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Monday, 23 October 2023

Chair: Councillor P Peacock

Members of the Cabinet:

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

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: Tuesday, 31 October 2023 at 6.00 pm

**VENUE: Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark,
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 on Nigel.hill@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk.

AGENDA

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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 item of business on the grounds that it involves 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, 12 September 2023 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chairman)

Councillor L Brazier, Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Crosby,
Councillor R Holloway, Councillor K Melton, Councillor E Oldham,
Councillor M Spoors and Councillor P Taylor

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

27 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.

28 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2023

The minutes from the meeting held on 11 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29 BUDGET PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 1- 2023/24

The Leader and Portfolio Holder - Strategy, Performance & Finance presented the Projected General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Outturn Report to 31 March 2024 as at 30 June 2023. The report forecast the outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets and detailed performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income; report on major variances from planned budget performance; and report on variations to the Capital Programme for approval; all in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

The Business Manager- Financial Services confirmed that the 5% variances within the salary budgets due to staffing vacancies were from across all service areas within the Council did not reflect vacancies from any specific post of business units.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the General Fund projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.130m;
- b) note the Housing Revenue Account projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.131m to the Major Repairs Reserve;

- c) approve the variations to the Capital Programme at Appendix C to the report;
- d) approve the Capital Programme revised budget and financing of £109.711m; and
- e) note the Prudential indicators at Appendix F to the report.

30 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 1 - 2023/24

The Transformation & Service Improvement Manager presented the Quarter 1 Community Plan Performance Report for April - June 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 April to 30 June 2023.

The Council's performance was measured in four parts as 'Our District', 'Our Performance', 'Our Customers' and 'Our Workforce'. The report for Members also contained a compliance report reporting performance in corporate compliance, housing (tenant) compliance and green space compliance.

Members welcomed the report and noted the reasons and actions on-going to mitigate those targets which had not been met, including Newark Beacon occupation and bin collections.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) review the Community Plan Performance Report attached as Appendix 1 to the report;
- b) review the Compliance Report attached as Appendix 2 to the report; and
- c) consider the Council's performance against its objectives highlighting any areas of high performance and identifying areas for improvement.

31 HOUSING COMPLIANCE PERFORMANCE REPORT- QUARTER 4 22/23 AND QUARTER 1 23/24

The Portfolio Holder for Housing presented a report to provide assurance on the performance of compliance services within housing services and highlight areas falling below the target set and reasons with plan for recovery for the end of Quarter 4 and Quarter 1 2023/24, 31 December 2023 to 30 June 2023.

The Business Manager - Housing Maintenance & Asset Management was in attendance and detailed the actions undertaken by the Council to gain access to council properties where tenants refused access to undertake gas and electricity checks and servicing.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the compliance performance for the end of financial year, the items for action and changes for next financial years reporting; and
- b) Identifies any areas of concerns or for further investigation or detail.

Meeting closed at 6.34 pm.

Chairman

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, 19 September 2023 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chairman)

Councillor L Brazier, Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Crosby,
Councillor R Holloway, Councillor K Melton, Councillor E Oldham,
Councillor M Spoors and Councillor P Taylor

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor N Allen, Councillor I Brown, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor J Lee, Councillor S Michael and Councillor P Rainbow.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

33 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.

34 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Leader and Chair referred to three recent events, the Tour Of Britain cycle race, the Community Awards ceremony and the Dragon Boat race along the River Trent in Newark which had all been successfully ran with support from the District Council.

35 PLANS TO DECARBONISE THE COUNCIL'S ESTATE (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Corporate Property presented a report which provided the Cabinet with an update on plans to appoint consultants to develop a decarbonisation plan for the Council's buildings in line with the Council's Community Plan objectives and stated plan to be net carbon neutral by 2035.

It was noted that within the Council's carbon footprint there were two principal sources of emissions, the fleet and Council buildings. Work was underway to understand how the Council's depot at Brunel Drive may need to be developed to support low emission vehicles and five buildings had been identified for photovoltaic panels to be fitted. However, a number of other sites, as listed in the report, had been approved for the decarbonisation plan and the Council had approached the market to identify consultants to carry out feasibility work.

Following a tender exercise, a preferred partner had been selected with a value of £150,780. Surveys would commence following approval of the budget, with a completion date in late Autumn 2023. Costings for the required works would also be produced for future funding requests. It was noted that government funding rounds were made available, but it was necessary to have ready made schemes to submit in order to be successful.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve a budget of £150,780 from the Change Management Reserve to fund the work identified in the report.

Reasons for Decision

To enable a programme of decarbonisation activities in line with the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan for a carbon net neutral target date of 2035.

Options Considered

The Council has a target of being net carbon neutral, excluding housing, by 2035. The two main sources of carbon within the Council's footprint are its fleet and its buildings. Doing nothing is therefore not deemed a viable alternative to deliver carbon savings within the Council's estate, whilst the expertise and capacity to deliver this work in-house is not currently available.

36 UPDATE ON KERBSIDE GLASS RECYCLING SCHEME

The Director – Communities & Environment presented a report which set out the current status and risks of the glass recycling project. An update on the project was set out in section 2 of the report. This provided updates on the infrastructure and capital works required; the vehicle and depot capacity; the waste transfer station; some of the arrangements for the service; working with Recycling Ollerton & Boughton; procurement; and resources, both staffing and financial.

In the report summary it was advised that the project continued to progress across the various areas and was still on schedule to go live in 2023/24, however there were slight risks around the transfer station. In addition, the anticipated shortfall in the budgets from 2024 onwards, could be covered if a planned increase in the garden recycling fee was implemented.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the current status of the project and note the challenges which may impact the project launch date;
- b) note that there is currently an additional forecast budget requirement of £30k from 2024/25;
- c) note that the garden recycling subscription fee is increased from £35 to £37 from 2024/25, in line with the rationale set out in paragraphs 2.6.8 and 2.6.10 of the report;
- d) note that the one-off funding of circa £8k for glass recycling boxes be provided to Recycling Ollerton and Boughton (ROB);
- e) approve the transition of apprentice mechanic to a permanent FTE at NS9; and
- f) further updates be provided where required.

Reason for Decision

To introduce a kerbside glass collection service in line with resident feedback, the aspirations within the Community Plan and within the budget previously agreed by the Council.

Options Considered

As set out, the report provides an update on an existing Council decision to introduce a kerbside glass collection service in Newark and Sherwood. As such, no alternatives have been put forward at this stage.

37 AMENDED ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Planning Policy & Infrastructure presented a report which sought approval for the Publication Version of the Amended Allocations & Development Management Development Plan Document, and which set out proposals around the provision of a Gypsy Roma Traveller site at the former Belvoir Iron Works, Newark.

Work on preparing the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD had gone through the various statutory stages culminating in the publication of a Draft DPD for a period of representation in November and December 2022. A total of 164 representations were received from 63 individuals and organisations. The details were set out in the Statement of Consultation and Appendix A to the report set out the proposed amendments to the DPD in response, and Appendix B was the draft version of the Second Publication Amended Allocations and Development Management DPD.

The draft DPD identified the former Belvoir Ironworks site to the south of Newark as a preferred additional allocation of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller pitch provision which could be delivered with Council support and resources, and it was noted that negotiations with the landowner were continuing.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) endorse the proposed amendments to the previous version of the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD as set out in Appendix B;
- b) recommends to Full Council that the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD as set out in Appendix B is published for a period of public representation;
- c) approves, subject to planning, a Maximum Contribution (as set out in the Exempt Appendix) towards the delivery of former Belvoir Iron Works Site, with delegated Authority being given to the Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Sustainable Economic Development, to conclude the terms of a land purchase in accordance with the Council's Acquisitions and Disposals Policy, subject to planning and the outcome of the grant funding submission to the Homes England Affordable Homes Programme; and

- d) to add the maximum contribution (as set out in the Exempt Appendix) into the Capital Programme financed by the Change Management Reserve.

Reasons for Decision

To allow Full Council to consider a publication version of the Allocations & Development Management DPD for a period of public representation.

To allow the delivery of the former Belvoir Iron Works site as part of the Council's Gypsy and Traveller Strategy, as contained within the publication version of the Allocations & Development Management DPD.

Options Considered

As set out in Section 1 of the report, the District Council have considered a range of options as part of the Plan Review engagement and consultation process.

38 NEWARK TOWNS FUND PROJECTS UPDATE AND PROJECT ADJUSTMENT REQUEST (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Economic Growth & Visitor Economy presented a report which provided an update on the delivery of the identified priority projects in the Town Investment Plan through the Newark Town Deal (NTD). In addition, the report sought to approve a Project Adjustment Request relating to the Towns Fund area, by seeking to change the redline boundary of the NTD.

The report gave an update on the ten priority projects with three full business cases still to be developed and approved – Newark Cultural Heart, SISCLOG (Gateway Project), and Castle Gatehouse. It was reported that to allow the conclusion of a full business case for the SISCLOG/Newark Gateway redevelopment it was necessary to amend the Newark Towns Fund boundary to include the Newark Showground Policy Area.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note and welcome the progress made in the delivery, assurance and monitoring of the Town Deal (NTD) and proposals within the Town Investment Plan (TIP); and
- b) approve the Project Adjustment Request (PAR) relating to the Towns Fund area, as detailed at paragraph 3 to the report.

Reason for Decision

To ensure the ongoing governance and management of the Towns Fund programme. To ensure that the Towns Fund area boundary is representative of updated information and encompasses all relevant areas.

Options Considered

There is an option to not undertake the PAR relating to the Town Fund Area. This has been discounted as it would not deliver the necessary requirements for the priority projects to be delivered within the programme period.

39 DECANT POLICY 2023 - 2026 (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder Housing presented a report which set out how the Council supported its tenants across the District when it was necessary to move from their homes temporarily or permanently to complete major works, or for the demolition or disposal of the property. This was known as the decant process, and a proposed Decant Policy for 2023-2026 was attached as an appendix to the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve and adopt the Decant Policy for 2023-2026 as set out in the Appendix to the report.

Reason for Decision

To ensure the Council has suitable arrangements in place to support tenants with moving to facilitate necessary works to homes and for good management of housing stock to support our Community Plan objective to create more and better quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority.

Options Considered

None, it is necessary to support tenants in this manner.

40 HOUSING SERVICES RESOURCES

The Portfolio Holder Housing presented a report which set out the current challenges in the Housing Services Business Unit and sought Cabinet approval to increase staffing resources to effectively deliver the tenancy & estate management services.

The report detailed the roles and workloads of the tenancy officers and the changes in the sector which had resulted in the additional workloads which were now being seen. It was considered that the additional resources sought would relieve pressure on existing staff, but also be available to be redirected as priorities and/or areas change or require a more intensive housing management approach. It was noted that a review of resources would be undertaken annually.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve:

- a) the use of £45,115 from the Housing Revenue Account Service Improvement Reserve to cover the costs of the additional posts for 2023-24; and
- b) the budget for the 5 FTE tenancy officers is included in the baseline budget from 2024 onwards.

Reason for Decision

To ensure we continue to deliver excellent housing services across the district in line with best practice, regulatory compliance and keeping tenants at the heart of our services.

The increase in staffing 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; reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and increase

feelings of safety in our communities; and improve the health and wellbeing of local residents”.

Options Considered

The consideration for temporary resource was discounted due to the continued rise of complex case management, the increase in homelessness duty discharge into our stock and the difficulty accessing support services within the district.

41 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

42 HOUSING SERVICES STRUCTURE PROPOSAL

The Cabinet considered the exempt report in relation to a Housing Services structure proposal.

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

Meeting closed at 7.06 pm.

Chairman

By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 31 October 2023

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

Director Leads: John Robinson, Chief Executive and Deborah Johnson, Director - Customer Services & Organisational Development

Lead Officer: Rowan Bosworth-Brown, Transformation & Service Improvement Officer, Ext. 5824

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Key Decision
Report Title	Community Plan 2023 - 2027
Purpose of Report	This report details the draft Community Plan 2023-2027 and carries forward the comments made by the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee for Cabinet's consideration, prior to the approval of the Community Plan.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) review the Community Plan and the accompanying comments carried forward from the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee; andb) endorse and recommend the Community Plan to the meeting of Full Council to be held on 12 December 2023 for approval.
Alternative Options Considered	The report details the process by which alternative options for inclusion in the plan have been considered.
Reason for Recommendations	Members of Cabinet, Chairs and Vice Chairs have worked together to reach a consensus and have developed the Community Plan over the course of a number of months. The Community Plan is the key direction setting document which sets out the priorities and vision for the Council.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Community Plan is the key direction setting document used to outline the priorities and vision of the Council for a four-year term. As a result of the election in May 2023, a new administration was appointed and they have worked together to develop the Community Plan 2023-2027.

- 1.2 The Community Plan has been under development for a number of months, in which the Cabinet, Chairs and Vice Chairs have met a number of times with the aim of developing and shaping the priorities of the Community Plan 2023 – 2027. The draft plan is attached as **Appendix 1** to the report. The results of the Resident Survey 2022 have been used to inform the development of the Community Plan.
- 1.3 Business Managers have reviewed the draft Community Plan objectives and associated actions and had the opportunity to provide feedback.
- 1.4 The Community Plan has been presented to the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee (PPIC) and Members of this committee have contributed a number of comments for Cabinet to consider prior to recommending to the Council for approval. These comments are detailed below:
- 1.5 ‘Review the Council’s leisure offer, including buildings and any necessary programmes of renewal’. Members commented that there is no specific mention of a new Leisure Centre in Southwell which had been budgeted for under the previous administration. Members requested that clarification on this point should be sought, as a new leisure centre would support the objective to improve health and wellbeing of the residents within Southwell.
- 1.6 Members highlighted that within the Community Plan there are not currently any timeframes set out and attributed to specific actions.
- 1.7 Members commented on the current actions and commitments proposed regarding climate change and lowering the Councils carbon footprint. Members urged Cabinet to consider that there is a great deal of green innovation taking place and that technologies are constantly evolving. As such, the Councils progress towards achieving net zero should be handled carefully and using a considered approach to achieve the greatest impact and secure value for money for the taxpayer.
- 1.8 Members commented on the benefits of utilising education for the residents of Newark and Sherwood, in order to encourage sustainable living. This may include the promotion of grants schemes for sources of renewable energy.
- 1.9 Members commented on how the priorities captured within the Resident Survey 2022, have been used and aligned to the priorities of the Community Plan. Specific reference was made to the Heritage, Culture & the Arts Portfolio, which were shared with members of PPIC as supplementary actions, and primarily detailed actions concerning the portfolio.
- 1.10 Members suggested that Portfolio Holders should be invited to future meetings of PPIC where reports directly relate to a specific portfolio and that where actions within the Community Plan are at an exploratory stage, the portfolio holder should be involved in the further development of these actions.
- 1.11 Members requested to be involved during the development of the performance framework.

- 1.12 Members proposed that when reviewing the Councils performance against the finalised performance framework, that focus areas could be pre-selected to allow PPIC to provide focused scrutiny on areas that have been identified.
- 1.13 Members commented on the resource considerations that would be required to support the delivery of the proposed actions set out within the Community Plan and whether this is affordable for the Council.
- 1.14 Members suggested that actions which are a continuation and in progress from the previous Community Plan should be worded to reflect this continuation.
- 1.15 Members acknowledged and agreed that the Community Plan must remain flexible and able to adapt to changes.
- 1.16 Members proposed the presentation of the Community Plan be amended in regard to the portfolio holder, to name the portfolio title opposed to the individual Councillor who holds that portfolio. Councillor Paul Peacock has confirmed that he is happy for this change to be made, which has been updated accordingly within Appendix 1.

2.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet review the comments carried forward from the PPIC, addressing the comments raised by the Members and reviewing which suggestions may be adopted into the Community Plan.
- 2.2 It is recommended that members of Cabinet review the draft Community Plan with a view to approving and embedding the Community Plan.

3.0 Implications

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

Financial Implications (FIN23-24/8812)

- 3.1 Where appropriate any resource requirements to enable the delivery of the actions contained within the draft Community Plan 2023-2027 will be built into the budgets/HRA Business Plan/Medium Term Financial that will be approved during February and March 2024.
- 3.2 Once further work has been undertaken to understand the resource requirements to deliver the actions, where appropriate, individual reports will be brought back on the various topics, which will identify any resource requirements to deliver the action whether that be from a one-off perspective or on-going.

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 AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY PLAN 2023 - 2027



SERVING PEOPLE, IMPROVING LIVES



**NEWARK &
SHERWOOD
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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WELCOME TO NEWARK AND SHERWOOD'S COMMUNITY PLAN

2023 - 2027

Welcome to Newark and Sherwood's Community Plan, covering the period from 2023 to 2027.

The plan sets out what the Council intends to achieve over the next four years and how we will go about doing this. It takes account of feedback that we've received from our residents and focuses on the things that matter most to them - like tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and protecting and enhancing our environment.

In so many ways, Newark and Sherwood is a fantastic place to live, work and visit. We are privileged to be surrounded by wonderful countryside, are home to a thriving and diverse business and community sector and have many local amenities on our doorstep that cater for all kinds of different interests. At the same time, some of the people we serve are finding life especially tough at the moment, struggling to cope with the continued high cost-of-living and finding it difficult to fulfil their potential. While some Council services and some activities within the Community Plan are universal - in other words they benefit everyone - there's a strong theme running through our plan to maximise the strengths and unleash the potential of individuals and communities that have yet to share in the wider prosperity of Newark and Sherwood. This will involve working at multiple levels (national, regional, county, district and neighbourhood) if we're to raise aspirations, improve local skills levels, stimulate inward investment and improve health and well-being.

The other strong current flowing through our plan is our ambition to accelerate action to combat climate change and to enhance and protect biodiversity. There's plenty more we can do as a Council, for example to reduce our energy consumption through our planning policies and sensitive approaches to land management and conservation. But as with all of our challenges and opportunities, we can't do this alone and rely on constructive relationships with a wide range of partners. So, in our plan you'll find actions that the Council will be leading on and other actions that are about us influencing others for the benefit of our community.

The Community Plan provides a focus for the Council's activities and we will use it to prioritise how we spend public money. However, we know from experience that plans change. Think COVID, the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis, none of which were on the horizon when we developed our last plan yet all of which had a profound impact on our own organisation and the people that we serve. We will therefore carry out regular reviews of our Plan, to ensure that we are making good progress so that it remains fresh and in touch with local priorities.

