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**Thursday, 18 January 2024**

**Chair: Councillor M Pringle  
Vice-Chair: Councillor N Ross**

**Members of the Committee:**

**Councillor A Amer  
Councillor A Brazier  
Councillor C Brooks  
Councillor S Forde  
Councillor A Freeman  
Councillor R Jackson  
Councillor J Kellas**

**Councillor P Rainbow  
Councillor K Roberts  
Councillor M Shakeshaft  
Councillor T Smith  
Councillor T Thompson  
Councillor T Wendels**

**Substitutes**

**Councillor N Allen  
Councillor D Darby  
Councillor P Farmer  
Councillor J Hall  
Councillor P Harris  
Councillor D Moore  
Councillor L Tift**

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>Monday, 29 January 2024 at 6.00 pm</b>
<b>VENUE:</b>	<b>Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY</b>

**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 Helen Brandham on [helen.brandham@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:helen.brandham@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk).

## AGENDA

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1. Notification to those present that the meeting will be recorded and streamed online	
2. Apologies for Absence	
3. Declaration of Interest by Members and Officers	
4. Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2023	4 - 11
5. Attendance at Committee by NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICB	
<p>The NHS Nottingham &amp; Nottinghamshire ICB will be represented by Alex Ball, Director of Communications and Engagement and Lucy Dadge, Accountable Emergency Officer to discuss the outcome of the listening exercise for the Newark Hospital Minor Injuries Opening Hours and the wider plans for the services within the district.</p>	
<b>Reports and Presentations for Comment and Endorsement</b>	
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11. Support for Active Lifestyles Working Group Update	Verbal Report
12. Information Sharing with Members Working Group Update	Verbal Report
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## Topic Suggestions

### 17. Items for Future Agendas

Annual Compliance Update – Housing Stock

Towns Fund Project – YMCA

Review of Digital Strategy

Budget Performance Report 2023/24 – Q2 General Fund, HRA and Capital

General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/25

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

Minutes of Mansfield & District Crematorium Joint Committee

Review of Grant Funding

Update on Property Repair & Letting Arrangements for Council Owned Homes

Community Plan Performance Targets

## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Policy & Performance Improvement Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Monday, 4 December 2023 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor M Pringle (Chair)  
Councillor N Ross (Vice-Chair)

Councillor N Allen (Substitute) Councillor A Brazier, Councillor C Brooks, Councillor S Forde, Councillor A Freeman, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor J Kellas, Councillor P Rainbow, Councillor K Roberts, Councillor M Shakeshaft, Councillor T Thompson, Councillor T Wendels and Councillor N Allen

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor L Brazier and Councillor L Tift

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor A Amer and Councillor T Smith

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

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

38 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Agenda Item No. 13 – Support for Active Lifestyles Working Group Update. Councillors Forde; Freeman and Pringle together with Deborah Johnson, Director – Customer Services & Organisational Development declared an Other Registrable Interest as Directors of Active4Today.

39 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 AND 25 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Minutes of the meetings held on 11 and 25 September 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

40 BRIEFING NOTE - HOUSING OMBUDSMAN CONFERENCE

The Committee considered the Briefing Note from the Chair of the Committee in relation to his attendance at the Housing Ombudsman Conference on 31 October 2023 as the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC).

The Chair advised that it had been a positive conference, the purpose of which had been to look at the role of the MRC and to learn more about how to be compliant with the Complaint Handling Code. He noted that the central focus of the Housing Ombudsman was to drive a positive complaint handling culture. The Complaint Handling Code was currently out for consultation, following which it would become statutory in January 2024. It would set out requirements for organisations that would allow them to respond to complaints effectively and fairly. The Code's purpose was to enable organisations to resolve complaints raised by individuals quickly and to use the data and learning from complaints to drive service improvements.



In considering the report a Member queried what the role of the MRC was in practical terms. The Chair advised that it was to ensure that the connections between the complainant and the team handling the complaint was as smooth and efficient as possible e.g. the speed with which they are handled; the positive engagement with tenants; and feedback from tenants on how their complaint has been dealt with. The Chair noted that the word 'complaint' was often viewed as a negative when it was more the fact that tenants raised an issue which the Council, as Landlord, were able to resolve. He added that his role as the MRC was to ensure there was positive engagement between the tenant and the Council and that the tenant was aware of the reasons and responses given by the Council as to how the issue would be resolved.

In response to a comment which noted that the Council were 'ahead of the game' nationally in relation to how they dealt with complaints, he stated that it was likely that the Ombudsman would wish to visit in the New Year to view how complaints were logged and dealt with so that the information could be shared with other organisations.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Chair's verbal briefing on the Housing Ombudsman Conference be noted.

#### 41 AIR QUALITY MONITORING IN NEWARK & SHERWOOD

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Public Protection which provided Members with an overview of Air Quality requirements and how air quality was monitored and managed within the district.

The report set out the legislative requirements which the Council operated under in relation to air quality. The report was comprehensive and covered diffusion tubes, particulate matter, smoke control areas, environmental permitting and the role as a statutory consultee in planning applications.

It also explained a county wide approach which would see a bid to DEFRA for grant funding to undertake wider real time monitoring, including particulate matter.

In considering the report Members commented on a number of items and raised a number of queries.

A Member raised the changing guidelines of acceptable levels of particulate matter, and the seriousness of particulate matter in air quality which is known to be a significant contributor to mortality rates. The Member acknowledged the need for a county wide validated approach where the data could be relied upon and supported the approach.

A Member queried whether the Council were the only district within Nottinghamshire that did not have real time air quality monitors, the closest being situated in Netherfield. The Business Manager agreed to review this and to report back.

Members also queried whether it was timely to review the Smoke Control Areas in the district which traditionally had been areas associated with coal mining. The Business Manager advised that any changes to the current Smoke Control Areas would need to be taken by Cabinet as it would be a key decision with potential legal and likely financial implications. A Member expressed concern about the use of wood burners, noting that they were considered to be more polluting than a diesel car. She acknowledged that there were restrictions on what could be burnt, querying whether this was monitored and enforced. The Business Manager advised that if complaints were received within a Smoke Control Area there were powers to address the issue, however if it was outside of those areas the Council was limited in its powers. The Business Manager stressed that educating users as to what they could burn was the first step rather than enforcement. Members expressed concern over this inequality, suggesting that it should be rectified if possible, the Business Manager would take this away but indicated that it is currently unknown what the financial and resource implications of this would be, this would need to be investigated.

In response to whether the diffusion tubes were mobile, the Business Manager advised that they were fixed locations to give a continuity of the readings. She added that it was proposed to visit locations in the District with the relevant Portfolio Holders, noting that any new tubes must be located in a residential and traffic area and that it was subject to strict DEFRA guidance procedures.

In response to how a location for a diffusion tube was chosen and whether any additional tubes would need to be purchased, the Business Manager advised that as long as DEFRA's guidance was followed, it was within the Council's gift to choose the location, using local knowledge and that as part of the funding bid to DEFRA, the need for purchasing additional tubes would be included within that.

In noting the proposed Anti-Idling Campaign, a Member suggested that this also include the promotion of walking to school, adding that the public needed to be educated on the consequences of leaving their vehicles running.

In closing the debate, the Chair noted that all Members agreed that the education of people as to the consequences of what their actions were in relation to air quality was key.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the work undertaken by Newark & Sherwood District Council in monitoring Air Quality across the District be noted;
- b) the creation of the Anti-Idling Campaign be supported; and
- c) the countywide DEFRA bid submission in 2024 to include particulate monitoring be supported.

42 DAMP & MOULD POLICY

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Housing Maintenance & Asset Management which sought to provide Members with the revision to the Damp & Mould Policy which set out the Council’s approach to tackling and preventing damp and mould in Council owned homes.

The report set out that the Housing Ombudsman had issued a “Spotlight on Damp and Mould” in October 2021, which highlighted the approach expected of social landlords when dealing with tenants who complained about damp. In November 2022 the Regulator of Social Housing sought information and assurances as to the approach of social housing providers to tackling damp and mould. The Council’s response was well received. It was noted that further guidance and regulation as to timescales and definitions were awaited in relation to the time limits to remedy instances of damp and mould. It was reported that the revisions to the Damp & Mould Policy had been positively received by both the Tenant Engagement Board and the Local Influence Network.

In considering the report a Member noted that one of the objectives within the Policy was to have a rolling programme of stock condition surveys which would maintain accurate data on 5-year anniversary cycle. He commented that until the survey was complete, the full extent of any issues would not be known. The Business Manager advised that to-date, 50% of the Council’s stock had been inspected with this increasing to 70-75% by the end of the financial year. It was hoped that the remaining stock would be inspected in the following year and of the 50% inspected, only 2 cases of damp and mould had been reported.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Damp & Mould Policy be endorsed and recommended to Cabinet for approval.

43 BUILDING SAFETY IN THE HOME POLICY

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Housing Maintenance & Asset Management which sought to share with Members the draft Building Safety in the Home Policy.

It was reported that the aim of the Policy was to provide tenants and leaseholders assurance of the steps the Council took in keeping them safe in their homes and also identified actions they could take to support the Council in that regard. The Policy also outlined additional measures the Council took over and above statutory requirements for buildings over 11 meters in height and identified their location.

The report also outlined how tenants could become involved in scrutinising the service in general or by attending the Local Influence Networks.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Building Safety in the Home Policy be endorsed and recommended to Cabinet for approval.

#### 44 REVIEW OF HRA BUSINESS PLAN ASSUMPTIONS

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Financial Services which sought to provide Members with an overview of the key assumptions to be made within the production of the 30 -year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.

The report set out the background to the development and maintenance of the HRA Business Plan, setting out some of the key assumptions which would affect the Plan from an external perspective. Those external factors would then be considered when looking at internal factors e.g. setting of rent, capital improvements or revenue services. The agreed assumptions would then be fed into the overall HRA Business Plan which in turn would form the basis of the HRA Budget and Rent Setting report.

AGREED (unanimously) that the assumptions presented, to be utilised in the update of the 30-year HRA Business Plan, be endorsed.

#### 45 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The Committee considered the report and presentation of the Transformation & Service Improvement Officer which sought to provide Members with an update on the Performance Framework, planned improvements and draft indicators that would be used to monitor and measure performance against the 2024/2027 Community Plan.

The presentation set out: the purpose of managing performance; objective setting cycle; performance framework; contextual district data; performance indicators; and further improvements, requesting Members to provide comment on what they would wish to see within the district and the customer element of performance reports.

The Director – Customer Services & Organisational Development reiterated that the role of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committees was to scrutinise how the Council performed and asked Members to consider whether the proposed performance indicators in the framework would provide the information to enable the Committee to carry out that function. She advised that the presentation would be circulated to Members to enable them to feed their comments into the Transformation Team.

In considering the report a Member raised a number of areas of concern. These included: improvement in productivity; areas of deprivation; very high disability levels; health indicators; low levels of satisfaction with life, stating that he would wish to link those issues with future actions the Council may take.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the indicators within the Performance Framework be noted; and
- b) Members consider the presentation given and feed any comments into the Transformation Team for consideration.

46 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE FOR QUARTER 2

The Committee considered the report of the Transformation & Service Improvement Officer which presented to Members the Quarter 2 Community Plan Performance Report (July to September 2023). Members were asked to review the Report attached as Appendix 1 together with the Compliance Report attached as Appendix 2.

In considering the report Members commented on the target for fly-tipping, querying why this was not set at 100%. The Transformation & Service Improvement Officer advised he would raise the matter with the Business Manager – Environmental Services.

Members also felt it important to promote the use of the Newark Beacon in an attempt to maintain the target levels set for usage.

In relation to future targets, Members queried whether it was possible for the Committee to review targets to ensure they were sufficiently ambitious. They agreed that they would wish to have a report to a future Committee on the work of the Waste Investigations Support & Enforcement Limited (WISE) who undertook enforcement activity for a range of environmental crimes on behalf of the Council. In relation to littering, Members noted that children of primary school age expressed concern about this behaviour and would welcome information as to why, and at what age, children's attitudes to littering changed.

Members also sought clarity on whether the repairs in Council owned homes was an appropriate target, stating that data should be captured on whether a reported issue was repetitious, indicating that the repair in the first instance was insufficient.

In closing the debate, the Chair commented that he wished to drive forward further ambitious targets leading to positive responses and that the role of the Committee was not just to accept the targets and performance levels as presented.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Community Plan Performance for Quarter 2 be noted.

47 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Financial Services which provided Members with the forecast outturn position for the 2023/2024 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets. The report also provided Members with information as to the performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income and on major variances from planned budget performance, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Details were provided as to the current position (as at 30 September 2023) variances. Table 1 showed the General Fund Revenue Outturn with a projected unfavourable variance against the revised budget of £0.418m on service budgets with an overall favourable variance of £0.422 to be transferred to General Fund reserves. Table 2 provided an overview of projected Housing Revenue Account outturn for 2023/24 with an unfavourable variance against the revised budget of £0.155m. Details of the overview of the Project Capital Outturn 2023/24 were also provided.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the General Fund projected unfavourable outturn variance on Net Cost of Services of £0.148m be noted;
- b) the Housing Revenue Account projected unfavourable outturn variance on net cost of HRA Services of £0.155m be noted; and
- c) the Capital Programme Forecast Outturn of £81.237m be noted.

48 SUPPORT FOR ACTIVE LIFESTYLES WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The Committee considered the verbal update of the Chair of the Active Lifestyles Working Group, Councillor Celia Brooks.

Councillor Brooks set out the work to be undertaken by the Group and that the first meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, 6 December 2023 at 4pm in Castle House.

AGREED (unanimously) that the verbal update be noted.

49 INFORMATION SHARING WITH MEMBERS WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The Committee considered the verbal update of the Chair of the Information Sharing with Members Working Group, Councillor Jack Kellas.

Councillor Kellas advised that the first meeting had taken place on 16 November 2023 and had been well attended. The Senior Information Governance & DPO Officer had been in attendance and had given guidance on issues surrounding GDPR. The Group had had a general discussion about the legalities of providing different types of information and it was proposed that a benchmarking exercise with other local authorities be carried out to assess what information was shared with their elected members.

The next meeting of the Group was scheduled for 16 January when discussions would be held in relation to a specific service area together with considering what the consequences may be of any recommendations made.

The Chair of the Committee suggested that it may be of use if the Group could find out whether a Member had reported an issue that Council Officers were already of and that they thought they should have been notified about. The Chair of the Group acknowledged the suggestion.

AGREED (unanimously) that the verbal update be noted.

50 CABINET FORWARD PLAN (NOVEMBER 2023 - FEBRUARY 2024)

NOTED the Forward Plan of the Cabinet for the period November 2023 to February 2024.

51 12 SEPTEMBER 2023 - MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING

NOTED the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 12 September 2023.

52 19 SEPTEMBER 2023 - MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING

NOTED the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 19 September 2023.

53 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

NOTED the provisional Agenda items for future meetings.

Meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Chair



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee - 29 January 2024

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

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

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Customer Experience Strategy: Pilot Opening Hours & Customer Promise Feedback Results
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present the results of the pilot opening hours within the Customer Contact Centre and Housing Repairs. As well as share the results of feedback received on the Customer Promise.
<b>Recommendations</b>	It is recommended that the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee:  a) endorse the recommendation to resume the Council's opening hours of 9:00am - 5:00pm within the Customer Contact Centre and Housing Repairs; and  b) note the results of the customer feedback about the Customer Promise.

## 1.0 **Background**

### 1.1 **Pilot Opening Hours**

1.1.1 In the 2022 Resident Survey, residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the Council as well as give specific feedback on areas of improvement. A key area of improvement identified was Council Communication. As a result of this, the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee (PPIC) set-up a working group to develop a Customer Experience Strategy to improve the quality and consistency of customer experience. Looking at elements such as how customers get in touch, how enquiries are handled and how the Council constantly improves its customer service and learns from customer feedback. The working group reviewed the opening hours of our Customer Contact Centre, considering whether the opening hours of our non-digital services are suitable for all of our customers. For example, customers who work full time or work nightshifts may not be able to contact us between 9am and 5pm. Therefore, to meet the needs of these customers, the working group proposed piloting additional opening hours. This report is a review of the results of the pilot, if the pilot is found to be successful, the additional opening hour may be made permanent.

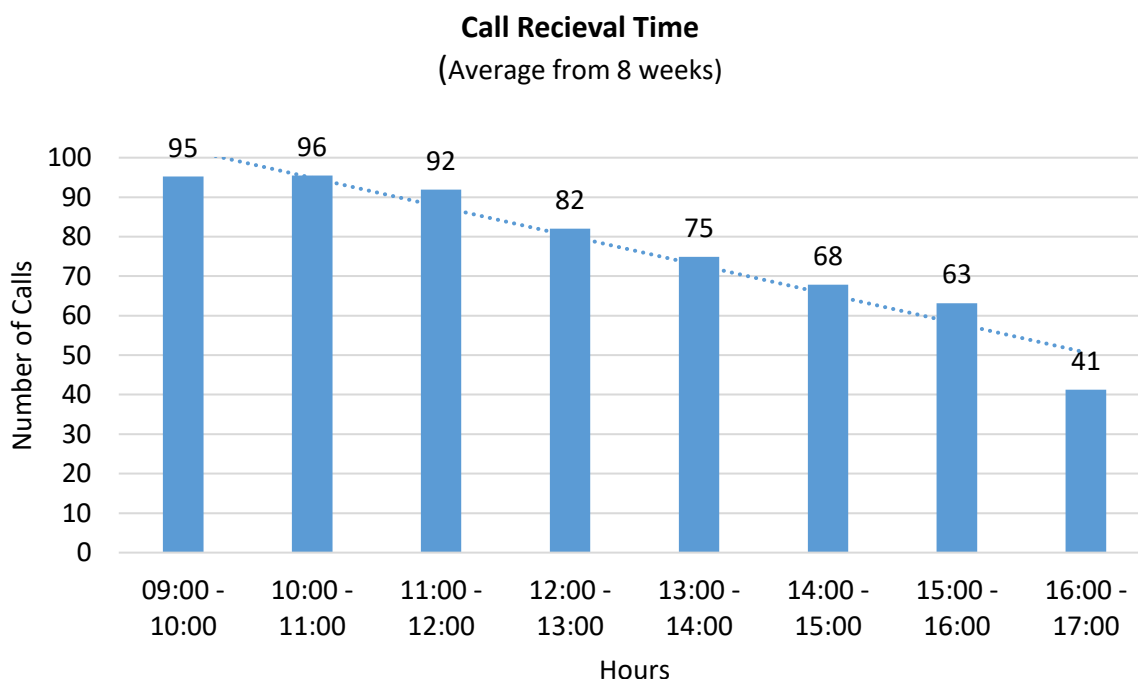


1.1.2 Prior to commencement of the pilot, a range of contacts methods were and continue to be available, to allow customers to choose the method which best suits their needs.

These methods include:

- **Telephone and Webchat**
- **Email and Online** – A range of self-serve services are available online 24/7, with customers able to complete a range of payments, reporting and applications
- **In person** – at both Castle House and Ollerton Advice Office
- **24/7 emergency repairs within tenanted properties** – These can be reported via the dedicated repairs telephone line or by using the online repairs service

1.1.3 PPIC unanimously voted to implement the proposed pilot opening hours from 8-9am on a Monday, this was informed by call volumes and the proposal was subsequently approved by Cabinet. The additional opening hour has been within the Customer Contact Centre and Housing Repairs, with customers able to contact by phone, e-mail, social media, and webchat.



1.1.4 The pilot which formally ran for 12 weeks, between 4 September – 28 November, was extended until 18 December in order to wind the pilot period down. This report will reference both the 12-week pilot period in which feedback and call volumes were captured, as well as the 3-week wind down period in which only call volumes were monitored.

1.1.5 The extended opening hours have been in operation within the Customer Contact Centre and Housing Repairs between 8-9am on Monday mornings, this has required 3 colleagues within the Customer Contact Centre and 2 colleagues within Housing Repairs working overtime to facilitate. When customers have contacted the Council during the additional opening hour, colleagues have been capturing information from the customer to understand the benefit of the additional opening hour, allowing the results of this pilot to help determine whether this format is really helping us better meet the needs of as many customers as possible.

- 1.1.6 The pilot opening hours were promoted using a variety of methods, both on and offline. Posters were displayed in key customer facing locations, such as the reception of Castle House and the Ollerton office. The Council website was updated to reflect the extended opening hours, as well as scheduled social media posts.
- 1.1.7 It should be noted that a major incident was declared throughout the district on 19 October 2023, due to floods impacting on the lives of many residents throughout the district, this may have contributed to peaks in call volumes from 23 October onwards. The autumn half term holidays for schools within the district was also observed during this period, during week commencing 23 and 30 October, this may have been an influential factor as to why call volumes peaked during week commencing 6 November within the Customer Contact centre.

## **1.2 Customer Promise Feedback**

- 1.2.1 In response to the Resident Survey 2022 Consultation, Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the Council and given the opportunity to provide specific feedback for areas of improvement. 919 comments were received, of which 28% were dissatisfied with Council Communication. As a result of this, PPIC requested that a working group be formed to develop a Customer Experience Strategy. Formed in September 2022, the working group met 3 times to look at various aspects including customer data, case studies, processes and what good customer service looks like. The working group also identified some minor improvements to the website that have now been implemented.
- 1.2.2 As a result of the working group meetings, a Customer Promise document was designed. The Customer Promise is a customer facing document which highlights the behaviour the Council will follow when interacting with customers. The Customer Promise has been designed with the target audience in mind, it is a document which will be used to deliver the message of the Customer Experience Strategy in an impactful and easily digestible format.
- 1.2.3 The Customer Promise was displayed for a period of four weeks in 3 key customer facing locations, Castle House, Ollerton Advice Office and the Palace Theatre. Suggestion cards were available alongside the Customer Promise in all three locations, with customers able to provide their feedback on the promises set out in the document to understand whether it describes what our customers want and need when interacting with the Council.
- 1.2.4 Customers were also asked if they had any other comments or suggestions on how the Customer Promise could be improved.

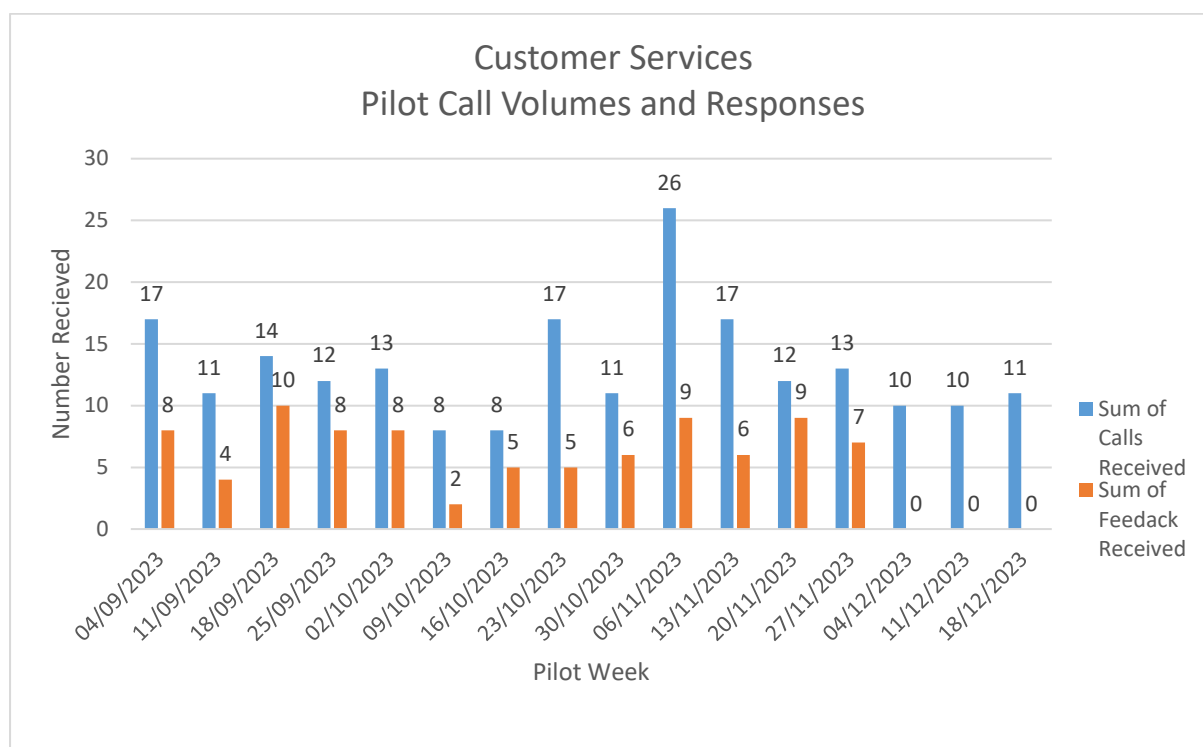
## **2.0 Proposal/Options Considered**

### **2.1 Pilot Opening Hours**

- 2.1.1 307 calls were received between 8-9am from 4 September 2023 – 18 December 2023 between both the Customer Contact Centre and Housing Repairs. 259 of those calls were answered during the initial 12 weeks of the pilot, during which each caller was asked if they would be willing to answer two questions:

- 1) Is there a reason why calling before 9am is more convenient for you and the reason why?
- 2) If we weren't open at this time, how would you have contacted the Council?

### Customer Services



2.1.2 Within the Customer Contact Centre, 179 calls were answered during the first 12 weeks of the pilot, with an additional 31 calls answered during the pilot wind down period, totalling 210 calls across the 15-week period. Of the 179 calls answered during the first 12 weeks, 87 callers provided feedback.

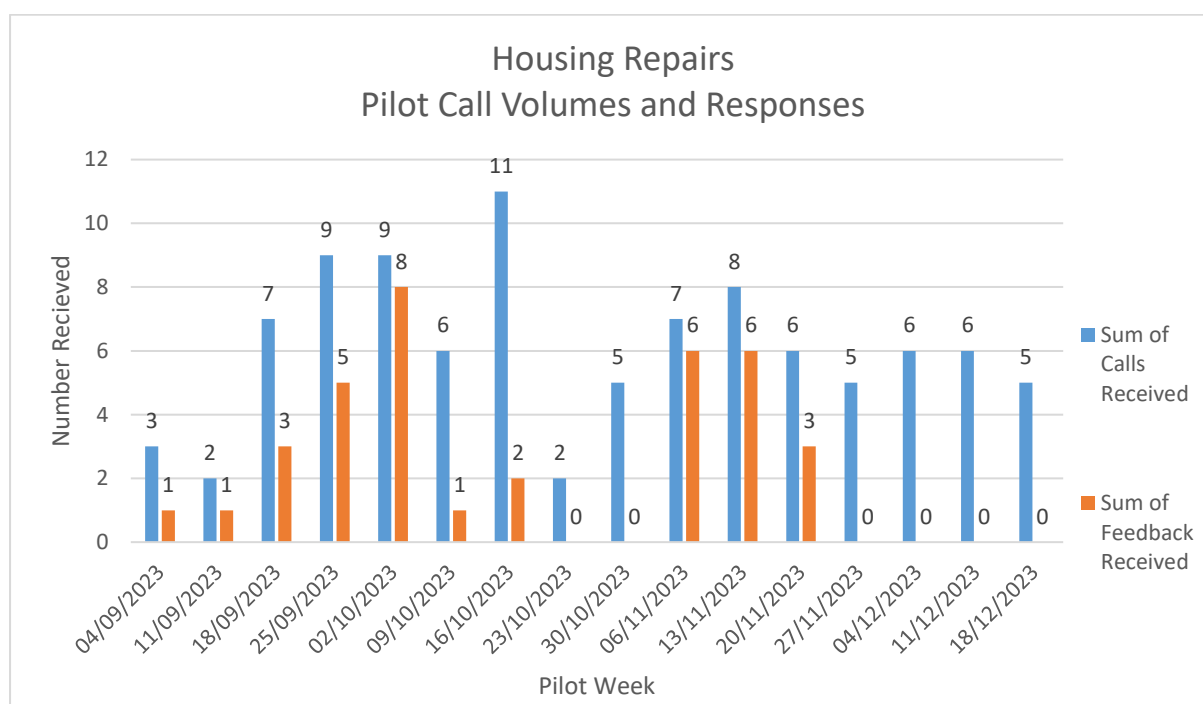
2.1.3 Of the 87 callers who provided feedback, 53 callers (61%) explained that calling before 9am is more convenient for their individual circumstances. The most common reason for this was due to work or other personal circumstances, such as childcare or personal appointments. This was mentioned 37 times (70%) of those 53 callers who said it was more convenient for them. Whilst this is a large percentage of callers, the sample size of callers who provided feedback must be noted and whilst it was mentioned 37 times this averages out to be just over 3 customers per week of the pilot.

