy Chief Executive and Director - Resources

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

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report, non-key decision
Reason for Report	To enable the Council’s budget process to proceed encompassing agreed assumptions.
Report Title	Corporate Annual Budget Strategy for 2024/25
Purpose of Report	To set out the General Fund, Capital & HRA Budget Strategy for 2024/25, for consideration by Members before detailed work commences.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) approve the overall General Fund, Capital & HRA Budget Strategy for 2024/25; b) note the consultation process with Members; c) note that Budget Officers continue work on the assessment of various budget proposals affecting services for consideration in setting the Council's budget; and d) note that Budget Managers work with finance officers in identifying further efficiency savings, increasing income from fees and charges and in identifying new sources of income.
Reason for Recommendations	To enable the Council’s budget process to proceed encompassing agreed assumptions.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Council’s Constitution sets out the process for developing the Council’s Annual Budget.

1.2 The process requires that, each year, the Council’s Section 151 Officer presents a report on the overall budget strategy for the forthcoming financial year, to the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee.

1.3 The Policy & Performance Improvement Committee is then required to consider the report of the S151 Officer and make recommendations to Cabinet for the forthcoming financial year. Accordingly, the Strategy was considered by Policy & Performance Improvement Committee on 26 June 2023 and was recommended to Cabinet accordingly.

2.0 Budget Proposals

2.1 Budget Presentation

2.1.1 The budget process will result in setting the General Fund budget and the Council Tax for 2024/25 and will be approved by Council at its meeting on 7 March 2024.

2.1.2 The budget process will result in setting the Housing Revenue Account budget and the rent setting for 2024/25 and will be approved by Council at its meeting on 13 February 2024.

2.1.3 The budget process will result in setting the Capital Programme budget for 2024/25 to 2027/28 and will be approved by Council at its meeting on 7 March 2024.

2.2 Financial Policies

2.2.1 The Council has agreed policies on Budgeting and Council Tax, Reserves and Provisions, Charging, Value for Money and also a set of Budget Principles which set out the approach to be taken to the budget process. These policies were last reviewed by the Cabinet in July 2023. The policies and principles have been reviewed and updated where necessary and are attached as **Appendices A to F**.

3.0 Budget Strategy

General Fund

3.1 The current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was approved on 9 March 2023.

3.2 The table below sets out the summary of the financial forecast, identified within the current MTFP, assuming that Council Tax at average Band D will increase by the same rate as in the 2023/24 financial year, i.e. 1.94%:

	2023/24 (£m)	2024/25 (£m)	2025/26 (£m)	2026/27 (£m)
Net Service Expenditure (less capital charges)	16.084	16.920	17.413	17.858
Total Other Expenditure	0.875	1.040	1.464	1.779
Total Expenditure	16.959	17.978	18.895	19.655
Business Rates: receivable annually	(8.702)	(8.705)	(4.991)	(5.028)
Business Rates: other adjustments	0.166	0.000	0.000	0.000
Council Tax: receivable annually	(7.811)	(8.155)	(8.313)	(8.474)
Council Tax: other adjustments	0.047	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other Grants	(1.228)	(1.563)	(0.388)	(0.708)
Contribution (to) or from Reserves	(0.569)	(0.444)	4.853	5.446

- 3.3 The national context around future local government funding is uncertain. The government has had plans to reform the local government finance system for a number of years. The government initially intended for these reforms to take effect from 2020/21. It has now delayed these reforms further to 2025/26, at the earliest.
- 3.4 Since approval of the MTFP in March 2023, no further information has been released regarding the impact on the Local Government Finance Settlement. However, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is now very important as it will be used to determine the funding increases in 2024/25. The Policy Statement released by DLUHC in December 2023 stated that “the core settlement will continue in a similar manner for 2024/25” which gave a clear indication that the Settlement Funding Assessment will be uplifted in line with the increase in the business rates multiplier (which in turn is based on September CPI). Modelling of differing levels of CPI will be completed over the next few months to ascertain the affect on the anticipated levels of funding available and will be reported in the updated MTFP during November 2023.

Bridging the Gap

- 3.5 Whilst the table above forecasts large gaps in each of the final two financial years, the MTFP also described ways in which the Council will bridge the gaps in funding. The table below summarises these mitigating measures:

	2023/24 (£m)	2024/25 (£m)	2025/26 (£m)	2026/27 (£m)
Contribution (to) or from MTFP reserve, before proposed mitigations below	(0.569)	(0.445)	4.853	5.445
Contributions to or (from) other Reserves	0.468	0.200	0.237	0.248
Contribution from Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool	(0.600)	(0.600)	-	-
Dividends from Arkwood Developments Ltd	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.650)
Savings from service reviews	-	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.170)
Savings/efficiencies from making business processes more efficient	-	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.150)
Increased income from the council becoming more commercial	-	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.200)
Rental income from town centre regeneration	-	-	(0.150)	(0.200)
Contribution to/(from) MTFP reserve to offset contributions from reserves in future years	1.201	1.644	(4.140)	(4.323)
Proposed General Fund Funding Gap	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

- 3.6 Whilst these initiatives bridge the gap in each of the identified years, there is still an inherent £4.323m annual deficit to fund from 2027/28 onwards. Policy and Finance Committee previously approved, at its meeting of 27th January 2022, a Commercial Strategy underpinned by an action plan, which would bring forward activities in order to assist with closing this gap. A steering group has been established and progress against these actions will be monitored. Any approved initiative will be factored into the budget and MTFP to be presented to Council on the 7 March 2024.

Housing Revenue Account

- 3.7 The assumptions to be used within the update of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan will be presented to the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee in September and Cabinet in November. These HRA specific assumptions (such as numbers of Right to Buy receipts) will then inform the creation of the HRA budget

Budgeting Assumptions

- 3.8 The following underlying assumptions will be applied in compiling the draft General Fund and HRA budgets for 2024/25:

3.8.1 Base Budget

The base budget for 2024/25 will be derived from the original 2024/25 notional budget as compiled in the preparation of the MTFP for 2023/24 to 2026/27 and approved by Council on 9 March 2023. This will aid in the transparency of the change in assumptions process and will also ensure that changes in resource allocations are captured and reported accordingly.

3.8.2 Staff Costs

It has been assumed that within the Service Unit budgets, the Council will employ 100% of the Council's establishment throughout the year with the exception of known unfilled vacancies where salaries are budgeted to commence on the anticipated starting date.

The Council are yet to receive information relating to the current years (2023/24) pay award for green and red book staff. A budget equivalent to a 5% increase was applied to 2022/23 salary scales for the 2023/24 financial year. An increase equivalent to 3% was applied to the 2024/25 financial year within the MTFP on top of the forecast 2023/24 salary scales. It is proposed to increase this further to 5%.

A vacancy provision of 5% of the total salary budget for 2024/25 will be made to allow for natural savings being made from posts remaining vacant before being filled. With the challenges in recruiting that have been seen over the last two financial years, this appears to be a reasonable approach. The actual outturn of savings from vacancies amounted to 4.86% for 2022/23. As it is not possible to predict precisely which business units will experience vacancies in the year, an overall saving will be set aside. This value of this provision will be determined once the total salary budget for 2024/25 has been calculated.

3.8.3 Employer's Superannuation

A triennial review was completed on the Nottinghamshire Pension fund, in order to determine the contributions necessary for the next three year period from 1 April 2023. The impact of this has already been included within the MTFP for the period. The primary contribution rate (which represents the employer's future service contribution rate expressed as a percentage) is therefore set and will be applied to the establishment based on the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts and the salary grades those posts are on. The secondary contributions (which represents an adjustment to the primary rate to arise at the total rate each employer is required to pay – to allow for deficit recovery) have also been set as a monetary amount.

3.8.4 Provision for Inflation

The Council is exposed to a number of different costs that rise at various different rates of inflation. The Consumer Price Index is the measure that references the weighted average prices of a basket of consumer goods and services and is measured on a rolling annual basis. This measure is used against the vast majority of Council consumables outside of Pay/Utilities and vehicle costs. CPI has risen substantially over the course of the last 18 months.

The Council has a number of properties within its portfolio and hence is exposed to increases in cost in relation to electricity and gas. Wholesale energy prices have been at an all-time high over the course of the last 12 months, based on a number of factors such the post covid increase in activity and the war in Ukraine. Due to this energy prices have ranged in increase but are putting significant strain on both residents and business' for which the Council is not immune.

Based on the above, it is felt reasonable to utilise the following inflation rates (for non-contracted costs) in the production of the budget and MTFP:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
General Inflation	5%	3%	2%	2%
Utilities	5%	5%	5%	5%
Transport (Fuel)	5%	5%	5%	5%
Transport (parts)	10%	8%	6%	6%

3.8.5 Fees and Charges

Changes in fees and charges will be subject to specific, detailed review by business managers who will compare the Council's fees for discretionary services to other neighbouring and family group authorities that provide the same services. The business managers will also benchmark the fees with other commercial organisations where similar services are provided. Business managers will also assess and evaluate whether new fees and charges can be introduced for discretionary services that are not currently being charged for. The Council's charging policy is included in Appendix D.

Where comparative benchmarking information is not available, an increase equivalent to general inflation, **as stated in the table above will be applied**. For clarity, this figure is used for uplifts in fees and charges, but will not be used to set car parking fees or forecast changes in rental income for dwellings within the HRA. The assumptions around that figure will be included within the refresh of the HRA Business Plan.

3.8.6 Interest Rate

The Council is proposing to borrow money in order to support its cash flow position. During previous financial years, decisions regarding capital expenditure have been taken to utilise internal resources and maintain an under borrowed position against its Capital Financing Requirement. This is not uncommon across the Local Government sector, at a time when

budgets have been squeezed, but reserves have existed. The Council is proposing to utilise elements of its reserves to fund various capital projects going forward. This will mean that cash backed by these reserves will be utilised, hence there is a need to borrow money to ensure that the Council has cash at hand to service its day to day costs. The timing of borrowing funds will be dictated by the Council’s cash flow which forecasts daily expected income and expenditure over the next 4 years. Treasury Advisors Link Group will be consulted with prior to borrowing to ensure that the Council takes the most economic route, be that either a fixed or variable rate borrowing, ensuring compliance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy. Rates will be monitored over the coming months until such time that the borrowing is secured.

4.0 Risks in Preparation of the Budget

- 4.1 The basis of the budget strategy will ensure that the Council delivers a balanced budget in March 2024; however, there are risks that may cause expenditure to increase or income to reduce. Consequently, income and expenditure levels will be kept under review throughout the budget process.
- 4.2 It is essential to ensure that the strategic budget efficiencies and additional income are delivered as this is central to ensuring that the Council has a balanced budget. The delivery of the efficiencies and additional income will be kept under continuous review throughout the budget process.
- 4.3 It will not be possible to finalise funding in the budget until government announcements on future funding levels are published later in the year. Members are asked to approve the budget strategy as set out in this report, in order for the main provisions of the budget to be built.

5.0 Timetable

- 5.1 The Budget Timetable is dictated by the corporate timetable for the Executive arrangements. The essential deadline is that the Council is able to set the level of Council Tax for 2024/25 at its meeting on 7 March 2024.
- 5.2 The table below describes the key activities and dates in order for the production of the budget.

Date	Activity	Description
26 June 2023	Budget Strategy reviewed by Policy & Performance Improvement Committee	Sets the overall direction of the setting of the budget and high level assumptions
11 July 2023	Budget Strategy approved by Cabinet	Sets the overall direction of the setting of the budget and high level assumptions
31 October 2023	Cash budgets completed	The completion by all Budget holders of the cash resources needed to fund service provision over the MTFP period

w/c 13 November 2023	Director and Budget Holder review	In order for the Director to challenge the budget holders to ensure internal scrutiny of resource provision
4 December 2023	Policy & Performance Improvement Committee review (HRA Only)	To review the assumptions around the HRA budget
28 November 2023	Service budget review by SLT	Holistic review of overall service budget provision by SLT
w/c 12 & 19 December 2022	Portfolio Holder review	Portfolio holder scrutiny over service budget provision
w/c 15 January 2024	Informal meeting with Portfolio Holders, Chair and Vice Chair of Policy & Performance Committee	Holistic review of the whole budget inclusive of the draft LGFS
18 January 2024	SLT review of overall budget position	Holistic review of the whole budget inclusive of the draft LGFS
23 January 2024	Cabinet review (HRA Only)	Cabinet review and recommendation to Full Council for approval of 2024/25 HRA budget
29 January 2024	Policy & Performance Improvement Committee review (GF Only)	PPI Committee to scrutinise proposed budget for 2024/25
13 February 2024	Council approval (HRA Only)	Council approves HRA budget for 2024/25 and Rent setting
20 February 2024	Cabinet review (GF Only)	Cabinet review and recommendation to Full Council for approval of 2024/25 GF budget
7 March 2024	Council approval (GF Only)	Council approves GF budget for 2024/25 and Council Tax setting

6.0 Consultation

- 6.1 As the production of the budget will be predicated on the priorities within the Community Plan (once this is finalised), it is anticipated that resource allocation will be linked to spending priorities. As the budget is to be derived based on the notional budget set for the forthcoming year (as per the approved MTFP), and changes made during the current financial year are factored in, consultation will continue to take place throughout the 2023/24 financial year. Members will continue to have an opportunity to shape the budget through approving/rejecting reports brought to Cabinet in year.
- 6.2 Once the first draft of the budget has been prepared, this will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure budget is aligned to the Community Plan priorities, during November 2023 as described in the table above.

- 6.3 Portfolio Holders will then be briefed on the proposals. This will enable a review of service budgets prior to presentation to Policy & Performance Improvement Committee during the January cycle of meetings. This will be facilitated by Financial Services, with the services Director and Budget holders presenting their budgets.
- 6.4 The Policy & Performance Improvement Committee will have the opportunity to scrutinise the budget proposals prior to Cabinet recommending to Council for approval.
- 6.5 As in previous years, consultation on the budget will take place with Commercial Business Ratepayers. This will be advertised on the Council's website between the Cabinet meeting in February and the Council meeting in March.

7.0 Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2027/28

7.1 Prioritisation for the General Fund Schemes

- (a) When business cases for new schemes are brought to Cabinet, financing implications of capital expenditure are included in order to assess the viability of the scheme and to enable members to make informed decisions. Once the capital expenditure has been incurred, the financing of the Capital Programme as a whole is arranged by the Section 151 Officer, in line with the Council's Constitution. This may include use of internal resources, borrowing from internal resources or external borrowing. An appraisal of the most appropriate funding source will be included within the business case.
- (b) Capital projects for the new financial year will initially be commissioned by the Senior Leadership Team. These projects will then be assessed against the prioritisation criteria (see **Appendix D**) and will be ranked accordingly. Based on this assessment a report will be prepared for submission to Cabinet in February 2024, before final approval by Council on 7 March 2024.

7.2 Prioritisation for the Housing Revenue Account Schemes

The current HRA Capital programme reflects the latest available information agreed by officers within the Housing, Health and Wellbeing directorate. It comprises capital investment in the existing Council housing stock and the continuation of the five phase new build programme which commenced in 2017/18. Resources for future years will reflect the ability of the HRA to support any necessary borrowing, and other funding opportunities which may arise.

8.0 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.

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

Policy on Budgeting and Council Tax

Introduction

Each year the Council is required to set a Council Tax in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. It is a requirement of the Act that the Council Tax must be set by 10 March each year.

The Council sets its Annual Revenue Budget in March each year in accordance with the provisions of the Budget Process, which forms part of the Council's Constitution.

The District Council is also responsible for collecting the Council Tax requirement (precepts) for Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottinghamshire Police & Crime Commissioner and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and any precepts set by the Parish and Town Councils or Parish meetings within the District. All of these Councils are required to notify the District Council of their requirements before 1 March each year.

The District Council has no control over the level of Council Tax or precept set by the precepting bodies. This policy covers the District Council element of the Council Tax only. Nevertheless, it is recognised that public perception is influenced by the overall level of Council Tax and it can be difficult to appreciate that the requirements of the District Council form only a part of this. In fact, the District Council's spending requirements account for around 8% of the total Council Tax bill.

The Government has powers to require local authorities setting "excessive Council Tax increases" to hold a local referendum on the level of Council Tax. The level of excessiveness for the 2023/24 financial year was set at 3% or £5 increase but may be different in subsequent years. This information is provided within the Local Government Finance Settlement which is published during Winter each year.

The District Council's spending requirement includes an amount levied upon it by other bodies. For this Council an annual levy is made by the Trent Valley and Upper Witham Internal Drainage Boards.

Current Level of District Council Tax

The District Council's level of Council Tax for 2023/24 is £189.16 for a Band D property. This represents a 1.94% increase in council tax on 2022/23. The total bill, including all major precepts, is £2,271.58 whilst the average Parish Precept is a further £85.49. In order to arrive at this level of Council Tax, the Council assessed its needs over the medium term and resolved to approve an increase at the minimal level possible whilst ensuring it remains cognisant of the challenges it faces ahead.

Consultation

The latest Resident Survey was delivered in 2022 and was open for nearly 6 weeks. Within the survey, a range of questions were asked to gather a picture of their experiences as a resident, their satisfaction with Council services and their views on their local area. It consisted of 16 questions that were predominately multiple choice, with some open questions allowing residents to expand on their answers.

As the feedback from the Resident Survey helps inform and shape our Community Plan, it is important that the consultation provided a holistic and balanced account of the district. To ensure this was achieved, three work streams were delivered as a part of the consultation:

- The open survey that was available for any resident over the age of 16
- A representative survey to allow us to recognise any bias in the open survey from under or overrepresented demographics
- Focus groups to ensure the voices of typically underrepresented groups were heard

In the open survey, 4,577 responses were captured, and this equated to a 3.7% response rate, so around 4 in 10 residents completed the survey. The results of this consultation will be used to shape Council services and inform the strategic direction of the Council with the creation of the Community Plan, this is anticipated to be delivered during Q3 of 2023/24. Budgets will also be aligned to this process to ensure that resources are directed at services which will deliver the priorities described in this document.

Proposals

The absolute level of Council Tax, and any annual increase, will depend on the demands facing the District Council, external funding available, and the Council's assessment of the appropriate level of Council Tax. Whilst these factors will vary from year to year, the following criteria will be taken into account when considering the level of Council Tax:

- The Priorities and Objectives of the Council as set out within the Community Plan
- Inflation
- Consultation Responses
- The level of Council Tax considered to be acceptable to the public
- Government views on grant levels and referendum criteria
- Service demands

Newark & Sherwood District Council aims to set the minimum level of Council Tax acceptable consistent with the achievement of its Priorities and Objectives and other financial and service demands.

General Fund Balances and Reserves Policy

Section 25 (Budget calculations: report on robustness of estimates etc) of the *Local Government Act 2003* requires local authority chief finance officers (Section 151 officers) to report on the adequacy of financial reserves in the council's proposed budget and robustness of estimates made.

The Council will review the adequacy of its useable financial reserves to ensure that these are neither too low (imprudent) or too high (over-prudent) based on their purpose and likely use.

Council's generally hold useable reserves for three purposes:

- as a working balance, to mitigate the impact of uneven cash flows;
- as a contingency, to mitigate the impact of unexpected events or emergencies; and
- as earmarked reserves, to pay for known or predicted future requirements.

The Council has a fixed £**Error! Reference source not found.**m General Fund balance which has been set aside to pay for exceptional items. Officers consistently review the appropriateness (prudence) of this amount in light of internal and external risks identified. For the council to maintain its current General Fund balance of £**Error! Reference source not found.**m, it is intended that the General Fund balance will only be used to fund expenditure once other appropriate/earmarked reserves have been fully utilised.

One of the most important principles used to prepare the MTFP is that council reserves and other one-off resources are not used to balance ongoing, base budget pressures: that all other mitigating actions are used before the use of one-off resources. Over the years, the Council's reserves have been used, for reasons such as to: cover the cost of one-off events not budgeted for; support and improve service delivery; and offset declining levels of income.

Members and officers are required to ensure the council operates as a going concern: that the council will continue to fulfil its functions for the foreseeable future. If this were not the case, for example, because of an imprudent use of council reserves, the Council's external auditors would be required to express a going concern opinion (GCO). A GCO would be the external auditor's way of expressing significant doubt on the Council's ability to operate longer-term.

It is recommended that:

- a) Reserves should be subject to an annual review by the Section 151 officer;**
- b) Reserves should not be over-provided;**
- c) Reserves should be used for the purpose for which they are provided (subject to a and b above)**
- d) Reserves should not be used to support ongoing general fund expenditure (subject to recommendations a and b, above)**

Budgeting Principles

The Council will prepare its budget in accordance with the following principles:

Council Objectives:

The purpose of the budget is to enable the Council to achieve its objectives, as set out in the Community Plan, and meet its statutory duties. In setting the budget and Council Tax, the Council will also have regard to Government requirements, including the Local Government Finance Settlement and the latest Comprehensive Spending Review.

Balanced Budget:

The Council is required to set a “balanced budget” with sources of funding identified to cover all expenditure proposed.

Affordable Budget:

In setting the budget, the Council will consider the affordability of proposals and their impact on the level of Council Tax.