Finally, although the bulk of the plan focuses on the actions we're going to take, there's an important section which concentrates on the "how" - the way we go about our business. This is hugely important - we call these our values - and they reflect what is important to us in the way that we think, behave and interact within and beyond the Council. You can find our values listed on page 5 of the Community Plan and ultimately, you will be the judge as to whether we are living these out or not!

We hope you find the Plan of interest and if you have any comments or suggestions, we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes.



John Robinson
Chief Executive of Newark and
Sherwood District Council

Councillor Paul Peacock
Leader of Newark and
Sherwood District Council

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OUR VISION

The ethos of Newark and Sherwood District Council is 'Serving People, Improving Lives'. We exist for the benefit of others and we are accountable for making things better. We accept this responsibility and recognise that our Community Plan can only be achieved by working in partnership with others and at a variety of different levels – sometimes street based, sometimes regionally, nationally and internationally.

Our Council wants to make a positive difference - now and for future generations. We're passionate for everyone within our community to fulfil their potential and our aspiration is to be at the forefront of sustainable living.

We are proud to represent Newark and Sherwood and although not everyone will agree with everything that we do, we are a Council that is true to its values: welcoming, ambitious, responsive, professional and value for money.

OUR PURPOSE AND OUR VALUES

We want to serve our local community in the best way we possibly can. As public servants we place a great emphasis on adopting a public sector ethos and seek to embody this in the way that we interact with you and with each other. The Council's purpose and values make it clear what we are here to do and how we will go about it.

Ambitious and forward thinking:

Focused on achieving the very best and always looking to improve and innovate.

Caring and compassionate:

Sensitive to the different needs and circumstances of others; seeks to empower people to fulfil their potential.

Commercial and business-like:

Careful and creative with resources; securing value for money.

Professional and trustworthy:

Open, honest and transparent. Consistently delivering on promises; providing good quality and demonstrating integrity.

Welcoming and responsive:

Approachable, friendly and inclusive. Open to feedback and challenge and swift to act.

'SERVING PEOPLE, IMPROVING LIVES'

OUR DISTRICT

Welcome to our district, we are proud to be home to 122,900 people with a total of 53,300 households over 651 square kilometres. The population of Newark and Sherwood has increased by 7% between 2011 and 2021, meaning our population has grown more quickly when compared with the population nationally. The population of residents aged 65 years and over has increased the most (by 26.7%) with the number of residents in all age groups 50 and over being higher than the national average. In contrast those aged 15 year and under has increased by 1.3%, with the number of residents in all age groups 14 and below being lower than the national average.

Despite the growing population, as of 2021 Newark and Sherwood is the 12th least densely populated local authority area out of 35 in the East Midlands.

13.9% of households in the district are socially rented, which is 3.2% lower than the national average. However, there are 7,814 socially rented households within Newark and Sherwood, and of those 5,534 (70.82%) properties are owned by Newark and Sherwood District Council.

Strengths:

Newark and Sherwood is a district which has much to celebrate and be proud of.

The district is fortunate enough to have access to green spaces throughout the district, including five green flag parks as of 2023, as well as a number of green space visitor destinations which are detailed in the map of the district below.

The district also has a number of historic visitor destinations, Sherwood Forest is a historic and ancient woodland that is associated with the world-renowned legend of Robin Hood and draws many visitors into the district. Newark and Sherwood is also the home of the National Civil War Centre and Newark Castle and Gardens.

Looking at the residents who call Newark and Sherwood home, we know that 69.8% of households own their own home, either outright or with a mortgage, loan or shared ownership and this is 7.5% higher than the national average. Newark and Sherwood District Council is the largest social landlord in the district, with 69.24% of all socially rented properties being owned and maintained by the Council.

Challenges:

Whilst there is much to celebrate and be proud of, it is recognised that there are challenges experienced by residents within the district.

There is educational disparity across the district, which varies by ward. For example, there are 2,059 residents concentrated in one ward who do not hold a formal qualification compared to 258 residents in a different ward. This theme continues when looking at numbers of residents who hold a level 4 qualification; 3,295 of residents who hold a level 4 qualification are concentrated in one ward compared to 592 residents in a different ward.

Employment rates are a challenge within the district. In 2021, 58.4% of the working age population of the district was in employment or actively seeking employment which is 2.5% lower than the national average. As such, we understand that the percentage of the working age population who were employed and not actively seeking employment, is lower than the national average.

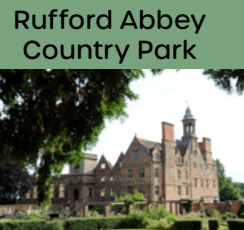
The health of our residents presents some challenges. 44.7% of residents would describe their health as very good, which is 3.8% lower than the national average. There are several factors which shape the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. These factors result in the differences between people or groups caused by social, geographical, biological or economical influences which can both cause advantages and disadvantages to health. The gap in life expectancy across the district is 9.1 years for men and 9.4 years for women, this means the residents living in one particular area will live on average 9 years less than those in another.



Thoresby Estate



Sherwood Forest and Sherwood Pines



Rufford Abbey Country Park



Vicar Water Country Park



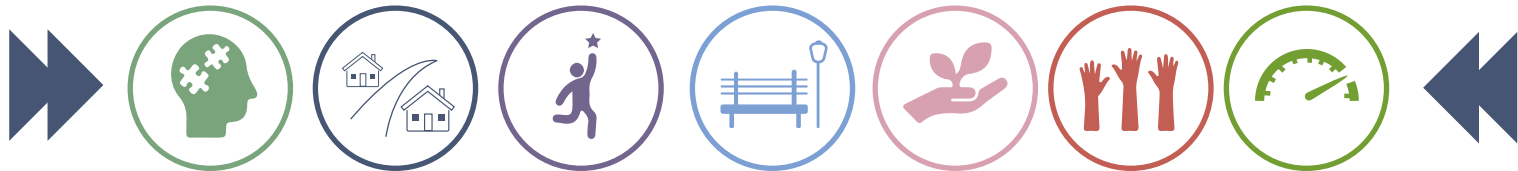
Newark Castle



Sconce and Devon Park

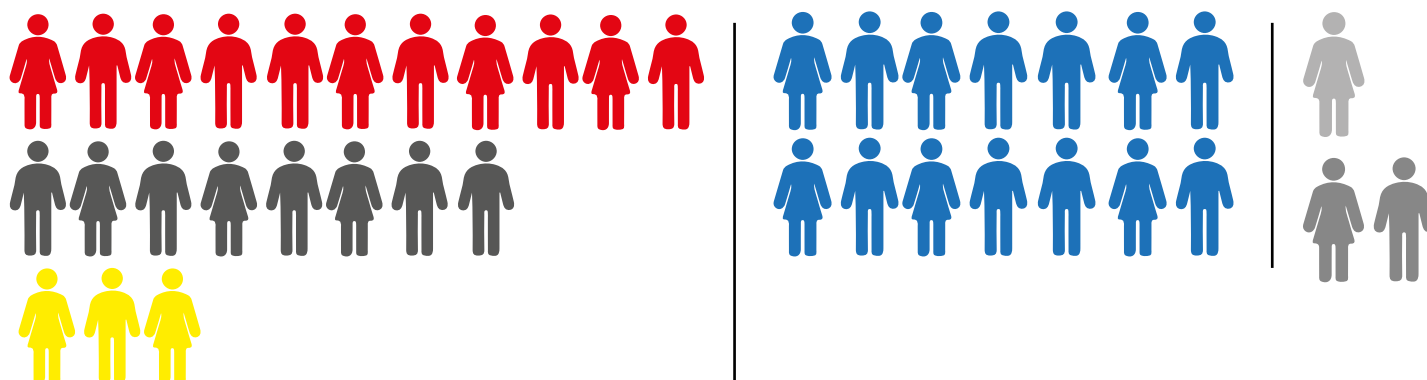
Southwell Minster and Archbishops Palace





HOW THE COUNCIL WORKS

Residents of Newark and Sherwood are represented by 39 elected members. The political make-up of the Council from May 2023 is shown below. As no single political group has a majority of seats (20) on the Council, a collective has been formed between the Labour group, Independents for Newark and District and the Liberal Democrat Group who between them provide the political leadership of the Council.

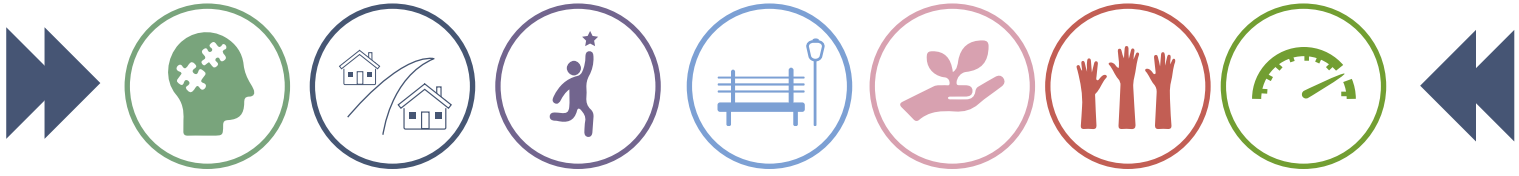


Councillors are elected by the community to decide how the Council should carry out its various activities. They represent public interest as well as individuals living within the ward in which he or she has been elected to serve a term of office. They have regular contact with the general public through Council meetings, telephone calls or surgeries. Surgeries provide an opportunity for any ward resident to go and talk to their Councillor face-to-face and these take place on a regular basis. Councillors appoint a Leader and Deputy Leader to provide political leadership and direction for the Council as a whole. Each year, Councillors also appoint a Chairman to undertake civic responsibilities on behalf of the whole Council.

Find out more about our Councillors, including the Councillor representative for each ward here:
[Your Councillors - Newark and Sherwood District Council \(newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk\)](https://newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)

All Councillors meet together as the "Full Council" and these meetings are open to the public.





HOW WILL WE FINANCE OUR PLANS?

Since 2010/11 the way in which Local Government has been financed has fundamentally changed, with Councils needing to be more financially self-sufficient in order to meet their objectives and priorities. In 2010/11 the Council received 23.12% of its total expenditure directly from Central Government in the form of a grant. In 2023/24 that percentage reduced to 7.5%.

Further reform in the way local government is financed has been anticipated for some years, however since 2019/20 several national priorities have impacted on ministerial time and the reform has therefore been delayed. It is expected that the reform will, when introduced, largely seek to rebalance the funding between lower tier (District and Borough Councils) and upper tier (County Councils) to address national priorities such as funding of adult and children’s social care services. It is expected that the reform will happen but when it will happen is uncertain, and unlikely now to be before 2026/27.

The Council funds its objectives and priorities through several different routes, four of which are outlined below:

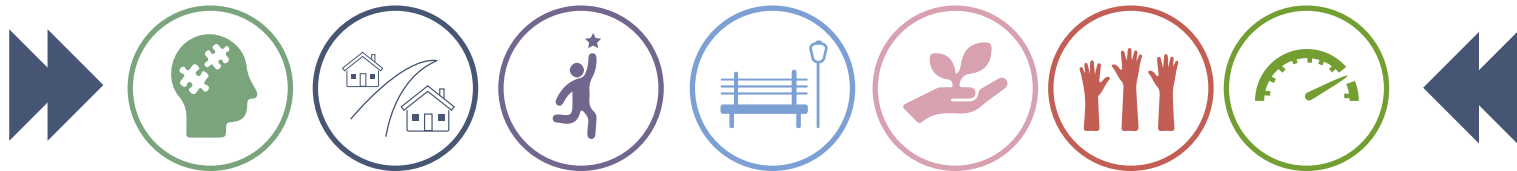
Fees and Charges: This is made up of a number of different types of fees and charges, some of which are mandatory (for example certain types of planning fee or certain types of licencing fee) and some are discretionary (such as lorry park charging or entry fee to the National Civil War Centre).

Business Rates - All businesses have a rateable value (the estimated annual rental value for a property) which is set by the Valuation Office Agency. Central Government annually sets a multiplier, which generates how much each business must pay in Business Rates by multiplying the multiplier by the rateable value. The Council then collects those funds and retains 50%, which is split 40% to this Council, 9% to Nottinghamshire County Council and 1% to Nottinghamshire Fire Authority.



BREAKDOWN PER £1 OF COUNCIL TAX

Average Parish Precepts - £0.04
Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue - £0.04
Newark and Sherwood District Council - £0.08
Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner - £0.11
Nottinghamshire County Council - £0.73



Council Tax - This is a tax on domestic properties based on the estimated value of a property. Each property in the district is then levied with a charge based on their size and proximity to services and is allocated a band on a scale from A-H. Only around 8% of the total Council Tax collected goes to Newark and Sherwood District Council. The remaining 92% funds a number of other preceptors and their operations. The chart shows where each £1 of your Council Tax goes in respect of the 2023/24 financial year. The charges are reviewed annually by each of the authorities during February and March for the forthcoming year, and hence the proportions can change depending on what each authority approves. More information, and updated proportions visit www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/counciltax

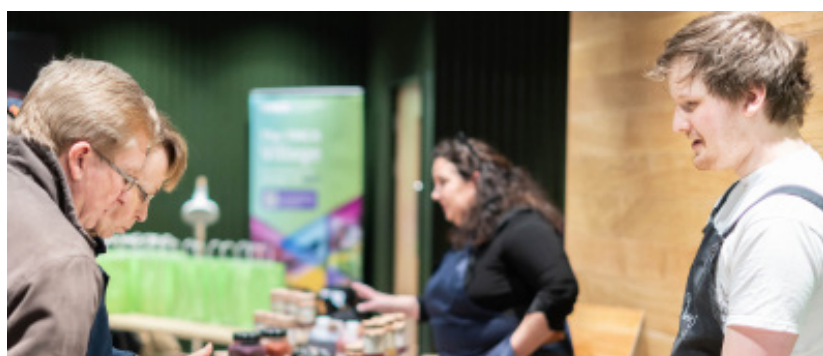
Central Government grants - The Council receives a number of grants directly from Central Government to assist with both general funding (through grants such as the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and New Homes Bonus) and specific funding (through grants such as the Homelessness Grant). Any external funding that is received assists the Council in delivering its objectives and priorities and ensures that a smaller burden is placed on the local Council Taxpayer.

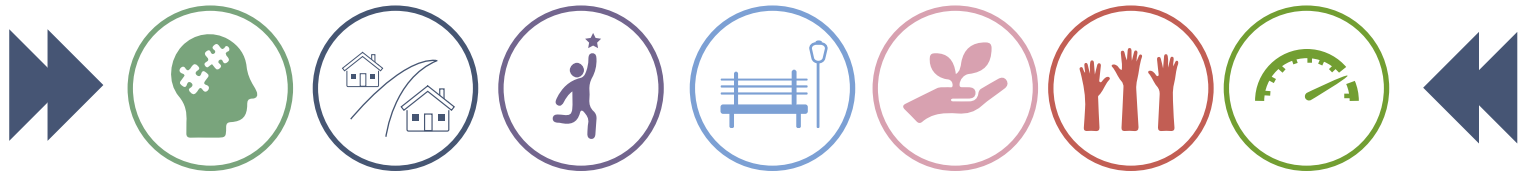
The Council has produced a Medium-Term Financial Plan, which describes how the objectives and priorities set out in this document will be financed over the medium term. This document is refreshed annually to reflect the changing economic environment in respect of various external factors. From the changes described above in funding arrangements, through to economic fluctuations in interest rates and inflation, it is important to ensure that our objectives and priorities remain sustainable.

The latest approved Medium-Term Financial Plan, together with future amendments and previous history is available on our website at www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/budgets

An integral part of the Council's funding plans has been the approval of a Commercialisation Strategy in January 2022, which provides support for front line services by creating efficiencies and increasing income. Work continues over the medium term to drive forward the organisation and ensure that service delivery is efficient, effective and offers good value for money.

The original Commercialisation Strategy is available on our website at www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/councilstrategies Future updates on the progress of projects underpinned by this strategy are reported within the Medium-Term Financial Plan each financial year.





OBJECTIVE 1

Improve health and wellbeing.

OBJECTIVE 2

Increase the supply, choice, and standard of housing.

OBJECTIVE 3

Raise peoples' skills levels and create employment opportunities for them to fulfil their potential.

OBJECTIVE 4

Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

OBJECTIVE 5

Protect and enhance the district's natural environment and green spaces.

OBJECTIVE 6

Reduce the impact of Climate Change.

OBJECTIVE 7

Celebrate and invigorate community spirit, pride of place and a sense of belonging.

OBJECTIVE 8

To be a top performing, modern and accessible Council.





OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING



Objective 1: Improve health and wellbeing	Lead Director/Officer	Portfolio Holder
Review the impact of the Council's cost-of-living action plan and consider future support.	Chief Executive/Director of Housing, Health and Well-Being	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure Strategy Performance and Finance Public Protection and Community Relations Sustainable Economic Development
Maximise take up of housing benefit, Council Tax support and other household grants to support residents financially.	Revenues and Benefits Business Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Support the delivery of community-based prevention services through the construction of a new car park at Newark Hospital.	Corporate Property Business Managers	Strategy Performance and Finance
Deliver our 'Warm Homes on Prescription' service in partnership with Mansfield District Council.	Housing Maintenance and Asset Management Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure
Deliver our 'Playpark Investment Plan' to improve play park areas across the district, exploring natural play opportunities.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
Develop options for improving Southwell Leisure Centre, including the provision of a new centre..	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure
Explore options for 'green' entrances and exits to and from estates and villages.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
Explore options for improving air quality in specific locations.	Public Protection Business Manager	Climate Change
Work with partners to reduce health inequalities in targeted areas and seek to increase local access to services and green spaces for all.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure Biodiversity and Environmental Services
Support NHS partners via sign posting and jobs fairs to recruit and retain staff from the local community in order to improve access to health and social care.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure



Develop plans and seek funding opportunities for the Council and its partners to improve cycling and walking infrastructure.	Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Manager Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure Sustainable Economic Development
Develop an agreed approach to increase the number of groups and individuals actively engaged in volunteering, making sure the offer is as inclusive and as varied as possible.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Develop and seek funding to implement a 'Playing Pitch Strategy' and 'Facilities Improvement Plan'.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure
Implement our 'Health and Wellbeing Strategy', having regard to the Office of National Statistics indices of wellbeing.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure
Work with partners to develop a Local Transport Plan for the district, including options for improving public transport with a focus on increasing the geographical coverage and frequency of these services and opportunities for low emission vehicles.	Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Explore options to further develop parks in the district enabling free play and exercise, making sure the offer is as inclusive and as varied as possible.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
Provide ongoing support to raise the profile of cycling within the district, including the promotion of high-profile events, supporting increased participation in cycling, and encouraging active travel and recreation.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure
To design and implement a changing places style facility within the Dukeries Leisure Centre to increase accessibility for all residents.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure
Consider how to ensure major projects are developed with community involvement where appropriate and seek to maximise the delivery of wider benefits, including health, climate, biodiversity and heritage and culture.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure Biodiversity and Environmental Services Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Identify and carry out trials of community growing spaces to improve health and wellbeing, air quality and to encourage healthy eating.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager Housing Services Business Manager	Housing Biodiversity and Environmental Services



OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASE THE SUPPLY, CHOICE, AND STANDARD OF HOUSING



Objective 2: Increase the supply, choice, and standard of housing		Lead Director/Officer	Portfolio Holder
	Deliver the Housing Strategy, 2023-2028.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Housing
	Review the 'Housing Allocations Scheme', including a full refresh of the housing register.	Housing and Estates Management Assistant Business Manager	Housing
	Continue to respond to additional and emerging demands for the resettlement of refugees.	Housing and Estates Management Assistant Business Manager	Housing
	Deliver a 'Housing Stock Condition Survey' for Council housing and private rented sector properties.	Housing Maintenance and Asset Management Business Manager Public Protection Business Manager	Housing
	Implement a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, 2024-2027.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Housing
	Explore ways to reduce the number of empty private homes across the district.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager Public Protection Business Manager	Housing
	Explore ways to improve energy efficiency in the private rented sector.	Housing Maintenance and Asset Management Business Manager	Housing
		Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Climate Change
	Complete the current Council house building programme and explore plans for a future programme.	Director of Housing, Health and Wellbeing	Housing



Develop new homes for open market sale or rent through Arkwood Developments Ltd, balancing housing quality, mix of housing, environmental sustainability and financial return.	Chief Executive Officer	Strategy Performance & Finance
Undertake an options appraisal for 'Housing with Care' in conjunction with partners.	Housing Services Business Manager	Housing
Develop an 'Affordable Housing and Development Contributions Supplementary Planning Document'.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Manager	Housing
Progress the amended 'Allocations and Development Management DPD' through the examination process to adoption.	Director of Growth and Regeneration	Sustainable Economic Development
Develop and deliver a strategy to meet the housing needs of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager Housing Services Business Manager	Housing
Complete development of Alexander Lodge, a new temporary accommodation facility, incorporating pathways to independence for care leavers.	Housing and Estates Management Assistant Business Manager	Housing
Embed and evaluate our new 'Repairs Online' service.	Housing Maintenance and Asset Management Assistant Business Manager	Housing
Review planning guidance and policies to encourage and require where possible enhanced sustainability standards in new developments.	Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development Climate Change
Design and implement a 'New Housing Management System' for Council owned homes, to provide a modern system and better user experience for both tenants and staff.	Housing Income and Leaseholder Management Business Manager	Housing
Deliver the estate regeneration scheme at Yorke Drive.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Housing
Explore further ways to seek out imaginative and effective ways to engage with and involve tenants.	Housing Services Business Manager	Housing
Maximise sustainable development opportunities to deliver public art and performance spaces within the residential built environment.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts

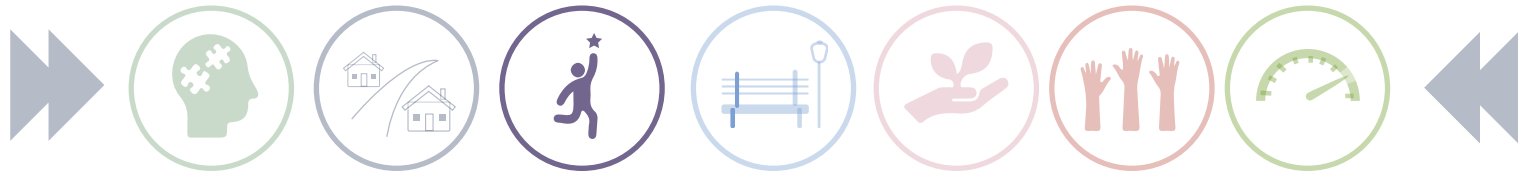


OBJECTIVE 3:

RAISE PEOPLES' SKILLS LEVELS AND CREATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEM TO FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL

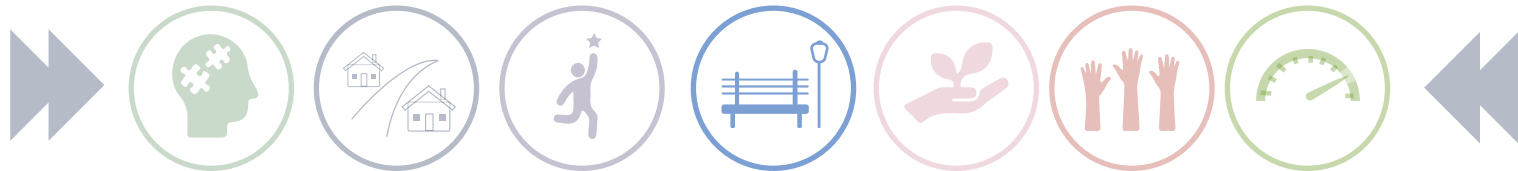


Objective 3: Raise peoples' skill levels and create employment opportunities for them to fulfil their potential		Lead Director/Officer	Portfolio Holder
	Review and adopt a new Sustainable Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy 2023-2028.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
	Work alongside educators and employers to identify, support and expand local opportunities in green and land management sectors.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development Climate Change Biodiversity and Environmental Services
	Support the further development of the Air and Space Institute (Newark)® including linked sectors, future skills, and supply chain.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
	Continue to develop and deliver the 'Future First Career Expo' annually.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
	Maximise local employment opportunities during, and arising from, major infrastructure and housing schemes, including the Southern Link Road, A46 and Ollerton Roundabout.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
	Redevelop the Clipstone Holdings site with high quality, environmentally sustainable industrial units.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager Corporate Property Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
	Progress the development of 14 Market Place to provide commercial space to the ground floor and residential dwellings above.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager Corporate Property Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development

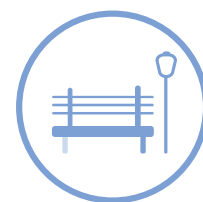


Progress the relocation of Newark Lorry Park and redevelopment of Newark Gateway.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager Corporate Property Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Undertake a feasibility study for the refurbishment of the Sutton-on-Trent industrial site with a view to creating employment opportunities.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager Corporate Property Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Deliver the 'Shared and Rural Prosperity Fund Programmes' up to March 2025.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Reinvigorate Invest Newark and Sherwood.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Review annually the 'Infrastructure Funding Statement' to pro-actively support identified priorities through a combination of developer delivery, direct delivery, securing funding, and using influence to shape third party delivery plans.	Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Expand the number of apprenticeship and work experience opportunities across the Council and district, including major projects, working with partner organisations to deliver this.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager HR and Training Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Promote the market for arts, culture and creative industries, including opportunities for high quality training and access to a variety of creative outlets.	Heritage and Culture Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Recognise and promote access to art and creative subjects, enabling all residents to realise their potential and explore how to increase employment opportunities within this sector.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Review with partners the wide variations in educational attainment across the district and develop targeted proposals to address this.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development

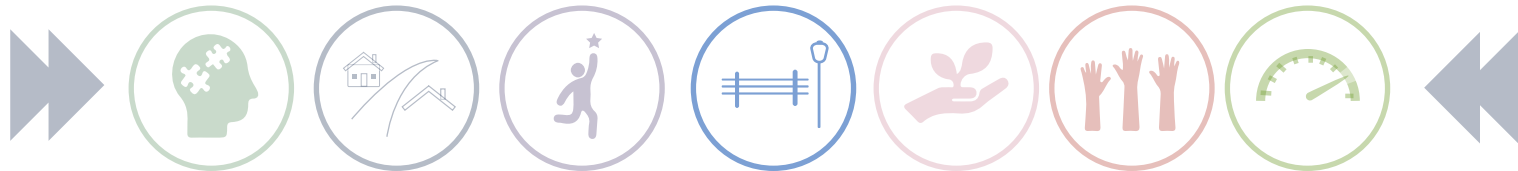




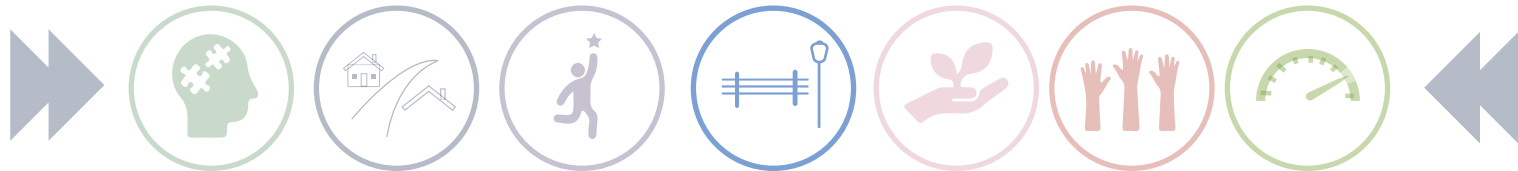
OBJECTIVE 4: REDUCE CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



Objective 4: Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour	Lead Director/Officer	Portfolio Holder
Develop a Community Safety Strategy and action plan addressing the priorities for 2024/25.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Increase the level of resource in order to tackle anti-social behaviour in target locations.	Director of Communities and Environment/Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Undertake a comprehensive review of public realm CCTV with a view to making recommendations for its future coverage, geographical locations and partnership arrangements.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Maximise the use and effectiveness of CCTV to deter crime and bring offenders to justice.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Intervene to reduce the number of empty premises across high streets to deter potential anti-social behaviour and encourage footfall.	Public Protection Business Manager Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Improve lighting and review infrastructure to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour and improve feelings of safety.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Integrate reduction mechanisms for crime and anti-social behaviour into town centre schemes, such as Newark Towns Fund, Newark Cultural Heart Programme, Heritage Action Zones and Shop Local campaigns.	Public Protection Business Manager Planning Development Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Actively promote the reporting of anti-social behaviour to increase intelligence and enable better targeting of interventions, including Pub Watch and Shop Watch.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Continue to undertake regular 'Nights of Action', targeting crime and anti-social behaviour 'hot spots'.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Continue to work with partners and businesses to identify and intervene with known groups who perpetrate anti-social behaviour.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations



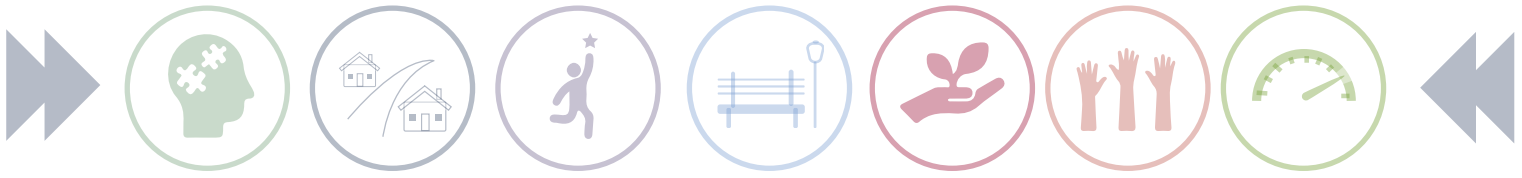
Continue to work with partners to encourage interventions at an early stage through education in schools and assisting families in need of support, including young people who have fallen out of education.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Assist in the delivery of 'Rural Crime and ASB Prevention' with additional target hardening at Sherwood Forest Corner.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Coordinate enforcement activity across Public Protection, Housing and Estate Management and Environmental Services to ensure joined up collaborative approaches.	Public Protection Business Manager Environmental Services Business Manager Housing Services Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Reduce the number of environmental crimes committed by increasing visibility and enforcement in targeted areas.	Environmental Services Business Manager Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Complete a programme of target hardening to protect vulnerable sites from unauthorised encampments.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Continue to deliver the 'Safer Streets' project and identify future funding streams.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Continue with the concession for the enviro-crime enforcement scheme.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Work in partnership with other housing providers to enable early intervention in matters of anti-social behaviour, which may include enforcement action for those in private rented accommodation.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Work with partners to develop early intervention and youth diversionary activities to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and engage with young people to understand what those activities might be.	Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Consider options of expanding the 'Community Alcohol Partnership' (CAP) service into the district.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
When new projects are underway, actively seek out ways to involve residents in aspects of their design and development, thereby increasing a local sense of ownership and mitigating against the risk of vandalism and damage.	Planning Development Business Manager Public Protection Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Examine how the provision of art and creative activities could be used as a means of diverting some young people away from anti-social behaviour and giving direction, hope and aspiration for the future.	Public Protection Business Manager Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts



OBJECTIVE 5: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE DISTRICT'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SPACES



Objective 5: Protect and enhance the district's natural environment and green spaces		Lead Director/ Officer	Portfolio Holder
	Support Newark Town Council in the delivery of improvement plans at Sherwood Avenue Park.	Director of Communities and Environment	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
	Understand the biodiversity baseline within the district, allowing the development and implementation of a Biodiversity Strategy, 2024 - 2028.	Planning Development Business Manager Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
	With WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) and Nottinghamshire County Council, develop an options appraisal for the collection of weekly food waste collections and mixed recycling.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Climate Change
	Roll out new kerbside glass recycling service.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Climate Change
	Improve recycling levels by promoting positive behavioural changes, through community events, targeted communication and enforcement.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Climate Change
	Improve the appearance of the environment and recycling rates in targeted communities by delivering at least 10 school or community projects per annum, aligned with the future 'Days of Action' programme.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Climate Change
	Undertake environmental protection activities to reduce levels of littering and fly tipping across the district, whilst also focusing on improving the quality of natural habitats.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
	Utilise new real time reporting analysis of street cleansing/grounds maintenance to improve our response times.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
	Carry out a district wide audit of litter and dog bins.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services



Conduct a programme of focus weeks (targeted following district wide monitoring) of joint working between Street Scene, Housing and the Environmental Protection Officer.	Environmental Services Business Manager Public Protection Business Manager Housing Services Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
Deliver on the Council's Tree Strategy.	Environmental Services Business Manager Planning Development Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services
Play an active role in biodiversity net gain for the district, including the potential to own our own biodiversity offset sites, as well as looking at how our own developments can contribute.	Corporate Property Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services





OBJECTIVE 6. REDUCE THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE



Objective 6: Reduce the impact of climate change	Lead Director/Officer	Portfolio Holder
Further develop and deliver a Council-wide decarbonisation plan for our built assets as set out within the Decarbonisation Plan, including the decarbonisation of heating systems within our corporate and leisure buildings.	Director of Communities and Environment	Climate Change
Continue to deliver the Brunel Drive Masterplan, including the trial of electric and hybrid vehicle options. Facilitate the expansion of mass vehicle charging required at Brunel Drive Depot.	Director of Communities and Environment	Climate Change
Undertake an annual assessment of the carbon footprint of Newark and Sherwood District Council to measure performance against the Council's target of net zero.	Director of Communities and Environment	Climate Change
Implement the 'Local Area Energy Plan'.	Director of Communities and Environment	Climate Change
Work with key strategic partners to support completion and evaluation of the 'Home Upgrade Grant' scheme.	Housing Maintenance and Asset Management Business Manager Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Climate Change Housing
Complete a project for our Council homes to renew over 100 oil heating systems with air source heat pumps and solar panels to improve affordability for tenants and reduce carbon emissions.	Housing Maintenance and Asset Management Business Manager	Housing Climate Change
Roll out programme of solar panels across Council buildings and explore other options to deliver our commitment to decarbonise Council owned assets.	Director of Communities and Environment	Climate Change
Engage with the Carbon Trust to explore the feasibility and implications of accelerating the decarbonisation target, our pledge to become Net Zero by 2035 and expanding it to include social housing.	Director of Housing, Health and Wellbeing Director of Communities and Environment	Climate Change
Investigate securing greater renewable energy solutions within new developments across the district, including small scale community schemes where appropriate.	Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Manager	Climate Change



Restructure current collection rounds and develop improved driver behaviour strategies, including the monitoring of vehicle repairs, to reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Climate Change
Take the lead to develop a more joined-up approach to the management of the public realm, focusing on key areas in town centres and local estates.	Environmental Services Business Manager Housing Services Business Manager Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services Housing Sustainable Economic Development
Work with partners to consider how best to maximise the potential benefit of the River Trent, including as a source of energy generation and as a tourism asset.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services Climate Change Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Declare a 'Motion for the Ocean' to champion good stewardship by the relevant authorities of the River Trent and its tributaries. To encourage addressing pollution and litter at source, contributing significantly to the preservation and restoration of the ocean.	Environmental Services Business Manager	Biodiversity and Environmental Services Climate Change
Consider how to celebrate community contributions made through youth volunteering.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Explore options for the creation of community works of art which communicate an environmental message, including a love of the natural world and to ensure all residents have a voice including young people.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts





OBJECTIVE 7:

CELEBRATE AND INVIGORATE COMMUNITY SPIRIT,
PRIDE OF PLACE AND A SENSE OF BELONGING



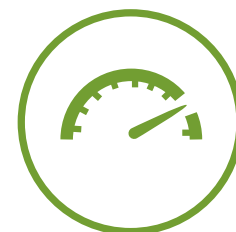
Objective 7: Celebrate and invigorate community spirit, pride of place and a sense of belonging		Lead Director/Officer	Portfolio Holder
Develop a flexible, creative approach to cultural visiting, with family orientated activities. To include family tours, drop-in arts activities and storytelling that utilise the three heritage sites with a vision of integrating our offer to broaden our reach and appeal to a wide range of audiences.		Heritage and Culture Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Review current grant aid support to voluntary and community groups to ensure Council funding has maximum impact.		Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Deliver seasonal destination marketing campaigns to promote visitor attractions, working in partnership with accommodation and food providers, and events promoters. Create brand ambassadors for the district both within the Council and the wider district.		Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Deliver the Newark Castle Gatehouse scheme.		Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager Heritage and Culture Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Deliver the National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) activity plan.		Heritage and Culture Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Support the delivery of community initiatives through ongoing grant schemes.		Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Develop and implement an Evening Economy Strategy for towns in the district.		Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Develop and implement a package of improvements to enhance Sherwood Forest as a visitor destination.		Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Lead the delivery of the Newark Cultural Heart programme.		Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Respond to community requests to support any community-led days of action across the district, in conjunction with partners.		Environmental Services Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Implement a 'Shopfront Grant Scheme' as part of the Heritage Action Zone Programme.		Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development