2.1.4 Other reasons included needing to speak to an advisor to progress something, which was mentioned by 9 callers (17%), followed by callers who hoped calling at this time would mean the phone lines are less busy and the callers who called on the off chance as it was more convenient for them, both of these reasons were mentioned 6 times each (11% respectively). The breakdown of calls received between 08:45-9:00am during the pilot shows that on average 41% of all calls were received in this 15minute window. This may be indicative of the reasons shared by the callers surveyed, who explained that they were calling ahead to avoid busy phone lines. As such it could be assumed that no matter what time the phone lines open, there will be callers who wish to call ahead to avoid call waiting queues.

2.1.5 34 of the 87 callers during the pilot period (39%) explained that calling before 9am was not any more convenient for their individual circumstances. The most common reason for this was that the customer had called on the off chance, this was mentioned by 27 of the 34 callers (79%). This averaged out to just over 2.25 callers per week during the pilot. Other reasons included that the callers assumed the Council Offices would already be open, this was mentioned by 7 callers (21%), followed by the callers who needed to speak to an advisor to progress something but that doing so wasn't any more convenient for them which was mentioned by 6 callers (18%).

2.1.6 All 87 callers who shared feedback during the 12-week pilot period were asked to share how they would have contacted the Council if the additional opening hour pilot was not currently in operation. Callers were able to select multiple channels as desired. 76 callers (87%) explained that they would have got in touch using the telephone at another time of day, 13 callers (15%) explained that they would've sent an email.

### Housing Repairs



2.1.7 Within Housing Repairs, 80 calls were answered during the first 12 weeks of the pilot, with an additional 17 calls answered during the pilot wind down period, totalling 97 calls across the 15-week period. Of the 80 calls answered during the first 12 weeks, 36 callers provided feedback.

2.1.8 Of the 36 callers that provided feedback, 24 callers (67%) explained that calling before 9am is more convenient for their individual circumstances. The most common reason for this was due to having an emergency repair to report, this was mentioned by 13 (54%) of callers who said it was more convenient for them. If an emergency situation is being experienced by a tenant, the reporting of this issue should not be delayed until the Council opens. Emergency repairs can be reported 24/7 on either the dedicated phone line or by using repairs online and should be reported as soon as possible.

- 2.1.9 Other reasons included work or other personal circumstances, such as childcare or personal appointments which was mentioned by 9 (38%) of callers and 2 (8%) of callers who said it was more convenient for them as they were able to get a quicker response.
- 2.1.10 12 of the 36 callers during the pilot period (33%) explained that calling before 9am was not any more convenient for their individual circumstances. The most common reason for this was callers assumed the Council Offices would already be open, this was mentioned by 4 (33%) of those callers who said it was not any more convenient for them.
- 2.1.11 This was followed by callers who explained it was not any more convenient, but they were aware that we were open and callers who said the time wasn't any more convenient but by calling earlier they hoped they would receive a quicker response, both of these reasons were mentioned by 3 (25%) callers each.
- 2.1.12 All 36 callers who shared feedback during the 12-week pilot period were asked to share how they would have contacted the Council if the additional opening hour pilot was not currently in operation. Callers were able to select multiple channels as desired. 33 callers (92%) explained that they would have got in touch using the telephone at another time of day. The only other method of contact chosen by the callers was email which was mentioned by 2 (6%) callers, 1 (2%) caller did not select any method of contact.

The two options considered as a result of this pilot were to:

**(a) Adopt the Extended Opening Hours**

If adopted this would require consideration being given to how the extended opening hours are staffed. Based on the approach operated during the pilot, 3 members of staff would be working in the Customer Contact Centre and 2 members of staff in Housing Repairs. This would incur the cost implication of 5 members of staff working for 1 additional hour per week, which is outlined in section 4.1.1.

The alternative to this would be introducing a split shift system with the 5 members of staff outlined above, working an earlier shift pattern from 8am-4pm. Based on the volume of calls received between 8-9am, and the 8 week average volume of calls received throughout the day, it is likely that the volumes incoming are likely to be higher at any other point throughout the day. As such, if a split shift was introduced this would have the impact of reducing staffing resource at the end of the day which may impact negatively on call waiting times and number of calls answered.

The purpose of piloting extended opening hours was to understand whether this enabled us to better support those customers who may not be able to speak to an advisor between the hours of 9am-5pm. Whilst in both the Customer Contact Centre and Housing Repairs, a majority of the callers who provided feedback did tell us that it was more convenient for them to get in touch between 8-9am, 87% of callers into the Customer Contact Centre and 92% of callers into Housing repairs told us that if we were not open at this time, they would have used the telephone to get in contact with us.

Or

**(b) Resume the Current Opening Hours**

If resumed, this option would have no financial implications outside of existing budgets. The hours and shift pattern worked would also remain unchanged. This would mean that the staffing resource would not be diluted and as such remain in place to serve customers throughout the day with the largest volume of incoming calls.

The data collected during the pilot shows that opening at 8am would not impact the way that most customers get in touch. As such, in order to be there for as many customers as possible, whilst not diluting the number of colleagues available, the Council can encourage the use of self-serve methods. The data collected during the pilot supports this, as when asked how customers would get in touch if we weren't open during the pilot hour, the most selected option after telephone, was email. Whilst not all customers will prefer or have access to digital means of contact, other out of hours, non-digital methods of contact remain, such as by letter.

- 2.1.13 **Based on the findings of the pilot the recommendation of this report is option b:** to resume the Councils opening hours of 9:00am – 5:00 pm. The data gathered during the pilot shows that the demand on the Customer Contact Centre and Housing Repairs between 8-9am is low in comparison to the volume of calls being received throughout the day, with 4% on average of the total calls for the day being received between 8-9am. Of those calls received between 8-9am, 39% on average were received in the final 15-minute window of the additional opening hour (8:45-9:00am). To adopt the extended opening hours formally, this would require permanent arrangements to be made to colleagues shift patterns which would have a financial impact or an impact on resource availability during the day when the call volumes are higher. The cost associated with this is outlined in section 4.1.1.

Within housing repairs, 54% of callers who said calling between 8-9am was more convenient, this was due to an emergency repair that needed to be reported. As such the pilot did not succeed in removing barriers for those customers to get in touch, however, has highlighted that some tenants may be waiting until we open to report emergency repairs. As such, the promotion of how to report an emergency repair via the dedicated 24/7 telephone line or by using the online repairs service could be considered.

The aim of this pilot was to understand whether we could better serve our customers, as such looked at removing potential barriers for customers getting in touch with us. The pilot has demonstrated that on the whole, the extended opening hours do not achieve this aim. As 87% of callers into the Customer Contact Centre and 92% of callers into Housing Repairs would've got in contact with us on the telephone irrespective of the pilot opening hours.

It is believed that this recommendation will concentrate our resource to ensure that colleagues are available for as many customers as possible during the busiest opening hours, whilst remaining dedicated to serving customers in the way that works best for them whether that be via the telephone, face to face or online.

## 2.2 Customer Promise feedback

- 2.2.1 Customers were asked if they agreed that the promises set out within the Customer Promise describe what they want and need when interacting with the Council. 35 responses were received, 34 respondents agreed, 1 respondent disagreed and 0 respondents were unsure.
- 2.2.2 9 customers shared comments when asked if they had any comments or suggestions as to how the Customer Promise could be improved. All 9 of those comments were complimentary of the service that officers had and continue to provide. Due to the small number of comments, all 9 of these comments are included below.

Comments Received
No, everyone I have dealt with has been efficient, friendly and really helpful at out time of loss. F2F or over the phone
No, we have had an excellent experience
Simply by following the kindness and professionalism shown by the officer that helped me today
Very good communication
No, very helpful
Keep up the good work
No comments, thank you for the great service
No problem officer very helpful
Officer was helpful today with advice towards my husband's cancer disability

## 3.0 Implications

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

### Financial Implications (FIN23-24/7657)

- 3.1 If the recommendations are approved the total budget required as detailed below and the increase to the establishment will need to be approved by Cabinet and included in the current budget setting process:

Description	FTE	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Customer Service Advisors (1x additional hour per week)	3	2,876	3,079	3,295	3,526
Housing Repairs Advisors (1x additional hour per week)	2	1,917	2,052	2,197	2,351
<b>Total Budget Required</b>		<b>4,793</b>	<b>5,131</b>	<b>5,492</b>	<b>5,877</b>

- 3.2 All posts have been assumed at the lowest salary grade (NS07 – 12) and all costs increase incrementally and include National Insurance and Superannuation.

**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: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee – 29 January 2024

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

Lead Officer: Helen Brandham, Democratic Services Officer [helen.brandham@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:helen.brandham@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk) – 01636 655248

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Attendance at Committee by Portfolio Holders
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To advise Members of the proposed schedule of attendance by Portfolio Holders at the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee:  a) note the proposed schedule of attendance by Portfolio Holders, subject to their availability; and  b) consider the actions as detailed in the appendix to the report and provide area(s) of focus for each of the portfolio remits.

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 As Members will recall, at the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee meetings held on 25 September and 4 December 2023, Committee were presented with the Community Plan 2023/2027 for comment, endorsement and onward recommendation to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.2 During consideration of the reports, Members requested that Portfolio Holders be invited to future meetings of the Committee. This would enable the Portfolio Holder to brief the Committee on their remit and to present actions therein. It would also offer the Committee opportunity to ask focussed questions of the Portfolio Holder.

## 2.0 Proposal/Options Considered

- 2.1 As Members will be aware, the newly approved Community Plan is for the period 2023/2027. In order to prepare the information for each Portfolio Holder's attendance, actions within the Community Plan have been reviewed specific to those with an expected start date within the next 12-month period.

2.2 The current actions for each Portfolio Holder’s remit for the next 12 months are attached as an **appendix** to this report to enable Members to formulate questions which they can then raise at a future meeting.

2.3 Members are requested to consider the actions contained in the appendix and to select which area(s) they would wish the Portfolio Holder to focus on. This will then enable the Portfolio Holder to present a more in-depth briefing on specific topics and to answer questions raised at the meeting.

2.3 It is proposed that attendance will be in the following order, subject to each Portfolio Holder’s availability:

4 March 2024 - Councillor Paul Peacock (Strategy, Performance & Finance)

24 June 2024 - Councillor Lee Brazier (Housing)

22 July 2024 - Councillor Emma Oldham (Biodiversity & Environmental Services)

9 September 2024 - Councillor Matthew Spoons (Sustainable Economic Development)

28 October 2024 - Councillor Rowan Cozens (Heritage, Culture & the Arts)

2 December 2024 - Councillor Susan Crosby (Health, Wellbeing & Leisure)

27 January 2025 - Councillor Paul Taylor (Public Protection & Community Relations)

20 March 2025 - Councillor Keith Melton (Climate Change)

### **3.0 Implications**

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

### **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.

Community Plan 2023/2027

**COMMUNITY PLAN 2023/2027**  
**PROPOSED ACTIONS FOR 2024/2025**

<b>PAUL PEACOCK – STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE &amp; FINANCE</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Planned Start Date</b>
Commission a 'Corporate Peer Challenge' and develop an action plan arising from its findings.	Summer 2024
Through the Commercialisation Strategy and action plan, continue to seek out and generate new sources of income, whilst retaining our public service ethos.	Ongoing
Finalise and implement the Communications Strategy.	April 2024
Ensure the new Customer Experience Strategy is fully embedded in the operations and culture of the Council.	Ongoing
Reinvigorate the Residents' Panel to ensure the panel is representative of the demographic profile to help drive service improvement across the Council.	Spring 2024
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.	Ongoing
Expand and refresh the wellbeing and engagement programme, including reinvigorating Councillor and officer wellbeing champions. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Health, Wellbeing &amp; Leisure.)</i>	Ongoing
Undertake a Staff Survey every 18 months and respond to the survey findings.	Ongoing
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.	Ongoing
Maximise take up of housing benefit, Council Tax support and other household grants to support residents financially.	Ongoing
Support the delivery of community-based prevention services through the construction of a new car park at Newark Hospital. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Health, Wellbeing &amp; Leisure and Sustainable Economic Development.)</i>	Autumn 2023
Review and adopt a new Sustainable Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy 2023-2028. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development and Heritage, Culture &amp; the Arts.)</i>	2024
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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Heritage, Culture &amp; the Arts.)</i>	2024

<b>ROWAN COZENS – HERITAGE, CULTURE &amp; THE ARTS</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Planned Start Date</b>
Review and adopt a new Sustainable Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy 2023-2028. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development and Strategy, Performance &amp; Finance.)</i>	2024
Explore options for the creation of community works of art which communicate an environmental message, including a love of the natural world. Ensuring all residents have a voice including young people. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Biodiversity &amp; Environmental Services and Public Protection &amp; Community Relations.)</i>	April 2024
Consider how to celebrate community contributions made through youth volunteering. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Public Protection &amp; Community Relations.)</i>	September 2024
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.	2024
Deliver the Newark Castle Gatehouse scheme.	2021
Lead the delivery of the Newark Cultural Heart programme. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development.)</i>	2023
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.	October 2024
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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Strategy, Performance &amp; Finance.)</i>	2024

LEE BRAZIER - HOUSING	
Action	Planned Start Date
Deliver the Housing Strategy, 2023-2028.	2024
Review the 'Housing Allocations Scheme', including a full refresh of the housing register.	January 2023
Deliver a 'Housing Stock Condition Survey' for Council housing and private rented sector properties.	Autumn 2024
Implement a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, 2024-2027.	2024
Undertake an options appraisal for 'Housing with Care' in conjunction with partners.	Spring 2024
Develop an 'Affordable Housing and Development Contributions Supplementary Planning Document'. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development.)</i>	Spring 2024
Develop and deliver a strategy to meet the housing needs of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development.)</i>	September 2024
Complete development of Alexander Lodge, a new temporary accommodation facility, incorporating pathways to independence for care leavers.	April 2024
Deliver the estate regeneration scheme at Yorke Drive.	2024
Explore further ways to seek out imaginative and effective ways to engage with and involve tenants.	April 2024
Coordinate enforcement activity across Public Protection, Housing and Estate Management and Environmental Services to ensure joined up collaborative approaches. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development and Public Protection &amp; Community Relations.)</i>	Autumn 2024

<b>SUSAN CROSBY – HEALTH, WELLBEING &amp; LEISURE</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Planned Start Date</b>
Expand and refresh the wellbeing and engagement programme, including reinvigorating Councillor and officer wellbeing champions. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Strategy, Performance &amp; Finance.)</i>	Ongoing
Support the delivery of community-based prevention services through the construction of a new car park at Newark Hospital. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Strategy, Performance &amp; Finance and Sustainable Economic Development.)</i>	Autumn 2023
Deliver our ‘Playpark Investment Plan’ to improve play park areas across the district, exploring natural play opportunities. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Biodiversity &amp; Environmental Services.)</i>	In the final stages of completion.
Develop plans and seek funding opportunities for the Council and its partners to improve cycling and walking infrastructure. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development.)</i>	2024

KEITH MELTON – CLIMATE CHANGE	
Action	Planned Start Date
Explore options for improving air quality in specific locations.	April 2024
Improve recycling levels by promoting positive behavioural changes, through community events, targeted communication and enforcement. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Public Protection &amp; Community Relations.)</i>	Underway and ongoing
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.	Underway and ongoing
Roll out new kerbside glass recycling service.	March 2024
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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development and Biodiversity &amp; Environmental Services.)</i>	January 2024
Investigate securing greater renewable energy solutions within new developments across the district, including small scale community schemes where appropriate.	Summer 2024
Restructure current collection rounds and develop improved driver behaviour strategies, including the monitoring of vehicle repairs, to reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Biodiversity &amp; Environmental Services.)</i>	Garden round restructure completed. Refuse/Recycling round changes to be carried out throughout 2024.
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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Biodiversity &amp; Environmental Services.)</i>	Autumn 2024 – resource dependent

EMMA OLDHAM – BIODIVERSITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	
Action	Planned Start Date
Explore options for 'green' entrances and exits to and from estates and villages.	Summer 2024 – resource dependent
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.	Ongoing
Support Newark Town Council in the delivery of improvement plans at Sherwood Avenue Park.	Autumn 2022 and ongoing
Understand the biodiversity baseline within the district, allowing the development and implementation of a Biodiversity Strategy, 2024 – 2028.	January 2024
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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Climate Change and Sustainable Economic Development.)</i>	January 2024
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.	Underway and ongoing
Utilise new real time reporting analysis of street cleansing/grounds maintenance to improve our response times.	Spring 2024
Carry out a district wide audit of litter and dog bins.	Underway – Results in Spring 2024
Deliver the Council's Tree Strategy.	Summer 2024 – resource dependent
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.	January 2024 – through planning applications
Restructure current collection rounds and develop improved driver behaviour strategies, including the monitoring of vehicle repairs, to reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Climate Change.)</i>	Garden round restructure completed. Refuse/Recycling round changes to be carried out throughout 2024.



**APPENDIX**

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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Climate Change.)</i>	Autumn 2024 – resource dependent
Explore options for the creation of community works of art which communicate an environmental message, including a love of the natural world. Ensuring all residents have a voice including young people. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Heritage, Culture &amp; the Arts and Public Protection &amp; Community Relations.)</i>	April 2024

<b>MATTHEW SPOORS – SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Planned Start Date</b>
Support the delivery of community-based prevention services through the construction of a new car park at Newark Hospital. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Health, Wellbeing &amp; Leisure and Strategy, Performance &amp; Finance.)</i>	Autumn 2023
Develop plans and seek funding opportunities for the Council and its partners to improve cycling and walking infrastructure. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Health, Wellbeing &amp; Leisure.)</i>	2024
Develop an 'Affordable Housing and Development Contributions Supplementary Planning Document'. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Housing.)</i>	Spring 2024
Develop and deliver a strategy to meet the housing needs of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Housing.)</i>	September 2024
Review planning guidance and policies to encourage and require where possible enhanced sustainability standards in new developments.	Summer 2024
Review and adopt a new Sustainable Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy 2023-2028. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Strategy, Performance &amp; Finance and Heritage, Culture &amp; the Arts.)</i>	2024
Work alongside educators and employers to identify, support and expand local opportunities in green and land management sectors.	2024
Support the further development of the Air and Space Institute (Newark)© including linked sectors, future skills, and supply chain.	2021
Continue to develop and deliver the 'Future First Career Expo' annually.	2021
Redevelop the Clipstone Holdings site with high quality, environmentally sustainable industrial units.	2024
Progress the development of 14 Market Place to provide commercial space to the ground floor and residential dwellings above.	2024
Progress the relocation of Newark Lorry Park and redevelopment of Newark Gateway.	2021
Undertake a feasibility study for the refurbishment of the Sutton-on-Trent industrial site with a view to creating employment opportunities.	2024
Deliver the 'Shared and Rural Prosperity Fund Programmes' up to March 2025.	2022
Reinvigorate Invest Newark and Sherwood.	2024
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.	Annual – from end of financial year (March to December publication)

**APPENDIX**

Coordinate enforcement activity across Public Protection, Housing and Estate Management and Environmental Services to ensure joined up collaborative approaches. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Housing and Public Protection &amp; Community Relations.)</i>	Autumn 2024
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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Public Protection &amp; Community Relations.)</i>	April 2024
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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Climate Change and Biodiversity &amp; Environmental Services.)</i>	January 2024
Lead the delivery of the Newark Cultural Heart programme. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Heritage, Culture &amp; the Arts.)</i>	2023
Implement a 'Shopfront Grant Scheme' as part of the Heritage Action Zone Programme.	2021
Conclude feasibility work in readiness for future funding opportunities for Ollerton Town Centre and Mansfield Road, Clipstone.	2024
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'. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Strategy, Performance &amp; Finance.)</i>	Spring 2020

<b>PAUL TAYLOR – PUBLIC PROTECTION &amp; COMMUNITY RELATIONS</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Planned Start Date</b>
Develop a Parish Council Conference	Summer 2024
Develop a Community Safety Strategy and action plan addressing the priorities for 2024/25.	April 2024
Increase the level of resource in order to tackle anti-social behaviour in target locations.	Completed
Undertake a comprehensive review of public realm CCTV with a view to making recommendations for its future coverage, geographical locations and partnership arrangements.	Completed
Maximise the use and effectiveness of CCTV to deter crime and bring offenders to justice.	Ongoing depending on Cabinet Outcome – April 2024 for 2 years
Maximise the use and effectiveness of CCTV to deter crime and bring offenders to justice.	April 2024
Actively promote the reporting of anti-social behaviour to increase intelligence and enable better targeting of interventions, including Pub Watch and Shop Watch.	April 2024
Continue to undertake regular 'Nights of Action', targeting crime and anti-social behaviour 'hot spots'.	April 2024
Continue to work with partners and businesses to identify and intervene with known groups who perpetrate anti-social behaviour.	April 2024
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. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development.)</i>	April 2024
Assist in the delivery of 'Rural Crime and ASB Prevention' with additional target hardening at Sherwood Forest Corner.	April 2024
Coordinate enforcement activity across Public Protection, Housing and Estate Management and Environmental Services to ensure joined up collaborative approaches. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Sustainable Economic Development and Housing.)</i>	Autumn 2024
Reduce the number of environmental crimes committed by increasing visibility and enforcement in targeted areas.	Ongoing
Continue to deliver 'Safer Streets' projects and identify future funding streams.	April 2024 – March 2025
Continue with the concession for the enviro-crime enforcement scheme.	Procurement for new contractor in progress

**APPENDIX**

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.	April 2024
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.	Ongoing
Improve recycling levels by promoting positive behavioural changes, through community events, targeted communication and enforcement. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Climate Change.)</i>	Underway and ongoing
Explore options for the creation of community works of art which communicate an environmental message, including a love of the natural world. Ensuring all residents have a voice including young people. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Biodiversity &amp; Environmental Services and Heritage, Culture &amp; the Arts.)</i>	April 2024
Consider how to celebrate community contributions made through youth volunteering. <i>(Also falls into the remit of Heritage, Culture &amp; the Arts.)</i>	September 2024
Respond to community requests to support any community-led days of action across the district, in conjunction with partners.	As requested following the new format
Actively promote the Councils role in supporting the Veteran community, both as an employer and within the community.	Ongoing

<b>ALL PORTFOLIOS</b>	
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.	Spring 2024



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee - 29 January 2024

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

Lead Officer: Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration & Housing Strategy x5923  
 Cheska Asman, Homelessness Strategy & Safeguarding Officer x5643

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024–2029.
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To provide Policy & Performance Improvement Committee with an opportunity to review the draft Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 prior to being presented to Cabinet for approval.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee consider the contents of the draft strategy and review, posing any questions, clarifications or additions as necessary.  The implementation of a new Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy is both a statutory requirement and delivers against a key action within the Community Plan under Objective 2 – increase the supply, choice and standard of housing.

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Policy & Performance Improvement Committee has requested an opportunity to review the draft Homeless Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024- 2029 prior to its presentation at Cabinet for approval.
- 1.2 The new Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 follows on from the Council’s existing Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy, 2019-2024. The production of a Homelessness Strategy is a statutory requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002, requiring housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review every five years (as a minimum).
- 1.3 Additional duties for local authorities have been introduced via the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (to produce a strategy that involves partners in earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness) and the Government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 (the expectation for Local Authorities to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy).

- 1.4 Newark & Sherwood District Council has brought these duties together to create a collective 'Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029' which is attached at **Appendix 1** of this report for consideration.
- 1.5 The Homelessness Review is attached at **Appendix 2** and is based on an evaluation of:
- i. Progress in delivering the 2019-24 strategy aims and objectives;
  - ii. The current and emerging national, regional and local policy context;
  - iii. An assessment of the housing market;
  - iv. Analysis of official homelessness statistics, local rough sleeping data, stock housing data and Private Rented Sector statistics over the last four years;
  - v. Research into the root causes of homelessness and the likely future levels of homelessness; and
  - vi. Consultation with a range of stakeholders and those with lived experience throughout the development of the review and subsequent Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy.

## **2.0 Proposal**

- 2.1 Our vision is for 2024-2029 strategy is for Newark & Sherwood: *"To create an environment where people lead safe and healthy lifestyles, ensuring suitable housing for all. At the heart of this is our aim to break the cycle of homelessness by ensuring the causes of homelessness are identified at an earlier stage and prevented where possible".*
- 2.2 Whilst a statutory requirement of the Council to deliver, the Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy can only be delivered through effective partnership work and therefore the strategy's delivery plan will be a collective plan to tackle homelessness with partners.
- 2.3 A draft delivery plan is included within the strategy. The delivery plan will be populated in partnership with key stakeholders across mid Nottinghamshire once the strategy has been approved.
- 2.4 At the core of this strategy are six priorities which will underpin our approach to the development and delivery of homelessness services in Newark & Sherwood:
- i. Early intervention through effective partnership working.
  - ii. The provision of an accessible, agile, and responsive homelessness service.
  - iii. Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors.
  - iv. Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways.
  - v. Linking homelessness, health, well-being, and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected.
  - vi. Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 2.5 To ensure that our six priorities are delivered and progress is monitored, we will:
- i. Develop a delivery plan with key stakeholders and agree robust actions with leads and timescales assigned.