Inflation:

The Council will have regard to the level of inflation when considering budget proposals. It may consider different indices of inflation for different purposes. For example, the retail prices index (RPI) and the consumer prices index (CPI) do not always reflect the rate of inflation faced by the Council and this may be better measured by specific indices such as those widely available for construction costs or energy.

Sustainable Budget:

The Council will set a budget to be sustainable over time. This will be reflected in the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Programme. The budget will include an overall risk assessment and will incorporate appropriate sensitivity analysis in order to ensure a robust final budget.

Budget Demands:

Any developments in the Council’s revenue and capital budgets will be required to go through the Council’s formal bidding process. Only those items approved as part of this will be included in the final budget.

Use of 3rd Party Funding:

Where third party funding is used to contribute towards the Council’s budgets, a plan is required to ensure that this element of the budget is sustainable if and when the 3rd party funding ceases. Where appropriate, an exit strategy is required.

Adequate Reserves and Provisions:

The Council aims to have adequate, but not excessive, reserves to cover unforeseen expenditure. Specific provisions are also in place to cover items of expenditure that are certain but where their timing is not known. Further details are set out in the policy on balances and reserves.

Asset Management:

The Council aims to manage its assets efficiently in accordance with best practice. Full details are set out in the approved Asset Management Plan.

Council Tax Levels:

In accordance with this policy, the Council aims to set the minimum level of Council Tax possible consistent with the achievement of its Aim and Priorities and other financial and service demands.

Value for Money:

The Council aims to achieve value for money in the provision of all of its services. This is set out in the Council's Value for Money Strategy.

Risk Assessment:

In accordance with section 25 of the Local Government Act 2104, the s151 officer will conduct an annual risk assessment of the robustness of the estimates made in the Council's budget.

Sensitivity Analysis:

The s151 officer will carry out a review of the impact of variations to key elements of the proposed budget (a "sensitivity analysis") on an annual basis.

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE CHARGING POLICY

Revised: July 2023

Date of next revision: July 2024

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1. Introduction

This Policy applies to external fees and charges other than those prescribed by the government. It provides a guide to internal charging arrangements but is subject to CIPFA's 'Service Reporting Code of Practice' and has regard to the Audit Commission's publication "*Positively Charged*".

It is not intended to apply to the disposal of Council assets, rents, internal charges or rechargeable works, nor will it apply where charges are governed by statutory regulation or guidance.

The Policy does apply if we have discretion, but not if there is a prescribed fixed charge.

Over the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan services will align their charges and processes with this policy.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the other related Council policies and strategies, including Financial Regulations, Equalities Policy, VFM Strategy, Corporate Plan.

Fees and charges will be in accordance with the toolkit approved by Economic Development Committee on 21 November 2019.

If after reading this policy you require further guidance or clarification, or you are not sure how best to comply with the Policy then please contact your Business Manager or the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources.

2. Purpose of the Policy

To establish a policy within which fee and charge levels will support the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan; and,

To encourage a consistent approach to the setting and reviewing of charges for services provided by Newark and Sherwood District Council by:

- specifying the processes and frequencies for reviewing existing charging levels or introducing new charges for areas of the council's work for which charges could in principle be set;
- providing guidance on the factors that need to be taken into consideration when charges are reviewed on an annual basis;
- establishing parameters for calculating different levels of charges;
- recommending the criteria for applying concessions or discounted charges on a consistent council wide basis;
- requiring more active use of market intelligence relating to different services.

3. Processes and Frequencies for Reviewing Charges

The following arrangements for reviewing charges will be applied throughout all areas of the Council where charges for services already exist or could in principle be set:

- all discretionary charges will be considered and approved by Council as part of the Budget and Council Tax setting process in March of each year.

- a major review of each business unit's charging strategy will take place at least once every three years to ensure consistency with the council's priorities, policy framework, service aims, market sensitivity, customer preferences, and income generation needs, and the justification for any subsidy that the council as a whole makes to the service.
- annual reviews will be carried out for all of these services as part of the budget process, and shall have regard for the budget strategy approved each year.
- where fees are not to be increased or are proposed to be increased below inflation, this must be reported to SLT by the budget officer clearly stating the financial implications and budget shortfall before the deadline for completion of the revenue budget.
- these formal reviews will be overseen by the appropriate Director.
- where decisions on fees and charges, including any concessions or discounts, are taken outside the budget process approved by SLT and Cabinet, any proposals must have due regard to the Medium Term Financial Plan.

4. Factors Relevant to the Annual Review of Charges

Annual reviews of charges will consider the following factors:

- a. inflationary pressures generally and input costs specific to the service;
- b. any statutory framework relating to the service
- c. the actual or potential impact of any competition in terms of price or quality;
- d. trends in user demand and the forecast effect of price changes;
- e. equality and access to services;
- f. customer survey results;
- g. benchmarking results;
- h. council wide and service budget targets;
- i. cost structure implications arising from developments such as investments made in the service;
- j. consistency with other charges;
- k. alternative charging structures that could be more effective;
- l. validity of continuing any concessions;
- m. proposals for targeted promotions during the year, and evaluation of any that took place in the previous year;
- n. where less than the full cost is being recovered (including nil charges), the justification for the decision is reviewed and documented to ensure that this decision remains valid and that significant income is not being lost.

5. Processes for Setting Charges for New Sources of Income

All Business Managers should explore new business opportunities with a view to generating additional income.

All guidance in this Policy must be considered when setting new fees and charges.

A business plan must be prepared.

Any potential new income streams will need to be approved by SLT and Cabinet.

The setting of the fees and charges must be made in accordance with the current VAT regulations.

The proposed billing and recovery administrative process must be agreed with the S151 officer prior to the charges being implemented.

A central record will be maintained by the relevant Business Manager of any decisions made not to charge for a service where a charge could be made.

6. Calculation of Charges

Charges will apply to all users, and will be set at a level to maximise take-up and income targets and wherever possible covering or exceeding the full cost of providing the service in question.

It is the responsibility of the relevant Business Manager to ensure that the proposals comply with the appropriate legal framework and any legal restrictions. Advice should be taken from the Council's Legal Business Unit before any proposal is finalised.

This calculation of full cost should be based on the direct cost of service provision including staff, supplies and services, equipment, premise costs. Overheads and capital asset depreciation charges should be included but consideration may be given to a less than full cost recovery of these elements where inclusion would distort competition.

Where less than the full cost is being recovered, the justification for the decision must be documented and retained by the appropriate Business Manager and clearly state the financial implications and budget shortfall.

All fees and charges must be calculated in accordance with the current VAT regulations.

7. Concessionary Charges

In some circumstances the Council will offer subsidies to all users or concessions to specific user groups where this is consistent with achieving its priorities.

Entitlement to concessionary charges must have regard to equalities legislation and is designed to reduce barriers to participation arising from:

- Age;
- Level of income;
- Family circumstances;
- Health
- Educational circumstances.

Concessions will not apply to retail sales from shops or cafes.

Concessionary charges may also be made available to organisations whose purpose is to assist the Council in meeting specific objectives in its priorities and policy framework, or which contribute to the aims of key local partnerships in which the Council has a leading role.

Concessionary charges should not normally apply to peak times or in situations that would result in the loss of income from customers paying standard charges. Neither would they normally be available to organisations that are based outside of the Council's area other than on a reciprocal basis.

Only one concession can be applied to the standard charge at any given time.

Services wishing to adopt a concessionary charging scheme must demonstrate the scheme is practicable in terms of assessment, collection and evidencing for audit purposes.

8. Discounts

For certain services it will be normal practice to set promotional discounts, frequent user discounts or group discounts.

Promotional discounts are defined as short-term charges that are targeted to increase take-up or awareness of the services that are available.

Frequent user discounts are to be used only for commercial reasons such as generating customer loyalty where alternative provision from competitors exists, and where market analysis shows a real risk of reduced income if they are not offered.

Group discounts are to be used to encourage take up by organisations able to block book and family discounts to encourage parents and children's take up.

Discounts can be applied to both the standard charge and the concessionary charge.

Discounts can only be applied where the Service has received prior approval of the principle to apply a discount to the charge for this service.

9. The Use of Market Intelligence

All managers of discretionary services for which a charge is made should take steps to identify competitors offering similar or related services, and make use of comprehensive and dynamic market intelligence in evaluating:

- their charging strategy;
- the range of services provided;
- the quality of services provided;
- their cost structure.

All managers of services for which a charge is made should consult with customers, relevant partners and stakeholders on the range, quality and cost of services provided prior to the triennial review.

Consultation should also take place with potential customers and target groups to determine improvements needed to encourage participation at least every five years.

Comprehensive and accurate usage statistics will be maintained for all services and at all facilities where charges are made, to enable analysis of usage, justification of any subsidy given by the Council, and accurate forecasting of the effect of price changes on usage.

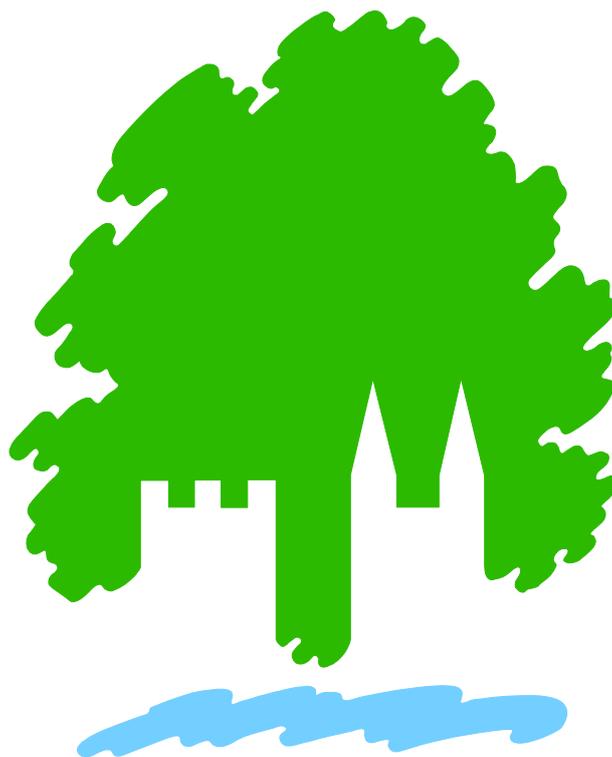
Benchmarking should be undertaken at least annually with other Councils in the local area and with relevant national groupings of authorities, to ensure that charges are at comparable levels and that significant differences are understood and justified.

10. Further Guidance

Charges should be payable in advance wherever possible or collected by direct debit or through the corporate income system.

All fees/charges must be reported annually to the Financial Services Business Unit as part of the budget process for publishing in the annual budget book.

All fees/charges must be published on the Council's website.



**NEWARK &
SHERWOOD
*DISTRICT COUNCIL***

Value for Money Strategy

Revised: July 2023

Next revision due: July 2024

Introduction

Newark & Sherwood District Council recognises its responsibility to achieve value for money from all its activities, however they may be funded.

The council is committed to the pursuit of economy, efficiency and effectiveness as part of its corporate strategy. It will seek to achieve value for money in the pursuit of its objectives and in the delivery of all services.

The council has a neutral position on service delivery methodologies. It will consider all service delivery options, including in-house provision, partnerships with other public sector organisations (including shared services), partnerships with private sector organisations, and bought in services as appropriate for individual services or groups of services.

In light of the current high inflation environment, it is inevitable that the annual revenue and capital budget setting will be challenging each year. The council has a range of methodologies in place to ensure that its aims and priorities are delivered within an acceptable level of council tax. The Value for Money Strategy is a key element of this process.

Value for Money Principles

The principles involved in achieving value for money are:

Efficiency: Considering the relationship between the amount of resources used (inputs) and the level of performance.

Effectiveness: The ability to achieve stated goals or objectives, judged in terms of both output and impact.

Economy: The acquisition or use of resources of an appropriate quality at minimum cost.

There are several aspects to be considered:

- Balancing effectiveness with efficiency
- Balancing efficiency with economy
- Sustaining the funding arrangement (where this is desirable)
- Demonstrating the most appropriate use of resources

Value for money can be defined as: **the use of available resources in an efficient and economical way to deliver effective services or achieve desired outcomes.**

The council is accountable for using resources efficiently to avoid wasting public funds, but this does not mean always seeking the lowest short-term cost. Waste occurs when a service – no matter how cheap or expensive – is ineffective. Effectiveness and efficiency needs to be balanced to achieve value for money.

The costs and benefits of each arrangement must be evaluated in terms of what the council seeks to achieve.

The council will manage any risks to its own interests, and use arrangements and processes such as monitoring, review and evaluation to demonstrate effectiveness and value for money.

At the planning stage, the council should be able to justify how it intends to apply its resources. After implementation it should be able to demonstrate that the policy is having the desired effects, and that the money is not going to waste. If there are unintended outcomes from its policies the council needs to adapt its funding arrangements to take them into account.

Objectives

To achieve value for money, the council will:

- target resources towards achieving the council's objectives and meeting the needs of local people;
- integrate VFM principles within existing planning, management and review processes;
- adopt recognised good practice as appropriate;
- analyse potential budget issues for the following financial year at an early stage and take a corporate approach to developing solutions;
- ensure that VFM principles are taken into account during the commissioning process;
- benchmark activities against other similar activities and organisations where appropriate;
- respond to opportunities to enhance the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of activities;
- promote a culture of continuous improvement;
- demonstrate actively to both internal and external stakeholders that the achievement of VFM is sought in all activities undertaken;
- ensure that all staff recognise their continuing obligation to seek VFM for the council as part of their activities;
- seek external funding where appropriate to support the council's services if the external funding assists the achievement of the council's objectives.

Methodologies for achieving VFM

The council has a number of different methodologies that contribute to the achievement of VFM.

These include:

- An annual refresh of the Community Plan focus' on the key objectives based on local need;
- development of Business Unit business plans which are referenced to the Community Plan objectives;
- resources are aligned, through the budget process including the refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan, with the key objectives as set out in the Community Plan;
- effective use of ICT (supported by the ICT Digital Strategy);
- service reviews;
- scrutiny by Policy and Performance Improvement Committee;
- scrutiny by the Audit & Governance Committee through Internal Audit reports;
- corporate procurement mechanisms (supported by the Contract Procedure Rules and external providers Welland Procurement);
- partnership working including consideration of shared services and public/private partnerships;
- customer feedback.

How the Council monitors the achievement of VFM

The Council sets a range of performance indicators for key activities in order to monitor the effectiveness of those functions. Each of these are built into Business Unit business plans and are referenced to objectives set within the Community Plan. These are reported through the Senior Leadership Team and on to Members for their scrutiny.

Responsibility for delivering VFM

The council is required to satisfy itself that VFM is being sought and achieved from the use of public funds.

The responsibility for achieving VFM lies with all Members and staff and is not restricted to those with resource or financial responsibilities. All Members and staff should endeavour to seek and achieve VFM in all activities and to bring to management's attention any opportunities for improvement.

Business Managers have the responsibility to maintain an awareness of good practices in their own area of operation and ensure that these are followed appropriately.

The Senior Leadership Team will provide a corporate overview of VFM to ensure that initiatives are not restricted to individual service areas.

The Council has an expectation that bodies with which the Council has partnership arrangements and organisations in receipt of grant aid from the council will follow VFM guidelines.

NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 – 2026/2027 PRIORITISATION SCHEME

	STAGE 1 FACTOR	Comments	STAGE 2 DETAILED PRIORITISATION	STAGE 2 WEIGHTING
1	Key Priorities Scheme must link to at least one of the Council's priorities and be an objective contained within a Service Plan.	If a scheme does not clearly relate to these areas it will not be considered further.	Each scheme to be marked as to how well it fits with the Community Plan	35%
2	Evidence of Need Service Strategy National Strategy or Guidelines Statutory Obligation	In some cases local demands are in excess of national guidelines and strategies and this tries to acknowledge that the two must be balanced. This will cover Health and Safety related schemes.	The following factors will receive equal weighting :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Obligation • National Strategy • Validity of consultation in relation to project. e.g. How specific to this project? Who was consulted, was this comprehensive? • Quality of evidence of need for project .e.g. size of sample base, date of evidence, format of evidence 	10%
3	Partnership Eligibility under existing criteria can be demonstrated.	Show that work has been done to ensure that the obtaining of external finance is realistic. The degree to which the partnership will add value to the project.	The proportion of finance which will be met by third party. The likelihood of receiving support. Assessment of the value the partner will add to the project.	15%

4	<p>Outputs and Outcomes</p> <p>These have been clearly identified and can be justified from supporting evidence.</p> <p>Specific comments should be made as to how the scheme represents value for money when compared to other options</p>	<p>This will enable the council to improve the way it reports its work and clearly show what is being achieved. The comments should refer to any performance indicators which the proposal is addressing specifying what the improvement target is.</p>	<p>Assessment then made on what the scheme will achieve.</p>	<p>15%</p> <p>Assessment of all factors or group of factors</p>
5	<p>Financial</p> <p>Capital costs have been based on internal or external professional advice</p> <p>Revenue implications have been properly developed</p>	<p>Capital costs include both works and land purchase and cover all associated costs.</p> <p>Try and avoid “guesstimates” which result in schemes requiring increased finance or having to be reduced to meet finance available.</p>	<p><u>Capital</u> will be based on the quality of work which has been put into estimate. e.g. costed feasibility studies.</p> <p><u>Revenue</u> will be based on whether the effect is positive, neutral or negative on the revenue budget.</p> <p>Positive effect scores 10 Neutral effect scores 3 Negative effect scores 0</p>	<p>5%</p> <p>10%</p>
6	<p>Risk Assessment</p> <p>Identify the level of risk in a project not being able to proceed. For example planning appeals, listed building consent. Over subscription of partnership funds</p>	<p>Try and ensure that not all schemes selected are high risk with the danger that there will be delays in delivery or no-delivery.</p>	<p>The following will all need to be considered:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Issues Financial Uncertainty Partnership uncertainty Planning Issues Legal issues Timescale 	<p>10%</p>



Report to: Cabinet Meeting – 11 July 2023
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock – Strategy, Performance & Governance
 Director Lead: Sue Bearman, Assistant Director – Legal & Democratic Services
 Lead Officer: Nigel Hill, Business Manager – Elections & Democratic Services, Ext: 5243

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report, non-key decision
Report Title	Annual Review of Exempt Items
Purpose of Report	To consider the list of exempt business considered by the Cabinet for period 1 June 2022 to date, and the officer view as to if any such reports can now be released into the public domain.
Recommendations	That the report be noted, with any items being released into the public domain if considered as no longer exempt.
Alternative Options Considered	None, this report is a useful tool in reviewing previous exempt items of business in order to release any into the public domain if considered appropriate.
Reason for Recommendations	To review previous exempt reports considered by the Cabinet over the previous 12 months.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 This report sets out the reports which were considered by the Cabinet as exempt items of business for the period from 1 June 2022 to date.
- 1.2 Officers have been requested to consider if any of these reports could now be released into the public domain or if the information contained in these reports remains confidential.
- 1.3 Members also have the opportunity to request (under Rule 4.18 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules) the Monitoring Officer to release exempt information into the public domain if there are substantive reasons to do so.
- 1.4 The following table provides the exempt business considered by Cabinet for the period 1 June 2022 to date, and the opinion of the report author as to whether the report could be released into the public domain.

1.5 Members will note that the view of all report authors is that the content in all remains confidential at this stage.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Exempt Paragraph	Opinion of Report Author as to current status of the report
07.06.22	Disposal of Land at the Green, Rolleston to Arkwood Development Ltd. Appendix (Key Decision)	3	Information to remain confidential
07.06.22	Levelling Up Submission and UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Appendix (Key Decision)	3	Information to remain confidential
07.06.22	Newark Town Fund Update and Lorry Park Options for Relocation. Appendix (Key Decision)	3	Information to remain confidential
12.07.22	Housing and Maintenance and Asset Management Restructure. Appendices	4	Information to remain confidential
01.11.22	Levelling Up Fund Update Clipstone Holdings	3	Information to remain confidential
17.01.23	Cyber Security Strategy. Appendix	3	Information to remain confidential
17.01.23	Land at Hall Farm, Edingley	1, 3, 5 & 7	Information to remain confidential
21.02.23	Capital Programme Budget 2023/24 to 2026/27. Appendix	3	Information to remain confidential
21.02.23	Stodman Street Update (Key Decision)	3	Information to remain confidential
21.03.23	Request for Market Supplement	4	Information to remain confidential
21.03.23	Non-Domestic Rates Write Off	3	Information to remain confidential

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.



Report to: Cabinet Meeting – 11 July 2023

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: Deborah Johnson, Director - Customer Services & Organisational Development

Lead Officer: Jill Baker, Business Manager - Customer Services, Ext. 5810
Rowan Bosworth-Brown, Transformation & Service Improvement Officer, Ext. 5824

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report, key decision
Report Title	Customer Experience Strategy 2023-2027
Purpose of Report	The Customer Experience Strategy and the Customer Promise, which, subject to approval, will go out for public consultation before being finalised and used to shape all Council delivery.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: (a) approve, in principle and subject to consultation, the Customer Experience Strategy and Customer Promise; and (b) approve the proposed pilot (as detailed in Paragraph 2.3 of the report).
Alternative Options Considered	Continue with no Council wide strategy and see no improvements.
Reason for Recommendations	The Council does not currently have a Customer Experience Strategy, this is a document which sets out our key principles to guide all customer interactions. Whilst the Customer Experience Strategy and Customer Promise do not directly link to the community plan, it relates to every service, as it outlines the behaviours all council employees and representatives will embody when interacting with customers. The Customer Experience Strategy and Customer Promise are important as they shape the quality of our customer interactions.