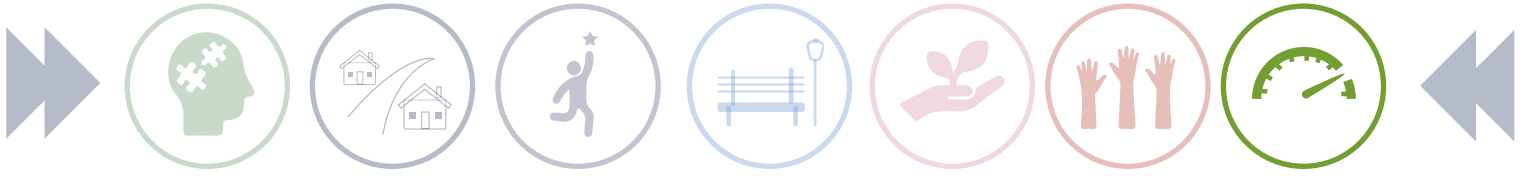
Conclude feasibility work in readiness for future funding opportunities for Ollerton Town Centre and Mansfield Road, Clipstone.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Sustainable Economic Development
Complete the development of 32 Stodman Street and explore further opportunities to revitalise town centres through residential development, including the 'Newark Town Centre Masterplan and Design Code'.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager
Actively promote the Councils role in supporting the Veteran community, both as an employer and within the community.	Corporate Property Business Manager	Transformation and Service Improvement Manager
Explore options for implementing a youth Council and youth awards, as a way of recognising the contribution of young people throughout the district as positive role models, in a range of settings that include the arts, providing positive mentoring and inspiring success stories.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Councillor Neil Ross
Champion and promote the arts, culture and heritage through the enjoyment of music and arts from different cultures, increasing a sense of belonging, shared experience and community pride.	Transformation and Service Improvement Manager	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager
Explore opportunities for having themed music and art events that focus on individual communities that celebrate diversity in the district and mutual respect, through a celebration of the arts.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Examine further ways to take art and artefacts out into areas of the community that are not geographically close to our museum and heritage buildings.	Heritage and Culture Business Manager	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager
Strive to ensure the composition of delivery boards for all major projects include as diverse a group as possible, leading to more inclusive decision making.	Heritage and Culture Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Work with partners to look at opportunities for music and the arts to provide therapy.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Develop opportunities to maximise the visitor offer linked to Sherwood Forest.	Housing Strategy and Regeneration Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts
Expand activities and events across the district to enable as many people as possible to benefit from the variety we offer, tying in ways to increase ease of access through joint promotion and offers, transport, food and facilities.	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy Business Manager	Heritage, Culture and the Arts



OBJECTIVE 8: TO BE A TOP PERFORMING, MODERN AND ACCESSIBLE COUNCIL



Objective 8: To be a top performing, modern and accessible Council	Lead Director/Officer	Portfolio Holder
Commission a 'Corporate Peer Challenge' and develop an action plan arising from its findings.	Transformation and Service Improvement Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Develop a Parish Council conference.	Transformation and Service Improvement Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations
Maximise the benefits to Newark and Sherwood arising from the East Midlands Mayoral Combined Authority.	Chief Executive Officer	Strategy Performance and Finance
Explore opportunities with Nottinghamshire County Council and other Nottinghamshire District and Borough Councils for closer integration of services.	Chief Executive Officer	Strategy Performance and Finance
Through the Commercialisation Strategy and action plan, continue to seek out and generate new sources of income, whilst retaining our public service ethos.	Financial Services Business Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Finalise and implement the Communications Strategy.	Communications and Marketing Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Ensure the new Customer Experience Strategy is fully embedded in the operations and culture of the Council.	Customer Services Business Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Reinvigorate the Residents' Panel to ensure the panel is representative of the demographic profile to help drive service improvement across the Council.	Transformation and Service Improvement Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Expand the range and quality of services available online, whilst ensuring we are accessible to all with continued telephony and face to face options for all residents.	Customer Services Business Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Expand customer satisfaction measures, both internally and externally, through regular surveys and other means.	Customer Services Business Manager Transformation and Service Improvement Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Expand and refresh the wellbeing and engagement programme, including reinvigorating Councillor and officer wellbeing champions.	HR & Training Business Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Undertake a Staff Survey every 18 months and respond to the survey findings.	Transformation and Service Improvement Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance



Develop a package of measures to recruit and retain staff, including a review of the pay grading structure and the Council's job evaluation scheme.	HR & Training Business Manager	Strategy Performance and Finance
Plan and implement arrangements to respond to new regulatory inspections and requirements.	All Business Managers	Strategy Performance and Finance
Review the impact of the Community Hub, with findings being used to support improved access to services in targeted communities.	Housing Services Business Manager	Public Protection and Community Relations



OUR PERFORMANCE

Why does the Council measure performance?

Monitoring performance across the Council is key to understanding if we are delivering on the promises we have made and that we're meeting the needs of our residents.

Performance management is used as a tool to drive improvement rather than simply used as a counting device. We acknowledge the value of understanding our performance, as this knowledge allows us to embed and disseminate good practice and quality service delivery as well as identifying and tackling areas for improvement.

How does the Council measure performance?

The Council's performance is measured in a variety of ways, to ensure that we understand if we're putting the right resource into delivering against the right priorities. This is done 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.



Some of the key methods we use to measure our performance are described below:

What we do:	Listening to our residents	Key performance indicators (KPI's)	Community Plan performance reporting	Finance performance reporting	Governance
How often we do it:	We do this by reviewing customer comments, feedback and complaints. We also undertake consultation and surveys.	These are set once every four years in line with the Community plan.	Quarterly reports are presented to committee and published online.	Quarterly reports are presented to committee and published online.	<p>Eight meetings of the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee (PPIC) are held each year.</p> <p>Quarterly meetings of Performance Cabinet held each year.</p>
Why we do it:	To capture district wide views of residents, using this feedback to allow us to drive service improvement and deliver services that meet the needs of residents.	KPI's are developed to enable performance to be measured and tracked. KPI's also enable the Council's performance to be benchmarked against national indicators.	We report on performance against the Community Plan as this provides visibility of performance against key activities. This enables us to disseminate good practice and quality service delivery as well as identifying and tackling areas for improvement.	We report on financial performance to consider the forecast/ actual outturn position for each financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets.	<p>The PPIC provide a 'scrutiny' function and has an integral role in improving the work of the Council through outcome focused challenge and development of strategies and policies.</p> <p>Performance Cabinet meetings are held in order for Cabinet to review the Council's performance and identify areas of high performance and areas where improvement is required.</p>
How it relates to the Community Plan:	Surveys such as the Resident Survey gather the views of residents which then informs the development of the Community Plan.	These are used to measure the success of the Community Plans aims.	This report examines how the Council has been performing against the Community Plan. It examines data to look at the performance of key services and delivery against the activities outlined in the plan.	Resource is key to delivering on our Community Plan actions and commitments.	The role of PPIC is a 'critical friend' to Cabinet, both committees review the Council's performance against the Community Plan.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Resident Panel

The Resident Panel is a group of people from across the district who would like to share their views on the area they live in and help shape the future of Newark and Sherwood. The panel has been created because we wish to understand the views and experiences of residents of the district and use this understanding to ensure that our Council services are the best they can be.

Any resident of the district over the age of 18 can join the panel to have their say on the Council's services, plans, proposals and development of their local area.

If you are interested in being part of the panel you can sign up in the following ways:

Online: Join the Resident Panel (newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)

Email Customer Services: customerservices@newarksherwooddc.gov.uk

Call: 01636 650 000



Local Influence Network

The Local Influence Network is a group of Council tenants who review and scrutinise the Council's delivery and performance in relation to housing. The Network are also involved in the Council's appeals process relating to housing complaints. We will work with you so you can improve your knowledge, learn new skills and meet new people.

If you are interested in being part of the Local Influence Network please contact our Customer Services team by email at customerservices@newarksherwooddc.gov.uk or by calling 01636 650 000.

getinvolved@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk.

Consultations

We also regularly consult on Council services, plans and decisions. Visit our consultations page to have your say: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/consultation.



Contact Us

Our residents, tenants and businesses can contact us in a number of ways.

Telephone: 01636 650000

Email: customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

In person: Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 1BY

The offices and telephone lines are open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Most of our services are also available on our website.

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Social media:



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Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 31 October 2023

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

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

Lead Officer: Nick Wilson, Business Manager - Financial Services, Ext. 5317
Phil Ward, Business Manager – Revenues & Benefits, Ext. 5347

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Non-Key Decision
Report Title	Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25
Purpose of Report	To confirm the continuation of the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 with minor changes in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Department for Works and Pensions.
Recommendations	That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the uprating of the applicable amounts, premiums, state benefits and disregard criteria in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Department for Works & Pensions (DWP); whilst continuing the current Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 financial year.
Alternative Options Considered	An alternative option would be to increase the maximum award of 80% - the cost of doing this has been considered within the financial implications section in the report.
Reason for Recommendations	To ensure the Council discharges its responsibilities to agree its Council Tax Support scheme by 31 January 2024.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 As part of the 2012 Welfare Reform Act the national Council Tax Benefit scheme was abolished and in accordance with the Local Government Act 2013 local authorities were required to introduce Localised Council Tax Support schemes from 1 April 2013.
- 1.2 Government funding for the new schemes was reduced by approximately 10%, for Newark & Sherwood claimants and this amounted to around £1m.
- 1.3 Support for Council Tax is now offered as reductions within the council tax system with claimants of state pension age receiving a discount of up to 100% thereby ensuring that they receive no reduction in support as a direct result of the reform.

- 1.4 Localisation provided local authorities with the flexibility to design Council Tax Support schemes for working age claimants taking into account the needs of vulnerable groups and the importance of supporting work incentives. Our current scheme provides the following:
- a) A maximum award of 80% of the liability that Council Tax Support would cover for properties in Bands A and B.
 - b) A maximum award of the liability that Council Tax Support would cover equivalent to a council tax band A charge for properties in Bands C to H.
 - c) No entitlement to Council Tax Support where claimants have in excess of £16,000 in capital.
 - d) A work incentive entitlement that maintains the current rate of council tax support for six weeks when moving into employment.
 - e) Providing additional support to vulnerable groups by applying the annual uprating of income and disregard criteria in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Department for Works and Pensions.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 Council Tax Support is calculated by comparing the claimant's income and capital to the applicable amount. The applicable amount is a notional figure made up of amounts set by the DWP each year and is a measure of someone's basic living requirements.
- 2.2 The applicable amount is made up of one or more of the following; dependent upon the makeup of the household:
- A personal allowance for the claimant/partner and children.
 - Any qualifying premiums such as the disability living premium.
- 2.3 By comparing the claimant(s) income and capital to the applicable amount a decision can then be made on the amount of any Council Tax Support entitlement.
- 2.4 This report asks Cabinet to recommend to Full Council uprating the applicable amounts, premiums, state benefits and disregard criteria in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP); whilst continuing the current Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.5 In consideration of the obligation to consider vulnerable groups within the design of our local scheme Child Benefit, War Pensions, Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance continue to be disregarded as income and the disability premiums are retained to protect families with children and people with disabilities.
- 2.6 By applying the annual uprating of income and disregards to the 2024/25 scheme the Council will continue to maintain the current level of support to all Council Tax Support claimants and ensure that the scheme continues to benefit the most vulnerable and low -income households using nationally recognised rates of DWP income rather than continuing with the 2023 rates that are being used in the current scheme.

- 2.7 Should the Council decide not to uprate the income and disregards in line with the annual uprating amounts applied by the DWP, this would then penalise claimants as where their income increases their applicable amount would remain the same as the current year. This would then potentially lead to a reduction in Council Tax support awarded.

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.

Financial Implications (FIN23-24 4567)

- 3.1 As at the end of August 2023, the number of working age claimants eligible for Council Tax Support was 3,789 and the number of pensioners eligible for Council Tax Support was 2,917.
- 3.2 The value of support awarded to date for the 2023/24 year is £7,290,000, in line with the forecast expenditure for the scheme. This would be forecast to increase for 2024/25 but will be dependent on the total Council Tax bill including preceptors, which at the time of writing this report are not available. The implications of an 80% award will be built into the Council Tax base in order to prepare the budget for 2024/25.
- 3.3 The additional estimated cost of moving to a maximum (working age) award of up to 90% would be approximately £911,000 of which the cost to Newark and Sherwood District Council would be £78,000.
- 3.4 The additional estimated cost of moving to a maximum (working age) award of 100% would be £1,822,000 of which the cost to Newark and Sherwood District Council would be an additional £156,000.

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 – 31 October 2023

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

Director Lead: John Robinson, Chief Executive

Lead Officer: Cara Clarkson, Business Manager – Regeneration & Housing Strategy, Ext. 5923

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Key Decision
Report Title	Update on the Council's Response to the Cost of Living Crisis
Purpose of Report	To provide an update on the delivery of proposals to assist tenants and residents, local businesses and employees with the rise in the cost of living.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) note the progress against the Cost-of-Living Action Plan as outlined in section 2 of the report; and b) approve the additional proposals set out in section 3.2 of the report funded from the existing budget previously approved; and c) approve that a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Cabinet in December 2023 outlining the proposed projects for 2024/25.
Alternative Options Considered	Alternative options include not providing a cost-of-living response; however, this has not been considered viable given the pressures faced by residents, staff and business alike.
Reason for Recommendations	To support tenants, residents, businesses and employees with the ongoing challenges of the cost of living.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 On 6 December 2022, Cabinet agreed to establish a fund of £150,000 (funded £100,000 from the General Fund and £50,000 from the Housing Revenue Account) to develop the Council's response to the cost-of-living crisis. With the addition of a further £50,000 from the Shared Prosperity Fund, on 21 February 2023, Cabinet agreed the additional activities and projects designed to support residents, businesses and staff. These have been collated in a 'Cost-of-Living Action Plan' and presented at Section 2.1.

- 1.2 In addition to the activities captured under the 'Cost-of-Living Action Plan' the Council continues to offer the following core services:

Support for Businesses and Residents

- Signposting businesses to support/grants via our website
- Business rate relief
- Ongoing support to the four food clubs we assist to run independently
- Continuing the 'No Eviction Pledge' which was introduced during the pandemic, that the Council will not pursue eviction whilst the tenant(s) are engaging with us and working with us to reduce their debt
- Continuing our 'Getting to Know You' visits, an opportunity to have a positive conversation with tenant(s) about how their home is working for them, providing advice and signposting for support where appropriate.

Support for Colleagues - Support to staff by offering:

- 5% or £1500 interest free loan
- Free parking (2 years)
- £10 leisure centre membership
- Discounted Virgin Media Broadband and TV
- Credit Union payroll scheme
- Counselling and support services
- Free eye test and discount on specs for regular screen users

2.0 Progress against the Cost-of-Living Action Plan

2.1

Project/Activity	Update	Spend
Food and clothing vouchers	£20,000 worth of food and clothing (supermarket vouchers) would be dispensed through the food banks and food clubs across the district. In total 264 individual households have been supported through this scheme.	£19,885 spent of £20,000 allocated
Fuel vouchers	Working in partnership with Citizens Advice Newark and Sherwood, 288 individual households have been supported to access fuel vouchers following an assessment of need. Vouchers are available to those households on pre-payment meters who often pay higher unit prices for their fuel.	£30,000 spent of £30,000 allocated
Awareness raising and signposting for support	Two, high profile 'wraps' have now been installed and are in circulation across the district on our refuse trucks. The wraps highlight the services available from our partners, Citizens Advice Sherwood & Newark and Notts and Lincs Credit Union, as well as a link to our cost-of-living website pages to direct people to advice and support.	£4,990 spent of £5,000 allocated

Project/Activity	Update	Spend
Debt advice and benefit maximisation	Following discussion with Citizens Advice, the service is now offering an outreach service across the district including at various hubs – offices, food clubs and community centres, taking the service to places where the people who need it can access it and delivering outreach outside of core hours, seeking to reach households who may be in work but struggling.	£40,000 committed against £40,000 allocated
Low-Cost Healthy Food Project	<p>This project was set up to deliver a targeted programme to support upskilling of residents with cooking healthy low-cost meals. Following delays in securing a deliver partner, this project has just begun with Academy Transformation Trust Further Education (ATTFE) stepping in as delivery partner.</p> <p>As a result of the delayed start only £184 has been spent from this budget, however the remaining is committed for spend by the end March '24.</p>	£4,500 spent with £4,500 committed against £4,500 allocated
Support to local food clubs	<p>This funding proposed to set up a voucher scheme so that households in need who were unable to afford the £3.50 to access the food club could be supported.</p> <p>Given the pressures on food clubs it is now proposed to reallocate this funding to purchase food stock, supporting the pressures being experienced with securing additional food from FareShare (please see more in section 3.5 below)</p>	<p>Funding uncommitted – proposed to be reallocated as per the table at 3.2 below.</p> <p>£2,800 unspent</p>
Household and hygiene packs	<p>In response to feedback from food clubs, that the main pressure that residents are experiencing (after food) is the cost hygiene and cleaning products, this project has issued 497 cleaning and hygiene packs across this district.</p> <p>Packs have been distributed to households in need through local hubs, food clubs, referrals, schools and included:</p> <p>Hygiene Packs: sanitary products, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste and brushes, deodorant, shower gel, toilet rolls, etc.</p> <p>Household pack: Washing up liquid, bleach, cleaning cloth/sponge, anti-bacterial spray, washing powder/eco egg and the potential of a laundry drying kit (pegs and rope to encourage people to dry outside, tackling the cost of drying and impact on indoor condensation).</p>	£9,999 spent of £10,000 allocated

Distribution of energy boxes	This project has distributed 314 energy packs to households. The energy boxes contained items to help combat energy usage including: LED bulbs, a plug timer, torch and hot water bottle to support those residents facing fuel insecurity and dehumidifier packs.	£9,520 spent of £10,000 allocated
Webinars for Businesses	This project has engaged 90 businesses across the district in webinars, delivered by retail and business specialists, including support in growing businesses successfully.	£10,000 spent of £10,000 allocated
Social Media 'shop local' campaign	The shop local campaign has reached a total of 281,788 residents on social media.	£15,000 committed of £15,000 allocated
Localised Council Tax Support take up trial	100 homes have been contacted under this project to promote council tax support. Of the 100 households contacted, 23 households have applied for council tax support and 17 have been successful in securing support totalling £11,769.	£2,500 committed of £2,500 allocated

3.0 Proposed Additional Activity

- 3.1 In February, the total budget allocated to projects outlined in section 2.1 was £149,800 against £200,000. This section proposes a range of projects against the unallocated £50,000 from the original budget (£100k General Fund, £50,000 Housing Revenue Account and £50,000 Shared Prosperity Fund) along with the underspend from the food voucher project.
- 3.2 The biggest pressures facing families are still being reported as food and fuel poverty. The projects below therefore aim to support issues of food and fuel insecurity both at the point of need arising (through food clubs and emergency food parcels) but also by supporting households to become more resilient by providing opportunities to grow their own food through two new community gardens and expansion of cooking sessions.