- ii. Carry out an annual review to re-evaluate and align the delivery plan to current findings or situations to be presented to Cabinet.
  - iii. Agree a robust data analysis framework to monitor performance and adapt to findings.
  - iv. Monitor the local, regional and national policy context.
  - v. Facilitate appropriate governance through the Mid-Notts Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group and the Newark & Sherwood Homeless Interagency Forum.
- 2.6 To fund homelessness prevention, every local authority receives a Homelessness Prevention Grant from central government, with a recommendation to ringfence the funding and meet the following conditions:
- i. Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness.
  - ii. Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homeless prevention.
  - iii. Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for families.
  - iv. Report total homelessness spend under the categories of temporary accommodation, staffing, prevention activities, relief activities.
  - v. Submit accurate data or up to 10% of funding may be deducted.
- 2.7 Newark & Sherwood received £226,279 in 2022/23 for Homelessness Prevention. This funding is used to deliver core services including prevention, staffing and contributions to partner delivery through service level agreements and grant funding including: Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union, Home-Start, Rough Sleeper Initiative Partnership and the Furniture Project.
- 2.8 Allocations for the current and next year stand at £236,278 for 2023/24 and £240,767 for 2024/25. This funding will be aligned directly to the priorities within the new strategy.

### **3.0 Implications**

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

#### **Financial Implications: FIN 23-24/7442**

There are no additional financial implications resulting from this report. Any specific activities requiring funding would be presented under separate cover.

#### **Background Papers**

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

Newark and Sherwood District Council

# Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy

**2024 – 2029**

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*‘Ending Homelessness Together’*

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# FOREWORD

*'Everyone should live in an environment that enables a safe and healthy lifestyle'.*



I am pleased to introduce our new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-2029. The strategy follows on from the Council's existing Homelessness Strategy, covering the period 2019-2024.

Our vision for Newark and Sherwood is to create an environment where people lead safe and healthy lifestyles, ensuring suitable housing for all. At the heart of this is our aim to break the cycle of homelessness by ensuring the causes are identified at an earlier stage and prevented where possible.

This Strategy sets out our priorities and objectives to respond to the challenges ahead, reduce homelessness and the impact of homelessness in Newark and Sherwood, and subsequently support the Council's Strategic Priorities and Community Plan delivery.

Homelessness has a substantial impact on the lives of those affected - for some, homelessness and rough sleeping can be a result of more long-established and complex issues including trauma, offending and substance misuse, often resulting in inequality, poverty, poor health & wellbeing.

This strategy sets out our person-centred approach and creates sustainable solutions that focus on an individual's need and aspirations; encouraging and working with individuals to create their own solutions.

We recognise that homelessness is complex and a much wider issue than a lack of housing or rough sleeping alone. Our partners play a vital role in their delivery of this strategy, and we value their expertise, dedication and support. We will work together to respond to the challenges ahead and to be innovative in our thinking, finding lasting solutions to tackle homelessness and support our most vulnerable residents.

We will ensure that this strategy and delivery plan are live documents. Progress will be reviewed annually by the council and through the Mid Notts Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the individuals and organisations who have contributed to the collation of the comprehensive district wide homelessness review and the development of this strategy.

**Councillor Lee Brazier, Portfolio Holder for Housing**

# INTRODUCTION



This Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 follows on from the Council’s existing Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy documents, covering the period 2019-2024.

The Homelessness Act 2002 and Code of Guidance (Section 1 (1) of the 2002 Homelessness Act) gives Housing Authorities a power and duty to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review every 5 years as a minimum.

Additional duties have been introduced via the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 - to produce a strategy that involves partners in earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness.

As part of the homelessness strategy, housing authorities should develop effective action plans to help ensure that the objectives, targets and milestones are achieved. To be effective the homelessness strategy will be based on realistic assumptions and be developed and jointly owned with partners.

The Government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 placed an expectation on Local Authorities to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy.

The 2022 ‘Ending Rough Sleeping for Good’ strategy sets out how the Government and its partners will work together to deliver on the Government’s manifesto commitment to end rough sleeping in this Parliament. It also lays the foundations for long-term system change to end rough sleeping sustainably and for good.

Newark and Sherwood District Council has brought these duties together to create a collective ‘Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 - 2029’.

For the homelessness strategy to be effective, we will ensure that it is consistent with other local plans and is developed with, and has the support of, all relevant local authority departments and partners.

# OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES

Our vision for Newark and Sherwood is to create an environment where people lead safe and healthy lifestyles, ensuring suitable housing for all. At the heart of this is our aim to break the cycle of homelessness by ensuring the causes of homelessness are identified at an earlier stage and prevented where possible.

At the core of this strategy there are six priorities which will underpin our approach to the development and delivery of homelessness services in Newark and Sherwood:

**Early intervention through effective partnership working**

**The provision of an accessible, agile, and responsive homelessness service**

**Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors**

**Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways**

**Linking health, well-being, and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected**

**Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping**

To ensure that the priorities are developed, and progress is monitored, we will:

**Develop an action plan with key stakeholders**

**Carry out an annual progress review**

**Agree a robust analysis framework of performance data**

**Monitor the local, regional and national policy context**

**Quarterly monitoring by the Mid Notts Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group and the Newark and Sherwood Homeless Interagency Forum**

# HOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED



This strategy was developed alongside colleagues at Ashfield District Council and Mansfield District Council as part of our continued commitment to joined-up working across Mid-Nottinghamshire to tackle homelessness.

It is based on a review of:

- Our progress in delivering the 2019-24 strategy aims and objectives
- The current and emerging national, regional and local policy context
- An assessment of the housing market
- Analysis of official homelessness statistics, local rough sleeping data, stock housing data and Private Rented Sector statistics
- Research into the root causes of homelessness and the likely future levels of homelessness

The full findings of this review are detailed separately in our Homelessness Review 2024.

We consulted with a range of stakeholders throughout the development of this strategy:

- 
- We asked internal teams and external stakeholders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of our work to tackle homelessness, and to tell us what we should consider doing differently.
- We later invited internal teams and external stakeholders to a face-to-face event to discuss the proposed priorities and identify actions they'd like to see us and our partners take to deliver them.
- The Local Influence Networks discussed and approved the proposed priorities.
- Supported housing and temporary accommodation residents were invited to a focus group to discuss their experience of homelessness and the proposed priorities.

# 2019 – 2024 ACHIEVEMENTS



As part of our Homeless Review, we have reviewed the success of our 2019-24 Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy. The following successes have been identified:

- Improved access to, and sustainment of tenancies in privately rented accommodation with dedicated Landlord Liaison Officers
- Continued partnerships with Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice to provide a Debt and Welfare Advice Service
- A homelessness Prevention Programme in secondary schools and colleges, delivered by Broxtowe Youth Homelessness
- Introduction of Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union Service
- Targeted support to young families through Home-Start
- Additional supported housing for rough sleepers with higher/complex needs following a successful bid to the Next Steps Accommodation Programme
- Supporting faith groups to provide 'The Well' Drop in for homeless singles or rough sleepers
- The delivery of Alexander House, a new temporary accommodation provision in Newark
- Initiation of a successful Rough Sleeper Action Group
- Countywide Rough Sleeper Initiative bid and funding for Rough Sleeper services
- Domestic Abuse Housing Liaison Worker in place as a result of the new Domestic Abuse Act



# HOMELESSNESS IN NEWARK AND SHERWOOD



Between April 2019 and March 2023, the main findings from the Homelessness Review tell us that:

- On average 800 households request assistance from the Housing Options Team each year. In 2022/23 the council experienced the highest number of approaches with an increase of 106% since 2019/20.
- Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy is the highest cause of homelessness in Newark and Sherwood, closely followed by friends/family no longer willing to accommodate.
- Single female with children has been the highest household type of application, but has reduced over the last four years, similarly for couples with and without children.
- The overall highest household type threatened with homelessness and awarded a prevention duty is single households.
- 55% of cases threatened with homelessness are prevented with a move to alternative accommodation.
- The number of single males already homeless is much higher than those that can be prevented.
- Dependent children are the primary reason for a priority need in Newark and Sherwood.
- Of all the acceptances, 21% are found permanent accommodation through acceptance of a Part 6 offer (social housing).
- On average 18 households per quarter are placed into Temporary accommodation.
- The largest increase in temporary accommodation placements is single males with complex needs, the number of single females has also increased since 2019-20 but not at the same rate.
- 62% of rough sleepers placed into short-term/emergency accommodation are EEA Nationals.
- The Rough Sleeper monthly snapshots total 52 EEA Nationals being found in Newark and Sherwood in 2022/23 with 26% being new rough sleepers.
- The average number of rough sleepers found per year totals 98 and that 48% are new to the street.
- 46% of homeless households disclosed on or more other support needs in addition to homelessness, the top four support needs in Newark and Sherwood are history of mental health, substance use, physical ill health and disability or a risk of/has experienced domestic abuse.
- Housing Stock data and the allocation of the councils shows that, over the last three years, 28% of allocations have been awarded to those in a homelessness banding.

# LOCAL CONTEXT



At a local level, Newark and Sherwood District Council has several strategies that guide contribute to or have synergies with the delivery of homelessness and rough sleeper services. These include:

**Newark and Sherwood District Council Community Plan 2020 – 2023** The Community Plan sets out the Council’s objectives over a three-year period, to ensure that the district continues to be a place where people choose to live, work, invest and spend their recreational time.

**Landlord Strategy 2022 -2027** This strategy establishes the vision for Council-owned social housing within Newark & Sherwood and the contribution that it will make to achieve the ambitions of the Community Plan 2020-23 and beyond.

**Tenancy Strategy 2022 – 2026** The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on all local authorities to produce a Tenancy Strategy to sit alongside the Landlord Strategy, Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, Allocations Scheme and any Registered Provider’s Tenancy Policies.

**Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026** This strategy sets out a four-year plan for improving the health and wellbeing of local residents to support our community plan objectives.

**Housing Allocation Scheme** Council housing and some Registered Provider (RP) properties (where NSDC has ‘Nomination Rights’) are let to people in accordance with this Scheme. NSDC has Nomination Rights to most RP properties in the district. This means NSDC nominates applicants on the Housing Register who are successful in 'bidding'.

**Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 - 2028** The Newark and Sherwood Housing Strategy identifies the key priorities over the next five years and sets out in the Delivery Plan what the Council and its partners are planning to do to address them and move Newark and Sherwood forward by identifying opportunities, investment decisions, legislative changes and setting out how they can be realised.

# GOVERNANCE



The strategy will be launched at an event with stakeholders where we will collaborate with partners to create a full delivery plan. Going forward an annual homelessness review will take place to re-evaluate and realign the action plan to deliver the priorities of the Strategy.

The Mid-Nottinghamshire Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group (JHPSG) will continue to meet quarterly and will play a role in the delivery and governance of the delivery plans.

A Newark and Sherwood Homelessness Interagency Group will be established and hold responsibility for ensuring the priorities and agreed actions of the Strategy are achieved locally.

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy is approved by Cabinet and will receive annual updates and provide scrutiny and challenge.

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

Homelessness Strategy

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# DELIVERY PLAN

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Delivery Plan is a collective plan to tackle homelessness with partners that will be equally responsible for its delivery.

The action plan will be a live document which will be developed with and jointly owned with key partners.

Objective 1 - Early intervention through effective partnership working			
Milestone	Action	Lead and partners	Target date
To prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless, with a particular focus on those becoming homeless from a private rented sector tenancy, friends, and family no longer able to accommodate or as a result of domestic abuse.	Reduce the number of evictions from Assured Shorthold tenancies to below the national average. Ensure particular understanding for the main reasons for ending an assured shorthold and find possible solutions to mitigate this.		
	Understand the reasons that friends and family can no longer accommodate and find solutions, such as mediation or incentives to continue to accommodate.		
	high reason for homelessness is other, guidance from DLUHC is to break this down further.		
	to identify ways to increase the number of preventions through early intervention and reduce the number that are already homeless and owed a relief duty.		
	Consider the rise in single homelessness and the complexities that can make it harder for services to prevent homelessness		

<b>Objective 2 - The provision of an accessible, agile and responsive homelessness service</b>			
Provide a high-quality service that customers are satisfied with and provide opportunities for customers to influence the design and delivery of services – remember this is not just a council strategy, this relates to the whole system approach	To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Housing Wizard, understand the reasons for an increase in approaches and take necessary steps to improve outcomes for the customer and to make best use of officer time.		
	to adopt a more data-driven and evidence-based approach to tackling homelessness.		
	ensure the Duty to Refer is effective and that the authority is able to assist people at the earliest opportunity to ensure the prevention of homelessness		
<b>Objective 3 - Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors</b>			
Help as many residents as possible to move from one home to another without the need for emergency and temporary accommodation. Influence where it is needed and that it is of good quality	consider if the large number of main duty decisions having no priority need is due to the number of single homelessness that cannot be prevented or relieved and therefore resulting in continued homelessness for many that do not fit the priority need criteria		
To understand and contribute towards a robust PRS in Newark and Sherwood. PRS is our biggest reason for homelessness, but also our second biggest type of accommodation secured for homeless households after social housing	The largest number of allocations, that have been awarded a homelessness bandings are from households moving from the Private Rented Sector or no longer able to stay with friends and family. Priority should be given to the prevention of homelessness from this type of accommodation.		
<b>Objective 4 - Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways</b>			
RSI may come to an end before the end of the strategy, create a	No fixed abode is also high but a cohort that we know little about. More		

contingency plan if RSI funding ends and there are no further rounds of funding	knowledge on where people are staying and how they secure a place to sleep which prevents rough sleeping		
<b>Objective 5 - Linking health, well-being and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected</b>			
To ensure Psychologically Informed Environments (day to day running of services are designed to take the psychological and emotional needs of people with these experiences into account) and Trauma informed Care (opportunity for individuals to engage more fully in their health care, to develop a trusting relationship with their provider) are indicated in the shaping and progression of the strategy and action plan.			
Better understand the projections of core homelessness levels and child poverty, as well as the housing market trends and the anticipation that there may be a rise in homelessness in Newark and Sherwood between 2024 – 2029			
<b>Objective 6 - Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping</b>			
Encourage and support leaders of key organisations to do more to prioritise SMD and prevent homelessness			

## **Appendix 2**

Newark and Sherwood District Council

**DRAFT**

# **Homelessness Review**

**2024 – 2029**

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List of abbreviations or meanings

ACRS	Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy
ARAP	Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme
ASI	Afghan Syrian Iraqi
AST	Assured Shorthold Tenancy
care experienced	Those that have been cared for outside of a family
DAHA	Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance
DELTA	The online system provided by DLUHC to facilitate the collection of statistical data and the administration of grant applications
DLUHC	Department for Levelling up Housing and Communities
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
HAST	Homelessness Advice and Support Team
HCLIC	Quarterly data returns on local authorities' actions under statutory homelessness legislation
HFU	Homes for Ukraine
HIF	Homeless Interagency Forum
HPG	Homeless Prevention Grant
HWB	Health and Wellbeing Board
ICB	Integrated Care Board
ICS	Integrated Care System
JHPSG	Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group
LHA	Local Housing Allowance
LINs	Local Influence Networks
lived experience	Those that have experienced homelessness themselves, giving them a personal knowledge or understanding
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MCCA	Mid Central Community Action
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NCC	Nottinghamshire County Council
NLCU	Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union
NHAS	National Homelessness Advice Service
NRPF	No Recourse to Public Funds
NSAP	Next Steps Accommodation Programme
NSDC	Newark and Sherwood District Council
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PIE	Psychologically Informed Environments
PRS	Private Rented Sector
RP	Registered Providers
RSAG	Rough Sleeper Action Group
RSI	Rough Sleeper Initiative
SMD	Severe Multiple Disadvantage
SNCA	Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice
SWEP	Severe Weather Emergency Protocol
SVPR	Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation
TIC	Trauma Informed Care
UKRS	United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Homelessness Review and the related Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 follow on from the Council’s existing Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy documents, covering the period 2019-2024.
- 1.2 The Homelessness Act 2002 and Code of Guidance (Section 1 (1) of the 2002 Homelessness Act) gives Housing Authorities a power and duty to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review every 5 years as a minimum.
- 1.3 Additional duties have been introduced via the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 - to produce a strategy that involves partners in earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness.
- 1.4 As part of the homelessness strategy, Housing Authorities should develop effective action plans to help ensure that the objectives, targets and milestones are achieved. To be effective the homelessness strategy will be based on realistic assumptions and be developed and jointly owned with partners.
- 1.5 This is not just a council strategy, this is a collective plan to tackle homelessness together, a partnership that includes all agencies and services that can assist anyone that is homeless or at risk of homelessness. All will be equally responsible for its delivery.
- 1.6 The Government Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 placed an expectation on Local Authorities to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy. The 2022 ‘Ending Rough Sleeping for Good’ strategy sets out how the Government and its partners will work together to deliver on the Government’s manifesto commitment to end rough sleeping in this Parliament. It also lays the foundations for long-term system change to end rough sleeping sustainably and for good.
- 1.7 Newark and Sherwood District Council will bring these duties together to create a collective ‘Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 - 2029’.
- 1.8 For the homelessness strategy to be effective, we will ensure that it is consistent with other local plans and is developed with, and has the support of, all relevant local authority departments and partners.

## **2. Methodology**

- 2.1 This section sets out the process we followed to progress the Homelessness Review and develop the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-29, including working in collaboration with other Nottinghamshire housing authorities, gathering data and consulting with stakeholders.
- 2.2 We have worked in collaboration across Mid-Nottinghamshire, with Mansfield District Council and Ashfield District Council to develop the Homelessness Review. All three local authorities have taken a similar approach to carry out the review and develop the subsequent strategies. The aims and objectives of all three strategies not only align to each other, but also to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategies of other Nottinghamshire authorities.
- 2.3 A review of progress against the 2019-24 action plan has been carried out, considering if any actions should be carried forward into the 2024-2029 strategy and to learn lessons from actions that have both gone well or not progressed.
- 2.4 An analysis of the current and emerging national, regional, and local policy context was completed to identify shared priorities, as well as opportunities and changes we need to prepare for.
- 2.5 An assessment of the housing market has aided understanding on how this might be driving homelessness now and, in the future, as well as to identify opportunities to address homelessness.
- 2.6 Research into the root causes of homelessness has helped to identify the likely future levels of homelessness.
- 2.7 Analysis of HCLIC data, Rough Sleeper data submissions and Rough Sleeper Initiative data, approaches for assistance, Stock Housing allocations, Registered Provider Nominations, Ready to Move outcomes and Private Rented Access data have been collated and recorded on a detailed data spreadsheet to recognise trends, give a true picture of homelessness, and identify areas for action and improvement.
- 2.8 Meetings with our HAST Advisor from DLUHC to jointly review the above HCLIC and RSI data for Newark and Sherwood, Mid-Nottinghamshire, and Nottinghamshire as a whole.
- 2.9 An online survey was created for frontline staff, stakeholders and partners to understand if there is adequate provision of accessible and responsive homelessness and housing advice services in the district and what the gaps and strengths are to tackle homelessness effectively. A copy of the questionnaires and results are included in Appendix one.
- 2.10 The Mid-Notts Authorities secured government-funded consultancy support from Shelter, who facilitated in person consultation events with internal teams and external

stakeholders in Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield and Mansfield during June 2023.

- 2.11 In Newark and Sherwood, attendees heard a presentation summarising the findings of the data analysis and a draft set of priorities were proposed. Attendees were then asked to work in groups to discuss if these priorities were suitable and what actions they'd like to see NSDC, and its partners take to achieve them. A write up of the feedback is available in Appendix two.
- 2.12 The Newark, Sherwood and Rural Local Influence Networks have been consulted in a similar way to the above in September 2023, in particular on the proposed priorities for the strategy – a pre-meet with the chairs of the LIN's took place to ensure the expectations of the group were met.
- 2.13 In September 2023, we also consulted current and recent customers of the Housing Options Service and those with Lived Experience currently accommodated in Supported Housing Provision. The consultation outlined the proposed priorities but also asked them to think about their own experience of homelessness and help us to understand what is and isn't working well for homeless services in our district, why people experience homelessness and what we can do to assist them. The results are available in Appendix three.
- 2.14 The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-2029 is based on the data and insights we gathered through the above process and has determined our priorities for the next 5 years.
- 2.15 The strategy will be launched at an event with stakeholders who we will collaborate with to create the full action plan. Going forward an annual homelessness review will take place to progress and develop action plans that deliver the priorities of the Strategy.
- 2.16 The Mid-Nottinghamshire Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group (JHPSG) will continue to meet quarterly and will play a role in the delivery and governance of the action plans.
- 2.17 A Newark and Sherwood Homelessness Interagency Group will be established and hold responsibility for ensuring the priorities and agreed actions of the Strategy are achieved locally.

### **3. Acknowledgements**

- 3.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council would like to thank all those with lived experience, delivery providers and professionals across all sectors who contributed to this review.

#### **4. 2019-2024 achievements**

- 4.1 This section provides an update on the progress that has been made in achieving the aims and objectives of the current strategy.
- 4.2 In 2018, Newark & Sherwood, Ashfield and Mansfield District Councils carried out a joint Homelessness Review (contracted to Homeless Link), in order to develop local Homelessness Strategies, under the terms of the Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 4.3 In April 2019, we launched the Newark and Sherwood Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-24. A second homelessness review was carried out 18 months later, in order to fully assess the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act, which came into force on 1st April 2018 and was in the process of being implemented when the first review was carried out.
- 4.4 This section provides an update on the progress that has been made in achieving the aims and objectives of the 2019 – 2024 strategy.

The full Homelessness Strategy can be found at:

<https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/media/newark-and-sherwood/images-and-files/housing/NewarkandSherwoodHomelessnessStrategy2019.pdf>

4.5 The aims of the strategy were to:

- i. Prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless.
- ii. Ensure options are available to ensure no one has to sleep rough other than through personal choice.
- iii. Help as many residents as possible to move seamlessly from one home to another without the need for emergency or temporary accommodation.
- iv. Provide a high-quality service that customers indicate satisfaction with.

4.6 The objectives of the strategy were:

- i. To improve the financial resilience amongst the population at risk of homelessness through a proactive and integrated local welfare benefits system.
- ii. To increase the amount of social housing available to households at risk of or experiencing homelessness and increase the sustainability of social housing tenancies by these households.
- iii. To deliver the additional required supported housing and housing related support.
- iv. To increase the amount of PRS housing available to households at risk of or experiencing homelessness and increase the sustainability of PRS tenancies by these households.
- v. To ensure the support needs of households at risk of, or experiencing homelessness are appropriately met in order to reduce their risk of homelessness and the risk of homelessness increasing their support needs.

- vi. To minimise rough sleeping and street activity and encourage the community to do their bit to end homelessness.
- vii. To achieve high customer satisfaction with the outcome and experience of the support provided by NSDC Housing Options.
- viii. To ensure services are designed based on robust evidence and effectively monitored and evaluated.

4.7 Our progress in meeting these objectives and the themes since the launch of the strategy 2019 – 2024 are summarised in the table below with additional detail at sections 4.8 – 4.15

Theme 1	Reducing the impact of poverty on homelessness	Excellent progress
Theme 2	Responding to the shortage of social housing	Progress
Theme 3	Supported housing and housing related support	Excellent progress
Theme 4	Working with the PRS	Good progress
Theme 5	Addressing the causes and consequences of homelessness	Good progress
Theme 6	Reducing the impact of homelessness on the community	Excellent progress
Theme 7	Improving customer services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness	Progress
Theme 8	Improving the data available to relevant agencies	Progress

#### 4.8 Theme 1 – Reducing the impact of poverty on homelessness

NSDC has a continued partnership with Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice to provide a Debt and Welfare Advice Service.

The council have made funding available to ensure that a dedicated debt service is available to all our residents and a Welfare Advisor post is in place to further support those to maximise their income. Citizens Advice also offer a bespoke service to any hard-to-reach tenants that are at risk of accruing rent arrears or at risk of homelessness.

In 2022/23 419 referrals were made to the service, 197 of those have been assisted with budget advice/debt work and 247 resulted in welfare benefit cases.

NSDC has also progressed a partnership with Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union to promote the service in Newark and Sherwood which will in turn allow sustainable savings and lending, preventing residents from turning to high interest lenders and loan sharks.

The Housing Options team continues to work closely with local DWP advisors who are co-located in NSDC offices; both teams are active members of multi-agency case conferences and make every contact count to ensure that customers make full use of the range of services available to them.

NSDC's Housing Benefit Team approved 235 Discretionary Housing Benefits applications in 2022/23, 8% of these assisted households at risk of homelessness. Generally, by assisting with deposit or rent in advance to access the private rented sector accommodation.

#### **4.9 Theme 2 - Responding to the shortage of Social Housing**

To date the Strategic Housing team have worked with housing association partners to deliver affordable homes through either S106 agreements and 100% affordable housing schemes across the district for affordable rent, shared ownership, discount for sale and first homes. (1,785 since 2005).

The affordable housing figures below includes Section 106 contributions, 100% affordable and HRA builds:

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
125	151	27	112	43

NSDC has secured nomination rights to most of these Housing Association homes meaning people from the Council's housing register can access them.

The Strategic Housing team has also worked with private developers to purchase affordable homes provided as part of Section 106 Planning Policy requirements to bring into the Council's housing stock where Registered Providers have not offered.

#### **4.10 Theme 3 - Supported housing and housing related support**

If there is a risk or threat of homelessness, the provision of family support in Newark and Sherwood is offered through HomeStart. Support is targeted at young families to help them manage and thereby prevent homelessness.

Additional supported housing for rough sleepers with higher/complex needs following a successful bid to NSAP. They have made available the financial resources needed to support local authorities and their partners to provide a long-term service.

The aim of the service is to ensure rough sleepers, those with a history of rough sleeping or at significant risk of rough sleeping and cannot access housing by other routes due to complex needs and risks are able to access and sustain long-term tenancies in the council's Northgate Supported Housing facility and any subsequent move on accommodation.

Additional revenue funding has also been made available to provide a full-time Intensive Support Worker to offer daily support and assistance to those placed into the Northgate Provision.

New temporary accommodation provision in Newark will be in place by 2024, alongside a bespoke service offer which will provide individuals with the skills needed to maintain a tenancy of their own through training modules.

A Domestic Abuse Housing Liaison Worker is in place as a result of the new Domestic Abuse Act.

A range of supported housing and housing related support services continue to be delivered across Nottinghamshire, some of which are as a result of the funding made available from the MHCLG (now DLUHC) Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI).

NSDC officers continue to attend the Nottinghamshire Youth Homelessness Forum and work in partnership to strengthen the local care leaver offer.

Officers have been involved in the NCC recommissioning of supported housing for young people in care and care experienced during 2021-22.

#### **4.11 Theme 4 - Working with the PRS**

In 2022/23 18% of cases were supported by the team to either maintain their current private rented tenancy or move into the private rented sector; households have been supported financially through the NSDC Homelessness Prevention Fund, this included sanctuary scheme installations, payment of arrears, rent in advance and deposits, as well as transport to places of safety.

The RSI funded Landlord Liaison Officer continued to work with customers in 2021-22 and secured accommodation for 18 households. The RSI funding for this role ended on 31st March 2022 but the role continued within the Housing Options Team and records show that the postholder secured accommodation for 32 individuals in 2022-23.

A Landlord Liaison Officer leads the RealHome Service. As part of the drive to improve landlord engagement - private sector landlords now receive a quarterly e-mail with updates on legislative changes, reminders of their rights and responsibilities, plus information on events and grants/schemes which may be of interest to them.

A quarterly virtual joint landlord forum (with Ashfield and Mansfield District Council) was launched in 2023 to share information from industry experts with landlords and provide a Q&A forum.

#### **4.12 Theme 5 - Addressing the causes and consequences of homelessness**

Funding has been allocated from the Homelessness Prevention Grant to allow a Homelessness Prevention Programme in secondary schools and colleges through Broxtowe Youth Homelessness.