1.0 Background

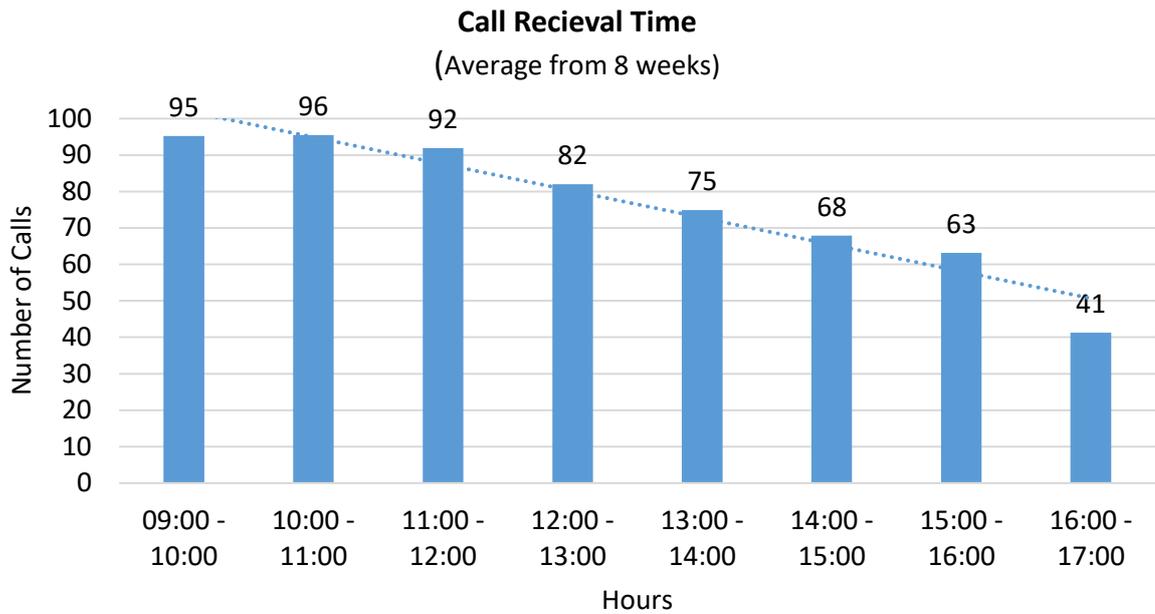
- 1.1 In the 2022 Resident Survey, residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the Council as well as give specific feedback on areas of improvement. A key area of improvement identified was Council communication. As a result of this, the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee (PPIC) set-up a working group to develop a Customer Experience Strategy to improve the quality and consistency of customer experience. Looking at elements such as how customers get in touch, how enquiries are

handled and how the Council constantly improves its customer service and learns from customer feedback.

- 1.2 Between September 2022 and February 2023, the working group met 3 times to look at various aspects including customer data, case studies, processes and what good customer service looks like. The working group also identified some minor improvements to the website that have now been implemented.
- 1.3 As a result of the working group, the Customer Promise (Page 3, **Appendix One**) was developed. This promise is a customer facing document highlighting the behaviour we will follow when interacting with customers. The Customer Promise and proposed pilot have been endorsed by PPIC. Following the feedback of PPIC a supporting Customer Experience Strategy (**Appendix One**) was developed to provide further detail on how the promise would be embedded. Following approval by Cabinet, this strategy will be used to develop staff training to embed these values within the Councils interactions with all customers.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The working group developed the Customer Promise document (Page 3, Appendix One) as the key principles to guide all customer interactions. The Customer Promise document was reviewed and endorsed by PPIC on 6 March 2023. The Customer Experience Strategy (Appendix One) has subsequently been developed alongside the Customer Promise. Subject to Cabinet approval, the Customer Experience Strategy and Customer Promise will go out for public consultation prior to implementation across the Council.
- 2.2 One of the principles laid out in the promise is that “we will be here for you, in the way that works best for you, whether that’s digitally, on the telephone or face-to-face.” This led the working group to consider the opening hours of our Customer Contact Centre considering whether the opening hours of our non-digital services are suitable for all our customers. For example, customers who work full time or work nightshifts may not be able to contact us between 9am and 5pm. Therefore, to meet the needs of these customers, the working group proposed piloting additional opening hours. This will be piloted for a period of 12 weeks and the findings reviewed. If this is found to be successful, the additional opening hour will be made permanent and other pilots may also be explored.
- 2.3 The proposal is for the additional opening hours to be on a Monday (our busiest day). The additional opening will be for the Customer Contact Centre with customers able to contact by phone, e-mail, social media, and webchat. This additional opening pilot could be for 8-9am or 5-6pm. PPIC members unanimously voted in support of early opening. This is supported by customer data which shows that the majority of calls on a Monday are in the morning (see graph below). Subject to approval, the aim is for the pilot to be undertaken from September and the results reviewed with Members.



3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendation’s 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.

Financial Implications (FIN23-24/8968)

The strategy and promise alone do not have any direct financial implications; however, any follow up actions, such as customer experience training, will need to be considered individually to ensure they are delivering in line with the strategy and are proportionate to the change. All training expenditure will be captured within the HR training budget.

The pilot proposed will impact on staff, but by introducing a rota system for the pilot scheme, so there will be no additional costs. The outcome of the pilot will determine if additional resources are required going forward.

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.

[Customer Promise and Customer Strategy working Group Update, PPIC, 6 March 2023](#)

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

2023-2027



Who are our customers?

Everyone who lives, works, studies, visits, or does business in, Newark and Sherwood will use a council service in some way. Making them all our customers. We also work with, and provide information and support to, other local authorities and public bodies as well as the third sector.

Why do we need a strategy?

The whole Council is dedicated to serving the diverse range of people who live and work in our district. This strategy has been developed with our Council values in mind to ensure that the people and businesses we serve are at the forefront of everything we do.

We have a great workforce that always strives to give the best possible service to our customers, however there are sometimes inconsistencies in the way we deliver our services. We receive too many contacts following up information that hasn't been clear enough. We need to make sure we tell our customers what they need to know in a way they understand. This strategy will ensure that the same high standard is consistent across all our services, and that all our services are designed with the customer in mind. Getting these services right every time will ensure we reduce 'failure demand' and customers will not need to contact us to clarify when a service will be delivered or to ask for further information.

This strategy is designed to put our customers at the centre of what we do. Success will be every customer receiving the best possible service. That means adapting our approach to provide the best possible service to each customer and their individual needs, allowing our customers the freedom to choose how they wish to communicate with us, and listening to our customers' feedback and using this feedback to drive improvement.

Refining our customer definition

Our customers are at the heart of everything we do, and our district is made up of a diverse range of customers. Our district has a wide range of residents in terms of ages and economic status and there is a combination of affluent areas and areas with significant deprivation where customers rely on us to provide them with support they need. Because of this diversity, our approach to our customers must be dynamic and adaptive, which is why this Strategy cannot deliver a single approach.

Newark and Sherwood has an older than average population. **44.2% of residents are over 50** compared to the 37.8% English average.

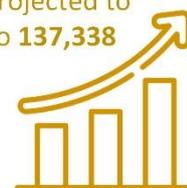


Whilst **22.9%** of Newark and Sherwood's population is **over 65**. This is projected to increase to 27.7% by 2040.



10% of the District's dwellings are owned by the Council and leased to tenants as **social housing**

Population of **122,956** which is projected to increase to **137,338** by 2040.



In Newark and Sherwood there is **1.89 residents for each hectare**. Reflecting that Newark and Sherwood is the largest district in Nottinghamshire.



There is significant health inequality within the district. There is a 9.5 year difference in life expectancy across the district for men and 7.2 years for women. This means people living in the most disadvantaged areas live on average 8.35 years less than those in the most affluent areas.

96.3% of Newark and Sherwood is white and the other **3.7%** represents a range of ethnic groups.



How do our customers interact with us?

The diagram below shows how, and how often, our customers contact us. Based on our population this diagram shows that every resident contacts us on average 1.5 times a year. This is a high number but remember this might be some residents contacting us once or twice every few years and other residents getting in touch often to receive multiple services. For example, on average 6,700 people move into Newark and Sherwood every year and every new household will need to get in touch with us to set-up their Council tax as well as request any other services they need, such as a garden recycling bin.

Our Customer Services Team responds to around

188,500

Customer contacts per year, via



Phone
116,000



In-person
15,500



Online Forms
34,000



Webchat
3,000



E-mail
20,000



Our website also receives around **515,800** views per year

We also have customers using other services...



Around **40,000** visit our theatre every year, and there are **940,000** visits to our leisure centres every year.



Finally, do not forget that every resident is interacted with at least 52 times a year when their bins are collected!

Our Contact Channels

We want to maximise our digital channels, taking advantage of new technology as it becomes available so that, wherever possible, our services can be accessed online. We will also ensure that these digital services are designed to be quick and easy to use. This means we will: -

- Increase our number of online forms,
- Improve our webchat service,
- Keep our website up to date, and
- Always improving the online offer.

Digital is the first choice for most people wanting to contact the council, however we appreciate that digital is not for everybody and that for some people, and for some queries or services, digital is not appropriate. Therefore, we will continue to invest in face to face and telephony services, ensuring that whatever means the customer uses to contact us they will receive a great customer service.

OUR CUSTOMER PROMISE

At Newark and Sherwood District Council we always want to provide the best possible service to our customers. These are our promises to you.

WHEN YOU GET IN TOUCH...

- | We will be here for you, in the way that works best for you, whether that's digitally, on the telephone or face-to-face.
- | You will be greeted in a friendly and welcoming way.
- | We will always aim to resolve your query at your first point of contact.
- | When communicating with you we will use plain English, adapting when needed.
- | We will only collect relevant information from you
- | We will always handle your enquiry with professionalism, honesty, and openness

KEEPING YOU INFORMED...

- | We will provide clear information to let you know when you can expect the service you have requested, or when we are able to answer your enquiry.
- | We will consider your wellbeing and personal circumstances when communicating with you
- | We will take ownership of your enquiry.
- | If your enquiry cannot be resolved first time, we will make sure that you understand what will happen next.
- | If your enquiry is complex, we will make sure you have a point of contact.

LISTENING TO YOU, LEARNING FROM YOUR FEEDBACK...

- | We will listen to you with care and empathy.
- | All feedback whether that be a complaint, compliment or suggestion will be used to ensure that we keep improving our services.
- | We will undertake regular consultation.
- | We will look at how we can do things differently to improve and meet the changing needs of our customers.
- | We will develop new processes with you in mind.



**NEWARK &
SHERWOOD**
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Delivery Framework

To bring about the changes required to realise the vision set out in this strategy, we need to deliver four key outcomes over the next four years. To do this we will work with our staff, our customers, and our partners.

Outcome 1 – To have customer led and designed processes

- We will do this through a long-term project to review all the documents (letters, forms etc.) we use with our customers to ensure they are clear, easy to understand and outline the process and next steps. This project will be delivered over several years and will be phased to tackle the most frequently used documents first.
- We will train all our customer facing staff on the customer promise and embed in our ways of working the importance of communicating in plain English and with respect and professionalism. This action will be completed by the end of 2023 and moving forwards we will deliver this training all new starters in customer facing roles.

Outcome 2 - To provide customers with a consistent high-quality experience, regardless of the contact channel they use

- We will continue to develop our digital services, from e-forms to webchat and digital self-service, with the aim that our customers can access services when and how it is convenient for them. We will ensure that however a request is received, whether by telephone, online form, or a self-serve request, that it is processed to the same quality and time standards.
- We will continue to utilise non-digital communication channels, which are as important as our digital methods. We will ensure that the opening hours of our non-digital services (such as telephones) are reviewed to meet the needs of our customers, and where necessary we will undertake relevant pilot projects to assess the suitability of opening hours.

Outcome 3 – To be open with our customers, communicating effectively throughout the process of a query or action and welcome feedback

- We will encourage feedback from our customers by actively signposting our customers to giving us feedback and we will use this to learn and improve our services where possible.
- We will ensure every area of the Council actively asks their customers for feedback

Outcome 4 – To set service standards for every service a customer receives

- We will, over the course of this strategy, work with each service area to set a service standard for every service we provide so a customer knows when they can expect their service to be completed/actioned. We will also ensure these standards are communicated to the customer when they start their service journey, and for longer and more complex services we will set a clear timescale for every 'phase' of the service.

Measuring Success

Performance management is not simply counting a number, it is a mechanism to drive continuous improvement. This is used to identify how we are performing and thus what we need to do to enhance our services for our residents. To measure the success of this strategy we will utilise a variety of mechanisms including satisfaction measures and performance indicators to monitor factors such as response times, customer satisfaction and ease of access. We will also use customer feedback and analysis of the customer journey to identify weaknesses and deliver improvements by learning from our mistakes. Performance, and progress against the delivery framework above, will be reported to the Portfolio Holder, and Cabinet as appropriate, on an annual basis.

Interlinking Strategies

Our Customer Experience Strategy is significant because of how wide reaching it is. This strategy sets the standard for how every department within the Council interacts with customers, across various communication platforms. However, this strategy is closely interlinked with several of our other strategies, and they all share common ground in the community plan, which influences and provides purpose to all our strategies. For example, the Council’s Digital Strategy has a section on ‘Digital Place’ which outlines how we will support and facilitate work across the district to narrow the digital divide top tackle digital inequality. This is relevant to this strategy as it supports residents to use our digital communication channels.



Approval, Consultation and Review Timetable

Document title	Customer Experience Strategy 2023 - 2027		
Version number	DRAFT v.1	Protective marking	Official
Lead Director	Director Customer Services and Organisational Development		
Lead Business Unit	Customer Services and Transformation		
Lead Contact	Customer Services Business Manager		
Date approved (SLT)	13/03/2023	Date approved (Members)	06/06/2023
Reviews due:	Annually		
Consultation			
Consultee	Date	Comments received	Material change requested (yes/no)
PPIC (Customer Promise only)	6 March 2023	Endorsed	No
Cabinet	11 July 2023	TBC	



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 11 July 2023

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Matthew Spoons, Sustainable Economic Development

Director Leads: Sanjiv Kohli, Deputy Chief Executive, Director - Resources and s151 Officer
Matt Lamb, Director - Planning & Growth

Lead Officers: Mark Eyre, Business Manager - Corporate Property, Ext. 5670
Oliver Scott, Senior Planner (Conservation), Ext. 5440

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report (with exempt appendix), key decision
Report Title	Ollerton Hall
Purpose of Report	To update Members on the progress of the proposed conversion of the Hall to 8 residential apartments by the Council's preferred developer (Severns Developments (Middleton House) Ltd) and to seek an amendment to the proposed terms of sale.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) note and welcome the updates provided; and b) approve an amendment to the proposed terms of sale to allow an earlier disposal to the Council's preferred developer (Severns Developments (Middleton House) Ltd) for the Agreed Purchase Price detailed at Exempt Appendix A subject to completion of all identified necessary heritage works as detailed at Appendix B to the report.
Alternative Options Considered	Cabinet could decide not to agree to the proposed revisions to the terms of sale and present the building back to the market for disposal. Members will be aware this building and site has a long history of failed attempts to secure a viable and acceptable re-use for the site. A return to the market would lead to delay and is unlikely, in the opinion of Officers, to find an acceptable and fundable solution given the difficult balance of reinstating heritage value and securing a deliverable scheme.
Reason for Recommendations	To dispose of Ollerton Hall and secure the long-term future of the building.

1.0 **Background**

- 1.1 Ollerton Hall has a long history of being in various states of vacancy and disrepair. The Hall was subject to an unsuccessful care home redevelopment in the 1990s, resulting in the Hall returning to Council ownership before being sold to a third-party developer who unsuccessfully pursued schemes for a nursing home and residential redevelopment (25 homes). Several unauthorised extensions were also constructed during this ownership. Following lengthy enforcement, negotiation and arbitration the Council repurchased the Hall in summer 2016. Since that time the Council has removed all unauthorised extensions and the building has been made wind-and-water tight. Additionally, the Council successfully secured a planning revocation order to remove all previous planning permissions, effectively wiping the slate clean.
- 1.2 Following a number of building and site assessments the Council presented the Hall to the market seeking an appropriate heritage-sensitive redevelopment. Unlike previous unsuccessful disposals the Council were keen to retain some control of any redevelopment in order ensure any scheme was commenced and completed to an acceptable standard and timeline. Accordingly, the opportunity presented to market was to find a purchaser/developer who could deliver an acceptable scheme (to be assessed by planning and listed building consent applications) under a building lease/licence, whereby works would be monitored by the Council via a monitoring surveyor until practical completion at which point the Hall would be sold for a pre-agreed purchase price. Any purchase price, once legal and monitoring surveyor costs are deducted, would be made available for any regeneration project(s) within Ollerton. The agreed purchase price of [REDACTED] is detailed at **Exempt Appendix A**.
- 1.3 Following lengthy negotiation with Council Officers, Historic England, and the local community (notably Ollerton & Boughton Town Council and Ollerton Village Resident's Association) the developer has secured [planning permission](#) and Listed Building Consent for the conversion of the Hall to accommodate 8 apartments. The developer is now ready to implement the scheme, albeit given industry challenges regarding inflationary rises and costs has stated to the Council that it is necessary to revisit the original terms of the agreement.
- 1.4 The developer accepts that an increase in costs over the passage of time is a known risk of the development industry. Thus, whilst the likely costs of completing the conversion have increased there is no intent to ask the Council to reduce the purchase price previously agreed. There is, however, an issue in cash-flowing the development. In simple terms monies can be raised against the building once the developers take ownership. Given the current deal would see ownership transfer upon practical completion this would not be possible. A suggested solution is that the developer continues to operate under a lease/licence arrangement until such time as all identified necessary heritage works, as detailed at Appendix B, are completed. At this point a sale would be completed for the agreed purchase price, allowing the developer to raise funds, complete the development and then occupy the completed properties. All works (pre and post purchase) would still be assessed by a Council-appointed monitoring surveyor.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 It is recommended that alternative terms which would allow a sale of the Hall to the developer sooner than practical completion is acceptable on the basis that a purchase should only take place after all identified necessary heritage works (as at Appendix B) are secured. This will secure all heritage works, will de-risk the Council and the developer, and finally allow this important asset to be brought back into a productive use which secures its longevity. A long-stop date and potential to re-purchase if the conversion is never completed would still be required, a matter which is agreed in principle between the parties.

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.

3.1 Equalities Implications

The proposed development has full planning and listed building consent including consideration of all required access and equality requirements.

3.2 Financial Implications (FIN23-24/4784)

There is no change to the level of capital receipt the Council will secure as part of the proposed sale terms detailed above.

The Council's Corporate Property Business Manager is of the opinion that the agreed Purchase Price remains appropriate, having regard to increased construction costs and the nature of the redevelopment proposed. Legal and Monitoring Surveyor costs will, as previously resolved, be covered by the purchase price with any residual balance being retained for regeneration project(s) within Ollerton & Boughton.

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.

Ollerton Hall Update - Policy & Finance Committee, 28 November 2019

Ollerton Hall – Policy & Finance Committee, 20 September 2018

Ollerton Hall – Policy & Finance Committee, 26 January 2017

Ollerton Hall – Policy & Finance Committee, 30 June 2016

Ollerton Hall Update – Policy & Finance Committee, 26 March 2015

Works to be carried out and agreed via legal agreement prior to disposal.

Unless otherwise specified, works to be to an appropriate conservation standard, and materials/specifications on a like for like basis. Unless otherwise stated, all mortar/pointing works to comprise natural lime with no cement. Replacement timbers to be an appropriate like for like.