Project/Activity	Detail	Funding (£)
Expansion of food clubs to evenings	<p>Pending FareShare confirmation, it is proposed to undertake a trial expansion of two food clubs to offer an out of hours/ evening food club provision.</p> <p>This is in recognition of families where households may be working but they are still 'just about managing' and require support.</p> <p>£10,000 will provide for the initial up-front cost of food for 6 months. As with all food clubs, it is then hoped that delivery will be self-sustaining after this initial startup period.</p>	£10,000

Project/Activity	Detail	Funding (£)
Expansion of cooking sessions with ATTFE and Newark College	<p>It is proposed to expand cooking sessions with our partners ATTFE and Newark College.</p> <p>£10,000 will provide 28x 7-week courses @ £50/week for ingredients. The course delivery will be mobile and travel across the district, targeting parents in school hours.</p> <p>In addition, those attending can secure a Level 2 Personal Development qualification.</p>	£10,000
Securing emergency food parcels	<p>Food clubs across the district are receiving requests for circa 2-3 emergency food parcels each week.</p> <p>Emergency food parcels are allocated as a last resort in circumstances where households have run out of all essentials and cannot access a food club (which has limited opening hours).</p> <p>Emergency food parcels provide significantly better value for money than vouchers and an upfront investment will allow larger catering packs to be bought and split to ensure value for money.</p> <p>It is proposed to use the underspend from the £3.50 food club vouchers scheme, with an additional £10,000 to fund emergency food parcels across the Blidworth, Bilsthorpe, Beaumont Walk and Ollerton Food Clubs.</p>	£12,800
Develop two additional community gardens	<p>It is proposed to develop a further two community gardens – one within the Newark and the second within Sherwood.</p> <p>It is proposed to allocate £5,000 to each garden to replicate the success of the Feel Good Gardens model on the outskirts of Sherwood Pines. The funding will provide all set costs up including: raised beds, equipment, seeds, storage and volunteer training. This is also an opportunity to build skills and make new connections</p>	£10,000
Winter Fuel Support	<p>It is proposed that a further £10,000 is committed to support additional fuel vouchers for households on pre-payment meters (the most expensive fuel) as we enter into the winter period.</p>	£10,000

- 3.3 In addition to the projects proposed above for the remainder of 2023/24, Cabinet may wish to give consideration to supporting the cost-of-living crisis beyond March 2023 either through continuation of the above projects or through additional projects. Examples that may be considered include:

- Developing 'Grow Your Own' vegetable packs for households (circa £5k).
- Considering a mobile food bank to reach those residents who cannot attend a physical base (costs to be established).
- Employing a full-time food-coordinator to dedicate resource to tackling food insecurity (circa £35k including on-costs).
- A market traders start up grant - A small grant programme that works with potential new market traders to open a stall on a local market with a 50% rent reduction for up to 12 weeks. The programme works with market operators to complement existing traders with new services and offers (circa £15,000).
- A Town Centre Gift Card - The creation of a town centre gift card that aims to support local independent retailers to promote local trade and increase local spend.

3.4 Risks to project delivery – shortage of food through FareShare.

FareShare is a national network of charitable food re-distributors who take food from across the food industry and distribute this to almost 8,500 charities and community groups across the country. FareShare continue to be an outstanding partner in helping tackle food poverty across the district however, with the increase in demand for their service, they have struggled at times in securing the volume of food needed for all clubs. The risk of not securing the adequate volume of food may manifest as increased costs to purchase food and/ or failure to meet demand. Officers are working closely with FareShare to manage this risk and maintain a sustainable service.

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 (FIN23-24/244)

- 4.1 The Cabinet meeting of the 21 February 2023 approved a budget of £200,000 (funded £100,000 from the General Fund, £50,000 from the HRA and £50,000 from the Shared Prosperity Fund). Of this budget £149,800 was allocated towards projects with £50,200 to be allocated once further projects came forward.
- 4.2 The table at paragraph 2.1 shows the spend and commitments to date of the allocated budgets. Of the £149,800 allocated, £146,394 has been spent and committed. Of the remaining £3,406, £2,800 relates to the support to local food clubs which is proposed to be reallocated into securing emergency food parcels as per the table at paragraph 3.2.
- 4.3 The table at paragraph 3.2 includes proposals to spend £52,800. The budget remaining, inclusive of the underspend described in the paragraph above, is £53,606 which means there would be £806 remaining. It is proposed that further fuel vouchers would be purchased with this remaining budget.
- 4.4 Any further projects, as described at paragraph 3.3, that are supported would require further budget approval and hence a further report would be tabled at Cabinet to gain that approval.

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.

[Cost of Living Report to Cabinet – 6 December 2022](#)

[Cost of Living Report to Cabinet – 21 February 2023](#)



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 31 October 2023

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

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

Lead Officer: Dave Richardson, Business Manager – ICT & Digital Services Ext. 5405

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Non-Key Decision
Report Title	Digital Strategy Action Plan Update
Purpose of Report	<p>To provide an update on the Digital Strategy Action Plan and provide background context.</p> <p>Every 6 months an update is provided to Senior Leadership and at least annually to elected members.</p> <p>It should be noted that ICT & Digital Services have two corporate strategies, Digital Strategy 2021-2024 presented to the Cabinet and the Cyber Security Strategy 2022-2026 presented to the Audit & Governance Committee.</p>
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) acknowledges the value of digital transformation and that the Council continues with a 'no customer left behind' approach to digital initiatives, therefore not closing any communication channels to the community; b) endorse the positive continuation of the final phase of the 2021-2024 Digital Strategy, that has a large focus on the digital community; and c) approve the commencement of work towards the 2024-2028 Digital Strategy.
Alternative Options Considered	<p>Closing of those more expensive channels including face-to-face, telephone and postal. This option is not a viable option and as a Council we work towards being inclusive for all of our residents and businesses in the District. Therefore, channel shifting that includes closure of non-digital communications channels would pose risk to those digitally excluded, including the most vulnerable in our communities</p> <p>Not implementing the actions in the Digital Strategy Action plan will cause:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital debt build-up in future years, officers have instances of this within business units when they have not kept the software systems up-to-date and then causing ineffective services, unsupported systems, and an increased cost to fix • Cyber security risk • Poor user experience • Potential saving would impact the MTFP <p>Overall, causing the Council to be less effective in providing services to its constituents.</p>
Reason for Recommendations	<p>To ensure that the Council provides communities with digital services and platforms that are expected, within budgets, time, and quality.</p> <p>Furthermore, ensuring the Council is more efficient and effective through the use of digital technologies including cost benefits and improvements to Council services.</p>

1.0 Background

1.1 In 2012 central government produced a digital efficiency report that highlighted how public services could provide better quality services, that drive efficiency from the use of digitalisation.

1.2 The report provided historic case study data, and it was anticipated that digital savings will primarily be made in the following areas:

- total employment costs of those providing the service, including training
- estate and accommodation
- postage, printing and telecommunications
- office equipment, including technology systems

1.3 The chart below shows a breakdown of the sources of savings based on a “time and materials” model of savings.

Percentage	Category
78%	Staff costs
12%	Accommodation
7%	Printing and postage
4%	IT and equipment

Figure 1, Time and materials

1.4 As an example, upon reviewing the Accommodation category, this Council has seen the benefits of shared accommodation with our partners at Castle House, providing a source of income and delivering a public services hub, yet without digital technologies and Agile ways of working this would not have been possible, especially during the pandemic which escalated this need with remote meetings and utilising digital tools which allows officers to work from multiple locations.

- 1.5 The Council's approach is to ensure that no customer is left behind and that our most vulnerable residents are not impacted by digital channel shift and therefore we maintain our face to face and telephony communications. Nevertheless, digitalisation frees up officer time to focus on those most vulnerable in the district and helps us provide better quality services.
- 1.6 The most valuable insight from the report was the transactional cost per channel conducted by the LGA via SOCITM, which included face-to-face, phone call and online visits.

Cost per transaction data

£8.62 per face-to-face visit
£2.83 per phone call
£0.15 per online visit

Figure 2, Socitm(2012) cost per transaction

- 1.7 It should be noted that this data is from 2012 and its expected that the human element cost including face-to-face and via phone call will have significantly increased whilst technology costs for online transactions has since reduced, further highlighting the financial benefits for increased digitalisation.
- 1.8 Therefore, this Council together with the majority of other local authorities has ensured that Digital alongside other support service areas, is prioritised in order to make efficiencies in addition to providing digital services that are expected in the modern-day Internet-Era, and local digital networks are invaluable to aid in this success for all local authorities.
- 1.9 During 2012-2019 the Council made advances in the use of digital technology. This was also an enabler for the new ways of working especially when moving from Kelham Hall to Castle House. The emphasis has since been on Housing Systems during the realignment of Housing Management back into the Council, moving to cloud based systems for resilience and staff becoming more agile in the ways of working and project management methodologies.
- 1.10 Below is a timeline of events since the IT & Digital Service had its sole corporate digital strategy.



- 1.11 **2019** - Digital Championing provides the Council with a digital workforce, that are positive to the change that digitalisation can bring and has representation across all business units. Furthermore, digital champions assist colleagues with basic IT needs making us all more effective and in return are at the forefront of new initiatives. Recent feedback from Digital Champions on what Digital Championing means to them:

"At the forefront of digital change as well as having the ability to affect change across the organisation. Supporting colleagues is rewarding."

"To be able to hear about the new digital updates in the council and learn how to use it before the information gets shared with the business units, to allow me the possibility of sharing and supporting my fellow colleagues."

"To help people when possible and be able to solve problems without escalating it to ICT services unnecessarily."

"I think the Digital Champion group works well for asking questions and sharing information about new projects so that ironing out the kinks can be implemented before going live."

- 1.12 **2020** – Investment in ICT infrastructure and equipment to better serve public during the pandemic, this included increases in bandwidth, agile working equipment and server hardware. During 2020, numerous working groups with employees, elected members and tenants was setup to create the framework of the digital strategy.
- 1.13 **2021** – Council signed the local digital declaration, a shared ambition for the future of local public services aligning to government digital service principles. 300 local authorities have since signed.

During 2021, the Digital Strategy was approved by Council (**Appendix A**).

- 1.14 The digital strategy was created with the three initiatives of Place, Customer and Council, with the community at the heart of the initiatives.



Figure 3, Digital Initiatives

- 1.15 Objectives and actions underpin those initiatives and throughout the past 2-3 years have provided value and benefit to the Council.
- 1.16 The first initiative in the digital strategy has been completed and critical success factors have been reviewed. The initiative **Digital Council - Objective 1.1** providing Digital Tools for staff and members, has offered hybrid ways of working, emphasised during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.17 This one objective alone has seen the following benefits and value to the Council and its constituents.



- Ability for staff and members to work from any UK location, with the correct piece of equipment for the role, allowing employees to work directly at the heart of the community.
 - Corporate Mobile contract renewal, providing a fully mobile workforce, increasing the mobile data and halving the existing spend and budget.
 - 2429 trees saved via a CO2 calculator, by reducing our mileage and emissions (mileage claims alone). Further carbon reductions not quantified by journeys to and from the office where mileage claims cannot not made and therefore not calculated.
 - £148,000 saved by reduction in mileage claims and officer time spent travelling, contract negotiations, new technologies and streamlining IT systems.
 - Migration of services to the Cloud. Improving resilience, security and carbon/energy efficiency.
- 1.18 The migration of these services to Microsoft Azure, can be up to 93 percent more energy efficient and up to 98 percent more carbon efficient than on-premises solutions.

In addition, by 2030, Microsoft want to remove more carbon each year than they emit. By 2050, their goal is to remove all of our historical carbon emitted—either directly or by electrical consumption—since Microsoft was founded in 1975. Utilise 100% renewable energy by 2024, be water positive by 2030 – therefore replenishing more water than they consume.

Furthermore, the energy and emissions generated by paper mail, email is certainly much better for the planet. Sending an email uses about 1.7% of the energy it takes to deliver a paper letter, adding further value and benefit not quantified in this report.

- 1.19 During the closure of this initiative, ICT & Digital Services were provided with qualitative feedback from those business units that utilised Agile working equipment:

Business Manager - Revenues & Benefits

“Revenues Business Rates Visiting officers and inspectors can update cases on the go, providing the customer with an instant response, no need to travel back to the office and allowing the officer to get home on time.

Officer wellbeing and job satisfaction will see an increase, customer satisfaction increase, reduction in mileage claims, reduction in carbon footprint from reduced travel.”

Business Manager - Planning Development

“Being able to access emails whilst on site has allowed officers to ‘pick up’ new cases that have come through whilst the officer is on site so that they have been able to undertake a site inspection whilst already close to the site thus saving time and fuel.

We have had examples where officers have been asked to undertake site inspections for new cases whilst already on site. Officers were able to undertake necessary background research in real time which has again saved time/ fuel.

When investigating a case on site we occasionally struggle to find the site if it is remote (“field at XYZ”) – the mobile devices been used to speak with the complainant to find the location of the site thus avoiding the need for repeat visits.

Cameras have been used to send instant images of unauthorised tree works to tree officers to gain advice whilst still on site – thus able to prevent more damage.

Site notes updated and photos uploaded on site. Made admin work with legal services more efficient.”

2.0 Implications

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

Financial Implications FIN23-24/7718

- 2.1 No financial implications currently, all the current budget requirements for final phase of the Digital strategy have been built within the current approved budgets.

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

Appendix A

Projects	Alignment with Digital Strategy Outcomes			Alignment with Community Plan							
	Digital Community			Econ Dev Strategy	Future Workforce Strategy	Customer Service Strategy	Medium-Term Financial Plan	Communications Strategy	Commercial Strategy	Information Governance Strategy	Climate Emergency Strategy
	Digital Customer	Digital Council	Digital Place								
Hybrid Workforce	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓
Microsoft Office 365		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Website(s) Phases 1&2	✓					✓		✓			✓
MyNS NSDC MyAccount	✓					✓			✓		✓
Connecting Systems	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓
Housing Management Review	✓	✓				✓		✓			
Asset Management Compliance		✓									✓
Electronic Signing	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓
HR Workforce Management		✓			✓		✓				✓

Legal Case Management		✓					✓			✓	✓
ICT & Digital Services Help Desk		✓				✓					✓
Digital Inclusion & Wellbeing	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓
Council E-Newsletter	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓
Cyber Essentials	✓	✓								✓	
ICT Infrastructure Replacement		✓					✓				✓
AR Repairs Support	✓	✓				✓			✓		✓
Digital Democracy	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓			
Omni-channel Customer Services	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓		✓
Palace e-commerce platform	✓		✓	✓					✓		
NEW! ISO Standards		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	
NEW! Income Management Review	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓			

<div>NEW! Planning & Public Protection Management Review</div>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			
<div>NEW! Digital Signage Review</div>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Projects	Project Description	New Value / Expected Benefits	2021-2024				
			Start Date	Expected End Date	Current Status RAG	Budget Type	Business Owner
Agile Workforce	Improving the mobility and flexibility of service delivery with Agile devices and applications.	<p>Improve the ability of workforce to access information and data from any location, reduction in return to base visits required.</p> <p>Delivery of digital services directly to customers to ensure digital inclusion. Reduced/low carbon initiatives.</p>	06-21	11-22	😊	Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services
Microsoft Office 365	Migration of existing services to Microsoft 365 cloud and utilising those for digital transformation.	Process transformation, cloud enablement, collaboration and unified services.	03-21	03-24	😊	Revenue	ICT & Digital Services
Website Phase 1 Migrate – Rebuild – Redesign	Improvement and redevelopment of the existing NSDC website to provide an accessible and modern customer experience.	<p>Reduction in people excluded from using the website due to its design and therefore providing a more accessible service.</p> <p>Improved customer experience. Reducing the requirement to telephone for information.</p>	03-21	03-22	😊	Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services, Transformation & Communications

Website Phase 2 Continual improvement	Further improvements to the website following from Website phase 1. Including – further accessibility, ancillary sites and WCAG ranking improvements.	Further improvements to customer experience. Reducing the requirement to telephone for information. Reduction in people excluded from using the website due to its design and therefore providing a more accessible service.	03-22	03-24	☹️	Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services, Transformation & Communications
MyNS an NSDC MyAccount	Implementation of a customer account portal, establishing a baseline for a 'tell us once' approach and unified services.	Enabling residents able to self-serve and to see key information about their council accounts at any time when it suits them, with the ability to track existing progress.	10-21	03-22	😊	Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services & Customer Services
Connecting Systems	Working with existing and new systems to enable a 'tell us once' approach and unified services.	Utilising webservices and APIs to connect/integrate systems for a unified approach, progressing towards a tell us once process.	06-22	03-24	☹️	GF/HRA Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services & Individual Business units
Housing Management System Review Agenda Page 69	Review of the existing Housing Management System used across the Housing Health & Wellbeing Directorate.	Staff access to system in an agile way, integration options with other related systems such as council wide CRM, functionality to improve tenant engagement and service improvements. Deliver new functionality to ensure continued compliance with legislation and regulatory responsibilities.	03-22	03-25	😊	HRA Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services, Housing, Health & Wellbeing

Asset Management and Compliance	Review and improvement of outdated and inefficient processes within Housing Asset Management and Compliance	Remove reliance on spreadsheets, minimise risks relating to compliance management, improved data management and analysis to support de-carbonisation requirements and investment management.	11-21	11-22	😊	HRA Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services, Transformation, Housing Maintenance and Asset Management
Electronic Signing	Modernising the process of document signing	Reduction in cost of production and delivery of contracts, quicker resolution as signature requests can be received via email.	06-22	09-22	😞	Revenue	ICT & Digital Services & Transformation
HR Workforce Management System	Modernising and improvement of HR & Payroll business processes, records and data management	Increase employee self-serve functions, reduce management administration time and replace obsolete software.	09-21	03-23	😊	Capital & Revenue	Financial Services & HR
Legal CMS	Implementation of a case management system, utilising modern services	Enable effective case and document management. Reduce costs and save time on everyday business processes. Enable effective security and sharing of sensitive documents.	01-22	06-22	😊	Revenue	Law & Information Governance