'The Well' drop-in service was set up at Newark Baptist Church for homeless singles or rough sleepers. This allowed further interaction with rough sleepers as officers could



engage with people at the drop-in and assist further. Funding and support have been made available to help facilitate this service.

A successful Rough Sleeper Action Group has been set up, discussions take place and bespoke plans are put in place with partners to assist rough sleepers.

Improved strategic partnerships have been built throughout Mid Notts, focusing in particular on SMD which refers to people with two or more of the following issues: mental health issues, homelessness, offending and substance misuse.

Housing Options Officers continue to take part in multi-agency case conferences which focus on the needs of the individual household including Vulnerable Persons Panel, Sanctuary Panel, Rough Sleeper Action Group, Hoarding Panel, Child in Need Conferences.

The team also attends a number of partnership meetings to ensure robust pathways are in place to prevent homelessness upon discharge from an institution. In 2021-22, The Probation Service was re-established, and this has brought new opportunities to prevent homelessness upon release from prison.

A county-wide Out of Hospital project was also launched to ensure patients are discharged from hospital to suitable accommodation.

Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding was used to provide support to non-UK nationals rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping to access welfare benefits, employment and housing.

At the end of 2021-22, the Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in response to the war with Russia; supporting non-UK nationals is expected to be a growing area of responsibility for the resettlement team.

#### **4.13 Theme 6 - Reducing the impact of homelessness on the community**

A successful countywide RSI bid was submitted in 2018, all seven authorities are involved (led by Ashfield DC). RSI funding is used for a number of services that can provide a holistic service to prevent, intervene or help with the recovery of rough sleeping.

In order to protect rough sleepers from the Covid pandemic, accommodation was offered to all rough sleepers following the 'Everyone In' response. Rough sleepers were encouraged to take up the offer of the Covid vaccine including through the use of a mobile vaccination centre.

#### **4.14 Theme 7 - Improving customer services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness**

No active achievements within this theme.

#### **4.15 Theme 8 - Improving the data available to relevant agencies**

In April 2019, together with Mansfield and Ashfield District Councils, we launched the Newark and Sherwood Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2019-24.

A second homelessness review carried out 18 months following the Homeless Reduction Act started in 2020 and made a number of recommendations to tackle homelessness at the earliest possible stage, including through financial resilience.

The review included a Survey of Support Needs, completed by support providers, covering an extensive sample of accommodation-based supported housing services. The aim was to gain a deeper understanding of service users' characteristics, pathways, support needs, engagement with services and move-on requirements.

## **5. National Context**

5. As highlighted by DLUHC, homelessness and rough sleeping is not simply a housing issue, meaning a whole system approach is needed, encompassing policies and initiatives across health and social care, the criminal justice system, immigration and enforcement, welfare, employment, support for care experienced individuals, as well as housing.
- 5.2 There is of course overlap between these areas, as well as regular changes to the scale and nature of homelessness and rough sleeping, both nationally and locally.
- 5.3 For this reason, organisations working to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping are encouraged by DLUHC to adopt the following core principles to guide their work through the complex and shifting policy landscape:
  - i. Integrate health and social care and housing.
  - ii. Focus on delivering person-centred, empathetic, non-judgemental support and trauma informed care in psychologically informed environments.
  - iii. Build long-lasting, trusting relationships and recognise that engagement with services may not work first time round.
  - iv. Ensure that the lived experiences of people inform any action taken.
- 5.4 This section provides a high-level summary of the national policy context (as at Spring 2023) regarding the prevention of homelessness as well as some of the other policies and challenges affecting the wider system working to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

### **5.5 Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**

In April 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act was introduced which placed duties on local housing authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness. An Eligibility for homelessness assistance toolkit is provided on the NHAS website - [nhas](#)

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, a new methodology to calculate the HPG funding (grant funding awarded to local authorities by central government) was introduced and funding allocations for 2023-25 announced in December 2022. The funding conditions of HPG are:

- Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness,

- Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homeless prevention,
- Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for families,
- Report total homelessness spend (from HPG and other budgets) under the categories of temporary accommodation, staffing, prevention activities, relief activities,
- Submit accurate data or up to 10% of funding may be deducted.

A number of amendments have been made to the Homelessness Code of Guidance since it was published in 2018, recent notable changes include:

- People who left Ukraine because of the Russian invasion are eligible for homelessness assistance and social housing,
- Confirmed victims of human trafficking and modern slavery granted limited leave to remain are eligible for homelessness assistance and social housing,
- A duty for public bodies to consider the Armed Forces Covenant in homelessness applications and housing allocations,
- A new chapter on people who are homeless as a result of violence, other than domestic abuse,
- People made homeless due to being a victim of domestic abuse have automatic priority need for homelessness assistance.

## **5.6 Ending Rough Sleeping Strategy**

In September 2022, DLUHC published a new strategy to end rough sleeping by 2025.

For the first time, the Government has defined what it means to end rough sleeping:

*prevented wherever possible, but when it does occur, it must be rare, brief and non-recurring.*

The strategy has 4 areas of focus, and each area of focus has a set of core aims:

### **Prevention**

- Maximise affordable housing supply and reform the PRS,
- Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act,
- Target support to the most challenging transitional points in people's lives.

### **Intervention**

- Co-ordinated local rough sleeping services,
- A clear pathway off the streets for those with restricted eligibility for public funds,
- Provide local authorities, police and other agencies with the tools they need to address rough sleeping, protect the public and make communities feel safe for all,
- Make it easier for the public to play their part in supporting people sleeping rough.

## **Recovery**

- Support both housing-led approaches and Housing First,
- Address unacceptable poor quality supported housing and increase supply,
- Improve the support available to help people with experience of rough sleeping into employment,
- Provide significant investment into drug and alcohol treatment.

## **Transparent and joined-up system**

- Introduce a new national data-led framework to measure progress towards ending rough sleeping,
- Ensure robust but flexible accountability structures are in place,
- Improve the evidence-base and understanding of what works to end rough sleeping,
- Improve how different services work together.
- Further detail on the current and previous Government policies on ending rough sleeping are detailed in a House of Commons Library paper - Commons Library

### **5.7 Supported housing oversight**

Since 2020, the Government has taken a number of steps to improve oversight of the supported housing sector, it:

- published a National Statement of Expectations,
- published an evaluation of the wave 1 supported housing pilots,
- published Housing Benefit guidance for supported housing claims,
- announced a second wave of supported housing pilots,
- announced support of Bob Blackman's private member's bill.

In August 2023 Bob Blackman MP introduced the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act.

The Act will:

- Require local authorities in England to review supported housing in their areas and develop strategies,
- Provide for the creation of a national expert advisory panel,
- Give the Secretary of State power to introduce national support standards,
- Give local authorities power to create local licensing schemes for exempt accommodation,
- Give the Secretary of State an option to introduce a new planning Use-Class for exempt accommodation.

### **5.8 Affordable housing supply**

There have been a number of recent opportunities to boost the supply of supported housing through the following national funding programmes:

- Rough Sleeping Initiative,
- Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme,
- Next Steps Accommodation Programme,
- Single Homeless Accommodation Programme,
- Night Shelter Transformation Fund,
- The Move On Fund,
- Housing Transformation Fund.

## 5.9 **Help with housing costs**

Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Cost rates have been frozen for private renters since April 2020. Since then rents have risen by 12% on average; analysis by Crisis has found that only 12% of advertised private rented properties were affordable to those in receipt of benefits.

## 5.10 **PRS reform**

In August 2022, DLUHC published a white paper setting out the Government’s long-term vision for a fairer private rented sector. This includes plans to:

- abolish Section 21 ‘no-fault’ evictions and introduce a simpler tenancy structure,
- apply the Decent Homes Standard to the PRS for the first time,
- introduce a new Property Portal to help landlords understand their obligations, and
- introduce a housing ombudsman covering all PRS landlords and providing redress for tenants.

In December 2022, DLUHC opened a consultation on the amendments required to the homelessness legislation as a result of the removal of Section 21 evictions.

## 5.11 **Specialist support**

### *Domestic abuse*

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a number of changes regarding housing and homelessness:

- A duty on Upper Tier local authorities to prepare strategies to provide accommodation-based support for all survivors of domestic abuse,
- A duty of Lower Tier authorities to co-operate with the Upper Tier authority,
- Protection of a survivor’s lifetime or assured tenancy,
- Priority need status for survivors of domestic abuse.

Alongside this new legislation, the Home Office has published A Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan and a Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, which both prioritise prevention, supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators and improving the system.

A number of new measures were announced in February 2023 to protect women and girls from harassment, aggression and violence, and stop domestic abuse before it takes place.

### **5.12 Asylum dispersal**

Since April 2022, all local authorities in England have been required to take part in asylum dispersal, which means accommodation providers working on behalf of the Home Office will procure properties for asylum seekers to occupy whilst their claims for asylum are considered. Local authorities are not expected to accommodate asylum seekers beyond 0.5% of their total population.

Home Office provided accommodation and support is withdrawn once a claim is either accepted or refused and residents are required to leave within 28 and 21 days respectively. Individuals and families granted asylum may be eligible for homelessness assistance and an allocation of social housing. Those who are granted limited leave to remain, or their application for asylum is refused, are likely to have no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and no eligibility for homelessness assistance or an allocation of social housing.

As such, there is a risk those leaving asylum accommodation could become street homeless and/or victims of modern slavery.

### **5.13 Refugee resettlement**

There are 4 main resettlement programmes local authorities are currently involved with:

1. Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme
2. Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP)
3. Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)
4. UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS)

#### ***Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme***

This scheme was launched in March 2022 and is open to Ukraine nationals who were resident in Ukraine prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 and their immediate family members.

The number of people who can access this scheme is uncapped and is dependent on the capacity of the sponsors who come forward. Guests will be able to live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, education and other support.

Local housing authorities are expected to provide the following support to arrivals under this scheme:

- An in person accommodation check prior to and following the arrival of guests
- Homelessness assistance if the placement is ended
- Facilitate community and well-being events

Data shared by DLUHC shows that between 24<sup>th</sup> February and 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023, in England 4,295 Ukraine households were owed a homeless prevention or relief duty, of which 2,595 entered England through the Homes for Ukraine scheme. As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, 80,305 Ukrainians have arrived into England.

### ***Afghan homelessness pathway***

Due to the number of Afghan families currently staying in “bridging accommodation”, i.e. hotels, whilst awaiting and accepting an offer of ARAP or ACRS accommodation, a “fair share” and refusals policy was proposed by DLUHC in August. Under this policy, local authorities will receive homelessness referrals on a rota system from families who have refused two offers of accommodation and have consequently been given 56 days’ notice to leave their bridging accommodation. Strategic Migration Partnerships will manage this process, including calculating how many referrals each area will receive. As at March 2023, this policy is yet to be activated.

### ***EU settlement scheme***

Following the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union and the introduction of a points-based immigration system, freedom of movement between the UK and EU has ended. All EU nationals, as well as other non-UK nationals, are now required to have a visa to reside in the UK.

Those EU citizens who were living in the UK by 31 December 2020 were able to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme for a permanent right to reside in the UK. The deadline to apply to this scheme was 30 June 2021 and a failure to apply by this deadline means individuals will have no rights to work or study, to claim welfare benefits or access health service, or to rent a property. Those with NRPF are at risk of street homelessness and/or victims of modern slavery.

## **5.15 Prison leavers**

In December 2021, the Ministry of Justice published their Prison Strategy White Paper which includes proposals to:

- provide all prison leavers with 12 weeks temporary accommodation,
- expand the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders programme (awarded to support with deposits, landlord incentives and support staff),
- increase the number of Approved Premises,
- reduce Friday prison releases,
- double housing specialists working in prisons.

### **5.16 Care Experienced**

The Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy (see above) includes an aim to ensure that no one should leave a public institution to the streets and that young people leaving care will receive the support they need to secure and maintain suitable accommodation.

The strategy includes commitments to:

- fund targeted support to young people leaving care most at risk of homelessness (in 69 local authorities),
- invest in 'Staying Put' and 'Staying Close' programmes.

The Department of Education has introduced mandatory national standards and Ofsted registration and inspection for supported housing providers who accommodate 16 and 17 year-olds. Registration began in April 2023, national standards apply from autumn 2023 and inspection will begin in April 2024.

In February 2023, the Department for Education published its response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, which includes a mission to increase the number of Care Experienced in safe, suitable accommodation and a reduction in Care Experienced homelessness by 2027. Actions to achieve this include:

- removing the local connection requirement for care experienced applying for social housing,
- removing the use of intentional homelessness for Care Experienced under 25,
- encouraging rent guarantor schemes.

The response also includes a mission to strengthen and extend the corporate parenting responsibilities across the public sector.

### **5.17 Armed forces veterans**

The Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022-24 commits to ending veteran rough sleeping by 2025. In December 2022, Government launched Operation Fortitude and committed to end veteran rough sleeping by 2023. Operation Fortitude is a central referral scheme to provide veterans at risk of homelessness access to supported housing and wrap-around specialist care in health, housing and education.

The Armed Forces Act 2021 enshrined the Armed Forces Covenant into law, which requires certain public bodies to help prevent service personnel and veterans being disadvantaged when accessing public services such as housing, healthcare and education.

### **5.18 Health and social care**

In 2022, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published a guideline covering the provision of integrated health and social care services for people experiencing homelessness.



In January 2019, the NHS Long Term Plan was published and includes a commitment to prevent and tackle health inequalities, including investment in specialist mental health support for those experiencing homelessness.

Guidance published under the Health and Care Act 2022 recommends that housing and homelessness services should be engaged by Integrated Care Partnerships when developing the strategy that will inform local commissioning decisions made by Integrated Care Boards and upper tier local authorities. Guidance for Health and Wellbeing Boards also references assessing and meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping.

The Adult Social Care White Paper, published in March 2022, includes a commitment to make every decision about care a decision about housing and pledges to increase the supply of supported housing.

### **5.19 Substance use treatment**

A 10-year Drugs Strategy was published in 2022 which highlights that homelessness and rough sleeping can be both a cause and consequence of substance use. The strategy commits to improve services for people rough sleeping, to provide housing support to those in treatment and recovery, and build the evidence base of housing related needs and the most effective interventions.

The Strategy also includes objectives to break drug supply chains, deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system, and achieve a generational shift in the demand for drugs.

## **6. Regional Context**

6.1 There are a number of public sector bodies in Nottinghamshire who are directly or indirectly working to prevent homelessness. This section provides a summary of these bodies and their strategic objectives concerning homelessness prevention.

### **6.2 Nottinghamshire housing authorities**

There are five Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategies in place across Nottinghamshire:

1. Ashfield Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24
2. Bassetlaw Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2017-22
3. Mansfield Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24
4. Newark & Sherwood Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24
5. South Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-27

There are a number of common objectives across these strategies:

- Early prevention of homelessness,

- Increasing the supply of, access to and sustainability of affordable and quality accommodation,
- Ending rough sleeping,
- Ensuring support for housing and health needs are available,
- Provision of a high-quality service to customers.

### 6.3 Nottinghamshire County Council

The Public Health Team, Adult Social Care team and Children's Social Care Team each have a number of statutory duties relevant to homelessness prevention.

- The following needs assessments and strategies set out NCC's priorities in these areas:
- Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26
- The Health and Wellbeing Board Framework for Action on Homelessness
- JSNA Health and Homelessness 2019
- JSNA Substance Misuse: Young People and Adults 2022
- Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24
- Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2022-25
- Nottinghamshire Care Leaver Local Offer
- Adult Social Care Strategy 2017
- Nottinghamshire Combatting Substance Misuse Partnership Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023-25
- NSAB strategic plan

NCC's areas of focus that are related to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping across all these strategies include the following:

- Integrated housing, health and wellbeing commissioning and care pathways
- Funding homeless prevention tools
- Embedding a trauma informed approach
- Providing safe accommodation for domestic abuse survivors
- Good physical, emotional and mental health
- Young people transition to independent living
- Ensuring no one leaves a public institution without accommodation
- Work with people with lived experience
- Increase strategic collaboration
- Attract levelling up investment
- Release land for housing development
- Supporting Ukrainian refugees
- Identify early prevention opportunities
- Take a whole system approach

### NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System

The Health and Care Bill 2022 created Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) as replacements for Clinical Commissioning Groups, and establishes in law the role of Integrated Care Partnerships as the committee where health, social care, the voluntary sector and other partners come together as an Integrated Care System (ICS).

One of the aims of the ICS is to tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access. The Health Inequalities Strategy 2020-24 identifies 13 areas for actions including: supporting those who suffer mental ill-health, and housing.

#### 6.4 East Midlands Mayoral Authority (launching May 2024)

The proposed East Midlands Devolution Deal includes the following actions that are relevant to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping:

- New powers to drive the regeneration of the area and to build more affordable homes including compulsory purchase powers and the ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations.
- Over £17 million for the building of new homes on brownfield land in 2024/25, subject to sufficient eligible projects for funding being identified.
- £18 million capital funding in this Spending Review period to support the delivery of housing priorities and drive Net Zero ambitions in the East Midlands area.
- The proposed Deal also identifies other areas of focus to bring into the remit of the new authority in the coming months and years:
  - Deliver transformative regeneration and new high-quality housing.
  - Tackle local housing challenges including homelessness and rough sleeping.
  - Tackle domestic abuse through an improved and system wide holistic approach and develop strong links between the Mid Central Community Action (MCCA) and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to help join up public service delivery and strategies in relation to community safety.
- Develop an ambitious, long term mayoral social mobility strategy, supporting young people through their journey to adulthood.

#### 6.5 Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Partnership

The partnership has published a Serious Violence Response Strategy 2022-25, which sets out a vision for Nottinghamshire communities to feel safe from violence and the fear of violence.

One of the strategic objectives is to implement a domestic violence perpetrator programme.

To reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls, bring more perpetrators to justice and increase support for all victims and survivors a Nottinghamshire's VAWG Strategy 2023 – 2028 has been published: Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

### **7. Local Context**

7.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council have created and take responsibility for a number of existing strategies across the various Business Units, each of the following are complimented by, have synergies or could link to the new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy as detailed below:

- Newark and Sherwood District Council Community Plan 2020 – 2023** The Community Plan sets out the Council's objectives over a three-year period, to ensure that the district continues to be a place where people choose to live, work, invest and spend their recreational time.

- ii. **Landlord Strategy 2022 -2027** This strategy establishes the vision for Council-owned social housing within Newark & Sherwood and the contribution that it will make to achieve the ambitions of the Community Plan 2020-23 and beyond.
- iii. **Tenancy Strategy 2022 – 2026** The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on all local authorities to produce a Tenancy Strategy to sit alongside the Landlord Strategy, Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, Allocations Scheme and any Registered Provider’s Tenancy Policies.
- iv. **Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026** This strategy sets out a four-year plan for improving the health and wellbeing of local residents to support our community plan objectives.
- v. **Housing Allocation Scheme** Council housing and some Registered Provider (RP) properties (where NSDC has ‘Nomination Rights’) are let to people in accordance with this Scheme. NSDC has Nomination Rights to most RP properties in the district. This means NSDC nominates applicants on the Housing Register who are successful in 'bidding'.
- vi. **Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 - 2028** The Newark and Sherwood Housing Strategy identifies the key priorities over the next five years and sets out in the Delivery Plan what the Council and its partners are planning to do to address them and move Newark and Sherwood forward by identifying opportunities, investment decisions, legislative changes and setting out how they can be realised.
- vii. **Economic Strategy 2021 – 2026** This strategy reflects what Newark and Sherwood District Council will do to directly support and lead our local economy to achieve our vision of “building a shared prosperity”. The Council cannot deliver this big agenda alone, therefore collaboration and partnership working with our businesses, education providers, public authorities, developers and residents is the best, and only way to achieve success.

## **8. District Housing Situation**

- 8.1 The Council owns 5,543 homes across most of the district. In addition to this ten housing associations and Registered Providers own and manage 2911 homes in many locations.
- 8.2 Despite the Council’s ambitious housing delivery programme, S106 housing and the ongoing support and investment from our housing association partners, the supply of affordable housing has not kept up with demand. Generally due to developers not being able to afford the land value and the percentage of affordable homes and still make a profit; most local authorities therefore don’t hit the 30% target. However, for the last 10 years NSDC has come top for affordable housing provision.
- 8.3 Much has changed in Newark and Sherwood since the previous housing strategy in 2016, largely resulting from the Covid 19 pandemic, alongside the cost of living, increasing house prices, the high cost of private rental properties and the impact of changes to the welfare benefits systems, it is likely that a number of people facing fuel poverty, eviction and homelessness will increase.
- 8.4 It is therefore important that the Council continues to provide advice and support to residents as well as keeping up with an increasing demand for affordable housing.

Newark & Sherwood Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028 will help our partners, funders and residents understand our housing ambitions for new and existing homes in the district and for the housing services provided for Newark and Sherwood’s residents.

8.5 Four new priorities have been set against the Housing Strategy:

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

8.6 In the private rented sector, average rents in England increased by 5.5% in the last year, the biggest increase since records began, but Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates remains frozen at 2020/21 levels.

8.7 This is a major issue for homelessness services, with our latest Homelessness Review finding that no Private rented sector accommodation is currently available at LHA rates and is therefore one of the major factors preventing people from moving into or on from this sector.

## **9. Current levels of homelessness**

9.1 By analysing data that is available to us, such as Government submissions through DELTA, Rough Sleeper Initiative data and homelessness approaches we can identify the levels of homelessness over the last four years (2019 – 2023).

9.2 Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2017, H-CLIC is the new mechanism for quarterly data returns. H-CLIC records all local authorities' actions under statutory homelessness legislation and replaced P1E as the means for local authorities to report.

9.3 This section identifies the current levels of homelessness and as a result of the findings includes recommendations for actions which will or could be included as milestones within our priorities for the next strategy.

9.4 Appendix 4 contains a selection of charts which support the findings of the data analysis.

9.5 While carrying out the data review, we are mindful that outcomes may have been influenced by the following policy timeline that ran throughout the current strategy:

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Policy changes or implications</b>
03 <sup>rd</sup> April 2018	Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
April 2019 to October 2020	H-CLIC statistics published by DLUHC were categorised as experimental, meaning that the data collection was still in the testing and development phase.
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020	The first Covid-19 lockdown began in England.
26 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	MHCLG (now DLUHC) asked all local authorities to provide safe accommodation to all rough sleepers by the end of the week. This became known as the 'Everyone In' initiative.
26 March 2020 and 30 September 2021	The provisions in the Corona Virus Act 2020 increased the notice periods landlords were required to provide to tenants when seeking possession of a residential property.
March 2020	The National Probation Service established Homeless Prevention Taskforces, and these have continued post-Covid.
Between March 2020 and March 2021	There were 22 funding announcements totalling around £11bn by MHCLG (now DLUHC) relating to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping during Covid-19.
May 2020	The requirements of the 'Everyone In' initiative was amended, and local authorities given more discretion in how it was applied.
20 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	The stay on possession proceedings expired.
17 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 to 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2021	A moratorium on evictions from the private rented and social rented sectors was in place.
19 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	After 16 months of restrictions, all lockdown laws were ended.
1 October 2021	All notice periods returned to the pre-pandemic position.
December 2021	The Bank of England raised interest rates for the first time since August 2018. Rates have not exceeded 1% since January 2009; as at August 2023 rates were 5.25%.
2021	A cost-of-living crisis began in late 2021, with the annual rate of inflation reaching a 41 year high of 11.1% in October 2022.
February 2022	The Russian invasion of Ukraine began and the Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in March 2022.

## 9.6 Approaches and Assessments

Most homelessness approaches are triaged via an online Housing Wizard tool, available on the Council's website. Households are encouraged to self-help by inputting their data, situation and personal details which results in tailored advice sheets and a printable Personal Housing Plan.

If happy with the advice given in the advice sheets and Personal Housing Plan, there should be no need to request further advice and assistance from the Housing Options Team and therefore no further duty will be owed.

We do not have knowledge of the overall number of people that use the Housing Wizard and therefore the number that are homeless or at risk of homelessness at this initial stage.

This means we are unaware of the number of people that use the Housing Wizard and feel satisfied with the information contained within the online assessment and therefore go on to resolve their homelessness situation. Equally those that are dissatisfied and request assistance straight away, upon completion of the online assessment. There may be others that approach for a second time and require intervention later on and as their situation worsens.

The number of approaches is recorded locally, this is the number of people that complete the Housing Wizard and go on to request further assistance from the Housing Options Team.

On average 800 households request intervention or further assistance from the Housing Options Team each year. In 2022/23 the council experienced the highest number of approaches with 1243 in need of intervention, this is an increase of 106% since 2019/20 when 602 households requested further advice and assistance.

Following a telephone discussion or an email (in most cases), housing advice and assistance will be given by an officer and 63% of approaches are closed at this point, resulting in an outcome of housing advice only or early closure being recorded.

Statutory guidance (section 11.13 – 11.16 of the Code of Guidance) outlining assessment arrangements advises that this should be flexible to the needs of applicants, and that in most circumstances assessments will require at least one face-to-face interview.

Use of online, email and phone contact to provide advice, information and some assessments may meet the needs for many of our applicants. However, if at least one face-to-face interview was provided - where the applicant's needs indicate it is necessary or if they request it - this may be beneficial for the individuals with severe multiple disadvantage or other difficulties.

Any triage or initial assessment arrangements must be able to identify whether a face-to-face assessment is needed or requested, as well as the urgency of that assessment. Face to face triage appointments is currently made available at Castle House, Newark for those that are found to be rough sleeping by the Street Outreach team.

Recommendations for action: To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Housing Wizard, understand the reasons for an increase in approaches and take necessary steps to improve outcomes for the customer and to make best use of officer time.

Recommendations for action: to adopt a more data-driven and evidence-based approach to tackling homelessness.

Over the last four fiscal years, applicants that have requested officer intervention and have not been closed as a result of initial housing advice average 67 assessments per quarter. 99% of duty decisions are accepted at this stage.

When assessing an applicant's status, officers are aiming to either prevent or relieve their homelessness or threat of homelessness. As a result, 37% of assessments are owed a prevention duty - this relates to those that are threatened with homelessness and likely to become homeless within 56 days. Allowing officers time to intervene and prevent homelessness at an earlier stage if possible. If the prevention of homelessness is not possible, the application will be reassigned to relief.

62% are owed a relief duty - this relates to those that are already homeless, officers can support applicants for 56 days to relieve their homelessness by helping to secure alternative accommodation.

Data shows that a larger number of cases are entered into or assessed as a relief duty rather than a prevention duty. This tells us that households are not being identified early enough to allow intervention to prevent homelessness, households are already homeless when approaching the council for assistance.

Assessments show that, over the last four years our biggest reason for homelessness has fluctuated between the ending of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy and friends/family no longer willing to accommodate. The top four reasons for homelessness are:

- End of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy is the highest cause of homelessness overall, at 25.5% of assessments and in line with the national average of 25.1%.
- 25.4% of cases are due to friends/family no longer willing to accommodate.
- Non-violent relationship breakdown amounts to 16% of reasons for homelessness.
- Domestic abuse causes 10% of homelessness which is below the national average of 12%.

As mentioned previously within the timeline, a moratorium on evictions from the private rented and social rented sectors has been in place. An initial embargo was placed on landlords, preventing them from awarding a notice to end a tenancy and latterly to award a longer notice period. The embargo was lifted in October 2021 and therefore numbers have risen throughout the last two years.