Roof

Replace strictly like for like broken/missing tiles - 150 No

Re-fix Displaced Tiles - 20 No

Lift tiles, replace damaged felt & re-fix ties - 10m²

Replace Hip Flashings to West Corner - 7.5 linear m

Repair/renew flashings to NW Chimney of the SW elevation

Refurbish/repair outlets to central flat roof

Central Chimneys – Repointing 10m² using natural lime mortar

Dormer Windows 10 No

Reinstate 10 No single glazed timber double hung 6 over 6 sashes, weights and pulleys, ovolo glazing bars less than 20mm thick, glazing fixed with sprigs and putty

Replace external timber trims like for like & repaint off-white - 10 No

Replace lead roofs 5m² x 3No

Replace lead cheeks to dormer 3m²

Rooflights

Replace flashings to 1No

Replace 1No rooflight with conservation variety (side or top hung, integral vertical glazing bar, no aluminium flashing)

Eaves

Minor timber repairs (2No dentils + 2No boards)

Repaint

Gutters

Re-secure, re-seal joints, re-paint

Replace all uPVC gutters with cast iron

Downpipes

Replace all uPVC downpipes with cast iron

Lightning Conductor

Repair/replace existing lightning conductor system

External Repairs

Repointing 40m² - lime mortar to match historic repointing found elsewhere on building

Cut out & re-set bricks 20 No

Stonework repairs NE Elevation Central

- Replace concrete surround SE Ground floor window

- In situ mortar repair 3No

- Replace damaged stone to stringcourse (400x250)

- Replace ½ window jamb

- Replace whole window jamb

- Lintel Repairs (Pin & Grout) 2No

- Jamb Repair (Pint, Grout & Shelter Coat) 1No

- Door Surround

Replace fractured stone to NW corner

- Re-bed stones to upper portion of pediment

NW Elevation

- Repairs to arched window head (lift, wedge & repoint bricks)

- Reform steps to the foot of the door opening

SE Elevation

- Breakout concrete above basement steps and make good brickwork

Basement

Replace decayed timber lintels 1No door

Repair cracked stone lintels 2No

Room B1

Replace concrete filler joist floor 11.5m²

Replace 2No timber joists to remainder of floor

Make good brickwork & studwork to reinstate fire separation with G19

Room B2

Reinstate 0.5m² brickwork & 0.5m³ of backfill to NE Wall

Insert steel frames @ 1m centres to prop ceiling vault 5No frames

Room B3

Insert steel frames @ 1m centres to prop ceiling vault 6No frames

Rooms B4 & B5

Backfill spaces

Ground Floor

Repointing of Brickwork (Deep) 2m²

Replace damaged/missing bricks

Remove and replace timber lintels/wallplates 22No

Sash Windows

- 25 No Refurbish (Replacement of edge and parting beads, easing/ freeing painted joints, addition of weights, pulleys, & ironmongery),

Re-glaze, Repaint

1No full replacement of window

- 10No replacement fixed cills

- 2No sashes replaced

- 6No Repairs to sash boxes

Room G1

- Steel Beam (Remove rust, repaint) 10.5 lin m

- Replace timber beam 2m long

- Replace ceiling joists 2.7m x 14No

- Replace floor joists (No floor covering repairs) 2.7m x 10No

- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beam (No floor covering repairs above) 12No

- Treat SW end of primary beam with Boracol 20

- Rebuild brickwork (high level) prop floor structure 1.5m²

- Rebuild brickwork (low level) 1m²

- Make Good Floor 3m²

Room G2

- Repair NE end of primary beam
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beam (No floor covering repairs above) 7No
- Replace ceiling joists 2.4m x 2No
- Replace floor joists (No floor covering repair) 2.4m x 2No
- Make Good Floor 2m²

Room G3

- Replace floor joists (No floor covering repair) 2.4m x 4No
- Replace ceiling joists 2.4m x 2No
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beam (No floor covering repairs above) 4No
- Make Good Floor 1.5m²

Room G4

- Remove boxing from primary beam and inspection by structural engineer
- Remove rust from steel beam & paint 4 lin m
- Replace floor joists (No floor covering repairs above) 2.4m x 8No
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beam (No floor covering repairs above) 9No
- Make Good Floor limecrete to vault 5m²

Room G5

- Remove rust from steel beam & paint 5.5 lin m
- Treat SW end of primary beam with Boracol 20
- Replace floor joists (No floor covering repair) 2.7m x 4No
- Replace ceiling joists 2.7m x 4No
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beam (No floor covering repairs above) 8No

Room G6

- Replace floor joists 2.7m x 8No
- Replace ceiling joists 2.7m x 8No

Room G7 & G8

- Treat SW & NW primary beam with Boracol 20 12 lin m
- Repair SW bearing of central primary beam
- Repair NW primary beam & fireplace trimmer

- Replace floor joists (No floor covering repair) 1.9m x 18No
- Replace ceiling joists 1.9m x 6No
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beam (No floor covering repairs above) 36No

Room G9

- Replace floor joists (lime ash floor above) 2m x 4No
- Replace ceiling joists 2m x 4No
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beam (No floor covering repairs above) 8No

Room G10

- Remove rust from RSJ & repaint 2m²

Room G11

- Treat NW end of primary beam with Boracol 20 2 lin m

Room G12

- Insert bed joint reinforcement across cracks above lintel on SW wall 4 lin m

Room G13A

- Reinststate first floor joists (6.3 x 1m space) 100%
- Reinststate ceiling joists (6.3 x 1m space) 100%

Room G15

- Repair both bearings of the SW secondary floor beam
- Repoint & reinforce cracking below SW Window (NW Wall) 2linm
- Repoint & reinforce cracking to SW end SE Wall 3 lin m

Room G16

- Treat primary beam with Boracol 20 6 lin m
- Replace floor joists (lime ash floor above) 1.9m x 2No
- Remove debris from ground floor void
- Replace 80% of floorboards 24.5m²
- Repoint & reinforce cracking to SW end NW Wall 3 lin m
- Repoint & reinforce cracking to SW end SE Wall 6 lin m

Room G17

- Repoint & reinforce cracking to SW end SE Wall 3 lin m

- Remove decayed beam from floor

Room G19

- Replace primary beam (6m) & floor & ceiling joists and boards (14m²) to first floor landing
- Replace NE primary beam of SF structure (6m) and floor and ceiling joists to NE of beam (6x1.5m)
- Refurbish & restore main staircase & balustrades
- Replace damaged moulded coving to ceiling (75%) 16 lin m
- Remove and conserve timber panelling to FF landing 3.25x1.2m

First Floor

Repointing of Brickwork (Deep) 2m²

Replace damaged/missing bricks

Remove and replace timber lintels/wallplates 18No

Sash Windows

- 26No Refurbish (Replacement of edge and parting beads, easing/ freeing painted joints, addition of weights, pulleys, & ironmongery), Re-glaze, Repaint
- 5No replacement fixed cills
- 4No sashes replaced
- 3No Repairs to sash boxes

Room F1

- Repair NW ends of 2No central primary beams
- Repair cracked truss tie beam to E corner 3.5m
- Treat SE end of SW primary beam & truss tie and plate in N corner with Boracol 20 (3.5m)
- Replace floor joists (no floor covering above) 1.8m x 40No
- Replace ceiling joists 1.8m x 40No
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beams & trusses (No floor covering repairs above) 60No

Room F2 & F3

- Replace 2No secondary beams 2No 4m
- Treat primary beam with Boracol 20 (5.75m)
- Replace floor joists (no floor covering above) 1.8m x 40No

- Replace ceiling joists 1.8m x 40No
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beams & trusses (No floor covering repairs above) 30No

Room F4

- Replace floor joists (no floor covering above) 2.1m x 5No
- Replace ceiling joists 2.1m x 5No

Room F5 & F6

- Repair SW & NE ends of primary beam
- Replace floor joists (no floor covering above) 2m x 13No
- Replace ceiling joists 2m x 13No
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beams & trusses (No floor covering repairs above) 6No

Room F7

- Repair NW end of central primary beam & treat beam with Boracol 20 (3m)
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beams & trusses (No floor covering repairs above) 36No
- Replace floor joists (no floor covering above) 2.5m x 8No
- Replace ceiling joists 2.5m x 8No

Room F8

- Treat NW end primary beam with Boracol 20 (1.5m)
- Tie opposing floor joists across primary beams & trusses (No floor covering repairs above) 10No

Room F9

- Replace NE-SW spanning beam 1.5m
- Repair SE-NW spanning beam 2.1m
- Replace floor joists (no floor covering above) 1.5m x 22No
- Replace ceiling joists 1.5m x 22No

Second Floor

Remove and replace timber lintels/wallplates 1No

Roof timber repairs

Sash Windows

- 2No Refurbish (Replacement of edge and parting beads, easing/ freeing painted joints, addition of weights, pulleys, & ironmongery), Re-glaze, Repaint

Room S2

- Repair/replace beam to head of NE Wall & repair bearing of 8No ceiling joists

Room S3

- Strengthen/repair 2No purlins below dormer windows

Room S4

- Repairs to ceiling joists

Room S6

Repairs to ceiling beam on SW side of area

Room S7

- Repairs to ceiling joists

Room S8

- Replacement of damaged ceiling joists

Works to be agreed via an updated schedule of works through the approved Listed Building Consent:

Ground Floor

Wall plaster repairs 395m²

Plaster ceilings 350m²

Room G2

- New suspended timber floor 11.25m²

Room G3

- New suspended timber floor 7.25m²

Room G4

- New suspended timber floor 15m²

Room G5

- Make Good Floor limecrete to vault 5m²

- New suspended timber floor 16m²

Room G6

- New suspended timber floor 11.5m²

Room G7 & G8

- Replace missing stone floor paving slabs 45m²

Room G9

- Replace 80% of ground floor joists 14.5m²
- Replace 100% of ground floorboards 14.5m²
- New GF suspended timber floor (cupboard) 2.75m²
- New FF suspended timber floor & ceiling (cupboard) 2.75m²

Room G10

- Replace ground floor suspended timber floor (5x1m space)

Room G15

- Replace floorboards 18.5m²

Room G17

- Remove cast iron SVP from SW wall & make good brickwork

Room G18

- Replace Ground floor structure & boards 20.5m²
- Replace first floor structure & boards 20.5m²
- Replace second floor structure & boards 20.5m²

Room G19

- Plasterwork repairs to NE wall 6m²

First Floor

Replacement of timber floorboards 195m²

Repair/replacement of lime ash flooring 30m²

Plaster Repairs 295m²

Plaster ceilings 315m²

Room F2 & F3

- Repair/conservate timber wall panelling 43.5m²

Room F10

- Repair fireplace arch (lift, wedge, repoint)

Room F11

- Replace floor joists (no floor covering above) 2.1m x 12No

Second Floor

Plaster Repairs 140m2

Replacement of timber floorboards 325m2

Plaster ceilings 425m2



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 11 July 2023

Portfolio Holders: Councillor Matthew Spoons, Sustainable Economic Development
Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: Matt Lamb, Director - Planning & Growth

Lead Officer: Matthew Norton, Business Manager Planning Policy & Infrastructure, Ext. 5852

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Non-Key Decision
Report Title	Plan Review Progress Report
Purpose of Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To update Cabinet on progress on the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD and progress on the associated Gypsy & Traveller Pitch Delivery Strategy. To propose an amendment to the Plan Review timetable and the Local Development Scheme.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> note and support the contents of the report. adopt the amendment to the Plan Review timetable (Local Development Scheme) as set in Section 3 of this report, to come into force on 18 July 2023. request that the Chief Executive call an Extraordinary Full Council meeting be held on 20 September 2023 to agree publication of the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD.
Reasons for Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To allow Cabinet to note progress on the Plan Review. To agree 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. To allow the Council to agree to the publication of the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD in September 2022.

1.0 **Background**

1.1 The Council's Development Plan provides direction for future growth of Newark & Sherwood, including making allocations for new housing employment and community facilities and sets out the planning policies which the Council uses to determine planning applications. Our Development Plan is made up of two parts:

- Amended Core Strategy
- Allocations & Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD)

1.2 The Council has been going through a process of reviewing these documents known as the Plan Review. The Core Strategy has already been updated and the Amended Core Strategy was adopted in 2019. Since then the Council has been updating its Allocations & Development DPD focusing on the following four elements:

- 1) Ensuring that the housing, employment, retail allocations continue to be deliverable and that any settlement specific planning policy issues continue to be appropriately addressed.
- 2) Ensuring that the Development Management policies are in line with the Amended Core Strategy and the latest national planning policy.
- 3) Updating housing policies contained in the Amended Core Strategy to reflect the latest Housing Needs Assessment and national planning policy
- 4) The development of a strategy to deliver enough sites and pitches to meet the future needs of our Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) communities.

1.3 Work on preparing the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD (*hereafter referred to as the DPD*) has gone through the various statutory stages culminating in the publication of a Draft DPD for a period to receive formal representations in November and December 2022.

1.4 It is important to note that there is no requirement as part of this DPD to allocate more general market housing or employment land. That is not the case for all housing sectors with one of the main challenges of the Plan Review being the ability of the Council to identify sufficient sites to meet the future identified needs of the GRT community. The need for an additional 169 pitches over the 15 year plan period is significant when compared to many authorities in the East Midlands but when compared to general market housing requirements of 9050 dwellings for the District it is small. It is challenging because of a lack of available sites. This lack of site is as a result of market failure and has led the Council to conclude that only a comprehensive Pitch Delivery Strategy which includes intervention from the Council to facilitate additional sites will allow the delivery of sufficient sites and pitches for our GRT communities.

1.5 The Pitch Delivery Strategy reflected in the Draft DPD is set out overleaf:

Pitch Delivery Strategy		
Meeting the overall need by the following actions:		
1 Contribution from Existing Sites	2 Allocating new sites in private ownership	3 New sites facilitated by Council Action
Current sites with existing additional capacity contribute additional pitches	Sites in locations around Newark allocated for additional pitch provision	Purchase of a site to deliver on our own or with partners
Sites with potential to accommodate need have been identified.	Proposed sites on Tolney Lane can be brought out of flood risk	Work with private sector operators to bring sites back into GRT use.
Cross Cutting Action:		
Delivery of a flood safe access to Tolney Lane and associated mitigation work		

1.6 The vast majority of our GRT community live in Newark on sites on Tolney Lane. This area, adjacent to the River Trent, is at significant risk of flooding. Work by the Council's flood risk consultants has concluded that whilst full flood defence of the area is not feasible, a flood safe access could be provided by raising the level of Tolney Lane significantly reducing the risk during flood events that residents will not be able to leave the site. It is currently proposed that the scheme will be funded with contributions from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

1.7 The other significant area of Council action will be the provision of a Council managed GRT site. There are currently no public sites in Nottinghamshire, however most neighbouring counties do have such sites. The Draft DPD identifies a potential site to the south of Newark and proposes allocation of between 15 and 27 pitches. Officers in Corporate Property and the Housing Directorate have been considering the various aspects of acquiring, building and maintaining such a site. Further details on the Pitch Delivery strategy are set out in a [GRT Supporting Paper](#) published alongside the Draft DPD.

2.0 Draft DPD and Decisions to be made

2.1 Following the close to the representation period the District Council considered the representations received. Of significance was a representation from the Environment Agency. The District Council has been in detailed and productive discussions with the Agency for a significant period of time. The Agency have been supportive of an overall approach which lessens flood risk for residents and provides a proper framework for making planning decisions in the Tolney Lane area. They have met with the Council's flood risk consultants who have explained the scheme and the results of the detailed flood modelling analysis to them. Our understanding had been that the work published alongside the DPD would be sufficient to progress to submission. However the Agency in making their representation the Agency stated until such time as they were happy with the model and its outcomes, they could not support the Tolney Lane flood alleviation scheme.

- 2.2 Cabinet considered the matter at its 21 February 2023 meeting and agreed to delay submission of the DPD to enable Officers and the Council’s flood risk consultants to address the necessary concerns of the Agency. Helpfully National Highways have been updating the flood model for the area to progress the A46 Newark Bypass scheme and the District Council has secured access to the model to progress our modelling work.
- 2.3 Since the publication last year of the Draft DPD the situation regarding a number of the proposals in the Plan both in relation to our Pitch delivery strategy and with other elements of the DPD have changed. The status of a number of sites has changed to the extent to which are considering recommending to the Council that we change our approach to them. Furthermore in relation to the Pitch Delivery Strategy a small number of pitches have been granted planning permission in the interim and the Planning Inspectorate have changed their approach to the implementation of planning policy as set out in Planning Policy for Travellers Sites following legal decisions, which we will need to reflect in the DPD.
- 2.4 It is always the case in plan making that any document will represent a moment in time, but the potential changes are significant enough that it would be most appropriate to publish a new version of the Draft Plan incorporating these changes and seek further representations. This will properly allow anyone to make a representation that can be considered by the Inspector as part of the hearing process, rather than through post hearing Main Modifications stage. It is proposed that this new Draft Plan will be worked up and discussed at Planning Policy Board over the summer and presented to Cabinet and Full Council in September. Further details on the proposed timetable are set out in section 3 below.
- 2.5 Alongside decisions relating to the DPD Cabinet in September will make decisions on those elements of the Pitch Delivery Strategy which require Council investment, namely the Tolney Lane Flood Alleviation Scheme and the delivery of a public GRT site.

3.0 Proposed Amendments to the Timetable

- 3.1 To reflect the proposed approach set out in section 2 the Local Development Scheme – the Plan Review timetable needs to be updated. The table below shows the proposed new timetable which will mean that the DPD will be adopted in Autumn 2024. In order for this to be achieved it will be necessary to ensure that an additional Council meeting is held in September (proposed for the 20 September 2023) so that the Draft DPD can be published that month and the plan hopefully submitted by the end of the year.

PLAN REVIEW TIMETABLE
Consideration of the Draft DPD <i>Cabinet 19th September</i> <i>Full Council Additional Meeting 20 September</i>
Publication of Draft DPD (and final Integrated Impact Assessment) for period of Public Representation (September/October/November 2023)
Consideration of representations and any potential amendments
Submission of DPD to Secretary of State (December 2023) <i>Full Council 12 December</i>
Pre-Hearing Period January to March 2024
Examination by Inspector (April 2024)
Consultation on Main Modifications (June/July 2024)
Receipt of Inspector's Report (September 2024)
Adoption and Publication (October 2024)

4.0 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.

Financial Implications - FIN23-24/842

This report has no direct financial implications.

Equality & Diversity Implications

An Integrated Impact Assessment is being prepared alongside the Plan Review process to ensure that the impact on groups with protected characteristics of the proposals are considered as part of the policy making process. It is clearly extremely important that housing provision in line with identified need is identified for the Gypsy and Traveller community.

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.

Newark & Sherwood Publication Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD
November 2022

Newark & Sherwood Plan Review – Gypsy Roma and Traveller Background Paper November
2022

Newark & Sherwood Local Development Scheme November 2022



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 11 July 2023
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Brazier, Housing
 Director Lead: Suzanne Shead, Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing
 Lead Officer: Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration & Housing Strategy, Ext. 5923

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report, key decision
Report Title	Newark and Sherwood’s Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028
Purpose of Report	To present the new Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan for 2023 – 2028. The Strategy/Plan has been developed in consultation with tenants and residents, officers, and key stakeholders. Its purpose is to set out the Council’s strategic priorities for housing over the next five years.
Recommendations	That Cabinet approves the Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 – 2025.
Alternative Options Considered	Continue with no formal Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan and increase the scope for a lack of co-ordination, communication, and accountability for housing services.
Reason for Recommendations	The Council does not currently have a district wide Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan (the previous strategy expired in 2016). This document sets out the key issues affecting housing in Newark and Sherwood and the impact these have on residents, sets out how the Council will work in partnership to address the issues identified and demonstrates alignment with other key strategies and plans.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Newark & Sherwood Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028 sets out Newark and Sherwood’s approach to housing in all tenures and in all areas of the district and is supported by a detailed delivery plan. These will be guided by the overarching themes and priorities of the strategy but refreshed every three years to make the plans responsive to the local and national housing landscape.

1.2 There is no statutory duty to produce a housing strategy but the new Newark & Sherwood Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028 will help our partners, funders and residents understand our housing ambitions for new and existing homes in the district and for the housing services provided for Newark and Sherwood’s residents.

2.0 Proposal

2.1 Key Issues

The Housing Strategy considers the following key challenges: -

- Housing shortages and affordability issues
- The increased role of the private sector and rising rents
- Climate change, carbon neutrality and energy costs
- Ageing populations, health, and disability challenges
- Building safety – increased focus following the Grenfell tragedy
- Quality and age of existing stock including damp and mould issues
- Continuing focus on home ownership
- Policy and legislative drivers i.e., building safety regulations, levelling up and Regeneration Bill, social housing white paper and emerging regulation

2.2 Housing Priorities

The Four priorities of the new housing strategy are: -

- Enabling Housing Growth and regeneration to secure sustainable communities
- Delivering an increased supply of affordable housing
- Meeting housing need for the district’s diverse communities
- Driving Excellence in Housing standards across all tenures

The Housing Strategy reflects the Council’s priority to significantly increase the number of homes for council rent, to provide affordable homes for people on the Housing Register.

3.0 Consultation on Proposal

3.1 Between February 2023 and May 2023, consultation was carried out with Newark & Sherwood residents, Council staff and a wide range of partners and stakeholders on the Housing Strategy. Evidence from the following was used to develop the strategy: -

- An online survey
- Staff sessions (with individual business units)
- Presentations to Tenants and Residents Groups (Local Influence Networks)
- Consultation session with Elected Members
- Existing evidence and intelligence
- Consultation with Registered Providers (key partners)

The feedback from this consultation exercise was used to develop the four themes of the housing strategy.

4.0 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 referred to these implications and added suitable expert comments where appropriate.

Legal

There are no substantive legal issues arising from the content of this report other than as may be dealt within the body of the report.

As implemented by the Deregulation Act 2015, there is no longer a legal requirement to have a housing strategy; however, such a strategy is deemed as good practice to set out the Council's approach to housing and allows Members to scrutinise delivery.