ICT & Digital Services Help Desk	Implementation of a modern service desk system, utilising modern services	Improved support provided across multiple channels. Decrease the cost of support and save time with self-service options. Enhance productivity for council employees.	01-22	03-22	😊	Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services
Digital Inclusion & Wellbeing	Supporting our communities with access and skills to enable the use of digital services.	Increasing the reach and availability of digital services to areas of digital deficit, to improve service consumption and delivery for all customers.	03-22	03-24	😞	Capital & Revenue	ICT & Digital Services, HHW
Council E-Newsletter	Implementing a modern approach to communication with our communities	Reduce paper copies produced in line with the Councils green agenda and engage through digital channels.	09-21	03-22	😊	Revenue	Communications
Cyber Essentials and information security frameworks	Continual improvement and maintenance of our digital platforms	Ensure council services are and remain safe and secure for customers and staff.	06-21	06-23	😊	Revenue	ICT & Digital Services
Infrastructure Capital Replacement	Continual improvement and maintenance of our digital platforms	Ensuring all council infrastructure is up to date and in support, with robust disaster recovery in place to ensure services are delivered and resilient.	06-21	12-23	😞	Capital	ICT & Digital Services

Repairs Online (DLUHC)	Modernising the repairs process	Investigations into Improved identification of repair need before site visit, reduction in repairs visits, and reduction in additional visits due to improved identification of resource requirements prior to visit.	09-22	09-23	😊	HRA Revenue	Housing maintenance, asset management, ICT & Digital Services
Digital Democracy	Improvements to live streaming and investigation into a modern members portal	Greater access to the Council's decision-making process. Improved connections with elected representatives.	03-22	03-23	😊	Capital & Revenue	Democratic Services, ICT & Digital Services
Digital Community	Community Centre Broadband	Providing connectivity around the district for staff, residents and tenants	06-22	03-24	😊	Revenue	HHW, ICT & Digital Services
Omni-channel Customer Services	Improving and expanding our customer communication channels (Call recording/Web chat/CRM integration)	Continue to improve customer service options for all customers with the introduction of additional channels of communication.	02-22	09-22	😊	Revenue	Customer Services, ICT & Digital Services
Palace e-commerce platform	Replacement of existing digital ticket sales offering for the palace theatre	Improved customer experience with a modern platform with the potential to increase revenue. Ability to expand marketing potential.	03-22	03-23	😊	Capital & Revenue	Heritage, ICT & Digital Services

NEW! ISO Standard	Implement information security best practices	Ensure council services are and remain safe and secure for customers and staff.	08-22	08-24	😊	Revenue	ICT & Digital Services & Information Governance
NEW! Income Management Implementation	Replace income management system	Providing a more accessible service. Improved customer experience. Reducing the requirement to telephone for information. Improving back-office processing and efficiency.	06-23	07-24	😊	Capital & Revenue	Finance, Customer Services, ICT & Digital Services
NEW! Planning & Public Protection Management Review	Review of existing Planning, premises & Public Protection Management	Providing a more accessible service. Improved customer experience. Reducing the requirement to telephone for information. Improving back-office processing and efficiency	06-22	06-25	😊	Capital & Revenue	Planning, premises & Public Protection, ICT & Digital Services
NEW! Digital Signage Review	Review of existing digital signage offer	Enable information sharing across multiple sites for internal staff information and look to provide advertising for local businesses	03-23	03-24	😊	Capital & Revenue	Communications, Heritage & Culture, Waste Services and ICT & Digital Services



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 31 October 2023

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

Director Lead: Matt Lamb, Director - Planning & Growth

Lead Officer: Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration & Housing Strategy, Ext. 5923

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Non-Key Decision
Report Title	Transfer of Section 106 Community Facility Contributions to Farnsfield Parish Council
Purpose of Report	To secure Cabinet approval to transfer Section 106 contributions held by the District Council for community facilities in the parish of Farnsfield to Farnsfield Parish Council.
Recommendations	<p>That:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Section 106 contributions for community facilities held by the District Council for improvements to community facilities in Farnsfield be transferred to Farnsfield Parish Council; and (b) the Council's Capital Programme for 2023/24 is increased by £141,748.08 financed by the Section 106 receipts referenced AG977 and AG975 held for community facilities improvements in Farnsfield.
Alternative Options Considered	<p>The Section 106 receipts held under these two agreements must spent on community infrastructure projects in Farnsfield, therefore it is appropriate that the District Council transfers the receipts held to Farnsfield Parish Council in order that it can determine which community projects should be supported and will deliver good community outcomes.</p> <p>The District Council could continue to determine which projects should be supported but it does not have the local contacts and connection that the Parish Council has with its local clubs and groups, and it is felt appropriate therefore to enable the Parish Council to determine such local priorities for the benefit of its community.</p>

Reason for Recommendations	To enable Farnsfield Parish Council to provide financial support to priority community projects in Farnsfield which will deliver positive outcomes for the local community.
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council is currently in receipt of two Section 106 contributions for community facilities in Farnsfield under agreements AG977 - £73,331.47 and AG975 - £68,416.61. These contributions can be used to improve community facilities in the Parish of Farnsfield either at the Village Hall, Bowls, Football, Cricket or Tennis Club as deemed appropriate. The Parish Council has, for some time, been working on a number of projects that it is keen to see delivered in the Parish and has asked that the monies held by the District Council now be transferred to it. Subject to Portfolio Holder approval this would be done under a 'side agreement', to ensure that the monies are only used as intended and as defined in the two legal agreements in order that the projects being developed can be delivered in a timely manner and are consistent with the legal agreements in place.
- 1.2 As the District Council has no direct local connection with the potential recipients of this funding, it is felt appropriate that the Parish Council should take local ownership of the development of the projects which can receive financial support from the transferred funds and will deliver community value and benefit. This approach has been successful in other Parishes of the District.

2.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Community Facilities contributions totalling £141,748.08 be transferred to Farnsfield Parish Council in order that suitable community projects that align to the Section 106 agreements referenced as AG977 and AG975 can be delivered in a timely manner and thereby contribute to the achievement of the District Council's Community Plan objectives as well as the priorities of the Parish Council and that the Council's Capital Programme is increased by £141,748.08 financed by the Section 106 receipts reference AG977 and AG975 held for community facilities improvements in Farnsfield.
- 2.2 The Council will work with Farnsfield Parish Council to ensure the Section 106 receipts were spent within requisite timeframes and in accordance with the requirements of the Section 106 Agreements.

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.

Financial Implications (FIN23-24/9788)

- 3.1 The Council is currently holding £141,748.08 for the provision of Community Facilities in Farnsfield, detailed over:

AG No.	Purpose	Spend by Date	Uncommitted Balance
AG975	Community Facility	23/06/2024	68,416.61
AG977	Community Facility	11/08/2024	73,331.47
Total			141,748.08

3.2 Due to the expenditure being Capital in nature, the equivalent budget will need to be added to the Capital programme, financed by the S106 receipts.

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 - 31 October 2023

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rowan Cozens, Heritage, Culture & the Arts

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director - Communities & Environment

Lead Officer: Carys Coulton-Jones, Business Manager - Heritage & Culture, Ext. 5773

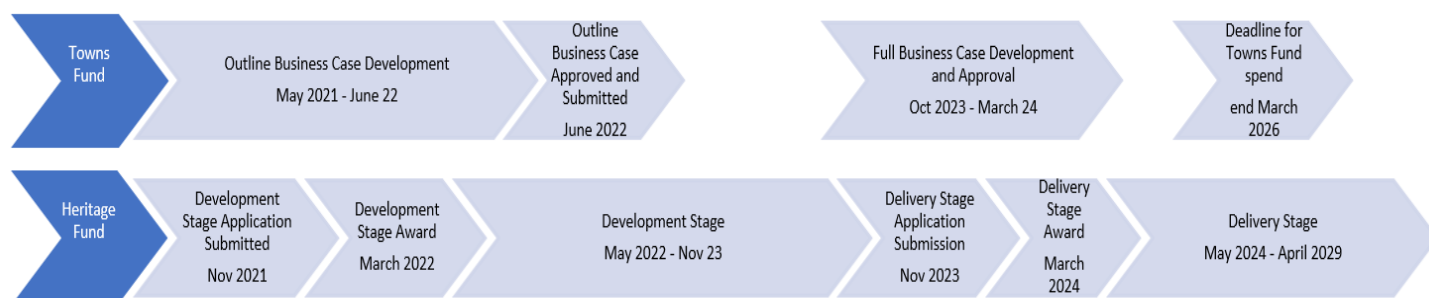
Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Key Decision
Report Title	Newark Castle Gatehouse Project - Delivery Phase Application
Purpose of Report	To update on the progress and revised costs of the Castle Gatehouse Project and request approval to submit the delivery phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) approve the submission of the delivery phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund by 16 November 2023; b) subject to the outcome of the Heritage Fund bid and approval of the Towns Fund Full Business Case, agree that a report be brought back to Cabinet to consider the increase to the capital programme budget from the Heritage Fund and to add additional staff to the establishment, funded by the project; and c) approve the preferred charging model.
Alternative Options Considered	<p>No alternatives are considered appropriate at this time. Without the project, the District Council would still have the responsibility to preserve and conserve the fabric of the building which is an ancient scheduled monument and requires significant investment, but without the wider benefits this project will offer. The Gatehouse Project is significant in the redevelopment of the town's visitor offer and as a key driver for the visitor economy, and further offers residents improved access to their heritage and to the gardens, supporting improved wellbeing and health and offering numerous opportunities to participate in cultural activity. The proposed charging model reflects the best option for the economic sustainability of the project whilst providing residents with this significantly improved offer.</p>

Reason for Recommendations	<p>The Heritage Fund is vital to securing the match funding for this project, and any delay to the delivery phase submission risks the timescales for delivery of the Towns Fund element.</p> <p>This project supports the community plan objectives of enhancing and protecting the District's natural environment through a more biodiverse planting scheme and landscaping development, preserving the green space within this historic site. It will deliver sustainable economic growth through delivery of a destination attraction for the town, and will support residents and local communities through co-creation, participation activities and opportunities to support improved wellbeing.</p>
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 In March 2022, NSDC were awarded development stage funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to progress the Newark Castle Gatehouse Project. The project is also funded through Newark's Towns Fund deal and by a contribution in the capital programme, and the Towns Fund element is subject to approval of a Full Business Case.
- 1.2 The project will reinstate the original Romanesque Gatehouse as the entrance to the Castle, create five gallery spaces plus a tower-top viewing platform and enhance the gardens through new planting, improved biodiversity and accessible paths. The project represents a unique opportunity to develop:
 - An iconic, flagship destination attraction at the gateway to the town which will increase footfall and dwell time within the town, benefiting businesses, residents and visitors and boosting the local economy
 - An innovative platform for Newark's rich and dynamic history and a unique backdrop for events, adding value to the Cultural Heart of Newark project
 - A catalyst for improved social inclusion and civic pride through access to heritage and culture
 - A driver for increased social value as a safe, vibrant and inclusive community green space with potential to reinvigorate the early evening local economy
 - A flexible space for inspirational education services and community co-creation
- 1.3 The project will develop and deliver inclusive, community co-created interpretation of the new galleries and spaces inside the Castle Gatehouse visitor attraction, delivering impact and appeal for the tourism market, linking to the National Civil War Centre through joint ticketing and supporting local businesses by moving footfall around the town. It will connect local communities and disadvantaged groups to their local history through participatory activity and events, and will strive to remove physical, economic and social barriers to accessing their heritage. A key aim is to promote the historic gardens as a safe and welcoming biodiverse green space, using lighting to enhance key architectural features as well as social and heritage significance, elevating the 'after darkness' experience to extend access times and support the early evening economy.

- 1.4 A key risk to the project is the timescale for delivery. The project is obliged to work within two sets of prescribed timescales to meet the requirements of both the Heritage Fund and the Towns Fund, as follows:



This demonstrates the importance of being able to submit the Delivery Phase application to the Heritage Fund in November 2023, alongside the development of the Full Business Case for the Towns Fund, to maximise the time available for construction before the Towns Fund spend deadline.

- 1.5 The project is subject to both planning permission and Scheduled Monument Consent. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with Historic England as a key stakeholder, in relation to the existing planning application (submitted in December 2021 to support the Outline Business Case, and paused, pending development of the landscape designs) and Scheduled Monument Consent, which was granted, subject to conditions, in March 2022.

2.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered

2.1 Heritage Fund Delivery Phase Application:

- 2.1.1 Over the last 12 months, the project is progressing to RIBA3 design stage, as required by the Heritage Fund. A sample of the designs can be found in **Appendix A**. During this time DBA Consulting have undertaken a significant amount of consultation, focus groups and workshops to inform the plans. Through this development phase, a number of key documents have been commissioned:

- A Conservation Management Plan
- Architects plans to RIBA3/4
- Interpretation plans to RIBA3
- Landscape and Lighting plans to RIBA3
- A Management and Maintenance Plan
- A Communications and Marketing Plan
- An Environmental Sustainability Plan
- An Activity Plan and Consultation Report
- A Business Plan
- A Cost Plan
- A Project Programme
- An Accessibility Audit

2.1.2 These documents will form part of the application to the Heritage Fund. The application also includes funding for key staff roles including a project delivery manager for 2 years, and a learning and participation officer for 4 years.

2.1.3 The most recent cost plan shows the full project cost as being £5,397,505 (excluding the current Heritage Fund development stage). This cost includes both capital and revenue costs for delivery, including the project staff team and the activity plan. With £3million Towns Fund allocated to this project, £1,025,150 secured within the capital programme and a further £50,012 committed to the Change Management Reserve, it is proposed to apply to the Heritage Fund for Delivery Phase funding of £1,322,343 in November 2023. It is likely that there will be some minor adjustments to this figure as costs are still being finalised; any increase to the cost plan would result in an uplift to the Heritage Fund bid and will not impact on the council's contribution.

2.1.4 The project is subject to both a successful Heritage Fund bid and the development and approval of the Full Business Case for the Towns Fund, both of which will be resolved in March 2024. Following this it is proposed to update Cabinet with a further report and to adjust the capital programme with the uplift from confirmed funding streams.

2.2 Charging Model:

2.2.1 The Business Plan has been developed by heritage consultants DBA, in collaboration with the Business Manager - Heritage & Culture and the wider Heritage & Culture team. A vital part of the new offer will be substantial free-to-access interpretation and activity. This includes the gardens, which remain free to the public, the ground floor exhibition space in the North-West Tower, and a programme of community participation events and workshops, all of which will benefit residents and under-represented groups and communities. The remainder of the offer (1st floor North-West Tower and Gatehouse Tower) will sit behind the pay barrier. Volunteer-led guided tours will offer hidden history tours to the other parts of the Castle, including the debtors dungeon, South-West Tower and undercroft.

2.2.2 The Business Planning team has modelled options for ticket pricing that reflects both the tourism value of the offer but also NSDC's approach to increase access to heritage for residents. **Appendix B** illustrates the preferred model, alongside a sample of benchmarking undertaken to understand the most sustainable pricing and demand. Mindful of the need to develop a scheme that is economically sustainable, the preferred model will offer residents half price entry, with free return during the year, encouraging repeat footfall and opportunities to upsell activities, events, tours, and the wider cultural offer across the town and district. The business plan also describes opportunities for commercial activity, including an increase in weddings and a new offer for events and celebrations on the terraced lawns and multi-function space.

2.3 Enhanced Lighting Scheme:

2.3.1 The current cost plan includes the cost of lighting scheme option 1 (**Appendix A**), ensuring that the scheme remains affordable. However, more ambitious proposals have also been designed – an architectural scheme which highlights key historic features, colour options enabling the site to be lit in a variety of colours, perhaps linked to key national and / or charitable initiatives, and large-scale projection on the curtain wall which would provide a new outlet for events and light shows and a platform for

commercialisation. These ideas sit beyond the scope of the Heritage Fund proposal but would complement and enhance the work being undertaken across the town to illuminate the town, improve safety and enhance the visitor experience. It is therefore proposed to allocate £5,000 from the capital feasibility reserve to explore these proposals in more detail, co-ordinate with the work of the Economic Growth and Public Safety teams and ensure the infrastructure and cabling specified for the Gatehouse project futureproofs the site to facilitate the potential delivery of these aspirational plans. Delivery of these plans would be subject to a future cabinet report and would also explore suitable potential external funding streams.

- 2.3.2 The project supports the community plan objectives of enhancing and protecting the District's natural environment through a more biodiverse planting scheme and landscaping development, preserving the green space within this historic site. It will deliver sustainable economic growth through delivery of a destination attraction for the town, and will support residents and local communities through co-creation, participation activities and opportunities to support improved wellbeing.

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.

Financial Implications (FIN23-24/7887)

- 3.1 The Castle Gatehouse project is in the Capital Programme with a budget of £4,025,150. This is financed as follows:

Towns Fund	£3,000,000
NSDC Borrowing	£1,000,000
Capital Reserve	£25,150

- 3.2 The Change Management Reserve has a commitment of £50,012 for the Gatehouse delivery (with £21,857 already committed to the development phase), which is currently expected to be part of the revenue costs.
- 3.3 As per Paragraph 2.1.3, the costs of delivering the project is estimated to be £5,397,505, which includes both Capital and Revenue elements of the project which will need to be split out, the details of which will be finalised as part of the submission to the Heritage Fund. The value of the bid will cover all additional assumed costs, therefore at this stage there is no additional funding requested from the Council.
- 3.4 Once the outcome of the Heritage Fund bid is received and the Towns Fund Full Business Case is approved a report will be brought back to Cabinet to update and seek approval to increase the Capital Programme budget accordingly, the financial implications of which will be detailed at that point.
- 3.5 As per paragraph 2.3.1, it is anticipated that the cost of exploring the enhanced lighting scheme will be £5,000 which can be funded from the Capital Feasibility Reserve. A further report will be brought back to Members with the outcome of the work, including the costs of the scheme and whether any external funding can be sourced to fund the cost.

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.