The main reason that landlords give for the ending of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy is wishing to sell or re-let the property, rent arrears has been the 2nd biggest reason.

When a notice has been issued to end an Assured Shorthold Tenancy due to rent arrears, this is broken down further and the main two reasons for the rent arrears is due to a change in personal circumstances or a tenant having difficulty budgeting, covering the rent payments or other household payments.



In terms of age, of those owed a prevention or relief duty, 30% are aged between 25 – 34 closely followed by 35-44 at 22% and 18-24 at 21%.

94% of assessments are recorded with an ethnicity of white, we do not have any recorded details on nationality.

Recommendations for action: Reduce the number of evictions from Assured Shorthold tenancies to below the national average. Ensure particular understanding for the main reasons for ending an assured shorthold and find possible solutions to mitigate this.

Recommendations for action: Understand the reasons that friends and family can no longer accommodate and find solutions, such as mediation or incentives to continue to accommodate.

Recommendations for action: high reason for homelessness is other, guidance received from DLUHC to break this down further.

## **10. Homelessness Prevention and Relief in Newark and Sherwood**

### **10.1 Prevention duty**

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act, Local Authorities must take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness for any eligible applicant who is at risk of homelessness within 56 days, regardless of priority need. This can involve assisting them to stay in their current accommodation or helping them to find a new place to live.

For NSDC, single female with children was the highest household type of application in 2019/20 but has reduced over the last four years, similarly for couples with and without children.

Although single parent female is the highest household type throughout, single homelessness is on the rise and comparable with households with families throughout.

Single female parents amount to 33% of all prevention duty accepted. Single males total 22% of prevention cases and single females total 18%, therefore, the overall highest household type awarded a prevention duty is single households.

Officer intervention results in 13% of households being prevented from becoming homeless by supporting a stay in their existing accommodation.

Alternatively, 55% of prevention duties ended with a move to an alternative accommodation, broken down below:

- 25% moved into privately rented accommodation (below the national average of 40%)
- 30% moved into Social Housing (below the national average of 42%)
- 14% of prevention duties resulted in the household becoming homeless

The tables below give a full breakdown:

<b>Reason Prevention Duty ended 2019/20 – 2022/23 (Percentages)</b>	
Stayed in existing for 6 months+	13%
Moved to alternative for 6 months+	55%
Homeless	13%
Refused suitable offer, to cooperate	5%
Contact lost	5%
Withdrew	5%
56 days elapsed	3%
Refused to cooperate	1%

<b>Prevention – type of accommodation secured 2019/20 – 2022/23 (percentages)</b>	
PRS	34%
Social Rented	49%
Family	3%
Friends	3%
Owner occupier	1%
Other	5%
Not known	6%

## 10.2 Relief duty

Single males placed into a relief duty is much higher than prevention at 41% compared to 22% placed into prevention. Single females is similar for both prevention and relief at 18% in prevention and 19% placed into relief. Single female parents is lower in the relief category at 22% compared to prevention at 32%.

This data tells us that single males in particular are not approaching for assistance early enough and are already homeless and therefore we can only relieve their homelessness, or their needs are higher and appropriate accommodation is not available for single males in particular.

Whereas single female parents are more likely to be assisted successfully at prevention stage.

27% of relief cases ended after the 56-day window elapsed (national average is 44%)

12% of households refused the accommodation offered to them and 15% resulted in contact lost or application withdrawn.

Note the tables below for a more detailed breakdown of outcomes:

<b>Reason Relief Duty ended 2019/20 – 2022/23 (Percentages)</b>	
Stayed in existing for 6 months+	47%
56 days elapsed	24%
Local connection referral	1%
Intentionally homeless	2%
Refused final accommodation	11%

Refused to cooperate	0%
Contact lost	6%
Withdrew	8%
No longer eligible	1%

43% of relief cases ended with a move to secure accommodation, detailed below:

<b>Relief – type of accommodation secured 2019/20 – 2022/23 (percentages)</b>	
PRS	37%
Social Rented	59%
Family	1%
Friends	0%
Owner occupier	0%
Other	2%
Not known	1%

Recommendations for action: to identify ways to increase the number of preventions through early intervention and reduce the number that are already homeless and owed a relief duty. We need to understand why this is and how we might intervene at an earlier opportunity. As detailed, ending of an assured shorthold tenancy and friends or family no longer willing to accommodate are the main reasons for homelessness – overall aim is to prevent homelessness before crisis point

Recommendation for action: Consider the rise in single homelessness and the complexities that can make it harder for services to prevent homelessness.

### **10.3 Duty to refer**

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 significantly reformed England’s homelessness legislation by placing duties on local housing authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas, and to provide homelessness services to all those who are eligible.

Additionally, the Act introduced a duty on specified public authorities to individuals that may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to local authority homelessness/housing options teams. This duty is effective from 1 October 2018 and will apply to the list of public authorities set out below.

- prisons
- young offender institutions
- secure training centres
- secure colleges
- youth offending teams
- probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)
- Jobcentres in England
- social service authorities (both adult and children’s)

- emergency departments
- urgent treatment centres
- hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care
- Secretary of State for defence in relation to members of the regular armed forces

Recommendations for action: ensure the Duty to Refer is effective and that the authority are able to assist people at the earliest opportunity to ensure the prevention of homelessness.

### **11. Main Duty, Temporary Accommodation and securing move on in Newark and Sherwood**

A 'main homelessness duty' is owed where an authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a specified priority need group. Such statutorily homeless households are referred to as acceptances.

A local authority only has a duty to provide accommodation under a homeless application to someone who has or might have a priority need. Some people are automatically in priority need. For example, if someone has dependent children living with them.

Other people are only in priority need if they or someone they live with is vulnerable for some additional reason. For example, someone who is vulnerable because of a health condition. The local authority must decide if the person is significantly more vulnerable than an ordinary person would be if they were homeless.

On average 12 main duty decisions are made per quarter and of these 46% are accepted for a main duty. 20% are found to be intentionally homeless (deemed to have deliberately caused the loss of a home) and 34% are not deemed to have a priority need.

Dependent children are the primary reason for a priority need in Newark and Sherwood.

Of all the acceptances, 21% are found permanent accommodation through acceptance of a Part 6 offer (social housing), however, 5% refuse a part 6 offer. 4% of households accept a Privately Rented Sector offer.

3% of those accepted as being owed a duty subsequently refuse suitable temporary accommodation, withdrew their application, or lose contact with their designated Housing Options Officer.

The Council has two temporary accommodation provisions, located at Wellow Green in Ollerton which comprises of ten bungalow style units and a new temporary accommodation provision is currently being built in Newark (Alexander Lodge), to replace the 17 units of self-contained one bed roomed units previously used at Seven Hills, Newark.

In the interim for Newark, local authority stock has been utilised pending the Yorke Drive Regeneration project.

Alexander Lodge is due to open in 2024. Plans are in place to provide a training program which will consist of modules to assist current and future tenants to build confidence, ensure a more balanced health and wellbeing and be in a position to better maintain a tenancy leading to homelessness prevention overall.

On average 18 households per quarter are placed into Temporary accommodation. 58% are placed into local authority stock and 16% recorded as being placed in a hostel. 6% are placed in any other type of temporary accommodation (private landlords or unknown) and 1% in Bed and Breakfast.

Single females with children are our leading placement but the numbers have fallen since 2019/20 and therefore the number of children in temporary accommodation has lowered overall.

Single households are our second biggest placement, in particular single males which has increased significantly since 2019/20 from 13% to 44% currently. A large reason for this is due to the 'Everyone in' initiative to accommodate rough sleepers as part of the Covid 19 lockdown period.

The largest increase in temporary accommodation is single males, the number of single females has also increased since 2019-20 but not at the same rate. This further supports the findings that single males with complex needs are harder to support and find suitable accommodation for. All households with children have reduced overall since 2019/20.

Recommendations for action: consider if the large number of main duty decisions being no priority need is due to the number of single homelessness that cannot be prevented or relieved. If alternative accommodation is lacking this therefore results in continued homelessness for many that do not fit the priority need criteria.

### **Rough Sleepers**

62% of rough sleepers placed into short-term/emergency accommodation are EEA Nationals.

The Rough Sleeper snapshots total 52 EEA Nationals being found in 2022/23 with 26% being new rough sleepers.

The average number of rough sleepers found per year totals 98 or 8 per month, some of these may be duplicates that move on and off the streets, however, 48% are new to the street, meaning there is a constant stream of rough sleepers in Newark and Sherwood on any typical night.

Each year NSDC are required to submit a figure to DLUHC on how many rough sleepers are found on a particular night. In order to count someone as a rough sleeper the following definition must be met.

*People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, Stations, or "bashes").*

The numbers that have been submitted each year are detailed below:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
4	5	5	4	5	10	6	4	4	2	6	7	3

## **12. Providing support in Newark and Sherwood**

It is recognised that many of the households needing assistance to prevent homelessness or to relieve their homelessness have other support needs. DLUHC data shows that between 2019/20 and 2022/23, 556 households owed a homelessness duty had no disclosed support needs but 483 or 46% (below the national average of 53.5%) disclosed one or more support needs.

This section provides details on the households presenting to the Housing Options Team with one or more support need, details on the top three support needs identified and an overview of some of the support available in Newark and Sherwood.

	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
<b>No Support Needs</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>One or more support needs</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>32%</b>

A households support needs are considered as part of the assessment of their overall housing need and the duties owed by the council to relieve or prevent homelessness.

The top four support needs over the four-year study are:

### **History of mental health problems**

29% of households owed a homeless duty identified mental health as a support need. Mental Health can impact on a household's ability to sustain their accommodation and therefore we work in partnership with mental health services to ensure that customers are informed about the help and support available to them.

### **Substance use**

21% identified substance use as a support need. If, at the time of approach for housing assistance, an individual is not engaging in specialist support, they are encouraged to engage through a Personal Housing Plan to access and engage with relevant support services. As part of their Personal Housing Plan, individual households can be referred to support services or can access support themselves via the commissioned services such as CGL (Care, Grow, Live).

### **Physical ill health and disability**

19% of households owed a homeless duty have physical health and disability support needs. In assessing whether the duty is to prevent homelessness or relieve it, we consider the individuals circumstances and establish if the household's existing home is suitable to meet their needs.

### **At risk of/has experienced Domestic Abuse**

Also significantly high is those that are at risk of/has experienced domestic abuse at 18% of households owed a homeless duty.

A Sanctuary Scheme is in place in Newark and Sherwood, this is a multi-agency victim centred initiative which aims to enable households at risk of violence to remain safely in their own homes by installing a ‘Sanctuary’ in the home and through the provision of support to the household.

17 Sanctuary referrals were received in the year 2021-22, the referrals related to various tenures that have been made safer for households through the installation of sanctuary measures. In cases where measures were not installed the survivor had decided to move or not progress with the scheme.

Feedback regarding the sanctuary scheme is positive, customers reported feeling safer after the measures were installed, that the measures “exceeded expectations” and that the service was timely.

### **13. Resources available in Newark and Sherwood and Nottinghamshire**

#### **13.1 Homeless Prevention Grant**

From 1st April 2023, a new methodology to calculate the Homeless Prevention Grant funding has been introduced and funding allocations for 2023-25 announced in December 2022.

Newark and Sherwood District Council have been awarded a Homeless Prevention Grant of £236,278 in 2023-24 and £240,767 for 2024-25.

The funding conditions of the Homelessness Prevention Grant are to:

- Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness.
- Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homelessness prevention.
- Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for families.
- Report total homelessness spend (from HPG and other budgets) under the categories of temporary accommodation, staffing, prevention activities, relief activities.
- Submit accurate data or up to 10% of funding may be deducted.

#### **13.2 Allocations/Homelessness allocations**

Housing Stock data and the allocation of these properties has been analysed between 2020/21 and 22/23. On average over the last three years, 28% of allocations are awarded to those in a homelessness banding. The findings are detailed in this section.

When considering property size for those placed into a priority banding due to homelessness, the largest allocation is for one beds with 43% of homeless bandings being allocated and 37% to those in need of a two bedroomed property. 19% of households are allocated a three-bed property and only 1 household has been allocated a four bedroomed property throughout the study, in 2020.

Between 2019-20 to 2022-23 a total of 241 properties have been allocated to households in a homelessness priority banding. Band two, notice to quit an Assured Shorthold Tenancy increased in 2022-23, although impacted by the embargo on landlords giving notice but still the numbers are high, and landlords are continuing to give notice.

Reasons for all priority homelessness bands are detailed in the table below:

Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy – current tenant	89
Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy – previous tenancy	4
Loss of Registered provider property	15
Friends and family no longer able to accommodate	28
Move on from supported or temporary accommodation	13
No Fixed Abode	27
Residing in a Hostel	57
Residing in a Refuge	2
Use and Occupation (cannot succeed someone else’s tenancy)	3
Loss of Owner/occupied home	1
Loss of tied accommodation	2

In addition to our own housing stock allocations, the council have nomination rights to registered providers accommodation. 79% of nominations are successfully allocated to those in a homelessness band.

Recommendation for action: The largest number of allocations, that have been awarded a homelessness bandings are from households moving from the Private Rented Sector or no longer able to stay with friends and family. Priority should be given to the prevention of homelessness from this type of accommodation.

Recommendation for action: No fixed abode is also high but a cohort that we know little about. More knowledge on where people are staying and how they secure a place to sleep which prevents rough sleeping. For example, some that sofa surf are buying electricity meter tokens as payment to stay.

Newark and Sherwood have a number of supported housing provisions for those that are homeless. Certain supported housing arrangements have been commissioned by public bodies that have a relevant duty or power to arrange such accommodation. There is also non-commissioned provision available as detailed in the table below:

Provision	Provider	Type of accommodation	Units available	Commissioned or non-commissioned
Russell House, Newark – Core service	Framework	Hostel with 24-hour staff support for 18+	16	Commissioned



Russell House, Newark - Move on	Framework	Self-contained flats for 18+	16	Commissioned
Core Accommodation in Newark	Newark Emmaus Trust	24-hour staff support for 16 – 25 years	11	Non-commissioned
Dispersed accommodation in Newark – move on	Newark Emmaus Trust	16 – 25 years	15	Non-commissioned
Mother and Baby accommodation in Newark	Newark Emmaus Trust	Self-contained	5	Non-commissioned
Branching Out, Newark – Core and Cluster	Nottingham Community Housing Association	Support for 16 – 21 years	8	Commissioned
Branching, Ollerton – move on	Nottingham Community Housing Association	16 – 21 years	5	Commissioned
Newark Women’s Refuge	Newark Women’s Aid	Women and their children fleeing domestic abuse	7	Non-commission

To ensure single households living in supported housing provision have the necessary skills in place to secure and sustain a tenancy, a Ready 2 Move (R2M) template requires completion by any support workers and agreement from key housing staff that someone is ready to transition to a council tenancy. If accepted their banding is moved to a priority banding for allocation.

The following data shows an analysis of the number of individuals that are deemed R2M by the provider and have submitted a R2M application. The data shows that the majority are approved for the allocation of a tenancy:

2019	Numbers	Percentage
1. Number of R2M submitted	35	
2. Number approved	28	80%
3. Number not approved	7	20%
4. Number secured a tenancy	20	57%
5. Average time between R2M approved and tenancy awarded		
2020		
1. Number of R2M submitted	39	
2. Number approved	29	74%
3. Number not approved	10	26%
4. Number secured a tenancy	24	61%
5. Average time between R2M approved and tenancy awarded		
2021		
1. Number of R2M submitted	32	
2. Number approved	26	81%
3. Number not approved	6	19%
4. Number secured a tenancy	17	53%
5. Average time between R2M approved and tenancy awarded	27.5 days	
2022		
1. Number of R2M submitted	32	
2. Number approved	21	66%
3. Number not approved	10	31%
4. Number secured a tenancy	6	18%
5. Average time between R2M approved and tenancy awarded		

### 13.3 Privately Rented Accommodation

In 2015, Newark and Sherwood District Council created RealHome, a tenant finder service for landlords.

A dedicated Landlord Liaison Officer oversees the RealHome service. There is also an additional Landlord Liaison Officer role in place, predominantly to focus on single homelessness.

As part of the drive to improve landlord engagement - private sector landlords now receive a quarterly e-mail with updates on legislative changes, reminders of their rights and responsibilities, plus information on events and grants/schemes which may be of interest to them.

A quarterly virtual joint landlord forum (with Ashfield and Mansfield District Councils) was launched in 2023 to share information from industry experts with landlords and provide a Q&A forum; marketing materials have been created - advising both landlords and tenants of

our offer; Our RealHome service has been promoted on social media by NSDC and partners; plus a survey of landlords took place with feedback given to points raised.

#### **13.4 Domestic Abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed a duty on local authorities to work together. The aim of the act is to strengthen the support for victims of abuse by statutory agencies.

Specific actions for authorities with a housing duty are:

- that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance
- ensure that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an Assured Shorthold Tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy

NSDC works in partnership with NCC and the districts/boroughs in Nottinghamshire on policies and guidance. Including MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) and the Violence against Women and Girls Strategy. The Community Safety Partnership already has a duty to carry out Domestic Homicide Reviews and we are working towards the DAHA Accreditation in 2024.

Domestic abuse reporting remains high and is reflected in the number of High-Risk cases being heard at the MARAC.

A Domestic Abuse Housing Liaison Worker in place as a result of the new Domestic Abuse Act.

#### **13.4 Resettlement**

A dedicated Resettlement Team manages the relocation of refugees in the district. The resettlement team consists of four staff members to work on the HFU scheme and meet the requirements of the scheme to help mitigate issues of pressures on the council's homelessness services.

To assist local authorities further, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is introducing a £500 million capital fund – the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) – for local authorities in England to provide accommodation to families with housing needs who have arrived in the UK via Ukrainian and Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes.

One of the aims in establishing the resettlement service was to ensure the best possible use of government grants and support and this has already resulted in Newark and Sherwood being the only council in the county to successfully apply to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities' £500m Local Authority Housing Fund. This will support the purchase of 14 homes, helping to meet resettlement and homelessness needs, with 35% of the homes secured already and the rest due to be acquired by November 2023.

The number of households relocated to date is listed below (as of August 23):

Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation	United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme	Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme	Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy	Homes for Ukraine
13	2	3	2	169

While a lot of the policies will undoubtedly impact migrants, we do not anticipate that they will have an immediate impact on homelessness services - Asylum and Refugee policies for homeless services

Existing procedures used by tenancy support workers to support households in our temporary accommodation provision will be amended to include the support for refugees of any scheme as the approach is similar. This is for the extra properties due to be brought into use by November 23.

ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) and employment will continue to be a priority for Refugees. Making sure we provide excellent tutors. Liaising with Newark College and Inspire to create a joined-up approach across the district.

### **13.5 Rough Sleeper Initiative**

The Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) was originally launched in March 2018 and was targeted at local authorities with high numbers of people sleeping rough, based on the national 2017 rough sleeping snapshot.

This included a £30m fund for 2018-19 which was allocated to 83 local authorities (Nottingham City included), as well as a specialist team of Government Advisers made up of rough sleeping and homelessness experts drawn from local authorities and the third sector.

The initiative is part of the government’s ongoing Rough Sleeper Strategies 2018 and 2022 which initially set out the vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it altogether by 2025.

The 2022 ‘Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy’ brought in a new definition which has four key elements.

Prevention is the first element, meaning wherever possible people should never have to sleep rough in the first place. However, it is impractical to imagine that in a dynamic society every single episode of rough sleeping can be prevented, therefore, the definition stipulates that where rough sleeping is unavoidable it should be rare, it should be brief, and it should be non-recurrent.

Therefore, for DLUHC, rough sleeping can be defined as having ended when anyone ending up on the streets is very much the exception not the rule, and on those rare occasions, every individual will be quickly supported into suitable and sustainable accommodation.

In 2019 RSI year 2 funding was made available nationally, led by Ashfield DC, the seven local authorities across Nottinghamshire submitted a successful bid to provide rough sleeper services throughout the county.

Nottinghamshire subsequently placed successful bids for RSI funding in years 3 and 4 which provided several commissioned services delivered within Local Authorities, Statutory Services and the Voluntary Sector to the value of over 1.4m in 2021/22 (RSI4).

Following a successful bid for continued RSI funding in 2021, Nottinghamshire was awarded sustained funding for three years until 2025.

The current DLUHC RSI 2022-25 services are:

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Delivery partner</b>	<b>Aim</b>
Rough Sleeping Coordinator	Framework	To develop the services and improve working practices as required. The post holder will ensure all multi-agency and Rough Sleeper Action Groups at an operation level are aligned. This post will work closely with the Strategic Leads to identify and support system change.
Street Outreach Team	Framework	The Street Outreach Team will identify and verify individuals who are rough sleeping and thereby accurately record levels of street homelessness. As the numbers of rough sleepers arriving on the streets starts to decline, the service will transition to refocus on delivering prevention and recovery work.
Navigator team	Framework	The service includes general navigators covering housing, mental health institutions and prison releases. There will be an additional Probation Navigator working with the team but funding for this post will be covered by Ministry of Justice.
Nursing outreach	Sherwood Forest Hospitals	The vision for this provision is that it integrates with specialist homeless support workers, accommodation providers and social care to establish a planned multi-disciplinary approach. Providing assertive outreach to people on the street but also following people through to more stable housing in order to prevent a return to rough sleeping.
Mental health outreach	Notts Healthcare	1 x CPN provides mental health outreach diagnosis, treatment and support in community

		locations, building trusted relationships with individuals and supporting them to access the secondary mental health services they need to gain or sustain a tenancy.
Ashfield/Mansfield supported housing	YMCA	40 units of accommodation to be split between Mansfield and Ashfield.
Nottinghamshire South supported housing	Framework	A support worker will work with the three residents that have been placed in an emergency housing provision in the south of the county (year 1 only)
Substance Misuse Outreach	CGL	The main function for this team is to support people to engage with the treatment of substance use service, provide intensive support to hard-to-reach groups, identify unmet needs and support onward referrals, identify risk and implement plans to mitigate these risks for high-risk individuals.
Non-UK national support	Tuntum	This service is available to Persons from abroad with limited eligibility to gain support and access settled status, employment support, reconnection and recognition of modern slavery and cohesive behaviour.
Local Authority surge fund	District/Borough Authorities	Surge funding to each of the authorities in the hope that the money can be used to offer a bespoke accommodation package to the individuals that are still rough sleeping and have so far not been accommodated.
Psychological Informed Environments and Trauma Informed Care		By year 2 we hope to provide psychological input and implementation of a PIE programme.

The RSI funding is held by Ashfield District Council. The current RSI Award is:

2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
£1,299,290	£1,350,604	£1,245,035	£3,894,929

Match funding held by RSI partners is:

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Funder</b>	<b>Held by</b>	<b>Delivery partner</b>
RSI Programme Manager	District/Borough Authorities	Ashfield District Council	Newark and Sherwood District Council
RSI Administrator	District/Borough Authorities	Ashfield District Council	Ashfield District Council
Social worker	Framework	Framework	Framework
Prison navigator	East Midlands Probation Service	Ashfield District Council	Framework

Key performance indicators are collated and submitted to DLUHC. Initial analysis of the quarter 1 & 2 data for 2023/24, in comparison to 2021 and 2022 tells us:

- The reason for homelessness has increased for Mental Health Ward discharge and prison release, suggesting that local authorities are not being informed early enough or, with partners, are unable to facilitate a move to suitable accommodation. Individuals being unable to sofa surf has increased as a reason for homelessness and eviction due to non-engagement. Both these reasons may be as a result of increased complexities and support needs which family, friends or housing support workers are unable to resolve.
- The number of referrals to the Street Outreach Team has increased, generally, only 20% of those referred are found and verified as rough sleepers. This may support the increased number of people that are unable to sofa surf or being made homeless and moving on and off the streets, meaning they are harder to engage with if not approaching services directly.
- The biggest increase in referrals by service are for the Street Outreach Team, Mental Health referrals for the Community Psychiatric Nurse and Tuntum Housing that assist those with no recourse to public funds which includes housing. The largest need for this service within the county is in Newark and Sherwood.
- Five out of the seven districts and boroughs are experiencing a marked increase in referrals for RSI services. This includes Newark and Sherwood.

The Street Outreach Team has been funded to work directly with rough sleepers across Nottinghamshire County. Since April 2021 the team have carried out a spotlight street count once a month in all district and borough areas. Below are the snapshot figures for Newark and Sherwood up to October 2023:

	2017	2018	2019		2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan					0		2	2
Feb						1	3	4
Mar					0		4	4
Apr						1	2	1
May					2	2	4	1
Jun			1		2	2	5	3
Jul						7	8	2
Aug					6	7	9	3
Sep			2		1	3	6	2
Oct					6	6	6	0
Nov	4	4	2			5	2	
Dec					1	3	1	

Recommendation for Action: For a holistic overall focus, priorities should be placed on SMD rather than one element of the complexities to rough sleeping which is homelessness.

#### **14. Consultation Response**

An extensive consultation plan has been carried out throughout the Homelessness Review, various mechanisms have been facilitated including online surveys, collective events with frontline staff, Stakeholders and Partners, face to face small groups and 1-2-1 feedback sessions with those with lived experience.

We secured government-funded consultancy support from Shelter, who assisted in facilitating in person consultation events with internal teams and external stakeholders in Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield and Mansfield during June 2023.

In Newark and Sherwood, attendees heard a presentation summarising the HCLIC and RSI data, to understand if there is adequate provision of accessible and responsive homelessness and housing advice services in the district and what the gaps and strengths are to tackle homelessness effectively.

Attendees were then asked to work in groups to discuss if the proposed priorities are suitable and what actions they'd like to see NSDC and its partners take to achieve them.

The online survey for frontline staff and partner surveys gave us a good insight into the thoughts and experiences of staff that are aware of and involved in homelessness intervention on a daily basis.