Financial Implications – FIN23-24/374

There are no direct financial implications due to the recommendations detailed in the report. The HRA Business Plan provides a financial assessment over 30 years, taking into account planned actions as part of the Housing Strategy, and its impact on the management and financing of the Council's housing stock.

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. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty contained within Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Newark and Sherwood District Council

DRAFT

Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan

2023 – 2028

Serving People, Improving Lives



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Foreword

‘Everyone should have access to a safe, warm, secure and suitable home that meets their needs’



As Portfolio Holder for Homes and Health, I am delighted to introduce you to Newark and Sherwood District Council’s new Housing Strategy for 2023 – 2028.

The strategy will play a key role in helping to deliver the Newark and Sherwood Community Plan’s objective of *‘creating more and better-quality homes through our role of landlord, developer and planning authority’*.

Those who live in the district know that it’s a great place to live and work as well as a wonderful place in which to invest. Our aim is for it to be a place where all residents can contribute to, and benefit from, sustainable prosperity. We acknowledge that housing is our key to the success of our communities as well as being of paramount importance to the quality of life, health, and wellbeing of residents.

The Council is proud of its long history in delivering and influencing housing provision and services within the district. Whilst building and managing council homes and delivering the associated services to our tenants is a key element of this, the Council’s housing roles extends much further.

Its housing role includes planning for delivering sustainable housing growth, strengthening communities, intervening in private sector housing to ensure homes are decent and safe to live in and empty homes are brought back into use, as well as supporting our most vulnerable groups to ensure their housing needs are met. In addition to its regulatory role as landlord and local planning authority, the Council also delivers new private homes through its wholly owned Development Company Arkwood.

The Council recognises that much of its work around housing cannot be delivered without the vital support of a wide range of stakeholders and partners. We strongly value the input of the many organisations and individuals who help us to provide the homes that our residents need and therefore have fully consulted with all stakeholders.

The housing strategy provides the opportunity to bring together in one place the varied housing related roles which are undertaken by different teams across the Council. It aims to give a clear sense of our priorities and the work we do to address these important issues. Ultimately it sets out how we will continue to deliver high quality housing and housing services for all our residents in Newark and Sherwood.

Councillor Lee Brazier

INTRODUCTION

THE VISION FOR HOUSING

Housing in Newark and Sherwood should be 'healthy', good quality, sustainable and secure, providing the environment for people to thrive and achieve. Housing in vibrant and attractive towns and villages will support a strong economy and help create a community where people want to flourish and fulfil their potential.

The priorities of Newark and Sherwood's Community Plan 2020 – 2023 (the Plan) recognises the importance of delivering more affordable homes for the district through its HRA five-year development programme and S106 delivery. Work on a new Community Plan has commenced and is expected to be concluded next year. The strategy will therefore play a key role in helping to deliver the current (and emerging) Plan's **vision** of 'enabling local residents and businesses to flourish' and *the priorities of 'creating vibrant and self-sufficient local communities ...' and 'creating more and better-quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority'*.

Achieving our vision will not be easy in these challenging times but it is important that we continue to be ambitious and innovated in our work, that we keep our Community Plan at the forefront of our efforts and look forward to engaging with the community and working with our partners to improve housing services and to deliver more and better homes in the district. Together we can work to ensure that every Newark and Sherwood resident will have a home that meets their needs and aspirations, serving as a foundation to support their health and wellbeing and springboard to achieve their vision of having a good life.

KEY PRIORTIES

The Newark and Sherwood Housing Strategy identifies the key priorities over the next five years and sets out in the Delivery Plan (attached) what the Council and its partners are planning to do to address them and move Newark and Sherwood forward by identifying opportunities, investment decisions, legislative changes and setting out how they can be realised. The four strategic priorities are:

- **ENABLING HOUSING GROWTH AND REGENERATION TO SECURE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**
- **DELIVERING AN INCREASED SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**
- **MEETING HOUSING NEED FOR THE DISTRICT'S DIVERSE COMMUNITIES**
- **DRIVING EXCELLENCE IN HOUSING STANDARDS ACROSS ALL TENURES**

The strategy will be reviewed every five years and annually for performance and delivery or when required to reflect any legislative changes to ensure it remains up to date and addresses the most recent challenges and opportunities and references the latest statistical evidence.

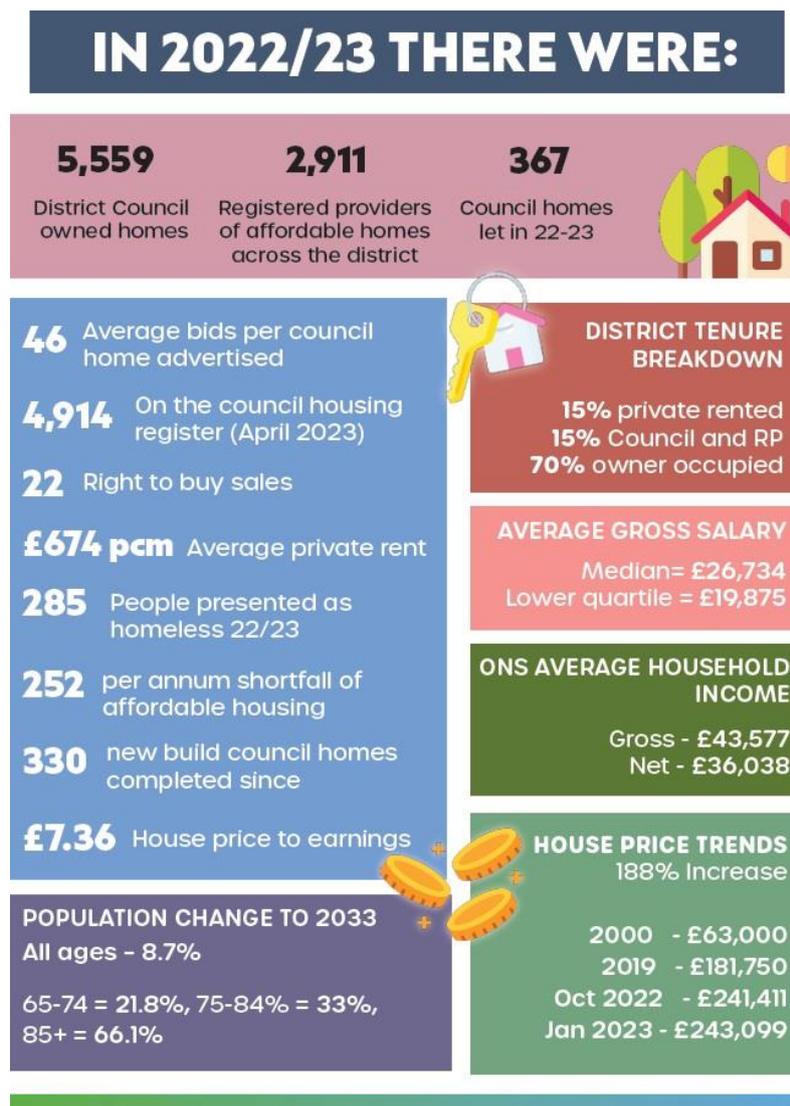


NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

Much has changed in Newark and Sherwood since the previous housing strategy in 2016, largely resulting from the Covid 19 pandemic, alongside the cost of living, increasing house prices, the high cost of private rental properties and the impact of changes to the welfare benefits systems, it is likely that a number of people facing fuel poverty, eviction and homelessness will increase. It is therefore important that the Council continues to provide advice and support to residents as well as keeping up with an increasing demand for affordable housing.

On-going legislative changes around mould and damp (Awaab’s Law), decarbonisation, and the need to deliver services more efficiently mean that the strategy has been shaped around these challenges and opportunities. Further detail on the changes can be found at Appendix A.

The Council owns 5,543 homes across most of the district. In addition to this ten housing associations and Registered Providers own and manage 2911 homes in many locations. However, despite the Council’s ambitious housing delivery programme, S106 housing and the ongoing support and investment from our housing association partners, the supply of affordable housing has not kept up with demand. The housing strategy therefore focuses on increasing the supply of affordable housing both through new build and from bring empty homes back into use.



LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIES

This Housing strategy works alongside existing Council plans, policies, and strategies, providing a framework for the delivery of Newark and Sherwood’s housing priorities. Where relevant, these documents will be reviewed to reflect the direction of our housing strategy, providing the mechanism to support the activities and deliver many of the outcomes detailed in our action plan (see below).

Table One: Council Policies and Strategies Framework for Newark and Sherwood District Council Housing Strategy



EVIDENCE USED TO INFORM THE STRATEGY

This strategy has been informed by, but not exclusively, the Arc4 District Wide Housing Needs Assessment, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, all of which identify the numbers, types, and location of housing need across the district along with census data as well as Council Housing demand data and evidence from Parish and resident surveys. Further details on the evidence base can be found at Appendix 2.

CONSULTATION

We have engaged with all residents and stakeholders to develop the four priorities for the Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 - 2028. This involved an on-line comment form, discussion at resident meetings and meetings/discussion with Registered Providers (Housing Associations), Developers, Elected Members, Parish Councils, YMCA and organisations with an interest in housing. We have worked with colleagues across the Council to ensure a cohesive approach across all business units.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The priorities set out in this strategy will only be achieved by working in partnership with a range of stakeholders. Whilst we have a central role, we need the support and co-operation of all those involved in building, providing, and managing homes in the district to deliver the best outcomes for our residents. Working with Homes England to access funding opportunities is vital to making housing delivery schemes viable. Our partners are:-

- ✚ Registered providers. These include traditional housing associations i.e. Nottingham Community Housing Association and more recently, 'For Profit' Registered Providers such as Heylo Housing.
- ✚ Other bodies that provide housing services i.e., Framework, YMCA, Women's Refuge, Reach.
- ✚ Parish Council's to support rural affordable exception site schemes
- ✚ Elected Members who have detailed knowledge about their local neighbourhood
- ✚ Local Influence Network representing the tenants and residents of the district.

PRIORITY ONE:

ENABLING HOUSING GROWTH AND REGENERATION TO SECURE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Our role in enabling housing growth and regeneration is to work with developers, landowners, and landlords to encourage innovation and delivery in the construction sector and on our regeneration led projects. Much of the new housing that will come forward in the district will be developed by private developers, the Council's own development company, Arkwood or Registered Providers (RP's) as well as the Council's own Housing Revenue Account (HRA) development programme that will be completed next year.

The Council has a significant role in supporting regeneration, as direct owner of land, local planning authority or convenors, accessing funding, commissioning services, and providing wider place-based regeneration and local growth and supporting cohesive communities. We also have a crucial role in ensuring good urban design principles are applied so that estates, both existing and new, become well connected, distinctive and attractive neighbourhoods that integrate with their surroundings.

The Council has several estates that are characterised by poor quality housing, unattractive buildings in physical decline and large areas of underutilised and degraded open space. They are often inward looking and physically, socially, and economically disconnected from their surroundings leading to higher concentrations of social deprivation and lack of opportunities for communities living there.

The Council recognises that estate regeneration can often be challenging and that no two areas are the same and therefore a 'one size' fits all is not appropriate. The Council believes that with an engaged community, the Council's support and leadership and a willingness to work with the private sector to access commercial skills and lever in investment, there is the potential to deliver hundreds of new homes over the next 10 to 15 years in areas such as Yorke Drive, Newark; and Ollerton and Boughton. The Council is also undertaking community-based work in Bilsthorpe, Clipstone and the Hawtonville area of Newark, whilst also improving the physical environment of existing estates.



WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

- Undertaken neighbourhood studies in Hawtonville, Newark and Ollerton and Boughton to help understand the views of the communities.
- Identified the requirement to re-purpose redundant and vacant space for town centre residential through the Town Centre Investment Plan i.e., Stodman Street, Newark and Ollerton
- Submitted a reserved matters planning application to progress the regeneration of Yorke Drive in Newark to reflect community consultation
- Commenced a community assets feasibility study in Bilsthorpe
- Support local employment on the HRA 5 Year Development Programme and encourage small to medium enterprises to participate and engage with local schools to encourage young people

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE?

- Maximise external and Council regeneration programmes and development opportunities based on need and strong evidence to create vibrant and self-sufficient communities
- Build a strong and balanced quality housing market that meets the needs of all residents
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging especially by providing new housing which promotes social mobility and good health.



Masterplan to deliver 800 new homes ranging from apartments and starter homes through to five-bedroom houses and a retirement village at the former Thoresby Colliery, Edwinstowe. (Development commenced).

Thoresby Vale Scheme, Edwinstowe



PRIORITY TWO: DELIVERING AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO MEET LOCAL NEED

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

This priority looks at how we can increase the supply, mix and quality of affordable housing. Due to the rising cost of living including rent and purchase costs, there is a pressing need for more affordable housing in Newark and Sherwood.

'Affordable Housing essentially means homes for people who cannot afford to rent or buy on the open market. It includes Council rented homes, Housing Association rented homes and affordable home ownership products such as shared ownership (where people buy a percentage of the home they can afford and pay rent on the remaining) and First Homes (where people can buy a new home with a 30% discount off full value).

- We need to respond to diverse needs ranging from smaller homes for young people and people looking to downsize through to larger family homes.
- We have a growing population of older people whose housing needs need to be anticipate and planned for.
- Home ownership is increasingly out of reach for households on low incomes.

The Council is playing a major role in building and enabling more affordable homes alongside housing associations and is committed to increasing delivery by June 2024. However, more homes are needed, as demonstrated by the fact that there are over 5,557 people on the Council's Housing Register.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

- Since 2018, the Council has completed over 300 high quality, energy efficient new build Council homes on a range of sites across the district, including Newark, Ollerton, Southwell and in our rural locations with a further 50 under development by 2024.
- Delivered small rural affordable exception site housing schemes in partnership with Nottingham Community Housing Association and East Midlands Housing Association. To date we have delivered over 55 homes in Southwell, Walesby, Caunton, North Muskham and Elston.
- We have worked with housing association partners in 22/23 to deliver 112 affordable homes through either S106 agreements and 100% affordable housing schemes across the district for affordable rent, shared ownership, discount for sale and First Homes. (1,785 since 2005).
- The Council has secured nomination rights to most of these Housing Association homes meaning people from the Council's housing register can access them.
- We have worked with private developers to purchase affordable homes provided as part of Section 106 Planning Policy requirements to bring into the Council's housing stock where Registered Providers have not offered.



Rural Affordable Housing Exception Site, North Muskham

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE: -

- Understand the need for a full range of affordable housing in the district including type, tenure, and location.
- Deliver a range of affordable homes that meet the needs of local residents and workers
- Work in partnership with registered providers, private developers, and local landowners to accelerate delivery of rural affordable housing.
- We will explore opportunities to continue to deliver our Housing Revenue Account new build programme to provide additional affordable homes to add to the 350 due to be completed since 2018.
- We will seek the highest standards of design and layout for all housing within the district.



PRIORITY THEME THREE:

MEETING PEOPLE'S HOUSING NEEDS

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Council is committed to meeting the housing needs of all its residents and recognise that the more vulnerable and often marginalised residents need access to good quality housing that promotes their independence and well-being.

In 2021 the Council commissioned Arc4 Consultants to prepare a District Wide Housing Needs Assessment providing detailed information on the type, tenure and mix of housing required and the needs of specific groups. In 2020 the Council also commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to determine need and pitch requirements. The key strategic messages from these pieces of research are: -

- New development should reflect the requirements of an ageing population whilst continuing to develop housing for younger age groups and a range of income groups to support economic growth. The overall focus needs to be around the delivery of 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings and a marked increase in the delivery of bungalows is needed.
- Affordable home ownership for key workers should be considered given the affordability challenges across the district.
- Most older people wish to remain in their own home with help and support if required. There is a need to improve support services available to older people across all tenures. There is also a need to increase specialist older persons housing provision, for instance extra care and retirement housing.
- There is a requirement to regularly review the needs of different groups, i.e., veterans and gypsy and traveller communities and the impact of physical disability and mental health on housing need.
- There is a specific recommendation to deliver 1% of new dwellings to M4(3) wheelchair accessible standard and minimum of 23% of new homes to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standards.
- There is a need for 118 pitches for Gypsy and traveller families that meet the planning definition; made up of 11 unauthorised pitches, 25 concealed or doubled up households of single adults; 1 movement from brick and mortar; 15 temporary pitches; 4 from in-migrations/roadside; 21 teenagers in need of a pitch over the next five years and 41 from new household formation. There is also a need for 30 pitches for households that do not meet the planning definition.

Demand for accessible homes and supported housing is increasing and this is not just driven by an ageing population. Increasing and more complex needs relating to homelessness, mental health, learning and disabilities and autism are more prevalent than ever before.

- **By 2023 there will be a 30% increase in the population over the age of 65 and 66.1% increase aged 85 and over**
- **1,335 units of specialised accommodation required**
- **12.9% of BAME households in housing need compared to 9.9% of all households**
- **Up to 2035 there are expected to be an additional 2,418 people aged 65 and over with a mobility problem**
- **A need for 118 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches to 2033**



- We have delivered two new Council owned and managed purpose built ‘state of the art’ extra care schemes in Newark (Gladstone House) and Boughton (Broadleaves) providing 100 apartments and bungalows.
- Regional Local Authority Building Control regional award (East Midlands) winner for Broadleaves (2022).
- Provided 9 extra care bungalows at Bilsthorpe amongst a scheme of 25 for older people

Broadleaves Extra Care Scheme, Boughton

- Implemented an extensive adaptation programme at Gladstone House, Newark, to meet residents’ specific needs including hoisting facilities in two properties.
- Reviewed Tenancy Strategy 2022 and renewed Tenancy Policy in 2020
- Reviewed tenancy agreement to make fit for purpose and contemporary 2022
- Provided annual tenant report for 2022
- Undertaken a homelessness review to support strategy in early 2023
- Improved financial resilience amongst the population at risk of homelessness by introducing Credit Union
- Delivered additional supported housing and housing related support by securing funding through the Next Steps Accommodation Programme ensuring the support needs of households at risk of, or experiencing homelessness are appropriately met after being awarded countywide funding through the Rough Sleeper Initiative
- Investigated the potential to acquire land for and develop the first public Traveller site in the district.

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE: -

- Consider how the strategy will address the varied housing needs of different groups i.e., older, and vulnerable people requiring supported housing, younger people with support needs, refugees, ex-offenders, Gypsy and Travellers and support for armed forces/veterans
- Increase opportunities for people to access low-cost home ownership through discount for sale, First Homes, and Shared Ownership options.
- Support residents to have a suitable home where they can live independently
- To review our housing needs evidence base, i.e., District Wide Assessment (every 5 years and the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment).



Coghill Court, Southwell – 2 x 2 bed bungalows

Helping to maintain people living independently in their communities is one of the priorities of Newark and Sherwood’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026

PRIORITY THEME FOUR:

IMPROVING HOMES ACROSS ALL TENURES

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Continuing to improve the quality and sustainability of Newark and Sherwood's housing stock is a key priority of this strategic theme. Higher quality and more energy efficient homes bring direct benefits to individual households, neighbourhoods, and the wider community.

- 🏠 Poor quality homes have a negative impact on older and younger people and people who have additional care and support needs. We are therefore committed to invest in existing homes where we can help our most vulnerable residents, helping to reduce energy bills (through improved energy efficiency) and improve overall health and wellbeing.
- 🏠 The Council recognises that meeting the housing needs and aspirations of Newark and Sherwood's residents relies on both building new homes and maximising the use of as many existing homes as possible.
- 🏠 A range of adaptations and home improvements are required by households. This includes, more insulation, (45.6%), better heating (34%), Double Glazing (27.1%), bathroom adaptations (20.2, internal handrails (16.1%), external handrails (13.3%), improved ventilation (12.2%), and adaptations relating to sensory needs (10.1%).
- 🏠 On average, **around 0.5% percent of Newark and Sherwood's Private housing stock is empty** at any given time and some of these properties can be problematic, especially when left empty for long periods of if they fall into disrepair. The Council's recognises the wider social, economic, and environmental benefits of bringing these properties back into use and developed policies and programmes to tackle this.
- 🏠 The Council will lead on a range of initiatives and encourage others across all types and all types and tenures of homes to understand the impact of climate change and de-carbonisation, raise housing standards, address energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and decrease the number of empty homes
- 🏠 Investment in town centre living to provide better access to services, repurposing of upper floors to provide the beneficial impacts of people living near facilities and reducing the use of transport.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR?

- 🏠 We are investing **£6 – 7M** in major refurbishment programme of our Council homes year on year to replace kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, and some windows working with a range of different partners to deliver the programme.
- 🏠 Have successfully submitted a bid to the 2023/25 Social Housing De-Carbonisation Fund for £1.15m focussing on the district's off-grid properties (in rural areas where no gas is available), to be match funded by the Council to bring it to £2.3m programme over two years.
- 🏠 **49** energy efficiency measures have been installed in private sector houses in partnership with Nottingham Energy which included solar panels, external wall insulations and cavity wall insulations and **14** solar panels fitted in Council owned homes.
- 🏠 Commenced the next three years programme for Warm Homes on Prescription for low-income households in the private sector.
- 🏠 Achieved **98%** decent homes standard in Council owned stock.

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE?