[Report to the Policy & Finance Committee – 25 November 2021](#)

Newark Castle Gatehouse Project



Project concept designs developed during the Heritage Fund Development Stage, to be further developed and refined during the next stage.



1. New visitor entrance
(image by Martin Ashley Architects)
2. The new entrance bridge to the Gatehouse from Beastmarket Hill with terraced lawns to the right and the new Multi-function Space to the left
3. The terraced lawns down to the Riverside
4. Proposed riverside meadow planting
Images 2-4 by Andrew Cottage, Urban Edge

Note these drawings are indicative only and do not accurately represent the Castle stonework or finishes



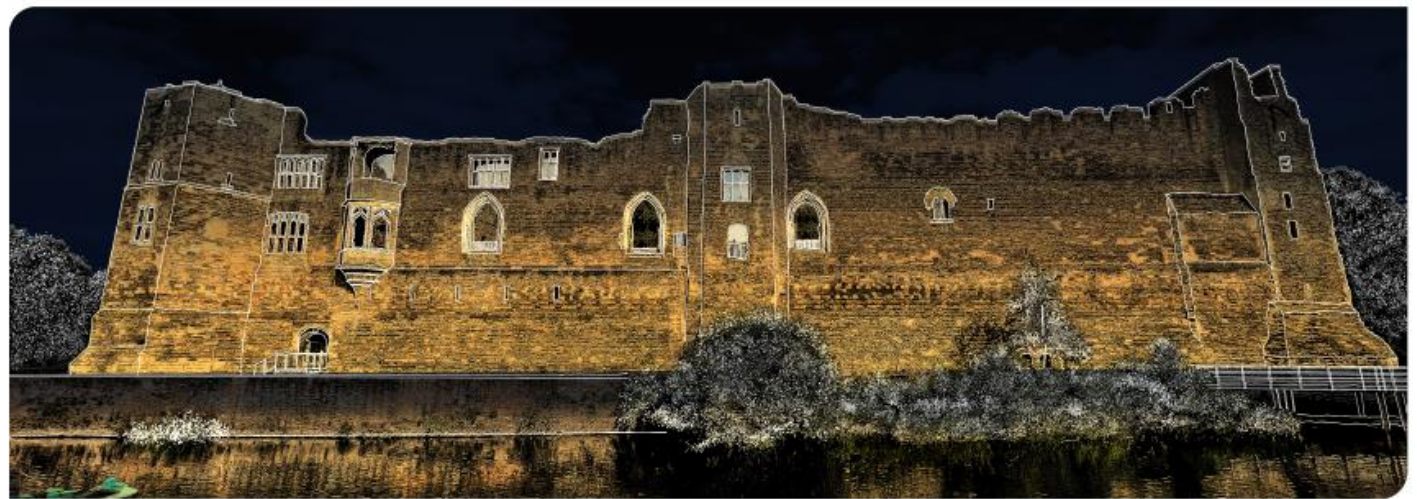
Landscape proposals by Urban Edge showing the new accessible paths and entrance, terraced lawn and Watergate planting. A planting strategy is now being developed to identify the type of planting in each area.

The plan includes:

- New public entrance
- New, accessible path from the entrance to the Gatehouse
- Terraced gardens and new planting
- Sensory, meadow style planting in blue, white and mauve along the river side
- Increased benches and seating



Proposed Lighting Scheme developed by Michael Grubb Studio, showing the improved lighting to the paths, bandstand, curtain wall and entrances.



Concept Interpretation Designs by Nissen Richards, showing the interpretative approach through models and interactives, real and replica tactile objects and furniture, embroideries, trails and play, telling the story of the Castle through time and exploring its Medieval history in more detail.



Influencing



Historical research



Music



Co-made interpretation



Creative writing



Newark Voices

Newark Castle: Charging Options

This paper sets out the preferred option for ticketing for Newark Castle following its redevelopment, and outlines the assumptions behind them, which have been established in discussion with NSDC staff.

Both NSDC and the core funders (the National Lottery Heritage Fund/Towns Fund) are keen to maximise local use of the castle, while also considering the financial sustainability of the site.

	Preferred Option
Ticketing Model	Headline adult entry charge of £8 (inc VAT, 2023 prices) No concessions Children go free Free return within 12 months Joint ticket with NCWC £12
Charges for Local Residents	50% discount for N&S residents, making adult entry charge £4, no charge for children
Visitor Number Assumptions	
Annual visits from N&S residents	8,600 <i>Represents 3.5% penetration into N&S District population for initial visits, with each initial visit generating 1.0 additional visits within the following 12 month period.</i>
<i>of which initial visits</i>	4,300
<i>of which repeat visits within 12 months</i>	4,300
Annual Visits from Non-NSDC Residents	16,900 <i>Represents 3.5% penetration into current Newark town tourist visits, plus 0.1% penetration into current N&S District tourism visits.</i>
Total Annual Visits	25,500
% Of all Visits From N&S Residents	34%
Total Ticket Income, ex VAT <i>(excludes charges for tours and special events)</i>	£98,017

Notes

Any assumptions around visitor numbers and the impact of charging at Newark Castle can only be estimates.

We do know that visits to NCWC from local people have risen substantially since the museum became free to local residents (up 31% in the period April-August 2023 compared with the same period the previous year).

In particular, assumptions around repeat visits are challenging. National data suggests 23% of visits to museums are made by repeat visitors within a 12 month period (i.e. each initial visit generates an average of 0.3 additional visits within a 12 month period). However, this covers a wide range of free and charging sites, and it can be assumed that free sites and those with free return entry generate a large proportion of those repeat visits.

Heritage Fund guidance on estimating visitor markets for heritage attractions suggests that penetration rates of 5% or higher should only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

For comparison, NCWC (free to residents) has achieved 2,599 visits from local residents since April this year (1.8% penetration for initial visits). This could realistically increase to 3% penetration over the remainder of the financial year.

The current split at NCWC is 42% N&S residents, 58% from outside the district.

Newark Castle itself has limited capacity, and will require timed booking slots at busy periods. 25,500 visitors a year represents an average of 112 visitors per open day. 29,200 represents an average of 129 visits per open day.

Benchmarking

The Heritage and Culture team at NSDC undertook a benchmarking exercise to consider similar attractions in the region / around the country to understand potential pricing and demand that could be sustained at a refurbished Castle attraction. The sample data below demonstrates that a standard ticket ranges from £3.80 to £16. The average standard price is £9.53. The most expensive often offer free entry or discounts for residents, and both English Heritage and the National Trust offer free entry with membership.

English Heritage – Roche Abbey	£6.50 adult, £5.50 conc, £3.50 child, £16.50 family
English Heritage – Lincoln Bishop’s Palace	£8.50 adult, £7.50 conc, £4.50 child, £21.50 family
English Heritage – Gainsborough Old Hall	£11 adult, £9.50 conc, £6.50 child, £28.50 family
National Trust – Tattershall Castle	£10 adult, £5 child, £25 family
Nottingham Castle (local authority)	£12 adult, children free
Newark Air Museum	£10 adult, £9 conc, £5.50 child, £28 family
Lincoln Castle	£16 adult, £15 conc, £8.50 child, £40.50 family
National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum	£8 adult, £7 conc, £4 child, free for N&S residents
Knaresborough Castle Museum (local auth)	£3.80 adult, £2.80 conc, £2.20 child, £11.10 family

Kate Elliott, DBA Consulting, September 2023



Report to: Cabinet Meeting – 31 October 2023

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Brazier, Housing

Director Lead: Suzanne Shead, Director - Housing, Health & Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Cara Clarkson, Business Manager, Regeneration and Housing Strategy, Ext. 5923

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Key - Decision
Report Title	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Housing Outturn 2022/23 and Future Delivery of New Homes
Purpose of Report	To provide an update on the progress of the Council's Housing Revenue Account Development Programme – the outturn for 2022-23 and options for future housing delivery.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) notes the progress and expected completion of the current HRA Development Programme; b) allocates £234,747.64 from Section 106 contributions (as detailed in section 2.16 of the report) to development sites at South Crescent, Clipstone; Firview, Ollerton; and Gaitskell Crescent, Edwinstowe as part of Phase 5 of the HRA Development Programme therefore reducing the required borrowing by an equivalent amount; c) supports the creation of £10.7m budget for the development of a discreet programme of HRA Development up to 50 units within the HRA Capital Programme in 2024/25 financed by the surplus identified at paragraph 2.19 of the report of £2.445m and with the remaining £8.255m financed initially from borrowing whilst other funding is sourced; and d) commits the total of £1.292m from the Section 106 agreements listed at 2.21 of the report to the new development programme within the obligations of the S106 agreements.
Alternative Options Considered	The completion of the HRA development programme, without the introduction of a future programme was considered but discounted in recognition of the impact that a net loss of housing (through annual right to buy numbers) will have on the ongoing viability of the HRA 30 Year Business Plan.

	A pause in the programme was also discounted as this would risk losing the in-house skills and experience that have been built up over the last five years.
Reason for Recommendations	To provide confidence in the ongoing delivery of the HRA Development Programme, securing value for money secured through the programme and the outcomes delivered to against the community plan objectives to create more and better-quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In 2017 the Council set a target to deliver 341 new-build council properties through its Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 1.2 Since 2017, the HRA Development Programme has delivered 279 properties across both general needs housing and specialist Extra Care Housing (Gladstone House, Newark and Broadleaves, Ollerton).
- 1.3 The programme has faced a number of challenges detailed below; however, this report demonstrates a highly successful and value for money programme has been delivered despite the challenges faced.

DATES	CHALLENGE
March 2020 – January 2021	Covid Pandemic and lock downs. Including social distancing on construction sites
June 2021	Main contractor for Broadleaves Extra Care scheme entered administration
April 2022 – April 2023	Inflation at 10%, construction costs and materials impacted. Labour shortages experienced across the construction sector
September 2022	Main contractor for programme entered administration leaving eight sites partly constructed and the remainder of sites in the pipeline without a contractor to deliver
October 2022	Re-procurement of all part constructed sites – awarded to three separate Small to Medium Enterprises to spread the workload and future risk of the project
April - September 2023	Procurement of further twelve sites to separate contractors to spread the workload and risk of the project.

2.0 Delivery

Overall Delivery

- 2.1 Delivery within the HRA Development Programme is split across five phases totalling 341 properties.

Phase	Properties Completed	Properties Currently under construction	Properties with planning permission due start on site	Total Properties being delivered
Phase 1	136	0	0	136
Phase 2	50	0	0	50
Phase 3	68	12	0	80
Phase 4	25	18	0	43
Phase 5	0	2	30	32
Total	279	32	30	341

- 2.2 It is expected that those properties currently with planning permission and due to start, will start on site around October 2023 for completion by July 2024.
- 2.3 The final phase of the programme has been spread over 30 months as a result of the main contractor going into administration in the latter half of 2022. This delay was reported to Cabinet in October 2022.
- 2.4 In addition to the properties within the HRA Development Programme, the council is also delivering a new temporary accommodation facility 'Alexander Lodge' on the site of the previous provision. Once complete, Alexander Lodge will provide 20 highly energy efficient properties with a range of configurations to adjust between one to four bedroom accommodation.

Location and Type of New Build Properties

- 2.5 Properties have been delivered across the district, predominantly utilising council owned infill and garage sites. A number of sites have been transformed from hot spots of anti-social behaviour to new homes for residents.
- 2.6 A range of property types have been delivered to reflect the variation and range of housing needs in the district. The table below shows the type and location of properties across the programme:

Location	Type of Properties Constructed			
	Flats	Bungalows	Houses	Extra Care
Newark Area	70	31	30	60
Western Villages	14	48	17	30
Newark Villages	2	19	20	0
Total 341	86	98	67	90

- 2.7 The table shows that the council has built more bungalows than any other type of property over the period of the programme. This is a significant result given the high demand for bungalows in the district and is in contrast to the market where developers

generally have not been building bungalows over the last 20 years due to land availability and the pressures of financial viability within the private sector.

Property Specification and Standards

- 2.8 The specification for new build properties has developed over the period of the programme to ensure the programme delivers modern properties that are efficient to heat and maintain. Current properties generally benefit from photo voltaic panels, solar thermal storage and an efficient “A” rated electrical heating system.
- 2.9 Over the period of the new build programme, the Council has carried out customer satisfaction surveys. The surveys have been conducted over the 12 months following occupation of the property and feedback gained has been used to improve the specification and service delivery. Customer satisfaction with the completed properties and defects service is currently at 98.9%.

Delivering Value for Money

- 2.10 Since the new build programme started, it has attracted £7.888m in grant funding from Homes England; £3.962m from Nottinghamshire County Council and the Better Care Fund, giving a total of £11.85m in contributions.
- 2.11 The HRA Development Programme will deliver 341 properties against a target of 335 and within the budget set out by the council – with an estimated surplus of £2.445m from the current allocation for Phase 3 – 5, Boughton Extra Care and the site acquisition budget.
- 2.12 Across the East Midlands, the 2023 average cost to build a new property is £303,000. The current 2023 HRA new build average cost of a property is £198,000.
- 2.13 The average cost of a property across all five phases of the programme, inclusive of extra care properties, build costs, planning fees, architects and consultants’ fees is £176,823 per property compared to £285,500 per property in the East Midlands for the time period 2018-2023.

Current Section 106 Contributions

- 2.14 The HRA Development Programme has utilised S106 Affordable Housing contributions where possible, to ensure these are spent effectively and appropriately.
- 2.15 The council currently has three S106 affordable housing contributions due for spend within this next two financial years. It is recommended that the S106 contributions shown below are allocated to the final phase of the current programme, to ensure the contributions are spent within the time scale and within the relevant parish.
- 2.16 The sites proposed to receive £234,747.64 S106 funding are: South Crescent, Clipstone, Fir View Ollerton and Gaitskell Crescent, Edwinstowe. Sites are programmed to start on site in October 2023 for completion June 2024, they will provide additional affordable one bed bungalows and both meet the restriction on the S106 to ensure spend within the parish boundary.

Table of s106 contributions for affordable housing that require spend by 2025-2026 financial period					
Parish	Contribution Type	Time Limited	Spend by date	Amount	Restricted To
Clipstone	Affordable Housing	Yes	20/1/2025	£150,086.59	Parish
Ollerton	Affordable Housing	Yes	06/09/2025	£42,872.00	Parish
Edwinstowe	Affordable Housing	Yes	29/04/2026	£41,789.05	Parish
Total				£234,747.64	

Future Delivery Beyond Phase Five

- 2.17 As the final phase of the existing development programme is underway, it is appropriate and timely for the council to consider any future programme for new build council housing.
- 2.18 The Council is currently undertaking a full stock condition survey of all council owned homes and is actively working with the Carbon Trust to model the financial implications of decarbonising homes. Whilst this work is underway, it is proposed that a smaller, discreet development programme, of up to 50 units is brought forward subject to capacity and affordability. This will ensure that the Council continues to meet the housing needs in the district and replaces those homes lost through Right to Buy sales, maintaining the financial viability of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
- 2.19 Within the current HRA Development Programme there is expected to be a £2.445m surplus budget made up as follows:

Scheme Name	Budget Available £
Phase 3	0.230
Phase 4	0.227
Phase 5	1.691
Boughton Extra Care	0.297
Total	2.445

- 2.20 It is proposed that the surplus from the current HRA development programme (£2.445m) is rolled forward to support the new programme along with utilisation of S106 Contributions, Right to Buy Receipts and any external funding that can be secured.
- 2.21 A further £1.292m S106 is available (with restrictions on location and spend date) as per the table below:

Parish	Contribution Type	Spend by Date	Amount (£)	Restricted To
Clipstone	Affordable Housing	04/02/2031	320,112.82	NSDC
Clipstone	Affordable Housing	19/04/2031	176,459.80	Extended Parishes
Clipstone	Affordable Housing	29/11/2031	41,396.85	Extended Parishes
Bulcote	Affordable Housing	10/02/2032	69,979.00	Extended Parishes
Bulcote	Affordable Housing	10/02/2032	69,979.00	Extended Parishes
Bilsthorpe	Affordable Housing	No	5,210.00	Commuted Sum no definition
Rainworth	Affordable Housing	No limit	469,993.43	No definition
Newark	Affordable Housing (off site)	No limit	4,840.04	Unrestricted
Bilsthorpe	Affordable Housing (off site)	No limit	36,000.00	No definition
Blidworth	Affordable Housing	No limit	45,927.19	No definition
South Scarle	Affordable Housing		52,000.00	Off Site unrestricted
Total			1,291,898.13	

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.

Financial Implications (FIN23-24/5017)

- 3.1 Allocating £234,747.64 of available in S106 as per the table at 2.16, to the current phase 5 of the Development Programme will result in the equivalent amount less borrowing required in the current year, which will save c£11,000 per year in interest.
- 3.2 The proposal to deliver a modest programme of additional HRA Development up to 50 units. This requires a total budget of £10.7m. The current build per unit cost as per paragraph 2.12 is £198,000. The new Programme would likely start during 2024/25, therefore it would be prudent to increase this cost by 8% to take account of future inflation.
- 3.3 As per paragraph 2.19, it is estimated that £2.445m of the current New Build Programme can be utilised towards the additional budget requirement. Therefore, the Capital Programme would need to be increased by £8.255m. Other sources of funding are currently being explored. Therefore, it would be prudent to assume at this time that the additional budget should be financed by borrowing, which at the PWLB rates at the end of September 2023 would cost £457,327 per year in interest.

- 3.4 The additional sources of funding currently being explored are Homes England Grant and S106 where applicable. there are restrictions with using certain types of funding together, for example Right to Buy (RTB) 1-4-1 receipts cannot be used at the same time as Homes England grant and S106 receipts are bound by a legal agreement.
- 3.5 There is £1.292m available in Affordable Housing S106 receipts as per the table at 2.21, which could reduce the borrowing requirement however, this would need to be reviewed once the sites were determined to ensure utilising the receipt was in line with the S106 agreement. In order to maximise the usage of the receipts listed, it is recommended that the Director of Growth and Economic Development be given delegated authority to approve the use of the receipts against the proposed programme as appropriate.
- 3.6 The additional budget required has been modelled into the current approved HRA 30-year Business Plan and is affordable.