A full write up of the questions and feedback to the online survey and Shelter event is available at Appendix two. Extracts of the feedback are detailed below:

**Do you think there is an adequate provision of accessible and responsive homelessness and housing advice services throughout the district?**

*'The services to the East are much better than the services to the West. Most services are located in the larger areas such as Newark and very little in places like Ollerton'.*

*'There is a section of the population that are uncomfortable with formal things, usually the ones that most need the help. They are scared by it. If they come to places like Castle house to ask for help, they come scared and on the back foot, which makes them more likely to be hostile and less likely to engage appropriately. They need informal settings and contact with people who look and sound like them to help them ask for help in a positive way when it's needed'.*

*'On balance as professionals working to support young people to access homelessness services, we can experience challenges in accessing housing advice services via the phone, as calls go via Customer Services rather than being able to contact the homelessness team directly. It would be useful to have a direct line phone number or a dedicated representative to speak to'.*

*'The pre-tenancy work offered by NSDC is very good, and the relationship with the supported accommodation providers in Newark is very good, honest and realistic'.*

**In your experience, what do you consider to be the topmost significant causes of homelessness within the district?**

*'Family breakdown, family home no longer suitable, landlords selling, landlords unwilling to make adaptations to unsuitable properties, home in poor state of repair/hoarding, home no longer suitable due to medical conditions and following a stay in hospital'.*

*'Single homelessness, not having their own tenancy and floating between friends and family. Issues with local housing allowance for single people not matching rising room rates. Not enough provision for those with support needs or historical issues with drugs and alcohol'.*

*'Substance or alcohol abuse, poorly identified/supported learning difficulties or mental health problems'.*

**What additional services would be beneficial to the district?**

*'More proactive assistance, rather than reactive. More active promotion of the service so that people are aware that they can get assistance and that this can be at any stage - not just when they reach crisis point'.*

*'More accessible face to face/telephone advice from housing options team without needing to tick so many boxes before getting to speak to someone who has the correct knowledge'.*

*'A better hospital discharge service in Newark and Sherwood'.*

*'More single homeless accommodation, possible 'crash pads' for those not yet ready to commit to permanent accommodation'.*

**Do you think early intervention through effective partnership working would work, if so, which services do people interact with and should be included?**

*'Yes. Partner agencies - such as Citizens Advice, health visitors, debt charities, mortgage lenders, GPs, foodbanks/clubs, DWP, debt collectors - should be encouraged to tell customers to seek advice as soon as they experience housing-related problems: whether this is with paying their rent; suitability of their homes to meet the needs of their household; etc'.*

*'Yes, just the fact that you are the council makes it hard for people to approach you. Also, they don't always know that they can approach you, other organisations signposting is really important. However, community groups can be quite naive about whether they are being strung along, so perhaps training offered to community groups on how to spot the difference between people that have a genuine problem and people who are attention seeking (and how to give them appropriate attention without tying up services that are needed by other people)'.*

*'Any form of early intervention would better enable people to maintain existing tenancies. For those people that find themselves homeless/sofa surfing/rough sleeping, again, early intervention would assist rather than a deterioration in the person's circumstances leading to greater impact on mental health/possible substance and/or alcohol misuse/greater connection with health and support agencies. Agencies involved could be health, LA, Framework, Social Landlords, etc'.*

**What is your opinion on access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors? Do you think there is enough suitable accommodation for secure, long-term housing?**

*'LHA rates do not match the rents anywhere in the PRS. There are significant top ups, especially for those who require single person units. In social housing it may be more affordable, but the housing need does not match the available housing'.*

*'The levels set for funding accommodation for those on benefits don't meet the actual costs of renting privately and there is not enough non private rental accommodation available long term'.*

*'Not enough accommodation for single people'.*

*'There is a severe local shortage of affordable housing with a long waiting list, families are overcrowded or are spending a long time in temporary accommodation'.*

*'There are significant waiting times for access to long term housing even when the young person is in band 1. Lack of flooring in newly let accommodation eats up a lot of the care leavers home establishment grant. Affordability is already an issue which will become more challenging due to the cost-of-living crisis and increases in fuel costs'.*

**Do you think floating support should be considered for someone who has found accommodation and previously experienced homelessness?**

*'I think a training course for new tenants that have previously been homeless, should be mandatory. How to manage your finances, basic home maintenance and housekeeping, who to turn to if facing difficulties etc?'*

*'The revolving door of homelessness can put barriers in place in relation to people's ability to manage. Not only a tenancy but actually having to manage day to day living tasks at times that are socially acceptable, having neighbours etc. They need long term support to manage independently on a long-term basis and reintegrate into society'*

*'We find that supporting families can give them encouragement to achieve what they need to, this is the same for housing'*

*'To allow a period of adjustment and for the individual to maintain the tenancy. It would also offer opportunity to link the person with other support services, i.e. health/substance misuse, etc. as necessary once they have a safe and secure place to stay'*

**Do you think we need to do more to develop and improve pathways to tackle rough sleeping?**

*'We need the appropriate wraparound services in place and to also make transient accommodation available to those who do not want secure accommodation.'*

*'From what I have heard, the issue is more with rough sleepers engaging than the services we can offer to them'*

*'Yes, better access to mental health services. Mental Health services working to prevent homelessness. A better understanding and awareness of why and how someone becomes a rough sleeper'*

*'I think the pathways we have now are more than suitable; there will always be a cohort who cannot be managed via any pathway'*

*'We need to educate the public about pathways offered out of rough sleeping and clarify the difference between rough sleepers and people who say they are because they want money/food/support. We need a clear path that yields immediate relief from rough sleeping that everyone knows about'*

*'The same faces keep appearing on the streets, not succeeding in keeping a home'*

**Do you feel enough is done to link health, wellbeing, and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected by homelessness?**

*'Young people should be encouraged to build better futures for themselves through education, positive life experiences and mentoring, instead of encouraged into tenancies'*

*'The cohort who struggle with their mental health and possible physical health require much more intensive support to be able to get back on their feet and then go on to manage housing'*

*'We've made huge gains in this area, but I think it is an important area in prevention of homelessness and as such it is worth investing in continued development'*

## **What should be done to deliver long term support solutions to sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable?**

*'Provide more bespoke support. Tenancy officers are already stretched, a possible role for a tenancy sustainment officer'.*

*'Have a mechanism in place to identify vulnerable tenants and target support at these'.*

*'Funding for Complex Needs Workers to intensively work alongside a person'.*

The stakeholder and partner event, hosted with Shelter, asked attendees four key questions, relating to strengths, challenges and improvements as well as suggested actions to achieve the proposed priorities for the strategy.

An overview of the first three questions is detailed below. The feedback to the fourth question will be included within the action plan. Full details are included within appendix 2.

## **What works well about Newark and Sherwood's homelessness service?**

Attendees of the consultation feel that Newark and Sherwood's homelessness service staff have excellent knowledge of both statutory requirements and the local offer of support available to its residents, allowing for effective signposting to relevant services.

Good communication between different internal departments enables quick and clear decision making, particularly between the housing register and homelessness service teams.

Another key finding from attendees was that the service is approachable and accessible. This was highlighted in relation to the range of methods of communication offered, particularly their face-to-face service but equally clients having the option of telephone and email communication too if that is better suited to the individual's needs.

Having an allocated Housing Options officer was also seen as beneficial to clients for consistency, as well as the provision of two duty officers and a Landlord Liaison Officer working with single males.

Rough sleeper pathway – NSDC are proactive with rough sleepers and work hard to get them into temporary accommodation, often on the same day. The dedicated drop-in service (Monday to Friday) is very useful.

## **What are the main challenges for the service when preventing and tackling homelessness?**

The main challenge identified by partners was around the lack of affordable and social housing, with rents in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) increasing at an exponential rate and the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) not keeping pace.

Unfortunately, as we know, this is a national challenge facing local authorities and resources are limited. However, it was felt that there is potential for work to be done in building relationships with PRS landlords, particularly around the stigma associated with homeless clients who are often not given priority as a result of their history/backgrounds.

It was also identified by many that there is not enough supported accommodation in the district, particularly for the growing number of people with complex needs and those requiring a high level of physical support but under the age threshold. There was concern that

people are being placed in accommodation that does not offer the correct level of support, and this was linked to difficulties with sustaining clients' engagement.

Another key challenge which participants spoke about was the availability of support to maintain tenancies. It was felt that there is a need for more floating support provision, educating tenants around basic skills for managing a tenancy and enabling better prevention.

There were also challenges raised in relation to particular cohorts. Firstly, staff from HMP Nottingham highlighted that on average, 30% of prisoners are released to no fixed abode (NFA) which equates to approximately 50 people per month (across the region, not all in Newark). It was suggested that the county wide prison release protocol is reviewed as currently there are gaps which result in homelessness on release. Secondly, supporting those with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) was also noted as a challenge due to issues around eligibility and in turn, delays in support. There is a desire to better understand this cohort and how best to support them.

### **How could the service be improved to better prevent and tackle homelessness?**

Following on from the challenges that were identified, we asked attendees to think about how the service could be improved in order to better prevent and tackle homelessness. The most common response was around education, particularly around reducing the stigma of homelessness, which would lead to people seeking help sooner rather than later and accessing tenancy sustainment provisions. It was felt that in order to achieve this, NSDC would have to be more creative with their prevention activities, and working with schools to develop and deliver support materials was suggested as a way to identify potential homelessness early on and tackle intergenerational homelessness.

There was also a recommendation for improving the sharing of information about what services and support NSDC has on offer to its residents. It is felt that in many cases, the provisions are there but they are not always being accessed to achieve their full potential. Actions that could be taken to achieve this include improving the non-digital service, specifically not relying on the website as this is not accessible to all, and making more referrals to relevant agencies, such as Citizens Advice for debt and benefit advice. This would allow for multi-agency meetings to be more widely attended by professionals and therefore greater wraparound support offered to the client.

Although Castle House was identified in our first discussion as a useful hub where many agencies can work together, it was recommended by participants that this model is replicated in other sites across the district so that it is more accessible to others who do not live nearby. A suggestion was also made about how Castle House could be redesigned using a trauma informed lens to make it more approachable to its clients.

There was a general consensus across the groups that more could be done by NSDC to gather feedback from its residents in order to shape the way its service is designed and delivered.

Although there are surveys in place, attendees felt that it would be beneficial for the council to go further than this to co-produce the service with people with lived experience of homelessness. For example, there were recommendations for a lived experience group and service-user forums where suggestions can be made and any concerns can be raised and responded to.

The Newark, Sherwood and Rural Local Influence Networks have been consulted in a similar way to the above in September 2023, in particular on the proposed priorities for the strategy – a pre-meet with the chairs of the LIN's took place to ensure the expectations of the group were met.

In September 2023, we also consulted current and recent customers of the Housing Options service and those with lived experience currently accommodated in Supported Housing Provision. The consultation outlined the proposed priorities but also asked them to think about their own experience of homelessness and help us to understand what is and isn't working well for homeless services in our district, why people experience homelessness and what we can do to assist them. All questions and responses are included in appendix 3.

### **15. Future levels of Homelessness**

The Homelessness Code of Guidance explains that a homelessness review should include an assessment of the likely future levels of homelessness in the district.

It is extremely difficult to predict with accuracy the likely future levels of homelessness, considering the division of the causes of homelessness between structural factors that create the conditions within which homelessness will occur and individual factors which mean some people are more susceptible to structural forces:

- Structural factors are wider societal and economic issues that affect opportunities and social environments for individuals, such as housing and labour market conditions, a weak welfare benefits system and rising levels of poverty.
- Individual factors apply to the personal circumstances of a homeless person and may include personal crisis, traumatic events, mental health, addiction challenges, relationship problems.

The Housing Options Service is not able to influence future levels of homelessness but can use the information contained within the Homelessness Review to guide the allocation and prioritisation of resources. Based on previous trends both locally and nationally the following can be surmised:

- The number of approaches remains high, households approaching for assistance in 2023/24 (Quarters 1 & 2) predicts a total of 1302 requests for officer intervention may be received throughout the year and following years will remain higher than those two years ago.
- Single homelessness has continued to rise over the last four years of the study, particularly in single men. Complexities of single homelessness has increased, a holistic Severe Multiple disadvantage approach is needed to ensure the success of housing and support for this cohort and to stem the potential increase.

- A reduction or loss in funding for housing related support to vulnerable people, including those with mental health needs, learning disabilities and substance use means that people in these groups may find it more difficult to sustain their tenancies and to live independently successfully. This is likely to result in an increase in homelessness amongst these households.
- The number of rough sleepers found has been consistent overall, including the number of new rough sleepers on the streets in Newark and Sherwood. Government plans to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end rough sleeping by 2027 will only be successful if long-term and sustainable funding is made available and the wider national issues tackled.
- Nationally, the cost of private renting continues to increase. Of those housed during 2021/22 and 2022/23, the average monthly rent for a 2-bedroom property in the East of our district was 24.5% higher than the LHA rate. Of those housed during 2021/22 and 2022/23, the average monthly rent for a 3-bedroom property in the West of our district was 30% higher than the LHA rate.
- Many tenants are required to top-up their rent from other income they receive meaning that this additional outlay, on top of the current Cost of Living crisis affecting gas and electricity prices and food, has created a very challenging environment for households when managing their budgets.
- With high rent and property prices locally, many young people are living with parents for longer or returning to the parental home. Family relationships can become strained and lead to parental eviction. This is likely to remain a predominant cause of homelessness unless the fundamental causes, (such as young people being able to access affordable accommodation independently) are tackled at a national level.
- The end of an assured shorthold tenancy is likely to remain a predominant cause of homelessness, as the private rented sector continues to thrive in the wake of home ownership being largely unaffordable to those on low incomes. Only action taken at a national level will address the issues within this sector. The Council's ability to access the private rented sector is likely to remain challenging (given the issues with affordability locally and impact of Welfare Reform). The Council will need to consider how best to work with landlords in the future to meet the needs of homeless households in the District.
- The Council does not have the resources to meet the shortfall between the private rent levels and the amount of assistance that low-income households are entitled to, through the benefits system, except through short term use of Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Of the structural factors, research has identified that childhood poverty is a "powerful predictor" of homelessness, though as depicted above the causation of homelessness is complex and there is no single trigger – structural and individual factors combine in differing ways, producing different outcomes, not all of which include homelessness.
- The Resolution Foundation have forecast that relative child poverty will increase to around 31% by 2026/27 (a 20% increase on the 2020/21 figure above), but for families with 3 or more children that increases to between 50% and 77%. This variation in impact is attributed to the caps within the welfare benefit system for larger families.

- Of all the structural factors, housing market trends appear to have the most direct impact on levels of homelessness – The Homelessness Monitor, published annually by Crisis, has developed a model based on these structural factors to project the amount of “core homelessness” to 2041. The 2022 report (written prior to the cost-of-living crisis) projects that core homelessness in the midlands will rise by 25% between 2019 and 2024, and from 2024 will remain fairly static.
- For Newark and Sherwood, since December 2021, there has been a steady rise in mortgage interest rates. Consequently, this upward trend has led developers to scale back their planned projects. Given that a significant portion of affordable housing relies on Section 106 contributions, this reduction in development activity has resulted in a decrease in the availability of affordable housing, which plays a crucial role in addressing homelessness.

## **16. Next steps**

By examining past and future levels of homelessness six key issues emerge. These issues are the Councils objectives for the future - shaping and providing focus for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

Because the strategy is a collective plan to tackle homelessness with partners that will be equally responsible for its delivery, the action plan will be developed with and jointly owned with key partners.

Launch events will take place across Mid-Notts in March/April 2024, delivered in two parts:

The first event in March 2024 will be a launch event, concentrating on the findings and content of the Homelessness Review and the Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029.

The second event in April 2024 will be a workshop-based event and concentrate on populating the milestones and actions under each objective/priority and assigning responsibility.

Recommendations for action have been added throughout this Homelessness Review document and will be proposed for consideration as the action plan progresses.

The objectives/priorities identified for the strategy and agreed through consultation are listed below.

### **Objective 1 - Early intervention through effective partnership working.**

Milestone – to prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless, with a particular focus on those becoming homeless from a private rented sector tenancy, friends and family no longer able to accommodate or as a result of domestic abuse.

Through partners we hope to identify those that are homeless early on and therefore encourage the prevention of homelessness before crisis. Ending rough sleeping and homelessness for good is only possible if we address the root causes and prevent it happening in the first place.



The chronic shortage of affordable housing and appropriate support services means we are just responding to people already in crisis, rather than preventing them from reaching that point in the first place.

Recommendations for action: Reduce the number of evictions from Assured Shorthold tenancies to below the national average. Ensure particular understanding for the main reasons for ending an assured shorthold and find possible solutions to mitigate this.

Recommendations for action: Understand the reasons that friends and family can no longer accommodate and find solutions, such as mediation or incentives to continue to accommodate.

Recommendations for action: high reason for homelessness is other, guidance from DLUHC is to break this down further.

Recommendations for action: to identify ways to increase the number of preventions through early intervention and reduce the number that are already homeless and owed a relief duty.

Recommendation for action: Consider the rise in single homelessness and the complexities that can make it harder for services to prevent homelessness.

### **Objective 2 - The provision of an accessible, agile and responsive homelessness service.**

Milestone – Provide a high-quality service that customers are satisfied with, and provide opportunities for customers to influence the design and delivery of services – remember this is not just a council strategy, this relates to the whole system approach

Recommendations for action: To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Housing Wizard, understand the reasons for an increase in approaches and take necessary steps to improve outcomes for the customer and to make best use of officer time.

Recommendations for action: to adopt a more data-driven and evidence-based approach to tackling homelessness.

Recommendations for action: ensure the Duty to Refer is effective and that the authority are able to assist people at the earliest opportunity to ensure the prevention of homelessness.

### **Objective 3 – Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors.**

Milestone - Help as many residents as possible to move from one home to another without the need for emergency and temporary accommodation. Influence where it is needed and that it is of good quality.

Milestone – To understand and contribute towards a robust PRS in Newark and Sherwood. PRS is our biggest reason for homelessness, but also our second biggest type of accommodation secured for homeless households after social housing.

Recommendations for action: consider if the large number of main duty decisions having no priority need is due to the number of single homelessness that cannot be prevented or relieved and therefore resulting in continued homelessness for many that do not fit the priority need criteria.

Recommendation for action: The largest number of allocations, that have been awarded a homelessness bandings are from households moving from the Private Rented Sector or no

longer able to stay with friends and family. Priority should be given to the prevention of homelessness from this type of accommodation.

**Objective 4 - Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways.**

Milestone – RSI may come to an end before the end of the strategy, create a contingency plan if RSI funding ends and there are no further rounds of funding.

Recommendation for action: No fixed abode is also high but a cohort that we know little about. More knowledge on where people are staying and how they secure a place to sleep which prevents rough sleeping.

**Objective 5 - Linking health, well-being and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected.**

Milestone – To ensure Psychologically Informed Environments (day to day running of services are designed to take the psychological and emotional needs of people with these experiences into account) and Trauma informed Care (opportunity for individuals to engage more fully in their health care, to develop a trusting relationship with their provider) are indicated in the shaping and progression of the strategy and action plan.

Milestone – Better understand the projections of core homelessness levels and child poverty, as well as the housing market trends and the anticipation that there may be a rise in homelessness in Newark and Sherwood between 2024 – 2029.

**Objective 6 - Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.**

Milestone – Encourage and support leaders of key organisations to do more to prioritise SMD and prevent homelessness.

**Appendix 1 – Frontline staff and partner Consultation Online Survey**

**Appendix 2 – Consultation Event with Stakeholders**

**Appendix 3 - Public consultation**

**Appendix 4 - Supporting charts evidencing current levels of homelessness**

**Appendix 5 – Equality Impact Assessment**

Please note –detailed appendices to the Homelessness Review are available upon request.



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee - 29 January 2024

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director - Communities & Environment

Lead Officer: Briony Ashton, Environmental Policy & Projects Officer

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Climate Emergency Update
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To provide an update to members on the progress of the Climate Emergency Strategy and associated Action Plan.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee note the progress on the action plan and its key projects.

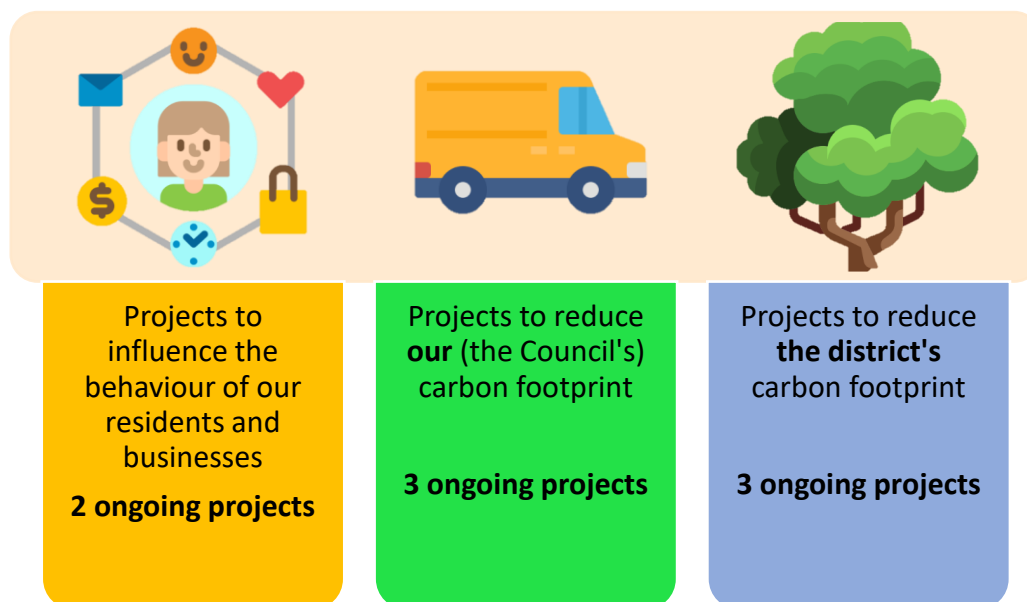
## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 Newark & Sherwood District Council (NSDC) declared a Climate Emergency at the Full Council meeting of 16 July 2019. At this stage, the declaration did not include a target for net zero for the Council but recognised that the UK Government had, the preceding month, agreed a target of 2050.
- 1.2 Following the declaration, the Carbon Trust were appointed to work alongside officers and members to develop a Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. The Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) met on several occasions to review the data and findings from the Carbon Trust, as well as to seek out views from partners, businesses, and local groups. The CEWG comprised of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons of the Policy & Finance, Leisure & Environment, Economic Development, and Homes & Communities Committees. Members of the working group recommended the carbon net neutral target date of 2035, and a emissions reduction target in line with this aspiration. The Climate Emergency Strategy and both targets were approved by Policy and Finance Committee in September 2020 and Full Council in December 2020.
- 1.3 The Council's agreed target for reduction is 2,165 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (gas and fuel consumption from scope 1, purchased electricity from scope 2, and waste and water from scope 3).
- 1.4 The Greening Newark & Sherwood Action Plan was developed to deliver the vision outlined in the Climate Emergency Strategy. This action plan is being progressed and an annual report of progress is made to members. This report informs members of the Council's progress towards the 2035 carbon neutrality target and provides an update on work ongoing to date to tackle Climate Change.

## 2.0 Ongoing Projects

Members can refer to previous update reports (November 2022) for previous works. This section of the report updated members on going work.

These ongoing projects fall into three themes as outlined below.



### 2.1 **Green Rewards App** (Behaviour change in residents)

2.1.1 The Green Rewards App is an online platform designed to incentivise and encourage users to undertake positive behaviour change by enabling users to log carbon reducing activities and gain points for these activities. Residents collect points for undertaking carbon avoidance measures, such as having a sustainable commute, learning about recycling or buying eco-friendly products. The points collected are honesty based and rely on users logging completed tasks. For some tasks you can only gain points once, for example completing the carbon quiz, whilst for other tasks, such as a recycling, users can connect points every week. The Green Rewards App launched to the rest of the County in November 2021, to coincide with COP26, and it launched to Newark and Sherwood residents on 16 February 2022. This made Nottinghamshire the first county to have a carbon focused platform available to all residents.

2.1.2 The platform features a leader board which enables residents to view where they sit in relation to other residents. Winners are selected on a monthly basis by the platform operator. There are two winners a month, both receiving a £20 voucher.

- The resident with the most points (each resident can only win once bi-annually), and
- A randomly selected resident that has logged activities in the last month.

2.1.3 The project team continue to review the progress of the App on a quarterly basis to monitor uptake, analyse trends and ensure the App's continued promotion. So far 567 our residents have signed up (as of 19/12/2023) and we have the second highest average actions logged per user in Nottinghamshire. Also 57 tonnes of carbon has

been avoided (as of 20/09/2023). This is equivalent to our expected annual carbon savings from the solar PV for Newark Sports & Fitness Centre, Newark Beacon, Sconce & Devon & Vicar water combined.

2.1.4 Healthy competition has been encouraged on a ward by ward basis via social media to highlight the highest performing wards. This is currently Devon ward. Parish Councils have also been provided with a communications digital toolkit to promote Green Rewards, future plans are in place to update this.

2.1.5 We have signed up to the App for Two years, this expires in January 2024, before expiry the success of the App will be reviewed. This review will consider the carbon savings attained, impact achieved and take up across the geography and demographics of the district. A recommendation on whether to continue with Green Rewards will then be taken to the Portfolio Holder for decision.

## 2.2 **Accelerator Training Workshops** (Behaviour change in businesses)

2.2.1 Accelerator is a new fully funded business support project being delivered by East Midlands Chamber to help local businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate.

2.2.2 This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. As part of this NSDC has committed £150k over 2 years for the delivery of the accelerator training workshops.

2.2.3 The Sustainability Accelerator will support businesses to reduce the cost of their energy bills and improve energy efficiencies any stage or level of their sustainability journey. Businesses can access a variety of workshops, training courses and 1-2-1 bespoke consultancy opportunities. The programme will also support businesses to develop comprehensive energy audits and decarbonisation plans.

2.2.3 Workshops and training courses take place through a mix of online and in person events throughout Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, NSDC businesses are welcome to attend at any location. Topics featured include: Supply-Chain Decarbonisation for manufacturing, retail and food & drinks sector, Introduction to Carbon Footprinting, Sustainability Sprint Series: Share your company sustainability journey and Remodel your brand for Net-Zero.

## 2.3 **Solar PV installation** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)

2.3.1 Our Climate Emergency Strategy Action plan outlines recommended carbon reduction initiatives which the Council can undertake in order to improve energy efficiency and reduce its overall carbon footprint. This includes the installation of Solar PV. As such we undertook feasibility works in collaboration with specialist consultants to consider the intricacies of Solar PV installation on a range of its corporate and leisure sites in order to gain further understanding in relation to costs involved, payback, carbon savings and if installation is practical.

- 2.3.2 The outcome of the feasibility study was presented to members at Policy and Finance Committee in November 2021 with a £685,250 expenditure approved for installation on the below sites in order of installation schedule:
- o Newark Sports and Fitness Centre
  - o The Beacon
  - o Vicar Water
  - o Dukeries Leisure Centre
  - o Sconce and Devon
- 2.3.3 The installation begun at Newark Sports & Fitness Centre on Monday, 16 October 2023, this has now been completed and work on The Beacon site is underway. The installation at all sites is due to be completed by the end of the 2023/2024 financial year. The installation of the Solar PV will generate in excess of 280,000kWh annually and save an estimated 70 tCO2e per annum. The completion of this project will assist the Council with making carbon savings and generating renewable energy which will assist us with reaching our 2035 net zero target.
- 2.4 **Decarbonisation Plan** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)
- 2.4.1 As part of the Climate Emergency action plan we are committed to delivering and installing low carbon heating measures at a range of Council buildings before 2035. The Carbon Trust recommended Air Source Heat Pumps as the low carbon technology. However, before installing this technology on large scale sites (which require significant heating) we must ensure this new technology is appropriate and consider all fossil fuel free options.
- 2.4.2 As such, work is underway with consultants to develop a Decarbonisation Plan for our corporate and leisure buildings. This plan will advise on the energy efficiency measures and carbon reduction improvements we can put in place at each site. This work is expected to be completed by February 2024.
- 2.5 **Climate Awareness Training** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)
- 2.5.1 Climate Awareness training has been introduced to the internal training programme for the first time. This training will help ensure decision makers are aware of the Climate Emergency and are considering carbon reduction in decision making. For example, considering the impact that the implementation projects and policy may make on the district's carbon footprint. The training is for both Members and report writing officers currently.
- 2.5.2 The Climate Awareness training takes the form of a Climate Fresk Course, this is an objective workshop or seminar style training course which presents the established scientific facts relating to climate change. The workshop involves individuals working as part of a group to 'piece together' the journey of climate change from cause to effect. Climate Fresk workshops enable participants to take ownership of the subject matter and gain further insight and knowledge into the climate change agenda. Delivered by the LAEP (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities' Energy Partnership).