- Improve the quality of homes across all tenures including a major £7m year on year Council homes refurbishment and stock condition survey in the private rented sector
- Improve the energy efficiency of the housing stock and reduce fuel poverty for low income and vulnerable households
- Ensure the efficient use of the housing stock and maximise opportunities to meet housing needs through a reduction in empty homes in the district and the conversion of commercial space to residential.

A new Future Homes Standard will be introduced in 2025 which will require all new homes to meet these design goals, including the installation of energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS



Newark and Sherwood District Council is committed to ensuring that it treats everyone who lives, works, and visits our district with dignity and respect.

We're also committed to:

- equality of opportunity
- tackling discrimination
- tackling harassment and intimidation
- promoting good relations through the district

We have a leading role to play in promoting equal opportunity and valuing diversity in the community, as an employer and as a provider of services to the people within the district and its visitors.

Our approach to equality and diversity is one of common sense, bringing people into the heart of everything the Council does. Our approach puts people, both our customers and our staff at the heart of what we do and forms the platform for our transparent and fair decision making and service provision.

Read our full [Equality and Diversity Strategy 2021 - 2023 \(PDF File, 1,207kb\)](#)

Having access to good quality and affordable homes is important for all our diverse communities and the Housing Strategy seeks to remove barriers people can face in accessing a home to meet their needs. We use data and consultation to understand Newark and Sherwood's communities and through all the priorities within the housing strategy will deliver homes that meet the needs of older people, people with disabilities, larger families, single people, couples and veterans, Gypsy and traveller community and make sure the homes we provide and enable will meet their changing needs.

An equalities impact assessment accompanies the strategy.

GOVERNANCE



The Housing Strategy is approved by Cabinet and will receive annual updates and provide scrutiny and challenge.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CONTACT:



We are committed to having open dialogue on matters relating to strategic housing. We shall ensure that the following information is available on the District Council's website: -

- Newark and Sherwood Housing Strategy and Action Plan
- Newark and Sherwood Arc4 Housing Needs Assessment and Sub-Area Analysis

If you wish to contact us, please either, write to us, e-mail us or telephone: -

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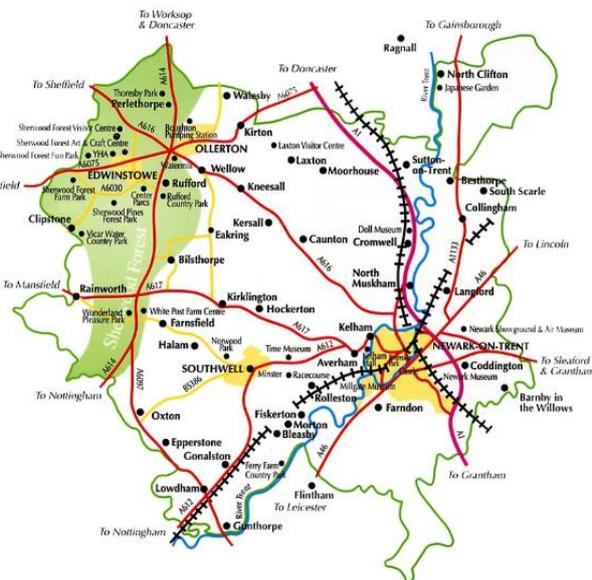
APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

Legislation and policies at a national, regional, and local level have an impact on the content and delivery of the housing strategy. There have been considerable changes to the national policy framework for both housing and planning since the last housing strategy was produced in 2009. The key legislation and policies that relate to the housing strategy are listed below:

National	
	Localism Act 2011
	Laying the Foundations – A Housing Strategy for England 2011
	Welfare Reform Act 2012
	Health and Social Care Act 2014
	The Welfare and Reform Act 2016
	Housing and Planning Act 2016
	The Housing White Paper 2017 “Fixing our broken housing market”
	The Homeless Reduction Act 2017
	The National Planning Policy Framework 2018
	Homes fit for Human Habitation Act 2018
	The Social Housing Green Paper 2018
	The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Description) (England) Order 2018
	Tenant Fees Act 2019
Regional	
	Nottinghamshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026
	Nottinghamshire Housing with Support Strategy for Adults (18 – 64) Years
	The Nottinghamshire Plan 2021 – 2031
Local	
	Newark and Sherwood Community Plan 2020 – 2023
	Newark and Sherwood Local Development Framework 2019 (Amended Core Strategy)
	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019 – 2024
	Emerging Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Doc
	Arc4 Newark & Sherwood Housing Needs Assessment 2021
	Newark and Sherwood Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2020

APPENDIX 2: NEWARK AND SHERWOOD EVIDENCE BASE DISTRICT PROFILE

Newark and Sherwood is the largest local government district in Nottinghamshire covering a third of the landmass and located in the East Midlands region of England. The district is made up of three principal urban areas, Newark, Ollerton and Boughton and Southwell along with several principal villages and smaller parishes/settlements.



The cities of Nottingham and Lincoln are within half an hour of travel of Newark itself and Newark has two railway stations including an East Coast Main Line Railway Station. The A1 national highway runs through the east of the district.

The current housing offer in Newark and Sherwood is very diverse reflecting the urban and rural locations and the dispersed nature of the district. The west of the district is characterised by the housing provided for the mining communities and is focussed on family semi-detached and terraced property whereas in the east of the district the housing stock reflects its rural nature and is comprised of a breadth of housing sizes and types.

The district’s housing stock provides for all levels of affordability. The Council and its partners have delivered the highest levels of affordable housing in Nottinghamshire during recent years and provides for a range of rent, discount for sale, rent to buy and shared ownership.

Newark and Sherwood’s population size has increased by 7.0% from around 114,800 in 2011 to 122,900 in 2021. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.6%) where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489.800 but is lower than the increase for the East Midlands.

In 2021, Newark and Sherwood ranked 193rd for total population out of 309 local authority areas in England, which is a fall of one place in a decade. As of 2021, Newark and Sherwood is the 12th least densely populated area of the East Midlands 35 local authority area.

There has been an increase of 26.7% of people aged 65 years and over, an increase of 2.9% in people aged 15 – 64 years and in increase of 1.3% in children aged under 15 years.

APPENDIX 3:

DELIVERY PLAN:

The Delivery Plan is designed to be a working document which will focus activity around the key areas which will help to address the issues identified throughout the life of the strategy.

Key Actions: Priority One – Enabling Housing Growth and Regeneration					
No	Actions	Target	Responsibility & Partners	Resources Required	Target Date
1.1 Maximise regeneration programme and development opportunities based on need and strong evidence to create vibrant and self-sufficient communities					
1.1.1	Build a strong and balanced quality housing market that meets the needs of all residents	To Identify areas for regeneration and undertake neighbourhood studies to increase economic activity, improve the built environment considering the needs of vulnerable groups and the rural community	Regeneration/Planning Policy/Health & Wellbeing	Officer Time	On-going
		Progress the regeneration of Yorke Drive, Newark	Regeneration Team/Planning/Lovells/ Compendium Living	£7m Officer Time	206
		Support Self Build and Custom Build Opportunities for residents	Planning Policy/Housing Register	Officer time	Ongoing
		Take a leadership role to influence developers and demonstrate increased standards in new build housing are deliverable. Ensure that national space standards are met in both market and affordable housing	Planning Policy Planning development	Officer time	Ongoing
1.1.2	Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging/create a place where everyone has the opportunity for a healthier and longer life	Refresh and review the Hawtonville Study	Regeneration/Planning Policy/Health & Wellbeing	Officer time	December 2023
		Refresh and review the Ollerton/Boughton Neighbourhood Study	Regeneration/Planning Policy/Health & Wellbeing	Officer time	November 2023
		Engage with residents to complete the Community Assets Feasibility Study in Bilsthorpe to progress regeneration opportunities	Regeneration/Planning Policy/Health & Wellbeing. Community Engagement Team	Officer Time	May 2023
		Undertake a feasibility study in Slipstone to form a catalyst for regeneration opportunities -	Regeneration/Planning Policy/Health & Wellbeing. Community Engagement Team/Sport and Leisure/Clipstone Welfare Charity/Heritage England/ Parks and Open spaces/Vicar Water/YMCA	Officer Time/£106k (\$106 monies) £30k UKSPF	Phase 1 – May 2023 Phase 2 – July 23

Key Actions: Priority Two – Delivering Affordable Housing to Meet Local Need					
No	Actions	Target	Responsibility & Partners	Resources Required	Target Date
2.1 Understand the need for the full range of affordable housing in the district including type, tenure, and location					
2.1.1	Ensure new affordable housing is in line with local identified need	Commission a New District Wide Housing Needs Survey	NSDC Hsg Strategy NSDC Planning Policy,	Planning Policy/ Strategic Hsg Budget to be agreed	September 2025
		Review the GTAA in 2025	NSDC Planning Policy	Officer time/Allocated funding	September 2025
		Complete two/three Parish housing needs surveys per annum to support rural development	Trent Valley Partnership, EMH, Parish Councils, Housing Stra & Dev	Officer time NCHA Funding NSDC Funding	Ongoing Annual Delivery
		Complete research and prepare a report on affordable housing tenures and affordability	Housing Strategy & Development Registered Providers	Officer Time	September 2023
		Help to inform the Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024	Housing Options and stakeholders	Officer Time	2024
2.1.2	Increase data collection using the Council's and partners internal databases	Review Housing Register to capture information on affordable and intermediate housing Need	Housing Choice Registered Providers	Officer Time	2023
		Review the Council's Allocation Scheme	Housing Choice	Officer Time	2023
2.2 Deliver a range of affordable homes that meet the needs of local residents and workers					
2.2.1	Work with and support Registered Providers and other organisations to deliver housing to meet Newark & Sherwood's unmet need	Maximise S106 delivery and 100% affordable housing Schemes through planning policies	Registered Providers Housing Strategy Planning Policy Housing Developers	Officer time	Ongoing delivery
		Deliver 100% affordable housing schemes at suitable locations to meet urban & rural need	Registered Providers Housing Strategy Planning Policy Housing Developers	Officer time, Homes England funding	Annual Delivery
2.2.2	Develop an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	Adopt an updated Affordable Housing SPD to complement existing Local Plan Policies and set out clear expectations and parameters to deliver the aims of the housing strategy	NSDC Planning Policy Team & Housing Strategy & Development Team	Officer Time	Draft by 2023/24

2.2.3	Explore opportunities to continue to deliver the Council's Housing Revenue Account New Build Programme	Prepare a business case for development capacity to take forward HRA Development Programme	Corporate Asset Team Finance Team External Developers	Officer Time HRA Budget	March 2024
		Complete Year 5 of the current HRA programme to delivery 50 additional units	Corporate Asset Team	Officer Time HRA Dev Budget	July 2024
2.3 Work in partnership with registered providers, private developers, and local landowners to accelerate delivery of rural affordable housing					
2.3.1	Deliver two rural affordable housing exception sites.	Proposed sites at Bleasby and Oxtton	Nottingham Community Housing Association, East Midlands Housing Association, Independent Land Finder, NCHA, Homes England NSDC Housing Strategy & Development	Officer time, Homes England funding	Annual Delivery - 2024
2.3.2	Support community led development	Work with East Midlands Community Led Housing to consider the viability and social led value of development sites	EMCLD NSDC	Officer Time	To commence June 2023
2.3.3	Develop closer joint working between planning and Housing to facilitate planning consents and accelerate affordable housing delivery	Consult with planning policy and work with an assigned development planner to achieve a consistent approach to rural housing development	Planning Policy Development Control Housing Strategy	Officer Time	On-going
2.4 We will explore opportunities to continue to deliver our ambitious Housing Revenue Account funded new build programme to provide additional affordable homes to add to the 350 due to be completed since 2018					
2.4.1	Consider funding, land availability and planning opportunities to accelerate delivery of additional HRA homes	Consult with planning policy, developers, landowners to determine options.	Asset Team Senior Leadership Team Finance	Officer Time Grant funding	On-going

Key Actions: Priority Three – Meeting People's Housing Needs					
No	Actions	Target	Responsibility & Partners	Resources Required	Target Date
3.1 Support Residents to have a suitable home where they can live independently					
3.1.1	Continue to support and meet the demand for adaptations to	Maximise the use of the Disabled Facilities Grant Budget for the benefit of older and disabled	NCC Environmental Health	Officer Time DFG Budget	Sept 2023

	assist older and disabled people to remain living in their own homes	residents by improving the process for assessments and commission of works			
3.1.2	Continue to support accessibility and adaptability in all new developments	Commit to raising the minimum standard for accessible homes to M4(2)	Planning Policy Developers	Officer time	On-going
		Continue providing accessible homes via the HRA development Programme beyond Year 5	Assets team Planning Housing Strategy	Officer time Homes England Grant	On-going
3.1.3	Promote use of technology to enable disabled and older people to live independently	Continue to invest in Care Line Technology	Housing Management	Officer time HRA budget	On-going
3.1.4	Support the Government's (VPRS) Vulnerable Persons Re-location Scheme	Re-settle Syrian/Ukraine refugee households	NSDC Homeless, Faith groups, Home Office	Officer Time VPRS Funding	Sept 2023
3.2 Consider how the strategy will address the varied housing needs of different groups i.e., older people, support for armed forces, Gypsy and Travellers, refugees, young people					
	Provide housing related support for households in need	Assisting in de-cluttering identified hoarded homes through employing a specialist external company to clear properties	Environmental Health/Homeless Prevention/Housing	Hoarding Fund/Officer Time/HRA/Homeless prevention	Until funding expired
		Providing training courses for getting people ready for tenancies to include budgeting and cooking skills	Housing Management	Officer time HRA budget	Ongoing
		Provide severe weather emergency provision at Alexandra Lodge	Asset Team	General fund Homes England Funding	March 2024
	Work in a co-ordinated way with local health partners to ensure residents most in need receive support to make their homes warmer	Engage with Health/Libraries to advertise warm homes on prescription	Housing Health	Officer Time	On-going
3.3 Increase opportunities for people to access low-cost home ownership					
	Secure intermediate housing through Planning Policy Requirements S106 contributions	Seek Shared Ownership, discount for sale and First Homes through S106 agreements and Registered Providers/Developers	Planning Policy Housing Strategy Registered Providers Developers	Officer time Legal/Housing Strategy/Planning	Ongoing

Key Actions: Priority Four- Improving Homes Across All Tenures					
No	Actions	Target	Responsibility & Partners	Resources Required	Target Date
4.1 Improve the quality of homes across all tenures					
	Continue to invest in a major refurbishment programme of Council owned homes	Major refurbishment project to replace kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, and some windows	Housing Maintenance and a range of different partners	£6-7m	Year on Year
		Achieve a level of 100% decency	Housing Maintenance	Capital funding	April 2023
	Improve conditions in the private rented sector	Undertake a private sector stock condition survey to understand the scale of future investment in partnership with other authorities	Environmental Health. Housing Strategy and Development	Council funding and Officer Time	Summer 2024
		Develop a Private Sector Housing Strategy outlining the Council's role in increasing access to and standards in the private sector, protecting tenants' health and safety and promoting energy efficiency and fuel poverty schemes	Environmental Health Housing Strategy	Officer Time	Dec 2023
		Ensure effective enforcement actions continue to be taken to improve unsatisfactory conditions in the private rented sector	Environmental Health/Planning	Officer time	Ongoing
4.2 Increase the energy efficiency of the housing stock and reduce fuel poverty for low income and vulnerable households					
4.2.1	Improve energy performance by 2035	102 Council homes will be brought up from D or E to EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) rating band C through a retrofit programme	Housing Maintenance and partners	Capital funding	2030
		The Council's HRA build programme to support carbon neutral ambitions	Corporate Asset Team	HRA Dev Programme funding	2024 and beyond
		Explore capacity in the marketplace for	Housing Maintenance	Government Funding sought	2023

		provision of solar panels, heat pumps etc for council stock				
	4.2.2	Increase awareness of council services and initiatives in relation to warm homes, energy efficiency and retrofit technologies	Commenced the next three years programme for Warm Homes on Prescription for low-income households	Housing Support Worker (Older People)	Government Funding	2026
			Promote the Home Upgrade Grant in non-gas areas (Bid submitted to the Social Housing Decarbonations fund to replace 102 oil heating systems with gas fired boilers and solar panels and other central government retro fit schemes	Notts County Council Charity Nottingham Energy Partnership Energy & Homes Support Officers/ Housing Maintenance and Asset Manager		
4.3 Ensure the efficient use of the housing stock and maximise opportunities to meet housing need						
4.3.1	Reduce the number of empty homes in the district	Project to identify empty properties and implement a 100% Council Tax premium after two years increasing to 200% after 5 years	Council Tax/Housing Strategy	Officer Time		Jan 2024
		Consider how other empty spaces such as derelict buildings and spaces above shops could be re-purposed to provide new homes	Planning/Corporate Assets	Officer time		Ongoing
		Explore opportunities to transform empty homes to affordable homes	Housing Strategy/Housing Maintenance	Officer Time Homes England Funding		December 2024
4.3.2	Deliver new units of housing in town centre by converting commercial space to residential	Project to convert the former M & S to apartments	Planning/Corporate Assets	Town Centre Fund/Brownfield Lane Release Fund/NSDC Capital funding		Spring 2025



Report to: Cabinet Meeting: 11 July 2023
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Brazier – Housing
 Director Lead: Suzanne Shead, Director of Housing Health & Wellbeing
 Lead Officer: Caroline Wagstaff, Business Manager - Housing Maintenance & Asset Management, Ext. 5637

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report (exempt appendix), Key Decision
Report Title	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1
Purpose of Report	To provide the business case behind applying in October 2022 to the governments Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund for a grant to replace oil heating systems with air source heat pumps systems for 102 council owned properties and to approve recommendations below.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: a) endorse the project plan and accept receipt of grant funding of £1.306m from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, which will be drawn down in arrears; and b) approve an increase in the Capital Programme of £458,106 in 2023/24 and £676,235 in 2024/25 equivalent to the Capital grant due which is the match funding being provided by the Council.
Alternative Options Considered	As noted in 3.0 in the report, there were no viable alternatives and taking no action would make it harder for the Council to meet the Government requirements on EPCs and decarbonisation of social housing stock.
Reason for Recommendations	This Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund provides 50% grant funding for 102 of the Council’s housing to have carbon neutral and lower cost-effective heating for tenants who currently have oil boiler heating systems. It meets both Community Plan objectives to create better homes as a landlord and improve tenants wellbeing by reducing fuel poverty and contributing to reducing carbon emissions.

1.0 **Background**

- 1.1 As outlined in the Community Plan, the Council is committed to create better quality homes through our role as a landlord and also improving the health and wellbeing of local resident specifically helping tenants by reduce their fuel poverty.
- 1.2 The Government is committed to reduce emissions by 2050. A step change in the rate of energy performance improvements to existing homes is required over the next decade to meet the carbon targets, keep energy bills low, and support the transition to low carbon heating. Social housing providers have been set a target to attain a C rating on Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) by 2030; though this is likely to change given recent pressure on the government to achieve this sooner.
- 1.3 The Government launched a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10- year period, to improve the energy performance of social rented homes (subject to future spending reviews). A £62m fund was announced in 2020 followed by £160m for the first wave of the SHDF in financial year 2021/22 delivering to January 2023. The Council was not a participant in this first wave. In the 2021 Spending Review, a further £800 million was announced to the SHDF for wave 2 for a three-year period from December 2022 and spend deadline by 31st March 2025. The Council joined the Midland Consortium to take advantage of wave 2 funding.
- 1.4 Decarbonisation technology is still very much in its infancy and therefore the Council has adopted a considered approach in its move to decarbonisation which prioritises improving the most inefficient and costly heating systems for tenants.
- 1.5 The key principles of SHDF are:
 - Fabric First - Ensures heat loss prevention measures are installed before other energy efficiency measures, to maximise the dwelling's suitability for low carbon heating either now or in the future, and to benefit tenants (comfort, health, wellbeing and bills).
 - Worst First - Facilitating the treatment of the worst performing homes through a scaled cost cap that allows for greater spend on those homes with a lower starting EPC Band.
 - Least Regret - Minimise the potential of measures having to be replaced in the future on the journey to Net Zero.
- 1.6 The SHDF allows for low carbon heating to be installed where a fabric first approach has already been taken such as cavity wall infill or external wall insulation. The Council undertook this measure for most of it's stock during the Decent Homes which took place around ten years ago.
- 1.7 The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund is a project that offers a fantastic opportunity to kick start out decarbonisation of social housing stock, improve properties thermal comfort (EPC ratings improved to a 'C') whilst also reducing the costs for tenants in heating their homes.

- 1.8 Back in October 2022 the Council were offered the opportunity to join a Midlands Consortia bid for 50% grant under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (see above). There was a significant advantage into joining a consortium given this is a relatively new funding with complex requirements and government favouring larger bids. Midland Net Zero Energy Hub (part of Nottingham City Council) were heading the consortium and gave considerable help in putting together the bid for the Council.
- 1.9 The 50% match funding is available in the existing HRA Capital Programme budget for the period of 2023 – 2025.
- 1.10 The request to submit a bid for funding was approved in October 2022 to enable the Council to meet the bid deadline. The Council has been successful in securing just under £1.3m SHDF grant (a mixture of Revenue and Capital funding) to commence in April 2023.
- 1.11 Participation in this scheme will enable to Council to commence a discreet programme of decarbonisation which will provide experience that will inform future decarbonisation programmes for Council owned housing stock.