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 - 31 October 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, Tel: 07929 864367

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Urgent Key Decision
Report Title	Devolution Retrofit Funding
Purpose of Report	To approve the government grant funding of £583,500 to be added to the Housing Assets capital programme to fund decarbonisation measure in 38 social housing properties.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>(a) endorse the project plan and accept receipt of grant funding of £583,500 from Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC), which will be drawn down in arrears; and</p> <p>(b) approve an increase in the Capital Programme of £583,500 in 2023/24 fully funded by DLUHC grant.</p>
Alternative Options Considered	As noted in Section 3 of the report, there were no viable alternatives and taking no action would mean returning grant funding back to government and make it harder for the Council to meet the government requirements on energy efficiency and move towards decarbonisation of social housing stock.
Reason for Recommendations	The DLUHC grant will provide 100% funding to assist the Council in its decarbonisation programme for its own social housing stock. 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 In preparation for the East Midlands Combined Authority the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), has allocated a total of £18m of capital funding to Derbyshire County Council as the Lead Funder on behalf of the four Constituent Councils who will form part of the EMCAA, if approved. Each local authority has been allocated £583,500.

- 1.2 On 13 September 2023, the Council received confirmation that £583,000 had been allocated and the Mobilization Grant Offer letter has been signed and returned by our S151 Officer on 3rd October 2023.
- 1.3 The project will deliver domestic energy efficiency and low carbon retrofit activities within Newark and Sherwood District Council and report through The Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) funded by the Department for Energy Security as part of the Government's clean growth strategy, hosted by Nottingham City Council.
- 1.4 The Council are currently working with MNZH as part of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 2.1 project to deliver carbon neutral heating, solar and air source to 102 council owned homes. The objectives of this scheme being:
- 85 Whole House Retrofit approach scaled with all compliant required SAP measures installed (Target of 5 homes per Local Authority)
 - 600 PAS2035 compliant measures installed (Target of 36 per Local Authority)
 - Improved health and wellbeing for home occupiers through a pre and post survey
 - Reduced consumption and lower carbon footprint.
 - Reduced number of households below an EPC C
 - Average Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) improvement
- 1.5 As NSDC is already in delivery mode, working on SHDF, this project is seen as an extension of this work, with all works meeting PAS 2035 standards and certificated by Trustmark.
- 1.6 All measures are expected to be signed up to receive measures in period October – December 2023 and be completed by June 2024.
- 1.7 Grant allocation will be based on a monthly claim and completion of the monthly monitoring form and payment made within 30 working days of evidence of the payment date agreed.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is outlined in **Appendix 1** and this meets the grant funding requirements and will deliver 51 decarbonisation or energy saving measures in a further 38 social housing homes.
- 2.2 These properties have been selected because either/or:

Properties cannot currently be funded under the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund criteria.

- They have EPC ratings of either a 'D' or 'E'
- The properties require whole house retrofit approach and include external wall insulation which is expensive.

- 2.3 These measures will benefit tenants by reducing heating costs and it will be more likely that tenants keep their homes sufficiently heated. This benefits the Council in maintaining their homes and the Council is less likely to have to intervene to remedy any damp and mould.
- 2.4 Procurement will be by 'direct call-off' from one of the procurement frameworks that the Council are a member of. This will allow for a quick start on site (given the tight timescales) but give assurance that tried and tested contractors will be used that have already gone through a value for money assessment.
- 2.5 This report asks Cabinet to endorse the project plan and formally accept receipt of grant funding of £583,500 from DLUHC, which will be drawn down in arrears and to approve this additional spend and increase in the Capital Programme of £583,500 in 2023/24 accordingly.

3.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 3.1 As this grant funding is essentially a 'gift' to assist in the council's decarbonisation programme no other funding measure were considered.
- 3.2 Given the tight timescales for delivery, knowledge of eligible stock and quick mobilisation are essential to this project; this ruled out any possibility of including stock in the private rented sector.
- 3.3 The option not to accept the grant funding was considered, but not recommended as this increases the number of tenants that will benefit in the next year from more effective and efficient heating or energy consumption and contributes to reducing the carbon emissions in its council housing homes at zero cost.

4.0 Urgent Key Decision

- 4.1 Given that a Key Decision is defined as one that is likely to 'result in the Council spending or making savings of over £150,000 revenue or £300,000 in capital' this item should have been advertised for a minimum of 28 days on the Council's Forward Plan on the website.
- 4.2 As this has not been the case, the general exception procedure as set out in the Constitution is to be followed which provides that the decision can still be taken if the Monitoring Officer has informed the Chair of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee five clear days in advance of the meeting; this has been done.

5.0 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 (FIN23-24/2021)

- 5.1 Should the grant be accepted a new Capital budget of £583,500 is required, provisionally split £480,000 in 2023/24 and £103,500 in 2024/25 and will be fully financed by the grant.
- 5.2 The payment profile of the grant has been based on estimated expenditure provided as part of the business case. This will be claimed monthly in arrears based on actual activity as part of the monitoring and evaluation.
- 5.3 Should the budget profile need to be amended, this can be reported through quarterly budget monitoring reports, in line with the project milestones reporting to Nottingham City Council.
- 5.4 There are no additional revenue costs for delivery.

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

Appendix 1 - Retrofit Devolution Capital Fund Plan

Retrofit Devolution Capital Fund			Total Sum £583,500						
TYPE	SCHEME	MEASURE(S) INSTALLED	No.	No. Measures	Est. Cost per measure	Est. Total Cost	Comments		
Whole Home Retrofit		Air Source Heat Pump 5/7KW Solar PV & Battery EWI	5	15	£47,000	£235,000	Possible direct procure of Phoenix or another from framework		
Solar PV & Battery	ASHP no solar - Forge Cl etc	Solar PV & Battery	12	12	£8,500	£102,000	TBC		
Air Source	Air source (no solar)	Air Source Heat pump	16	16	£10,000	£160,000	Westfields via EEM		
ASHP & Solar PV	Off Gas Grid not in SHDF	Air Source Heat Pump 5/7KW Solar PV & Battery	5	10	£18,500	£92,500	Wrights Renewals		
TOTAL			38	53		£589,500			

Installation Progress	Number of measures Solar PV	Capital Cost	Number of measures Heat Pump	Capital Cost	Number of Whole Home Retrofit	Capital Cost	Forecast Total Measures Installed	Forecast Total Homes Completed	Total Capital Costs
Input Category	Number	£	Number	£	Number	£	Number	Number	£
Month / Scheme	Devo-Retrofit		Devo-Retrofit		Devo-Retrofit		Devo-Retrofit	Devo-Retrofit	Devo-Retrofit
Sep-23									
Oct-23	1	£8,500.00	1	£10,000.00					£18,500.00
Nov-23	2	£8,500.00	2	£10,000.00					£37,000.00
Dec-23	2	£8,500.00	2	£10,000.00					£37,000.00
Jan-24	3	£8,500.00	3	£10,000.00					£55,500.00
Feb-24	4	£8,500.00	2	£10,000.00					£54,000.00
Mar-24			5	£10,000.00					£50,000.00
Apr-24			5	£10,000.00					£50,000.00
May-24	4	£8,500.00							£34,000.00
Jun-24	1	£8,500.00	1	£10,000.00	5	£235,000.00	15		£253,500.00
Jul-24									
Aug-24									
Totals	17	£59,500.00	21	£80,000.00		£235,000.00	15	374,553	£589,500.00



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 31 October 2023

Portfolio Holders: Councillor Susan Crosby, Heritage, Culture & the Arts
Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Leads: Sanjiv Kohli, Director - Resources/Deputy Chief Executive
Suzanne Shead, Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing

Lead Officers: Mark Eyre, Business Manager - Corporate Property, Ext. 5440
Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration & Housing Strategy, Ext. 5923

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report (with Exempt Appendix), Key Decision
Report Title	Southwell Leisure Centre Works
Purpose of Report	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To inform Cabinet of the condition of Southwell Leisure Centre and the essential works that are required to the dry and wet side facilities at the Leisure Centre. 2. To inform Cabinet of the decision to close the main pool from 29 October 2023 to 1 December 2023, to carry out further investigatory works. The Learner Pool will remain open during this period. 3. To seek approval for an additional budget allocation of £161,800 from the Change Management Reserve, making a total budget of £740,000 in the Capital Programme, to carry out the fire safety and general repairs to the dry side facility.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) approves an additional transfer of £161,800 funded from the Change Management Reserve, giving a total Capital budget of £740,000 to carry out the essential works to the dry side facility as set out in this report; (b) note that whilst every effort will be made to phase the works to keep the Leisure Centre operational at all times, there is a possibility that the Leisure Centre may have to close for a period of time in order for the works to be carried out safely, effectively and efficiently; and (c) note that in the event of closure, Active4Today will endeavour to accommodate customers at the Newark and

	Dukeries facilities, and that the Leisure Centre members affected will have their direct debits reduced to a nil payment where appropriate.
Alternative Options Considered	An alternative option would be to do nothing. This is not a feasible option as there are significant compliance and maintenance works that need to be carried out. In addition, the condition of the main pool at the centre poses a risk of significant water leakage and impact on wider operations to the site.
Reason for Recommendations	To mitigate the risk of failure of the main pool and carry out the essential fire safety and general repair works to the building.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The management of the Southwell Leisure Centre was transferred to Newark & Sherwood District Council (NSDC) in 2021, with the operational responsibilities being carried out by Active4Today. At the end of 2022 and the beginning of this year, fire safety inspections and subsequent surveys identified works that were required for the building to be fully compliant. Some of these works that related to the first floor were carried out in January of this year, after a short closure of the first-floor fitness suite and staff offices. The surveys, however, identified further fire safety and general repair works that needed to be undertaken. A more recent survey of the main pool and the learner pool carried out by a swimming pool specialist has reported significant defects in the infrastructure of the main pool.
- 1.2 Corporate Property have approached Lindum, based in Lincoln, to undertake a full feasibility of a programme of works required to the dry side facility prior to a potential instruction through the SCAPE framework. SCAPE frameworks are designed to deliver value for money on construction projects that are delivered on time and on budget. Lindum have produced an indicative programme for the works and cost estimates, however if Lindum were to proceed on the basis of a direct award under the SCAPE framework, they would firm up costs by seeking three quotes on all items where necessary.

2.0 Works Overview

- 2.1 The works are categorised into three areas - fire safety, general repairs, and pool repairs. A summary of the defects and works required are set out in 2.2 to 2.4 below.

2.2 Fire Safety Repairs

The works required in this area are:

- Fire compartmentation upgrades (walls, ceilings etc).
- Repairs to existing damaged fire doors
- Replacement of non-compliant internal glazing
- Upgrade of emergency lighting
- Installation of smoke vent systems
- Construction of a disabled refuge with fire doors
- Fire dampers.

2.3 General Repairs

The works required in this area are:

- Roof repairs/ replacements
- Main entrance atrium glass
- Guttering a rainwater goods upgrade
- External redecoration (in isolated areas)
- External cladding repairs
- Repairs to the fitness suite floor
- Repairs to final exit doors
- Electrical upgrade works.

2.4 Pool Repairs

The Corporate Property business unit instructed a specialist swimming pool company, Asher Swimpool Centre Limited, to undertake a review of the condition of the pool. This review has included pool tank effectiveness, pool top up data, pool plantrooms and all associated equipment, the air handling system and recommended health and safety management routines for on-site staff to follow. Further details are set out in the exempt appendix. These investigative works have been commissioned for week commencing 23 October and will be reported to the Corporate Property business unit by the structural engineer once test results are received and compiled into their report.

2.5 The Council and Active4Today have agreed to close the main pool for a period of four weeks from 29 October 2023 to ascertain the extent of the water leak levels at the main pool. During this closure period, the Corporate Property team will also review all available options to repair the defects in the pool together with associated costs.

2.6 There is a larger programme of works to the centre, identified, and costed by Lindum, which will be separately procured. This includes elements of the fire safety works to the rest of the centre (mainly focused on the plant room) and the wider building repairs. Once these are procured, the works are expected to start in the new year. Whilst every effort will be made to always keep the Centre open, initial estimates from the contractors we have been working with have indicated that a period of closure may be necessary to enable some of these works to be carried out in a safe, efficient and effective manner.

2.7 Budget Costs

The current feasibility report for the repairs listed within the fire safety repairs and general reports are forecasted by Lindum to be in the region of £740,000. There is currently a remaining budget in the Capital Programme for Southwell Leisure Centre of £374,500, along with £203,700 in the General Fund revenue budget to fund the general repairs. This takes the total budget available to £578,200.

In relation to the larger programme of works and the potential closure of the centre for a period, as the extent of any closure period is unknown, along with the time of the year when a potential closure may take place, the company has calculated the financial net revenue loss for an average month closure. This loss will necessitate an adjustment to the management fee to Active4Today. The estimate of this loss is provided in the exempt appendix to this report.

In addition to this, there will be likely significant costs to undertake the extensive repairs resulting from the pool survey, including pool repairs and replacements. Details of this will be provided at the next meeting of Cabinet on 19 December 2023.

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.

Financial Implications (FIN23-24/8458)

- 3.1 As per paragraph 2.7 there is £578,200 budget available, which has been funded from the Change Management Reserve. To fund the total works of £740,000, an additional budget of £161,800 is therefore required from the existing commitment in the reserve and the £203,700 in the General Fund revenue budget will need to be added to the Capital Programme to include the works as one package of improvements to the building.
- 3.2 Once the outcome of the pool survey is known, a report will need to be brought back to Cabinet to assess the works necessary and the associated financial implications to request a capital budget as appropriate.
- 3.3 As per paragraph 2.8, the proposed closure of the pool for a four-week period will result in an estimated loss in net income of £20,000. This has been calculated assuming that a proportion of the membership base (the wet based categories) will be making a nil payment for the closure period. The company will endeavour where possible to accommodate customers at the Newark and Dukeries facilities (as they have pools) and if any usage can be secured at these sites, swimming lessons for children, increased swim in lanes for customers, aquatic classes etc, this may result in a slightly lower deficit; however, at this stage, this cannot be guaranteed and therefore the worst case impact .
- 3.4 The £20,000 loss has been arrived at after mitigations by Active4Today by working on reducing staffing where possible (redeploying, taking leave, covering holidays at other facilities), to ensure contracted staff are still fulfilling their contracts and being paid in full.
- 3.5 The estimated £20,000 loss would therefore increase the contribution that the Council makes to Active4Today in Management Fee. The Management Fee budget for the 2023/24 financial year was approved at Full Council within the budget setting report in March 2023 at £486,670. The actual fee will depend on the performance across the portfolio of leisure centres and hence may be able to be contained within the existing budget depending on how the other centres perform.

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 - 31 October 2023

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Taylor, Public Protection & Community Relations

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	Revisions to the Community Grant Scheme
Purpose of Report	To present the revised criteria for allocations against the council's community grant scheme.
Recommendation	That Cabinet approve the revised criteria at sections 2.3 and 2.4 of the report.
Alternative Options Considered	Maintaining the existing grant criteria was considered, however the changes proposed allow for greater targeting of funds in line with Community Plan priorities.
Reason for Recommendation	To ensure that funding can be allocated to community groups – supporting communities to be sustainable and thrive.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In 2022/23 the Council offered a combined community grant scheme, consolidating a number of previous grant allocations, with the intention of providing a simpler and more efficient offer to community groups.
- 1.2 During 2022/23, the Council allocated a total of £151,000 in community grants, supporting a total of 56 organisations across the district.
- 1.3 Criteria for the 2022/23 scheme was left relatively open, in contrast to previous years which had seen groups struggle to fit projects within more narrow funding requirements. Whilst a relatively open criteria allows for flexibility with allocation, the popularity and demand on the scheme far exceeded the funds available and for this reason, additional criteria to prioritise spend is being proposed for 2023/24.

2.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered

- 2.1 It is proposed that the criteria for community grant allocation is linked to the new community plan objectives, elsewhere on this Agenda.
- 2.2 The scheme will remain open to a full range of applications from community groups. As before, all projects must demonstrate:
- i. Eligibility to apply i.e. applications must be from a registered charity, unincorporated association, trust or charitable/ not-for-profit company limited by guarantee/ community interest company, a constituted voluntary and community group, society or club
 - ii. A local need for the project
 - iii. How the project contributes to one or more of the council's community plan objectives
 - iv. That the project takes place within the district
 - v. Financial information to support application (this includes considering the level of reserves the group has access to and evidence to support the need for council funding, including that the funding is not being applied for retrospectively).
- 2.3 Additional weighting will be given to those projects that meet the following criteria:
- i. Projects that contribute to overcoming the cost-of-living crisis
 - ii. Projects that contribute to public protection by reducing crime or anti-social behaviour
 - iii. Projects that improve bio-diversity or contribute to reducing climate change
 - iv. Projects that can demonstrate match funding (above £5k)
- 2.4 Additional changes to the scheme:
- i. The previous grant scheme set a maximum award of £5k per organisation. This is proposed to increase to £20k to allow for larger, transformational projects with the caveat that those projects (above £5k) that can demonstrate match funding will receive a greater weighting.
 - ii. Applications will be assessed by a cross-party panel of three members from the largest three political groups, nominated by the Leaders of the relevant groups. As previously, the recommendations of the cross-party panel will normally be referred to Cabinet for approval. Where necessary to meet timescales, recommendations can be referred to the relevant Portfolio Holder for delegated decision.
 - iii. The support and endorsement of the local district ward councillor is no longer required as part of the application process. Councillors will be made aware of all applications within the district and within their constituencies, with summaries of all applications available to view and comment upon. Collated comments will be fed into the panel decision-making process.
 - iv. Parish and Town Councils are no longer invited to apply for funding under this grant scheme. During 2022/23 approximately one third of the grant funding available was allocated to Parish and Town Councils including allocations to support the maintenance of Parish and Town Council assets. Given that Parish and Town Council's can raise a precept, were the majority of community groups have no formal income, the funding should be directed to those groups with less opportunity to raise regular income.

- 2.5 The budget 2023/24 has been set at £100,000. Once the criteria has been approved as part of this report, the scheme will go live with applications welcomed from early November 2023. A timeframe for allocations is identified below:

Criteria Approved	31 October 2023
Application Window	13 November – 22 December 2023
Initial officer assessment (due diligence)	2 January – 12 January 2024
Member comment opportunity	15 – 19 January 2024
Cross party panel to convene	Week commencing 22 January 2024
Allocation confirmed – award letters	Week commencing 5 February 2024

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.

Financial Implications – FIN23-24/9794

- 3.1 The 2023/24 budget was originally set at £100,000. By carrying forward the underspend in 2022/23, this gives a revised budget of £124,100 for the current financial year. It's possible that under the new criteria stated above, that the number, and value of appropriate bids, fall short of the total funding available and that there is a further carry forward of unallocated grant funding into 2024/25.

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

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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