2.5.3 Climate Fresk workshops first gained momentum during COP26 in 2021, since then various partners have begun to facilitate this course. The workshop utilises a selection of cards and a large sheet of paper. It takes place over a three-hour period with a maximum of 12 attendees and is divided into three distinct phases:

- Discovering and linking the cards by the relationship between causes and consequences associated with climate change,
- A creative element where participants within each group decorate the Fresk, and creating further links/relationships between each cause and consequence, and
- A debrief including a discussion about how the emotional response of the participants, as well as any questions. This section also includes a discussion on solutions, and we would also include here information specific to NSDC and what 'you' as a member/officer can do about it.

2.5.4 To ensure that the debrief element is specific to NSDC an example set of slides have been developed to be delivered by NSDC staff focusing on local data and examples such as recent wildfires due to extreme heat and flooding events.

2.5.5 So far, 47 Officers and 12 Members have received training, plans are in place to continue to roll this out further with new training dates to be arranged. The course has been well received with feedback received displaying the following:

- 100% of participants gained a better understanding of climate change and the risks facing our society.
- 100% of participants thought that the speed and pace of the course was just right,
- 100% of participants rated the overall course delivery as very good or good

## 2.6 **Electric Vehicle charge points** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)

2.6.1 The Climate Emergency action plan commits us to exploring the implementation of electric vehicles within the Council owned fleet of vehicles. It was agreed at Leisure and Environment Committee on 16 March 2021 to adopt a phased approach towards electrification. This began with the pilot of two vehicles which have been used by our Community Protection team for short journeys in the district within the past two years. Work is currently ongoing to upgrade the EV charge points outside the back of Castle House to enable faster charging of our Community Protection vehicles and the installation of a charge point at Brunel Drive for the first time.

## 2.7 **Energy Efficiency Improvements to Homes** (Reducing the district's carbon footprint)

2.7.1 LAD3 is a scheme which aims to raise the energy efficiency of low income and low energy performance homes. Focusing on homes with energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings of E, F or G. The Midland Energy Hub allocated Newark and Sherwood £710k of funding to carry out this work which enables cost saving for householders as well as carbon reduction, and the creation of green jobs via Regional Energy Hubs.

2.7.2 So far as part of the LAD3 programme of works 65 properties have been identified and a total of 59 properties have been completed, these have been retrofitted with energy efficiency measures, enabling cost savings on energy bills and to support low-income households in Newark and Sherwood. This comprised of energy efficiency



improvements such as Solar PV installation, External Wall insulation and loft insulation.

- 2.7.3 As part of the Yorke Drive development a minimum of 83 houses will be constructed. The main focus of the development will be to ensure these properties are as energy efficient as possible, current plans include the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps.

## 2.8 **Tree Planting** (Reducing the district's carbon footprint)

- 2.8.1 As part of the Community Plan and Climate Emergency Strategy the Council committed to planting 10,000 trees by 2023. The Council have surpassed this record as since 2019 we have planted or given away in excess of 19,000 trees. Earlier this year we planted 800 trees on our own land and opportunities to increase this number are continually explored. A typical tree can absorb an estimated 21 kilograms of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per year, however this figure is only achieved when the tree is fully grown.

- 2.8.2 We are also taking part in the Sherwood Forest Trust project 'Trees for Climate' helping to identifying suitable areas for planting and woodland development in the district.

## 2.9 **Local Area Energy Plan** (Reducing the district's carbon footprint)

- 2.9.1 The Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) is a pathway broken down into components that show the district's route to achieve net zero. It will list the interventions and where they will have the most impact, for example, heating system installations in this area and public electric vehicle chargers in this town.

- 2.9.2 The LAEP will focus on three key areas;
- Retrofitting of existing housing to improve energy efficiency of homes (private and Council owned homes)
  - Switching to low carbon road transport (private and Council owned)
  - Deployment of renewable generation (on Council owned land/properties)

- 2.9.3 The implementation of a LAEP will complement our existing ongoing projects and work streams, this included housing specific projects which focus on energy efficiency improvements in the private and Council owned sectors. This is also aligned with our Climate Emergency Projects and our overall direction of travel in relation to becoming net carbon neutral. This also will give us the opportunity to consider each of the included aspects at a district level in combination with our direct emissions.

- 2.9.4 Undertaking the works outlined in the LAEP would realise considerable associated benefits, both socio-economic and health benefits, as undertaking this carbon reduction work across the East Midlands would likely lead to:
- The creation of new 'green' jobs as a result of low carbon investments in local areas,
  - Benefits to health and comfort from warmer homes and improved air quality,
  - A reduction in fuel poverty through lower cost warmth, and
  - A lower delivery cost due to economies of scale with mass procurement and the opportunity for more grant funding.

- 2.9.5 The opportunities to obtain further grant funding will be extremely beneficial in meeting our individual net zero targets and making strides in carbon reduction at a district level. The LAEP will also enable the creation of an interconnected work stream between housing, energy generation and electrification of vehicles internally and at a district level.
- 2.9.6 The procurement to appoint a consultant to deliver this programme of works is currently taking place, this work to develop the LAEP will begin this winter. The project is expected to be completed with a targeted NSDC specific action plan in early 2026.

### **3.0 The Council's 2022-23 Carbon Footprint**

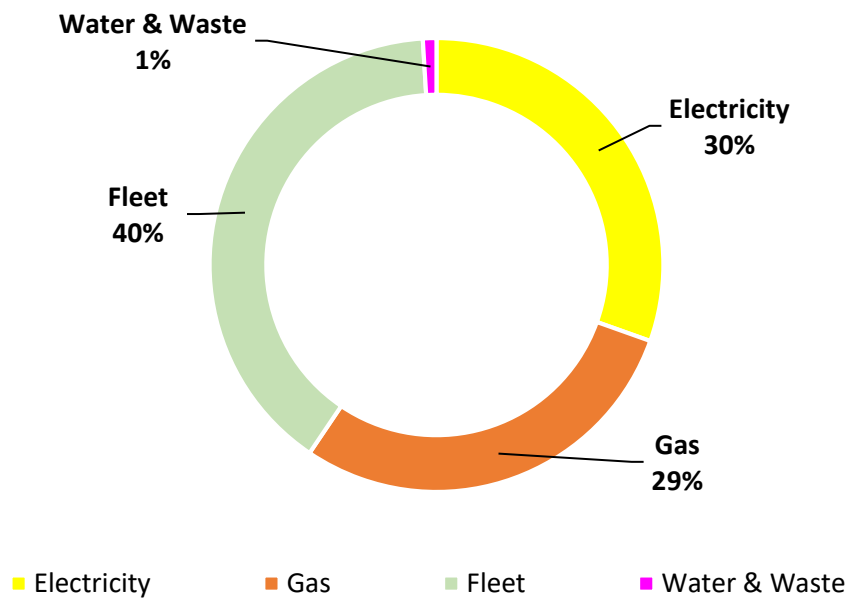
- 3.1 As part of the Climate Emergency Strategy, and associated action plan, we have committed to monitoring and measuring our carbon emissions. This helps us be accountable to our residents. It also helps us identify areas of high carbon emissions suitable for targeted action.
- 3.2 Our target for reduction is 2,165 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (gas and fuel consumption from scope 1, purchased electricity from scope 2, and waste and water from scope 3).
- 3.3 Full Council in December 2020 decided that the Council's housing stock would be excluded from this target. This decision was made due to the estimated associated costs (circa £55million based on a 2020 estimate). A piece of work is currently in the beginning phases to determine if it is now feasible to include our housing stock in our net zero 2035 target or consider if we can be more ambitious and bring our target forwards to 2030 still with the exclusion of the Council's housing stock. Further updates and output from this assessment will be brought back to PPIC in the future.
- 3.4 The baseline carbon emissions (meaning the carbon footprint of the Council), was first measured in 2020, and the baseline was agreed at Full Council in December 2020. However, since the setting of this baseline with the Carbon Trust, the Council has undergone some key service changes impacting on its emissions, such as:
- We now deliver our garden waste service in house, which increased the fleet by two waste trucks,
  - Next year we will also be delivering a new kerbside glass service which will require three new trucks
  - We have increased the scale of our Grounds Maintenance works, including taking on the maintenance of HRA land, which increased the fleet by five vehicles,
  - The addition of the 4 Community Protection Officers, and their 2 vehicles,
  - An additional vehicle to run the targeted action street scene team,
  - Management of Southwell Leisure Centre, and
  - The installation of a pool at the Dukeries Leisure Centre.
- 3.5 These approved key service changes have undoubtedly had an impact on our carbon footprint, these changes nonetheless have been required in order to provide these essential services to our residents.
- 3.6 It is important to recognise the significance of the decisions we have made since 2018/2019 and that these have had an impact on our carbon footprint, as seen in the table below.

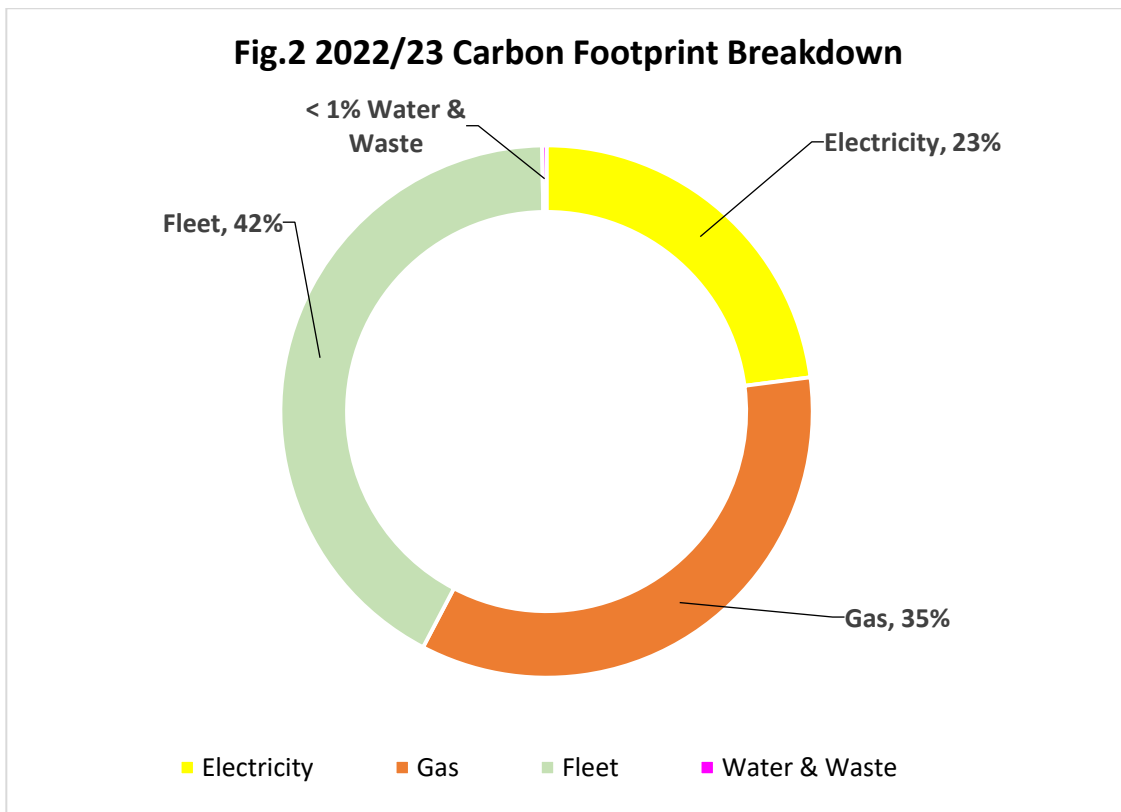
Newark & Sherwood District Council's Carbon Footprint			
2018/19	2019/20	2021/22	2022/23
2,165 tCO2e	Not gathered due to Covid	2,483 tCO2e	358 tCO2e

3.7 Therefore, we have increased our carbon footprint by 8% since 2018/19. However, if we do a 'like for like' comparison. This means measuring our footprint without the vehicles purchased for new services and energy spent on new facilities, such as the pool. When comparing like-for-like, our carbon footprint is 1,916 tCO2e. This is a 11% reduction since 2018/19.

3.8 Please see the graphs below for a breakdown of the carbon footprint this year and in the baseline year.

**Fig.1 2018/19 Carbon Footprint Breakdown**





3.9 The setting of the target and the annual monitoring has shown how we need to be mindful of our energy consumption in both our operational practices and strategic decision making and how these decisions will impact upon our carbon footprint. Moving forwards we plan to consider energy efficiency recommendations from the Decarbonisation Plan and our Corporate property team will continue to review energy consumption and understand energy profiles for each building and determine a tolerance level to carry out investigations. All reports now feature an environment section for report authors to consider when submitting reports for decision.

**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 and Sustainability, and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

**Financial Implications (FIN23-24/6752)**

**Green Rewards**

4.1 As outlined, this is a joint procurement exercise between all Nottinghamshire Councils and the continued subscription to the App for two years expiring in January 2024 and is subject to review. The Transformation Revenue budget 2024/25 includes £5,490 plus inflation going forward should the Portfolio Holder decide to continue the subscription. If the Council withdraw, then this budget will be removed.

### **Accelerator Training Workshops**

- 4.2 The Accelerator Training workshops are fully funded by SPF grant, £50,000 in 2023/24 and £100,000 in 2024/25.

### **Decarbonisation Plan**

- 4.3 A budget has been set up for £150,780 from the Change Management reserve for Feasibility Works to be completed in 2023/24 at which time recommended works will be brought forward.

### **Climate Awareness Training**

- 4.4 The Councils Corporate Training budget includes a commitment to provide Climate Change Awareness Training.

### **Energy Efficiency Improvements to Homes**

- 4.5 The Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme includes the following budgets for decarbonisation of Council Dwellings:

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Total</b>
Budget	916,212	1,352,470	2,268,682
Total NSDC Contribution (HRA Capital)	458,106	676,235	1,134,341
Total Grant	458,106	676,235	1,134,341

### **Tree Planting**

- 4.6 NSDC are working in partnership with Sherwood Forest Trust in respect of planting and maintaining Whips, Feathers, and Fruit Trees, within their jurisdiction. A full agreement in terms of number of trees and time scales is still in progress; this will come at no additional expense to the Council.

### **Local Area Energy Plan**

- 4.7 The revenue budget includes £82,000 split over two years 2023/24 and 2024/25. This represents £75,000 contribution to the creation of the LAEP and £7,000 towards a LAEP advisor for a 2-year period. There is currently no budget provision for 2025/26 onwards.

### **Climate Change Budget Allocation**

- 4.8 The Capital Programme has the following budgets in the Capital Programme:

	<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>Spend to 31 October 2023</b>
Climate Change	205,000	36,850
Solar PV	685,250	55,600
LED Lighting – Beacon	81,995	0
Boiler - Beacon	61,525	0

Electric Vehicle Charge points – Beacon	36,850	0
Electric Vehicle Charge points – Castle House	50,000	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,120,620</b>	<b>92,450</b>

### **Solar PV**

- 4.9 The maintenance costs and savings anticipated following the installation of the PV units have already been included in the 2023/24 revenue budget. For the Leisure Centres an adjustment was made to the Active 4 Today management fee to take account of their maintenance costs and savings.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Climate Emergency Strategy

Greening Newark & Sherwood Action Plan

Climate Emergency Update November 2022



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee - 29 January 2024  
 Director Lead: Suzanne Shead, Director Housing, Health and Wellbeing  
 Lead Officer: Nicola Priest, Housing Regulatory Compliance Manager, 01636 655526

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) Survey 2023/24
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present the tenant satisfaction measures (TSM) survey report.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee: a) note the content of the report; and b) note that this report has been presented to SLT and the Tenant Engagement Board in November 2023.

## 1.0 Background Information

- 1.1 In November 2020, the Government published the charter for social housing residents – social housing white paper which set out ways to improve things for people living in social housing. As a result of this, a number of Consumer Standards were created (which were recently consulted on between 25 July and 17 October 2023 and over 1,000 responses were received) and the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) set out guidance for the ways to measure against these standards and brought in a range of tenant perception satisfaction measures so tenants could see how landlords are performing and identify which landlords might need to improve.
- 1.2 Landlords with 1,000+ properties are required to carry out the TSM survey annually and submit their results to the RSH after 1 April 2024. The Council carried out its survey during September and October 2023. The findings are presented within the attached report (**Appendix 1**).
- 1.3 The survey also asked a few optional questions, which are permitted as part of the survey exercise to establish satisfaction with lettings and gas servicing and asked tenants if they would like to be involved.
- 1.4 Part of the RSH survey requirements is that weighting must be applied where the survey sample base is not fully representative of the wider tenant base. Weighting has been applied and is shown for comparison on page 4 of the report. There is very little shift in the results between the actual result and the weighted result.
- 1.5 The summary table below shows the direction of travel when compared to the same or similar questions asked in the STAR survey which took place at the end of 22/23. Whilst most measures have declined, it is pleasing to see a slight increase with complaints and a marked increase with ASB, as these are historically our worst performing areas. The TSM survey was conducted by 70% telephone and 30% online (as the Regulator of Social Housing recommends offering more than one survey method), whereas when the TSM

questions were asked as part of the STAR survey, these were carried out 100% by telephone. Face to face and telephone survey methods generally have higher satisfaction rates because it is more likely that respondents with strong opinions will complete an online survey, rather than those who are generally satisfied. This is likely to have had some impact on the results and this is worth taking into account when making the comparisons.

<b>TSM 22/23</b>	<b>TSM Sep 2023</b>	<b>STAR Mar 2023</b>	<b>Direction</b>
ASB handling	62%	47.8%	↑
Complaint handling	28%	25.8%	↑
Communal areas clean and well maintained	65%	87.3% (clean and safe)	↓
Home is safe	85%	93.9%	↓
Home is well maintained	77%	83.2%	↓
Kept informed	70%	85.2%	↓
Listens to views	68%	77.1%	↓
Positive contribution neighbourhoods	65%	79.4%	↓
Overall satisfaction	78%	86.5%	↓
Repairs	75%	81.8%	↓
Time most recent repair	70%	71.8%	↓
Fair and respect	81%	91.8%	↓

## **2.0 Proposals**

2.1 Business Managers will use the data from the report to understand the underlying issues and drive service improvements.

## **3.0 Implications**

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

### Financial Implications (FIN23-24/7581)

There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report. All follow on actions will be met within existing resources and budgets.

It is to be noted however, that there is a current tender exercise in progress to outsource customer satisfaction surveys once again, which includes the TSM survey. The current contract ends on 31 December 2023 and the proposed contract will run for 3 years with an option to extend for 2 years. The contract budget is for £30k per year, with an additional £5k in the first year for set up costs. The deadline for submissions is 1 December 2023. The new contract will commence on 1 January 2024.



### Digital and Cyber Security Implications

There are no implications resulting from this report.

### Equalities Implications

There are no implications resulting from this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

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



**NEWARK &  
SHERWOOD**  
*DISTRICT COUNCIL*

**Tenant Satisfaction Measures Report 2023**



**viewpoint**



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## Executive Summary

This report details the results of the 2023/24 Newark and Sherwood District Council Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey.

2023/24 is the first year the survey has been required by the Regulator of Social Housing to generate annual tenant perception measures. Newark and Sherwood District Council commissioned Viewpoint Research CIC survey to complete the survey through a mixed methods research approach of telephone and online. A total of 545 surveys were completed.

The report presents results for all questions showing counts (actual number of responses) and percentages to one decimal place. Commentary to the results will typically group answers to give a combined satisfaction score (fairly satisfied and very satisfied answers added together) and differences are highlighted between demographics where they are notable.

Further analysis is provide with a summary of the open text comments received and a key driver analysis to investigate how opinion-based questions have been influencers on overall satisfaction.

### Results summary

- Overall satisfaction (TP01): This measure is often used as the headline measure of service performance. The 2023/24 score for Newark and Sherwood District Council is 77.9%.
- Highest scoring TSMs: The top scoring Tenant Satisfaction Measures were as follows:
  - TP05 84.7% - Proportion of respondents who, when thinking about the condition of their property or the building they live in, report that they are satisfied their home is safe.
  - TP08: 80.8% - Proportion of respondents who report that they agree with the statement: "Newark & Sherwood housing services treats me fairly and with respect".
  - TP01: 77.9% - Proportion of respondents who, taking everything into account, report that they are satisfied with the overall service provided (as above).
- Lowest scoring TSMs / high dissatisfaction:
  - TP09 27.6% - Newark & Sherwood housing services approach to complaints handling. Based on those who stated they had experienced the service in the last 12 months.
  - TP12 61.7% - Newark & Sherwood housing services approach to handling anti-social behaviour – although a 14 point improvement on the score received in the 2022/23 Star survey
- Identifying what drives overall satisfaction: Based on the results, the top service areas driving satisfaction are: the home is well maintained (TP04), overall repairs service (TP02), listens to tenant views and acts upon them (TP06), and treats me fairly and with respect (TP08).

- Guidance from the Regulator of Social Housing states that results should be as representative of the tenant population as possible. In one area the achieved sample was not sufficiently representative – that of Tenure –the proportion of General Needs and Sheltered respondents (See Representation table on P6).
- To achieve representation in this area the results have been weighted to adjust for the correct proportions of both General Needs and Sheltered respondents. The table below shows a summary of the actual results achieved and the weighted results.

**Results Table**

A summary of all the TSM results is below:

	<b>Result</b>	<b>Weighted result</b>
TSM01 Overall satisfaction	77.9%	77.2%
TSM02 Overall repairs service	75.3%	75.2%
TSM03 Repairs: Time taken	69.8%	69.0%
TSM04 Home is well maintained	76.9%	76.3%
TSM05 Home is safe	84.7%	84.7%
TSM06 Listens to views & acts upon them	68.0%	68.1%
TSM07 Keeps informed	69.8%	70.3%
TSM08 Treated Fairly & with Respect	80.8%	80.7%
TSM09 Approach to complaints	27.6%	27.1%
TSM10 Communal areas	65.5%	65.7%
TSM11 Contribution to Neighbourhood	65.1%	64.3%
TSM12 Approach to Anti-social behaviour	61.7%	61.3%

# Summary of Approach

## Methodology

A summary of the methodology used to complete the Tenant Satisfaction Measures' survey for NSDC is below.

<b>Feedback services provider (collecting, generating, and validating the reported perception measures)</b>	Independent research company – Viewpoint Research CIC
<b>Survey fieldwork dates</b>	September to October 2023
<b>Total surveyable population</b>	5400
<b>Statistical confidence required and achieved</b>	Required: $\pm 4\%$ margin of error at 95% confidence level (i.e. requiring a minimum of 541 responses).
<b>Total sample size achieved (total number of responses)</b>	545 (To be consistent with recent STAR surveys)
<b>Reasons for any failure to meet the required sample size</b>	N/A
<b>Collection method</b>	Online (165) & telephone (380) The online survey was completed first, delivered by email to 1000 customers, followed by telephone surveys to achieve the overall amount required.
<b>Sampling method</b>	Online – computer generated random sampling Telephone - Stratified sampling
<b>Type and amount of any incentives offered</b>	None
<b>Number of tenant households within the relevant population that have not been included in the sample</b>	None
<b>Summary of representativeness of the sample against the relevant tenant population</b>	The sample achieved is broadly representative of the tenant population, particularly in regard to property type and occupancy.
<b>Any weighting applied</b>	Weighting applied to ensure results are representative of tenure as the sample achieved did not closely enough match the proportion of general needs and sheltered properties.
<b>Questions asked</b>	12 x regulatory TSM questions. 1 x open comment question after overall satisfaction 2 x additional questions regarding lettings and gas servicing
<b>Any other methodological issues likely to have a material impact on the tenant perception measures reported</b>	None

## Representation

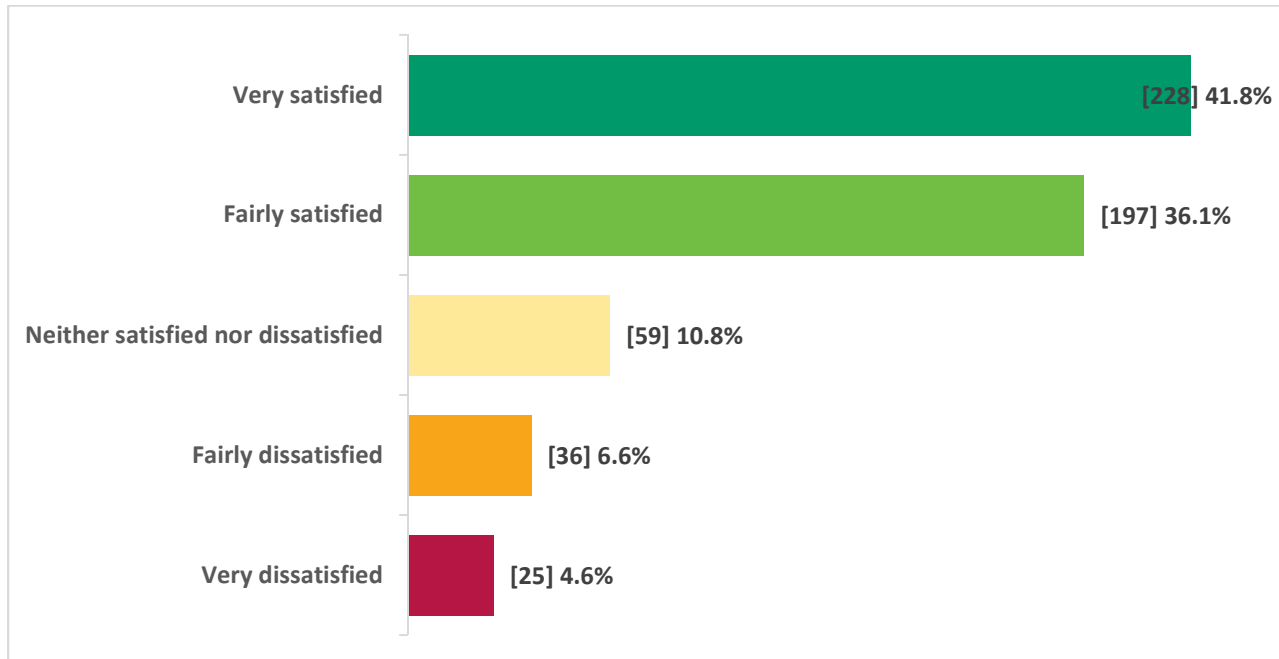
The table below shows that the survey sample achieved is generally representative of the relevant tenant population, other than Tenure as explained above.