2.0 Proposal and Reason for Recommendation

- 2.1 The proposal targets 102 Council owned homes with oil heating, to be upgraded to air source heating system, solar photovoltaic panels (PV) and a battery. These properties have been selected because:
- Most of these oil boilers are coming to the end of their useful life
 - Oil boilers are significantly more costly to run and require bulk purchase of oil which some tenants are struggling to afford.
 - The homes also all have EPC ratings of either a 'D' or 'E'.
- 2.2 Under this scheme any low energy heating system must be consistent with net zero and include considerations such as affordability, air quality, and sustainability. The government's heating system preference is for heat pumps with exceptions only being considered under limited circumstances.
- 2.3 Each property will also be fitted with solar PV and battery to reduce electrical costs. Solar PV, captures the sun's energy and converts it into electricity that tenants can use in their home free of charge. The battery storage can help to take up any excess power created by panels not directly used so that this energy doesn't go to waste. The energy stored can then be used by tenants when they are in the home and need it.
- 2.4 Given that it will be cheaper to heat the homes, it will be more likely that tenants keep their homes sufficiently heated. This benefits the Council in maintain their homes and the Council is less likely to have to intervene to remedy any damp and mould.
- 2.5 This decarbonisation project will not be successful without sufficient 'buy-in' and co-operations of our tenants. The project team has developed a Tenant Engagement Plan that covers:

- What the new technology is
- how it works
- how to reduce their energy bills using case studies
- easy to understand instructions for usage
- supporting tenants through installation
- customer care post installation

2.6 At the moment, there is no mechanism to recover savings tenants make in reduced energy costs through the rent setting regime. There is also no mechanism to recover any charges via a service charge on the property. Within the sector there has been discussions around applying a “warm rent” charge to slowly recoup the costs but this remains in the policy arena. These improvements will not increase the rent for tenants but will increase the efficiency of their heating and will reduce energy bills keeping more money in people’s pockets.

2.7 The 2-year programme in line with the grant expectations are for 40% of works to be completed in 2023/24 and 60% of works in 2024/25.

2.8 This report asks Cabinet to endorse the project plan and formally accept receipt of grant funding of £1.306m from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund; which will be drawn down in arrears and to approve an increase in the Capital Programme of £458,106 in 2023/24 and £676,235 in 2024/25 equivalent to the Capital grant due which is the match funding being provided by the Council.

3.0 Alternative Options Considered

3.1 As the government is now prescribing that social housing landlords direct their decarbonisation project via the SHDF, other funding options such as Local Authority Decarbonisation (LAD) were not considered. The LAD programme is now tailed to the private sector.

3.2 In terms of other heating systems; electrical “wet” systems are not appropriate under this funding as they worsen the EPC ratings because of their high energy use. When modelled, electric wet systems failed to bring any of the property types tested to the required EPC ‘C’ level even with the addition of solar panels and battery.

3.3 The option to do nothing was considered, but not recommended as the Council needs to start improving the thermal comfort in properties if it is to achieve the Government’s target on EPCs and reducing carbon emissions in its council housing homes.

4.0 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.

Financial Implications (FIN23-24/4630)

4.1 In order to deliver the project £350,000 is required for admin and ancillary costs over the two-year period. 50% of these costs will be grant funded by the SHDF and the other 50% is match funded from existing budgets.

4.2 The total costs for the two-year period are broken down as follows:

Description	Total Amount 2023/24 and 2024/25
Project Oversight	54,248
Project Delivery	181,040
Tenant Liaison	62,572
EPC/ Retrofit Assessments	15,000
Top up roof insulation/cavity fill	25,000
Contribution to MNZEH	10,325
Total	348,185
50% NSDC Contribution	176,092
50% Grant Funded	172,092

4.3 The grant income will need to be split between the HRA and the General Fund and that received over and above the budget will be reported in budget monitoring reports throughout the year.

	HRA £	GF £
Total for 2-year programme	235,288.40	62,571.60

4.4 The total cost of implementing the measures can be found in the Exempt Appendix 1.

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.

Nil.



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 11 July 2023
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Brazier, Housing
 Director Lead: Suzanne Shead, Director - Housing, Health & Wellbeing
 Lead Officer: Julie Davidson, Business Manager - Housing Services, Ext. 5542

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report, key decision
Report Title	Local Authority Housing Fund – Request for Delegated Authority
Purpose of Report	To secure delegated authority to enable the Council to fulfil our obligations of the Local Authority Housing Fund to purchase 14 market sale properties in a timely manner between April and November 2023.
Recommendations	That Cabinet approve the following delegated authority: a) purchase of property with a value of £300k or less be delegated to Director - Housing, Health & Wellbeing; and b) purchase of property with a value over £300k be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Section 151 Officer subject to Key Decision requirements.
Alternative Options Considered	Continue with no delegated authority and fail to meet financial deadlines required to fulfil our obligations of the Scheme
Reason for Recommendations	To enable the Council to fulfil our obligations under the Local Authority Housing Fund Scheme to purchase 14 market sale properties in a timely manner between April and November 2023. The delivery of this scheme aligns with our community plan to “create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contribute to their local area”

1.0 Background

1.1 On 21 December 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) announced a £500m Local Authority Housing Fund to provide capital funding

for English councils in areas facing most significant housing pressures as a result of Ukrainian arrivals. Newark & Sherwood District Council were one of the councils provisionally allocated a slice of this funding subject to submitting a validation form and a signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

- 1.2 A special urgency decision was made on 15 March 2023 by the Leader to apply for this funding, so the Memorandum of Understanding could be signed and submitted before the deadline of 15 March 2023. We were notified the following week that our submission had been successful with the first tranche of monies being received on 23 March: £366,557.00. NSDC are the only Council within the county to receive the funding.
- 1.3 The funding is split into two elements: the main element of £1,050,400 to provide 13 homes to assist with alleviation of housing pressures from Homes for Ukraine schemes and a bridging element of £171,457 to provide one four bed (or larger) home to allocate to a household currently in bridging accommodation. These funds are broken down as follows:

	Capital Grant per Unit	Grant represents	Additional grant per unit	No. of homes	Total grant available
Main Element	£60,800	40% of capital costs	£20,000	13	£1,050,400
Bridging Element	£151,457	50% of capital costs	£20,000	1	£171,457

- 1.4 The initial purpose of the scheme is to increase provision of affordable housing to those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or in bridging accommodation and support Local Authorities with high numbers of placements to mitigate the expected increased pressures on resources which may arise as sponsorship/family placements/bridging accommodation arrangements come to an end.
- 1.5 A desktop exercise was undertaken to explore house prices and stock availability within the district and the grant offered will enable the Council to purchase suitable stock with the ideal purchase price to maximise grant being between £153,000 and £200,000.
- 1.6 All acquisitions will be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s Acquisitions and Disposals Policy. In accordance with standard practice for domestic conveyancing transactions, officers will need to make an offer ‘subject to contract’ when a property is identified. Formal approval will be sought following valuation and due diligence, prior to exchange of contracts. A project group of housing and corporate property has been established with fortnightly meetings in place with legal colleagues being in attendance periodically once conveyancing has commenced. Progress of the scheme will be regularly reported to DLUHC, Council Land & Planning Group and Cabinet.

2.0 Proposal/Options Considered and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The property market appears buoyant with properties selling quickly so we need to be in a position to make offers on accommodation in a timely fashion; this proposal will allow for streamlined decision making and prompt progression to secure the acquisition.

2.2 The proposal is as follows:

- a) To approve the delegated authority for property purchases under £300k be given to Director for Housing, Health & Wellbeing.
- b) Purchases of £300k and over to be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Homes & Health in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Section 151 officer subject to Key Decision requirements.

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 below where appropriate.

3.1 Financial Implications (FIN23-24/631)

The Capital Programme has the following budget:

	Main Element £	Bridging Element £
Expenditure	2,860,000	270,000
<i>Financed by:</i>		
Grant	1,050,400	171,457
Borrowing	1,809,600	98,543
Total	2,860,000	270,000

Within the main fund, the budget of £2,860,000 allows for 13 properties to be purchased at a maximum of £220,000 (including SDLT and Legal costs).

As per paragraph 1.5, the properties are likely to be range from £153,000 to £200,000. There is an additional £20k allocated per unit to cover any remedial, legal and stamp duty costs – this is not limited to £20k per property as long as overspend doesn’t exceed £260k across the whole portfolio purchase.

Monitoring of the purchases will take place throughout to ensure they remain within the delegated authority and the overall budget.

3.2 Equalities Implications

Given the purpose of the funding as outlined in 1.4; the accommodation funded should increase the availability of accommodation in the first instance for that cohort of people. In order to make the best use of properties acquired we will direct match families to the most suitable accommodation. This is in line with our Allocation Scheme and the approach we use to housing homeless households who are identified as priority need. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

After the immediate housing needs of this cohort are met and the accommodation is no longer required for the purpose it was originally intended these properties will be reviewed and decisions made regarding maintaining as general fund stock to support our homelessness temporary accommodation duties or increase our HRA stock.

3.3 **Tenant Implications**

It is proposed to use rolling monthly periodic assured shorthold tenancies, with an initial starter period of 6 months (during which the levels of support and assistance the family require can be assessed) for this accommodation to allow for maximum flexibility for the tenants, to encourage move on to secure, settled housing at a time when they are ready rather than the length of tenancy determining this progression. Legal advice on this approach is being sought and a specific policy will be put in place to provide transparency.

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



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 11 July 2023
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Brazier, Housing
 Director Lead: Suzanne Shead – Director - Housing, Health & Wellbeing
 Lead Officer: Julie Davidson, Business Manager Housing Services, Ext. 5542

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Non-Key Decision
Report Title	Tenant Engagement Strategy
Purpose of Report	The purpose of the report is to share the draft Tenant Engagement Strategy which includes the engagement framework, regulatory landscape and how successful engagement will be measured.
Recommendations	That Cabinet approve the Tenant Engagement Strategy.
Alternative Options Considered	Continue with no Council wide strategy and fail to meet our legal obligations with regard to tenant engagement.
Reason for Recommendations	Effective Tenant Engagement is not optional; this strategy sets out how we will engage in order to meet our legal obligations as set out by the Regulator fo Social Housing The delivery of this scheme aligns with our community plan to “Create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contribute to their local area”

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Tenant Engagement Strategy sits alongside the Newark & Sherwood District Council’s Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2022-2027 and sets out how we seek out, listen to and act on the views of tenants and leaseholders.
- 1.2 Effective and meaningful tenant engagement is expected of all landlords which is clearly demonstrated by the Charter for Social Housing Tenants, its inclusion in the imminent Social Housing Bill and is subject to regulation through the Regulator of Social Housing’s consumer standards.
- 1.3 This strategy outlines the importance of tenant engagement in every aspect of housing services and what our approach looks like, including how the tenant engagement team can support with effective engagement.

- 1.4 The strategy supports the Council to create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contribute to the local area.

2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 The Tenant & Engagement Strategy and menu of involvement are attached as **appendices** to this report for comment. If approved a work plan will be created to set out activities required over the life of the strategy to make sure it is effective, current and meaningful for tenants.
- 2.2 The strategy sets out how performance of housing services will be measured both at the time of consultation and tenants perceptions of the opportunities for involvement. The tenant satisfaction measures that were introduced in April 2023 will help to gather tenant perception that views are listened to, acted on and that tenants feel they are treated fairly and with respect.
- 2.3 The Tenant Engagement Board has approved the creation of a service specific Local Influence Network around building safety which has been added to the strategy for endorsement.
- 2.4 The Tenant & Engagement Strategy and menu of involvement were presented to Policy and Performance Improvement Committee on 26 June 2023. The committee were very positive about the strategy and appreciated the hardwork and dedication of officers in facilitating engagement with our tenants. They did comment that the 'menu' as a way of presenting the options had limitations as it did not give enough information to understand the time commitment of each item. They also queried if it is tracked whether those participating in one of the options came back – this would be useful feedback to improve engagement. They would like to see progress on tenant engagement to come back to PPIC with some statistics on take up of the options and follow up on some of the comments. They were also interested in how this is publicised and whether the tenant newsletter had been undertaken. We will take progress these actions and look forward to presenting back to the Committee.

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.

3.1 Financial Implications - FIN23-24/7626

This strategy has no direct financial implications although the training and support for involved tenants to build their skills and knowledge will require funding via the efficiency savings secured through housing services being brought back into the Council. Budget is already available to support tenants incurring reasonable costs to participate in events and meetings.

3.2 Equalities

The strategy has no direct equalities implications although there is an expectation that approaches to engagement are varied and reflect the needs and requirements of tenants. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

3.3 Tenant Involvement

Local Influence Networks (LINs) have been consulted in the creation of this strategy which is welcomed to bring an updated framework to our existing arrangements. A review of the effectiveness of the LINs is underway to reflect on what is working well and identify what improvements can be made to how we engage.

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



NEWARK & SHERWOOD *DISTRICT COUNCIL*

Tenant Engagement Strategy

2023-2026

DRAFT

Tenant Engagement Strategy

1.0 Why we need a strategy

This strategy sets out how the Council will engage with tenants and leaseholders to seek out, listen and act on their views in the performance, delivery, scrutiny and development of housing services and provide assurance on how we will meet our legal obligations set out by the Regulator of Social Housing.

The voice and influence of tenants is essential to enhance every aspect of housing services, from rent collection to improving homes, undertaking repairs to managing estates and ensuring homes are warm and safe. This strategy sets out the framework of engagement available to tenants and the role of the tenant engagement team to support housing services to deliver effective engagement.

This strategy links into the Newark and Sherwood District Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2022-2027 and has a specific focus on tenant and leaseholder engagement, which will form part of the expected Social Housing Bill and is subject to regulation through the consumer standards by the Regulator of Social Housing.

Our approach to engagement is reflective of our values:

Ambitious and forward thinking - we seek to understand what is important to our residents and stakeholders so we can focus our energy on improving and innovating.

Caring and compassionate - through providing a variety of opportunities to get involved in a way that works for the individual, removing barriers to getting involved.

Commercial and business-like – seeking views on where we focus our resources to secure value for money.

Professional and trustworthy – engagement builds trust and transparency around decision making, demonstrating the Council's integrity.

Welcoming and responsive - through being approachable, open to feedback, suggestions and challenge around our services, performance and tenant satisfaction.

This strategy does not cover customer complaints and feedback. Consultation and engagement is the important process of listening to and working with communities to gather views and insight. Our approach to receiving feedback or raising a complaint is covered within the [Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy](#).

2.0 What is Tenant Engagement?

Tenant engagement means different things to different people; other terms such as participation or involvement can be used interchangeably to mean the same thing.

The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) defines tenant engagement as "involving tenants who live in social rented housing who receive services from their council landlord".

The Consumer Standards and imminent Social Housing Bill both emphasise the importance of tenant engagement and places a legal duty on social housing providers to ensure that tenants' voices are at the heart of services, that tenants live in good quality houses, and have a route to complain when this isn't the case. It expects landlords to tailor engagement so all tenants can engage, through a wide range of ways such as surveys, focus groups or local events to the level they wish to.

Effective tenant engagement has many benefits: it can highlight existing and new services that are valued by tenants, provides feedback on how services feel for the user, so the Council can act on this feedback and provide service improvements, it improves value for money and better communication and relationships with tenants that are built on trust as well as using tenants' existing skills and building new ones. In turn, tenants feel happy about where they live and that they feel valued and listened to and their voice makes a difference.

3.0 Our Approach to Tenant Engagement

In 2022, involved tenants designed a new approach to tenant engagement with the Council, that supports local conversations about local issues which are co-ordinated through the Council's decision-making structures at both operational and strategic levels.

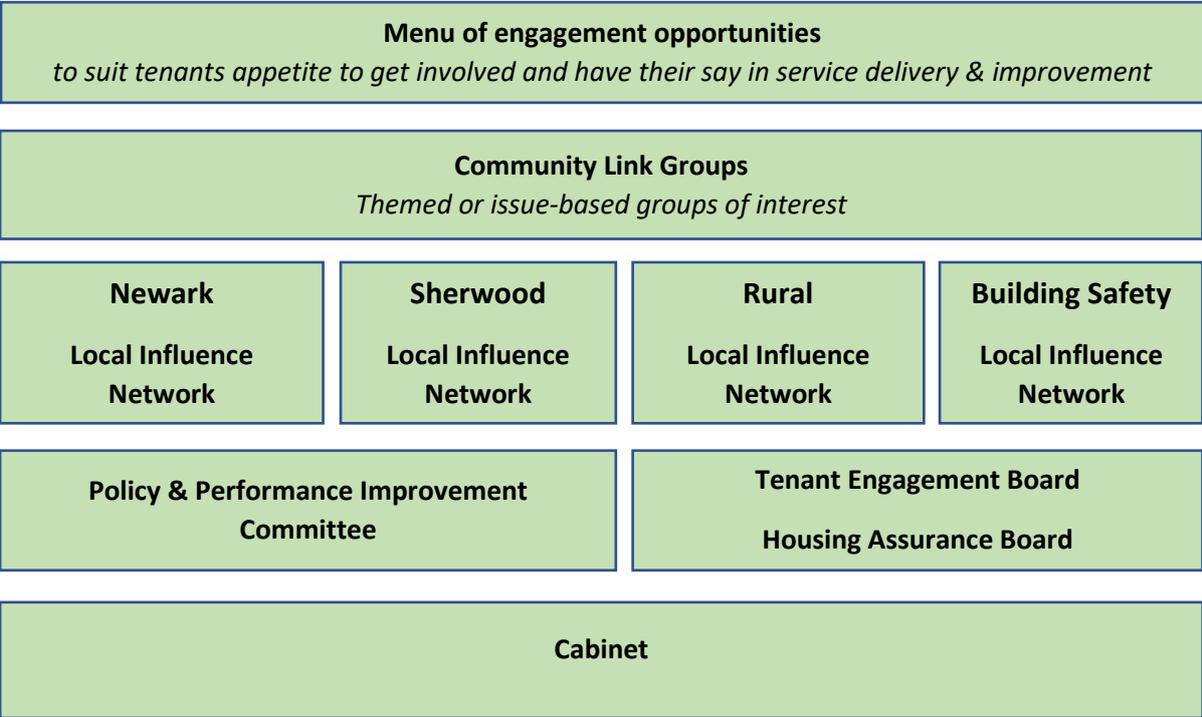
There is a menu of engagement opportunities dependant on the tenant's appetite and availability to get involved. More formal groups such as the community link groups and Local Influence Networks formalise engagement between communities and the council, with a dedicated Business Manager supporting each Local Influence Network and their chair.

Through the Tenant Engagement Board, the Local Influence Networks can direct their views, comments and feedback into the Council including their satisfaction with performance and services as well as identifying areas for action and investigation.

Comments and views can be raised through any of these mechanisms and the Local Influence Network chairs (who are tenants) present information to the Tenant Engagement Board for discussion and recommendations. The Tenant Engagement Board consists of representatives from Policy & Performance Improvement Committee and chairs of the Local Influence Networks. This engagement structure works both ways to provide information, scrutiny and recommendations for approval.

There are also opportunities to create service specific Local Influence Networks, at the time of writing this strategy, there is a Building Safety Local Influence Network that will focus on how the Council comply with safety standards and legislation including in this case, a service specific tenant engagement strategy for building safety.

The work of the tenant engagement board is regularly reported to tenants, residents, colleagues and members on how the tenants voice has been heard and used to improve or design services.



Tenants and leaseholders can be involved in a variety of ways including:

- Mystery shopping
- Scrutiny of services
- Contractor tender evaluation
- Responding to consultations
- Talking to colleagues about their experiences of services
- Ground maintenance champions
- Surveys
- Digital champions
- Service Improvement Activities
- Performance monitoring
- Estate Walkabouts

Information and opportunities for involvement will take place in a variety of formats including face to face, online, via surveys or social media channels as well as pop up events, taking into account where possible their preferred method of contact.

Further current opportunities to get involved can be found at [Tenant engagement | Newark & Sherwood District Council \(newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk\)](http://newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk) or email getinvolved@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

Involvement opportunities will be promoted at every opportunity and via social media, rent statements and newsletters available to the Council and via partners.

4.0 The role of the Tenant Engagement Team

The tenant engagement team will support business managers to lead on consultations, reviews or service proposals. The Consultation and Engagement Strategy operational guidance provides information on how consultations should be undertaken.

The tenant engagement officers can support with:

- Training and support for involved tenants
- Identifying interested tenants to participate
- Facilitating focus groups and small surveys
- Providing advice on undertaking tenant engagement
- Accessing Local influence network meetings and agendas
- Accessing community groups
- Planning community events involving tenants including 'pop up' events or tenant engagement events
- Accessing online survey tools and templates
- Co-ordinating consultations across the Directorate to ensure tenants do not feel over consulted
- Collating feedback and how we can use it
- Ensure outcomes and results from engagement are communicated through appropriate channels to tenants, residents, colleagues, members and other stakeholders.
- Developing and maintaining a culture of effective engagement within teams
- Maintaining and refreshing the tenant engagement database including an annual check in that the tenant wishes to remain in the database and how they wish to be involved.
- Regular reviews of how the tenant engagement structure is delivering for tenants

5.0 Tenant Engagement Action Plan and Engagement Calendar

The Council's arrangements for engagement are reviewed every three years. An action plan sits beneath this strategy to set out the key activities to be undertaken to keep tenant engagement fresh, relevant and effective for tenants. This will be appended to the Strategy.

Oversight of Tenant Engagement is through an Annual Engagement Calendar which highlights planned consultation throughout the calendar year. This is a live document which updated regularly and can be found [here](#).

6.0 Support for Tenants

To encourage participation, the Council will support tenants to utilise their existing skills and build new ones through training and personal development, covering reasonable costs of being involved including provision of IT to engage digitally as well as offer opportunities to attend tenant conferences or support with applying for boards or specific engagement groups at a local, regional, and national level.

There are many great sources of ideas to maximise engagement with tenants and the Council are members of Tenant Participation Advisory Group (TPAS) and Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH) to help understand and share best practice.

7.0 Measuring our performance and impact

We will collate information about our performance and report through the Tenant Engagement Board and other forums as appropriate. We will share our performance widely with tenants, colleagues, members and other stakeholders including via our Annual Tenant Report.

We will:

- Collate number of tenants involved in every consultation to understand its reach
- The findings, outcomes and recommendations arising
- How the feedback has impacted on service delivery
- The number of new tenants engaged with Housing Services
- Obtain feedback at events to learn what worked well in the consultation and what would make it even better next time
- Keep our measures of impact under regular review to make sure they measure the correct things

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures contains a number of measures that will also help the Council to understand if it is hitting the mark with engagement. These are:

TP06 Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenants' views and acts upon them

TP07 Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them

TP08 Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect

These will be collated and reported annually.

We will self assess our services to ensure they comply with the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and any future standards relating to engagement.

8.0 Approval, Consultation and Review Timetable

Document title	Tenant Engagement Strategy		
Version number	DRAFT	Protective marking	Official
Lead Director	Director Housing Health and Wellbeing		
Lead Business Unit	Housing Services		
Lead contact	Housing Services Business Manager		
Date approved (SLT)		Date approved (Members)	
Reviews due:			
Consultation			

Consultee	Date	Comments received	Material change requested (yes/no)
SLT	13/06/23		
Policy & Performance Improvement Committee	26/6/23		
Tenant Engagement Board			
Cabinet			



SERVING PEOPLE, IMPROVING LIVES

Tenant Involvement

Are you **hungry** for involvement in your community or how your home is managed?

If the answer is yes - we have a **Menu of Involvement** that will fill you up!

Turn over to see our specials

MENU

Starters - Have a Taste

Easy ways to get involved that don't take too much time.

Estate Walkabouts
Influencing Service Improvements
Contractor Tender evaluations
Grounds Maintenance Champions
Empty Home Scrutiny
Rant and Rave

Talk to us about your experience of services

Main Course - A Big Plateful

Play a part in decision making by attending regular meetings

Community Link Groups (also available as a starter)
Local Influence Networks
Scrutinising our services
Digital Champions
Reviewing and scrutinising our performance

Dessert – Something Sweet

Have more time and able to dedicate more time – this is the cherry on top!

Why not become a Chair of a Local Influence Network to attend our Tenant Engagement Board and Housing Assurance Board to get strong understanding on how we are performing against the Regulatory standards

Prefer to take away?

Get involved without having to leave your home

Mystery Shopping
Surveys (choice of service areas)
Online discussions
Performance and Tenant Satisfaction results
Have your say on local and national consultations

Side Orders

Added extras to make your experience better

Training to improve your skills
Transport provided or your costs covered
Mix of on-line and face to face meetings
Meetings held in accessible spaces and at convenient times
Opportunities to network

Kids Menu

Fussy eaters? Ask about our kids menu and we will find a way that suits them to get involved



Home
Delivery
Available

Tenant Involvement at Newark and Sherwood District Council

We have a strong record of placing tenants at the heart of our decision making processes and have a range of ways for tenants to get involved in a way that works for them to shape how the council delivers and provides housing services.

We want to involve as many tenants as we can in helping us deliver service improvement and to challenge our performance. If you want to have influence or get involved with us here's our offer:

What you can expect from Newark and Sherwood District Council:

- ❖ 121 support and guidance from our Tenant Engagement Team
- ❖ Support with travel and childcare costs
- ❖ An overview of the regulations and guidance that govern our housing services
- ❖ Opportunity to undertake formal training and/or gain new skills that add to your experience
- ❖ Access to and/or support with kit to help you engage digitally
- ❖ Opportunity to meet people with similar interests and a shared focus on improving housing services
- ❖ Attendance at training events and conferences that will help build your knowledge and confidence

To get the most out of your involvement with us, talk to us about:

- ❖ The level of involvement that fits the time you can commit to so we can agree the ways to talk to us
- ❖ The support and training that would help you
- ❖ How you want to take part in training and 121 sessions
- ❖ How we can support you to challenge us and drive forward improvements

Want to know more; want to get involved and make a real difference? Then let us know via:

getinvolved@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

Calling our Customer Services Team on 01636 650000



Report to: Cabinet Meeting: 11th July 2023
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Taylor – Public Protection and Community Relations
 Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director Communities & Environment
 Lead Officer: Jenny Walker, Business Manager – Public Protection, Ext.5210

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report, non-key decision
Report Title	Responding to increased demand in anti-social behaviour and safeguarding
Purpose of Report	To provide an update to Cabinet on the demands within Community Safety and in particular ASB and Safeguarding cases and projects. To further strengthen the service and the work managed and delivered by increasing resources within the Community Safety Team.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the current work on Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety as set out in Section 1; • approve the additional one Full Time Post to the Council’s establishment; • approve the overspend in salaries 2023-24 funded by the overall predicted overall council General Fund underspend in year; and • approve the growth of Salary Budget set out above for all future years from 2024-25
Alternative Options Considered	Continuing service delivery with existing resources which would not help to combat the increasing demand.
Reason for Recommendations	To note the current work the council currently undertakes to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour within the district and to look how this can be improved and enhanced ensuring support for the team and residents.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Council’s Community Plan (2020-2023) has a key objective to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the district and to increase the feelings of safety in our communities. The Community Plan set out a number of outcomes linked to this objective and many of these have been undertaken and will continue to be delivered.

1.2 Policy & Performance Improvement Committee (PPIC) set up a working group to look at Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in June 2022. The working group looked at current ASB working practices and made a number of recommendations that were presented to Cabinet on 21 February 2023. The recommendations were broken down into 5 categories:

- Improve Communications
- Community Protection officers (CPOs)
- Partnership Working
- The Community Safety Charter
- CCTV

1.3 Many of the 15 recommendations made have been completed, this includes the purchase of a hybrid van to assist the CPOs in working across the district (delivery date to be advised), a quarterly ASB newsletter that provides updates to Members and selected partners, continued funding of the Police Analyst as part of the Community Safety Partnership and to continue to work closely with partners and ensure the council retains a strong focus on a collaborative approach to tackling ASB.

1.3 Current ASB initiatives and Action

1.3.1 Newark & Sherwood has been successful in bringing external funding to the area through the Safer Streets Programme. Applications have seen almost £1.2 million of investments made in key locations including improvement at Chatham Court, which has now not had a single burglary in two years.

1.3.2 Most recently we were successful in our application for Safer Streets 4 Funding following previous Safer Streets successes. The current programme is due to finish at the end of September 2023 and on completion will see the following actions to have been taken:

- Installation of security gates at St Marks Precinct
- Replacement of 4 CCTV cameras
- The provision of 3 new additional CCTV cameras
- Replacement lighting in Market Square and on Church Walks
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) – Nights of action in the night-time economy, training for those working in those setting and the creation of Gym Safe
- Installed a new door entry system to prevent burglary at Tithe Barn, Queen's Court and Lovers Lane, learning from the impact at Chatham Court
- Promotion and extension of the ShopWatch Scheme
- Environmental Improvement – removing benches from locations where they were a source of ASB, cutting back hedges and tress to increase the feelings of safety

1.4 Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Funding

1.4.1 Each year the OPCC opens up for bid submissions from authorities for two pots of funding, the first is Locality Funding (up to £200k), where request for funds are made for projects, schemes or works that contribute to the Make Notts Safe Strategy. This

funding has been provided to Newark and Sherwood successfully for a number of years for the provision of diversionary activities to reduce ASB, women's safety, safe drinking campaigns, wildlife and rural crime/ASB, substance misuse, taxi marshals for peak times of the year and key events such as the world cup, and cybercrime.

1.4.2 The current bid submission for 23-24 has been submitted to the OPCC for consideration alongside other bids from the other Nottinghamshire Authorities. The bid includes again funding request for diversionary activities to reduce ASB and crime, seasonal ASB campaigns around Halloween, Bonfire Night and Christmas, Rural and Wildlife Crime to continue work on off road motor bikes etc

1.4.3 The second fund is Safer4All funding. There are no bids submitted for this fund for 23-24 as a joint bid submission was made in 22-23 with Bassetlaw District Council through Community Safety Partnership (CSP) for a Rural Crime Initiative. This bid was successful and provided £200k to reduce rural crime across Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw, focussing on hotspot locations, to liaise with affected homes and business and seek to provide target hardening measures following an appropriate risk assessment for the locality. This project is being led by Nottinghamshire Police and reported into the Safer Streets existing project meetings and through the CSP.

1.5 CCTV Review and Replacement

1.5.1 As part of the ASB working group, a recommendation was made for a CCTV review to be undertaken and presented to members in late 2023. This is a large ongoing piece of work looking at many aspects of CCTV including but not limited to the following:

- Overview of current process – location at Sherwood Lodge, staffing and processes
- CCTV Partnership in place with Broxtowe, Ashfield and Rushcliffe - Costs for NSDC for staffing and maintenance as part of the contracts
- Cameras – number of cameras and their location, the age of the cameras and the new planned replacement scheme
- Town and Parish Council cameras – number of cameras, who they are run for, costs and process for those cameras
- Data and Legal – CCTV requirements and accreditation, legal agreements in place or required.

1.6 Community Protection Team

1.6.1 There are only two ASB Officers who sit within the Community Protection Team, this is made up of Environmental Protection, Community Protection Officers, Emergency Planning, CCTV and the Community Safety Partnership, which includes the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator. The ASB Officers work closely with the wider team on shared cases and directly link and work with other colleagues as the need arises. There are also a number of related groups and panels that the ASB Officers either attend regularly or when a case arises, these include:

- Community Safety Partnership – NSDC and Bassetlaw District Council
- Vulnerable Persons Panel – Attends most panels where individuals have been identified as vulnerable for a variety of reasons to include mental health issues and, addictions and their vulnerability in the community due to risk of becoming victim to criminal behaviour.

- ASB Panel – Attend all panels and present updates on cases listed. The chairing and administration of this panel sits within the team and will receive and process referrals from a variety of agencies prior to and after the meetings.
- Hoarding Panel – Will attend when able to contribute to the issues of the individuals being discussed.
- Disruption Meeting – Facilitated by the Police, this panel is for those that have moved beyond the ASB Panel in terms of seriousness of their offences and actions. The aim to prevent further deterioration of their ASB and criminal behaviour
- Child In Need/Safeguarding meetings – Led by social services and will attend on a case-by-case basis.

1.6.2 The team also have to be aware of wider partnership meetings for work that is being undertaken in the Community Safety arena and how it links with their roles, these include:

- Serious Violence Duty
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Duty
- Child Sexual Exploitation Panel
- Child Criminal Exploitation Panel
- Domestic Violence Partnership Board
- Hate Crime Board
- Prevent Duty

2.0 Current Demand

2.1 There is demand from multiple sources for the current ASB Officers, whilst the foundation of the role is to deal with complaints of anti-social behaviour this fundamentally links into other areas of work and partnerships that create demand on the role.

2.2 Delivering of enforcement for Housing

2.2.1 The two ASB Officers assist in the provision of the enforcement function for NSDC housing. As part of this an internal recharge is made to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) of £34,000 per year to support the costs of the two existing posts. Housing have a responsibility for tenancy management and undertake certain level of enforcement and ultimately tenancy breaches and evictions. The ASB Officers assist with wider ASB enforcement action that sits outside of the housing function.

2.3 ASB Enforcement

2.3.1 Alongside delivering the enforcement function for housing services the ASB Officers undertake enforcement actions related to ASB across all tenures. Enforcement should always be a stepped approach, beginning with advice and warnings, to more enforcement measures such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs), Community Protection Warning and Notices to Injunctions and Criminal Behaviour Orders.

2.3.2 It is essential for the officers to work well with all partners such as the Police, Youth Justice, Youth Offending Team, Social Services and local schools to ensure that cases can be holistically managed and co-ordinated. Working in a collaborative way aims to create more sustainable solutions to cases. On some occasions incidents that occur are so severe and previous warning and actions have been to no avail that we have no choice but to take firm enforcement action.

2.4 Safeguarding

2.4.1 The ASB officers are the council's safeguarding officers, alongside the Homeless Strategy and Safeguarding Officer from the housing team. All three deal with all safeguarding referrals made by council officers or via our partners such as Active4Today. They also deliver all in house training which is required to be delivered to all staff and elected members. The priority of these referrals is high, and the content and issues presented in these referrals often require rapid action to ensure the individual in question is not in immediate harm and if they are, take swift action and liaison with the Police.

2.4.2 Our Annual Partner Assurance Tool, which has to be completed and returned to the County Safeguarding Adults board has identified that the level of safeguarding concerns increased in 2022/23 to higher levels than those experienced pre-covid 2019/20. The number of concerns received in 2022/23 has increased by 47% since 2020/21. The referrals made are now much more complex, require multiple partners to be involved in and a significant number relate to mental health concerns.

2.5 Vulnerable Persons Panel, ASB Panel and Safeguarding and Disruption Meeting

2.5.1 These are the main meetings where ASB cases are discussed and are led by a combination of the Community Protection Manager and ASB team at NSDC and senior officers from the police and youth justice services. They occur on a 4 weekly/monthly basis. The aim of these meetings is to provide a safe and secure environment to share information/actions on any individual with a variety of agencies who can then work collaboratively to resolve the issues raised. There is excellent attendance at all the meetings which enables cases to be resolved in a timely manner.

2.6 Diversionary Activities

2.6.1 Through the funding bids mentioned above and other partnership working the ASB Officers organise and attend diversionary activities for youths set up across the district to try and actively engage them in different activities and to keep them busy. These events are well attended, most recently:

- Supporting Community and Tenancy engagement colleagues in Easter event in Rainworth
- Extreme Wheels event at Blidworth Skate Park
- Extreme Wheels event at Newark Skate Park
- Fishing projects with 2 local schools in Balderton and Newark

- Working with Notts County Council Youth Services teams to deliver diversionary activities, including a vegetable garden at Bilsthorpe Young People’s Centre, an engagement session at Hawtonville Young People’s Centre and establishing a cooking club.
- The Hill Holt Project is still running and following further funding from the PCC is now able to take referrals from ourselves and any other partner agency if we identify an individual who may benefit from the skills they teach.

2.7 Schools and Education

2.7.1 The ASB Officers, alongside the Community Protection Officers, all take part in visits to schools and community events to provide education and advice to groups of all ages in relation to ASB matters. This may include alcohol awareness, reporting ASB, dog control, partnership working with the Police etc. The officers were all recently involved in the Newark Show, with a busy stand with lots of activities to take part in to highlight various issues. They also arrange Water and Fire Safety days in our local parks with Notts Police, Fire and Rescue and our own Park Rangers to get the safety message across but also to ensure that they are aware of the consequences of swimming in open water and of setting fires.

3.0 Case Reporting and Enforcement Data

3.1 The table below shows the number of cases reported for the ASB Officers for both ASB cases and Safeguarding referrals. It should be noted that these are numbers of cases reported to NSDC, we are aware that there is an issue in underreporting to both ourselves and the Police. There have been a number of recent incidents that have come through to our attention via social media that haven’t been reported to either agency.

3.2 We recognise that data only paints part of the picture and that the perception of feeling safe for our residents is key. The table below illustrates that with increasing ASB cases, enforcement action taken by the officers is also increasing year on year.

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024 to date (21/06)
Number of ASB Cases reported	250	208	214	144
Enforcement action taken	1 Closure Order 7 CPW 3 CPN 8 ABCs	1 ASB Injunction 5 CPW 1 CPN 3 ABCs 1 PSPO	3 Interim Orders 2 Criminal Behaviour Orders 10 CPW 1 CPN 7 ABCs 3 PSPOs	13 ABCs

Number of ASB Cases Reported that are Council Housing	47	45	51	28
Enforcement action taken	2 x CPW 1 x CPW + CPWN	1 x ABC 3 x CPW 1 x CPW + CPWN 1 x Injunction	8 x CPW 3 x Interim Injunctions	2 X ABC 1 X ABC + Injunction Warning 4 x Stage 2 Letter 4 x Stage 1 Letter 1 x CBO/Injunction Warning
Number of Safeguarding Referrals	35	39	78	14

3.3 Safeguarding referrals were lower during COVID restrictions due to less customer contacts or visits being undertaken. The numbers provided are actual safeguarding referrals and does not include advice and guidance given that may not have resulted in a referral. In relation to Anti-Social Behaviour there were increased recording during COVID restrictions as potential breaches in COVID rules were recorded as ASB.

4.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered

4.1 The report above details the work undertaken by the service and shows the increasing demand and complexity of cases managed by the existing team alongside competing demand of ad hoc funding bids aimed at making further improvement. This is an area of increasing demand in both cases but in expectation of communities and the impact anti-social behaviour has on their lives. Increasing resources by creating a new Senior ASB Officer post into this area and the wider work within Community Safety will offer a fundamental benefit for our communities.

4.2 This role would supervise the Community Protection Officers on a daily basis ensuring deployment of patrols in key locations in a timely manner, assist the existing officers in dealing with more complex ASB and Safeguarding cases to provide more resources and assistance to manage the continued demand.

4.3 In addition, this role will also take a lead on projects including bid funding to further free up resources to ensure bids and projects are completed in a timely manner. This will include future OPPC funding bids and any future Safer Streets programmes with the aim of dealing with the stubborn upward spike we've seen in Newark Town Centre as well as any latent demand that may arise from asking residents more strongly to report matters to the Council.

5.0 Implications

5.1 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.

5.2 Financial Implications FIN23-24/5041

5.2.1 The proposed Senior ASB Officer role has been subject to NSDC Job Evaluation process and has been awarded a grade of NS12. As a new role, not part of the existing establishment, there are financial implications. The funding of this new role cannot be funded through existing budgets within Public Protection.

5.2.2 In order to fund the new role it is proposed that, subject to member approval, that the funding for the new role for 23-24 be funded from predicted overall council underspend in year. For future years the post will be included as a growth item for 24-25 and become part of the establishment budget from April 24.

5.2.3 A one-off indirect cost to Public Protection of a new laptop, ICT equipment and additional licenses is in the region of £2,000.

5.2.4 It is anticipated that the post will be occupied from August 2023; this is to give an indication of part year costs calculated to be £35.8k in 2023-24. Any movement on this start date will fluctuate the costs accordingly.

5.2.5 The table below illustrates the General Fund budget impact; if approved by Members, from August 2023-24 the costs are anticipated to be £35.8k, and each year of the Medium-Term Financial Plan starting from £55.3k, inflated as per the pre-approved budget strategy 2023.

5.2.6 The Salary Scale for 2023/24 is at 2022/23 rates plus 5% pay award inflation, which is subject to change pending the pay award settlements. These figures include assumptions for Salary, National Insurance and Superannuation. The grade for this post has been assumed at the top of the scale, therefore working on maximum budgetary impact. If the post is agreed at a lower grade, this will result in a favourable variance to this request.

CODE	Post	Grade	HOURS	W.e.f Date	2023/24 PART YEAR COST	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
A10823	SENIOR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OFFICER	NS12 - SCP33	37	August	35,792	55,337	57,035	58,783
	TOTAL COST/(SAVING)				35,792	55,337	57,035	58,783

5.3 Human Resources

5.3.1 This is a new post that, if approved, will be created within the organisation and recruitment to the post will be conducted in line with our recruitment & equalities

procedures. This may present an opportunity for advancement for an existing member of staff or to bring in external talent to the organisation.

5.3.2 The new post has been reviewed by a Job Evaluation Panel as per the Policy and has been assigned NS12 grade.

5.3.4 In line with procedures, a report will go to the Joint Consultative Committee for consultation if approved.

5.4 Digital Implications

5.4.1 The proposal will result in an increase to the establishment of 1 FTE, which will mean that additional ICT equipment and licenses is required – noted in the financial implications.

5.4.2 The digital strategy action plan has some planned projects for Public Protection, however not specifically in relation to this post and it is unlikely this type of service could benefit from digital transformation to reduce the need for plus 1 FTE

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.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Working Group Review – Cabinet Report 21 February 2023

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

Document is Restricted

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

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