	Population %	Responses % (and actual)
<b>Tenure</b>		
General Needs	53%	43% (234)
Sheltered	47%	57% (311)
<b>Property type</b>		
Bungalow	39%	39% (214)
Flat	30%	30% (163)
House	28%	29% (158)
Other	2%	2% (10)
<b>Occupancy</b>		
1	53%	54% (296)
2	25%	26% (141)
3+	21%	20% (108)
<b>Age</b>		
18-34	13%	4% (24)
35-54	29%	17% (91)
55-74	37%	50% (273)
75+	21%	29% (157)
<b>Disability</b>		
Disabled	31%	34% (186)
Non-disabled	69%	66% (359)
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White British	91%	95% (521)
Other	9%	2% (12)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	38%	45% (243)
Female	63%	55% (302)

## TP01 – Overall Satisfaction

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Newark & Sherwood District Council housing services?

# 77.9%



### Analysis

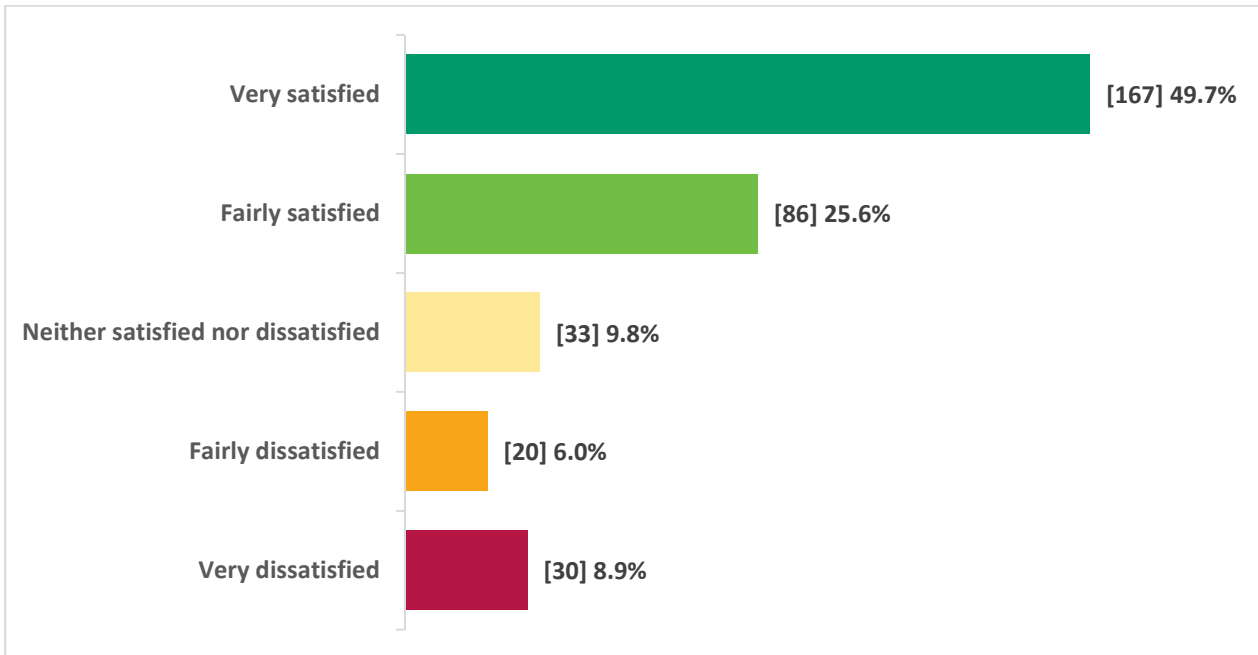
- Overall satisfaction is 77.9% (425 respondents).
- ‘Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ accounted for 10.8% of responses meaning 11.2% (61 responses) were actively dissatisfied
- Satisfaction from tenants who completed the survey online was lower (71.5%) than those who completed by telephone (80.8%).
- Satisfaction among Sheltered tenants (81%) was higher than Gen Needs (74%)
- Differences in housing type were minimal but residents living in houses were slightly less satisfied – Bungalow (79%), Flat (80%), House (74%).
- Satisfaction between age groups is broadly similar, apart from the oldest age group, who were notably more satisfied – 18-34 (75%), 35-54 (70%), 55-74 (73%), 75+ (92%)
- The overall satisfaction score has fallen compared to that achieved in the 2022/23 Star survey, undertaken in February 2023, of 86.5%. Factors to explain this may include: The inclusion of a proportion of online surveys, a higher proportion of general needs respondents, and the wider context of declining tenant satisfaction nationally.



## TP02 – Overall Repairs Service

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from Newark & Sherwood housing services over the last 12 months?

# 75.3%



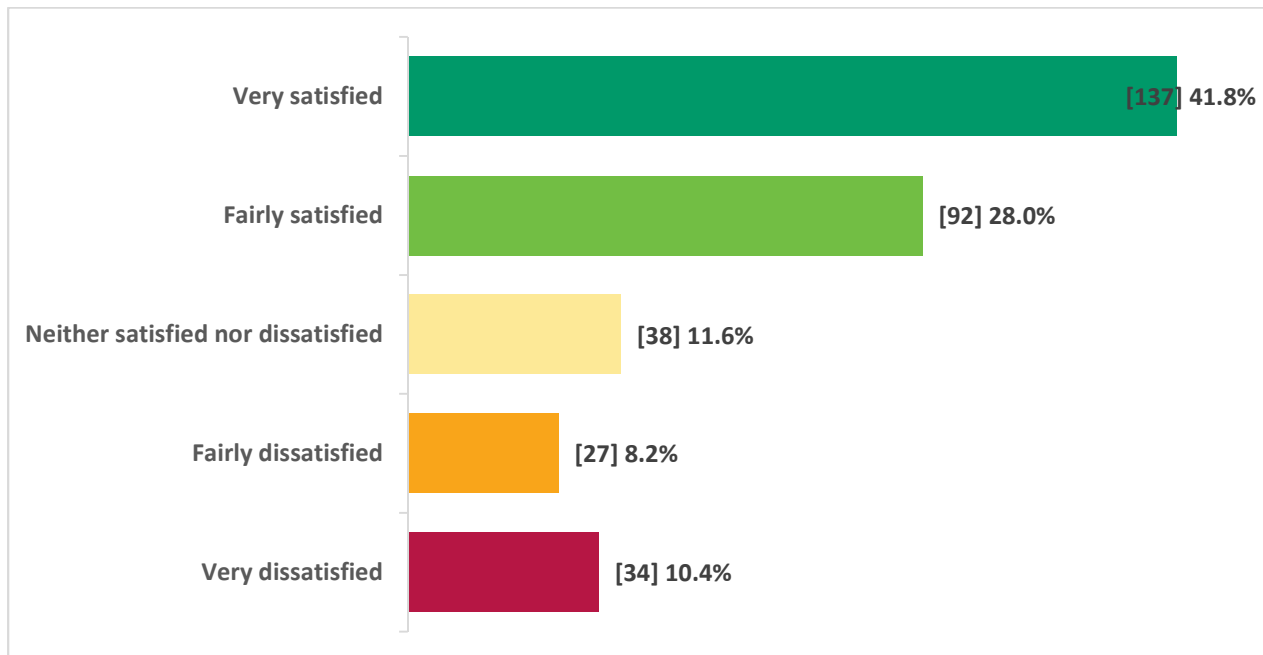
### Analysis

- Residents were asked, “Has Newark & Sherwood housing services carried out a repair to your home in the last 12 months?”. A total of 62.3% (337 respondents) stated ‘Yes’ compared to 37.7% (204 respondents) who stated ‘No’.
- Those who stated ‘Yes’ were then asked TP02 above, where 75.3% (253 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied.
- The score is slightly lower than the scores received in the Star survey for, satisfaction with latest repair received (81.8%) in last 12 months and 77.0% for the repairs service generally
- Respondents in Flats (84%) returned higher satisfaction than other property types – Houses (71%) and Bungalows (73%).
- 87% of the oldest category of tenants - 75+, were satisfied compared to 69% of tenants aged 18-34.
- This question is the second ranked key driver to satisfaction, and many of the comments received related to the repairs service.

## TP03 – Repairs: Time Taken

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?

69.8%



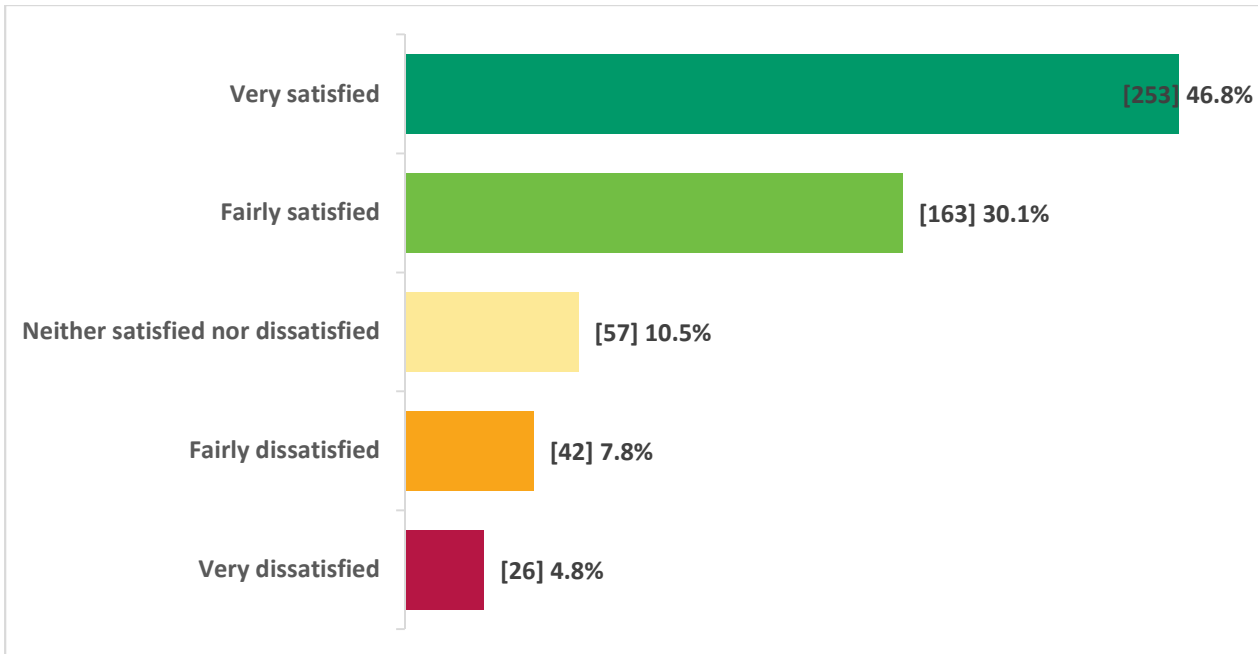
### Analysis

- Of those residents who previously stated Newark & Sherwood housing services had carried out a repair to their home in the last 12 months, residents were then asked TP03, above.
- A total of 69.8% (229 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied
- Sheltered tenants (73%) were 8 points more satisfied than General Needs (65%)
- As with TP02, customers in Flats (78%) were more satisfied than other housing types – Houses (64%), Bungalows (68%)
- This was the lowest scoring question for tenants aged 18-34 (47%), compared to 82% for customers who are 75+.
- The results is very similar to that achieved in the Star survey, which returned 71.8% satisfaction.
- Comments received from tenants (see Page 21) showed that speed of service (not just repairs) is very important to tenants, and this question is ranked fifth in the key drivers to satisfaction.

## TP04 – Home is well maintained

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing service provides a home that is well maintained?

# 76.9%



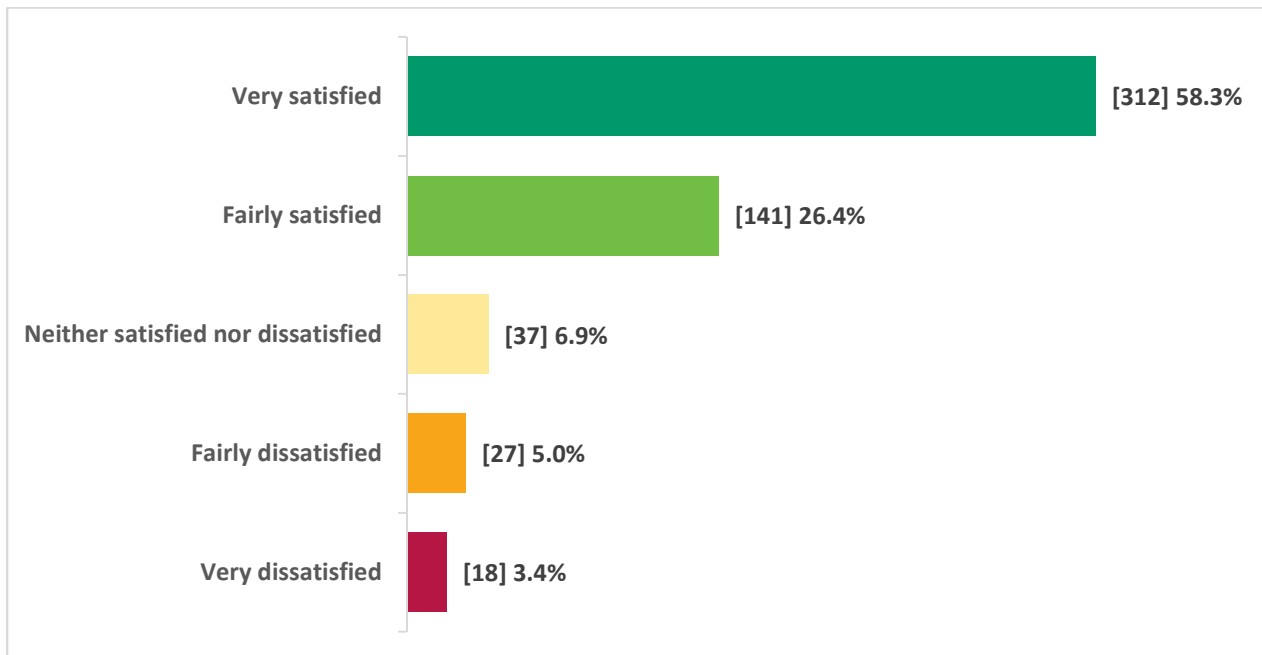
### Analysis

- 76.9% (416 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied.
- This is the fourth highest scoring question on the survey.
- Tenants in Sheltered accommodation (80%) were 7 points more satisfied than General Needs.
- Differences between property types are slight, with tenants living in Flats (80%) marginally more satisfied than those in bungalows (77%) and Houses (73%).
- This question was the top driver to overall satisfaction, making it arguably the most important aspect of the service to tenants. Also, more comments related to the quality of the home than anything else.
- The score is a fall on the 2022/23 Star survey where 83.2% of tenants were satisfied.

## TP05 – Home is safe

Thinking about the condition of the property or building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood provides a home that is safe?

# 84.7%



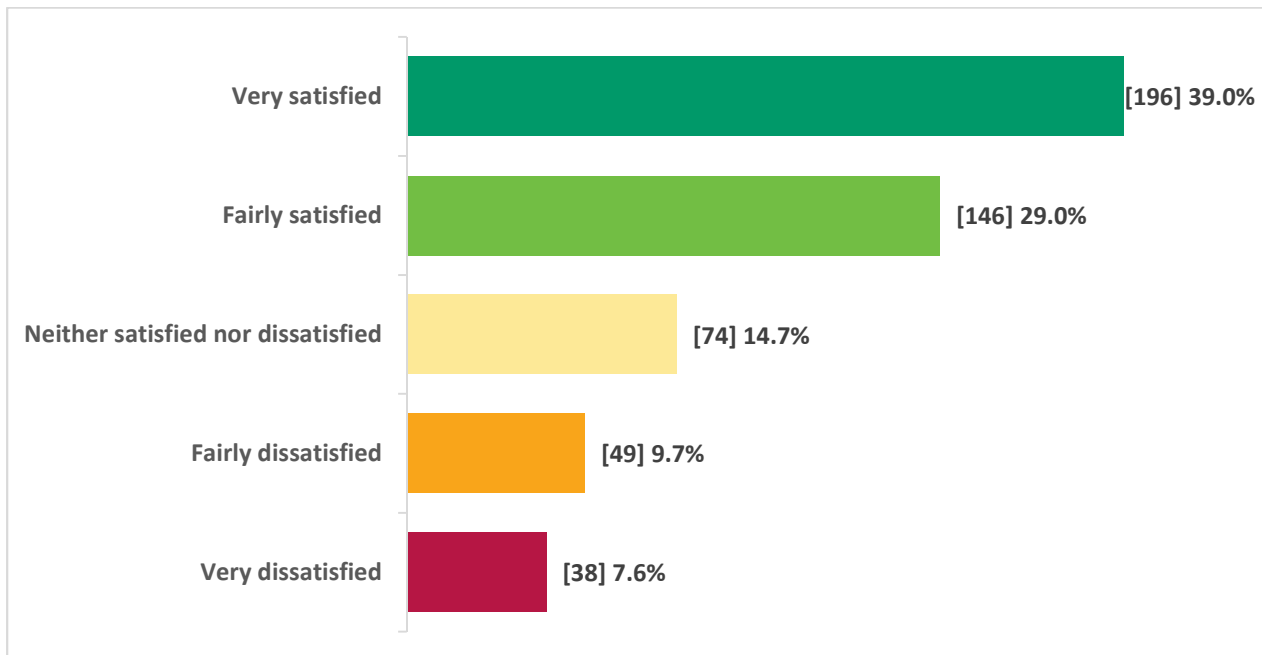
### Analysis

- 84.7% (453 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied and this is the highest scoring question on the survey.
- It does nevertheless represent a fall on the score achieved in the 2022/23 Star survey, of 93.9% satisfaction.
- The scores for General Needs and Sheltered are identical at 85%.
- Scores are also virtually identical between property types (Houses 85%, Flats & Bungalows 84%)
- All age groups score above 70% with the 75+ age group scoring 94%.
- Breakdown by ethnicity is very similar (85% White British, 83% Other).

## TP06 – Listens to views & acts upon them

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing services listens to your views and acts upon them?

# 68.0%



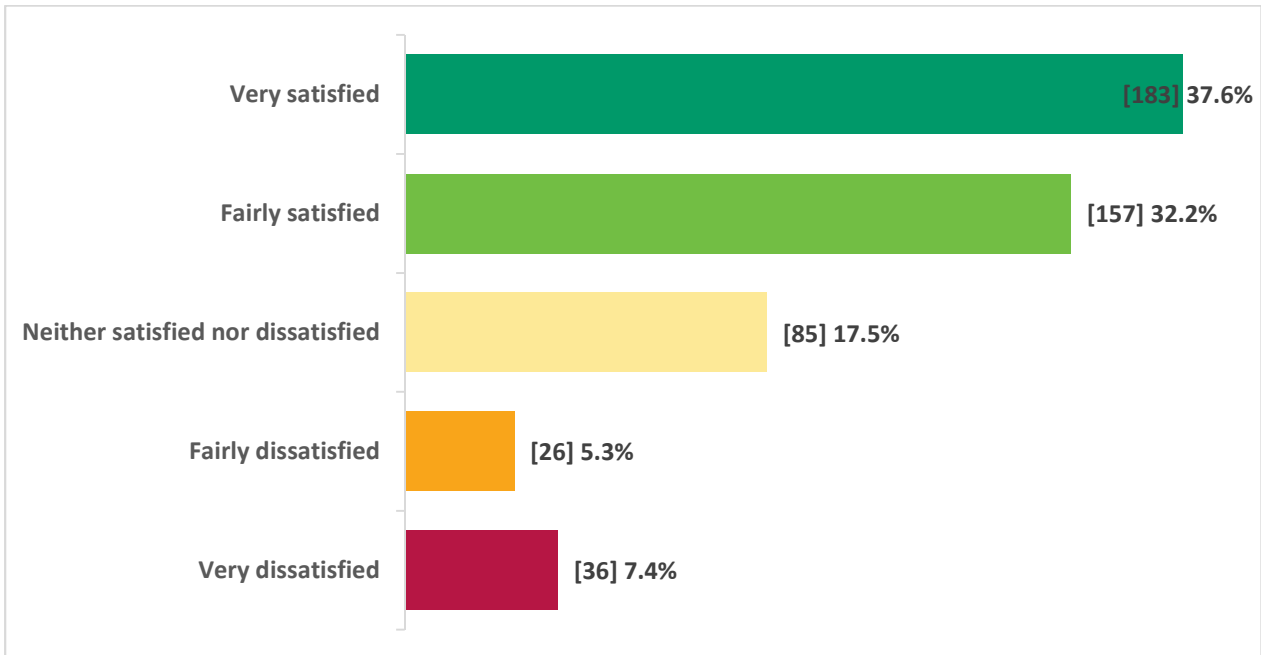
### Analysis

- 68.0% (342 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied.
- The satisfaction score is a fall on the 2022/23 Star survey of 77.1% satisfaction.
- 68% is the score returned by both General Needs and Sheltered Tenants, and indeed the scores across all the demographics were broadly similar, apart from higher satisfaction among the oldest age group (75+).
- The question is the joint-third key driver to satisfaction.

## TP07 – Keeps you informed

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing services keeps you informed about things that matter to you?

# 69.8%



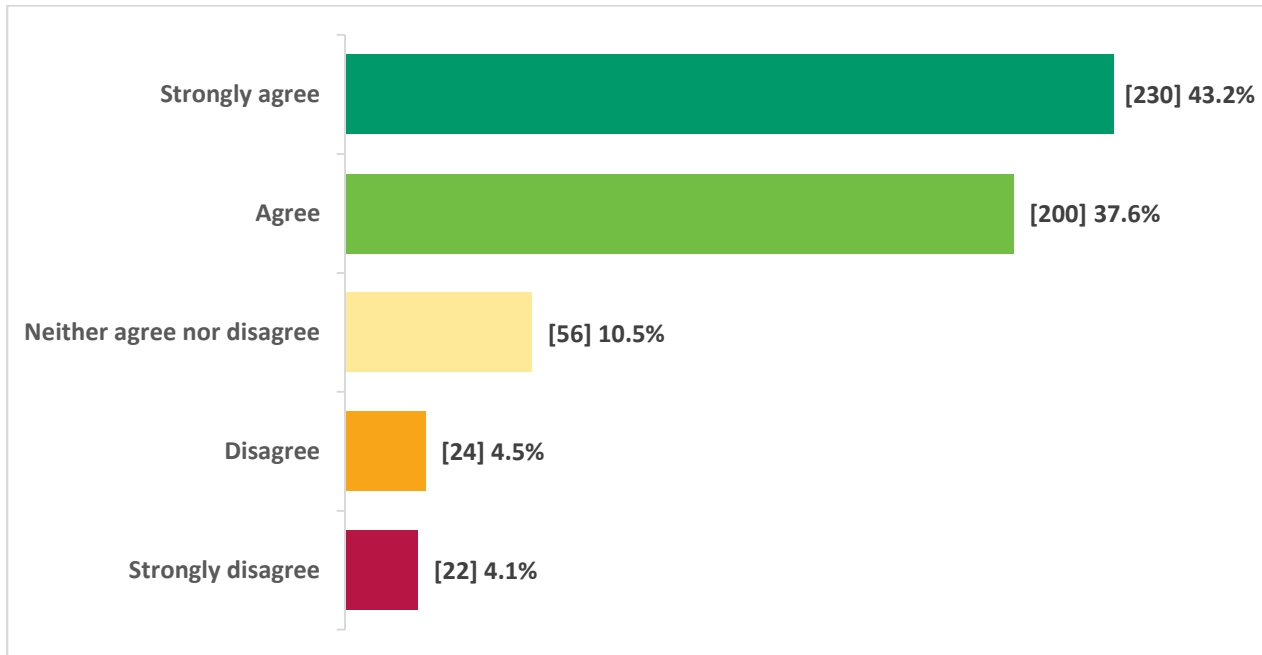
### Analysis

- 69.8% (340 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied.
- The score is a notable fall in satisfaction from the 2022/23 Star survey where the score was 85.2% satisfaction.
- General Needs customers (73%) were more satisfied than Sheltered (68%)
- Just 50% of the youngest age group (18-34) were satisfied with this aspect, compared to 80% of people aged 75+.

## TP08 – Treated Fairly & with Respect

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: “Newark & Sherwood housing services treats me fairly and with respect”?

# 80.8%



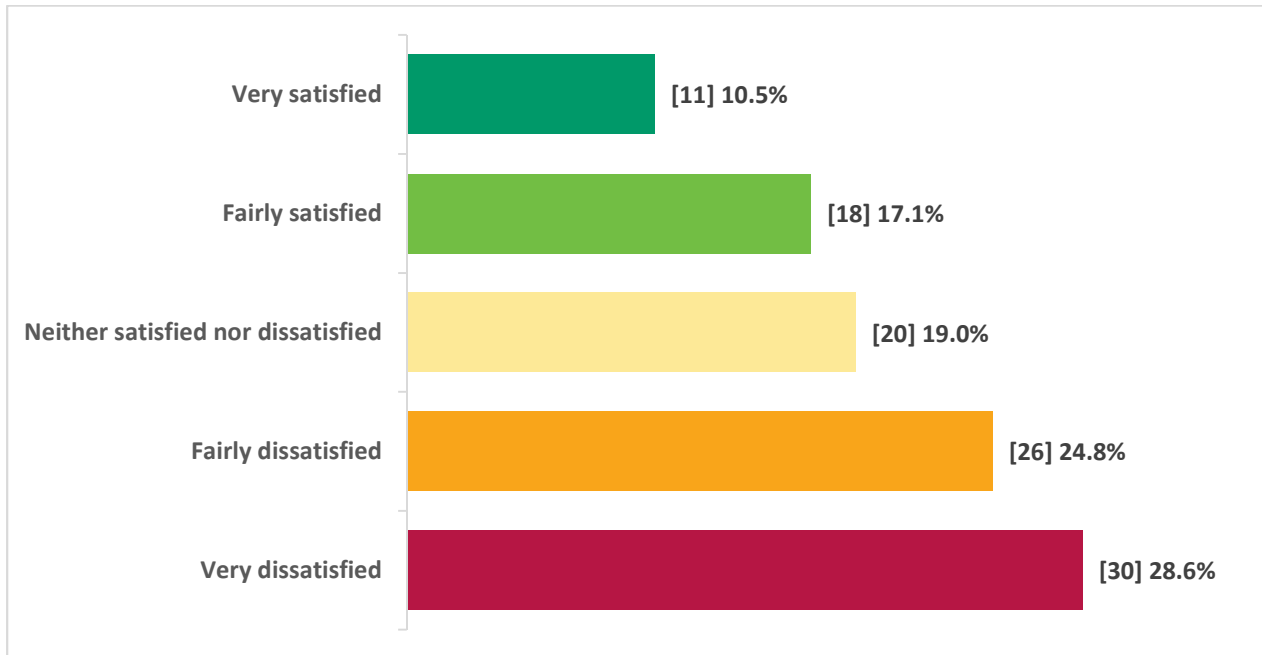
### Analysis

- 80.8% (430 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed that they are treated fairly and with respect.
- This is the second highest scoring question on the survey, but is a fall on the 91.8% ‘agreement’ score achieved in the 2022/23 Star survey.
- Differences between tenure and property type were minimal.
- The greatest discrepancy was again with age, where the 18-34 age group scored 67% compared to 92% for the 75+ age group.
- The question is the joint-third key driver to satisfaction.

## TP09 – Approach to Complaints

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Newark & Sherwood housing services approach to complaints handling?

27.6%



### Analysis

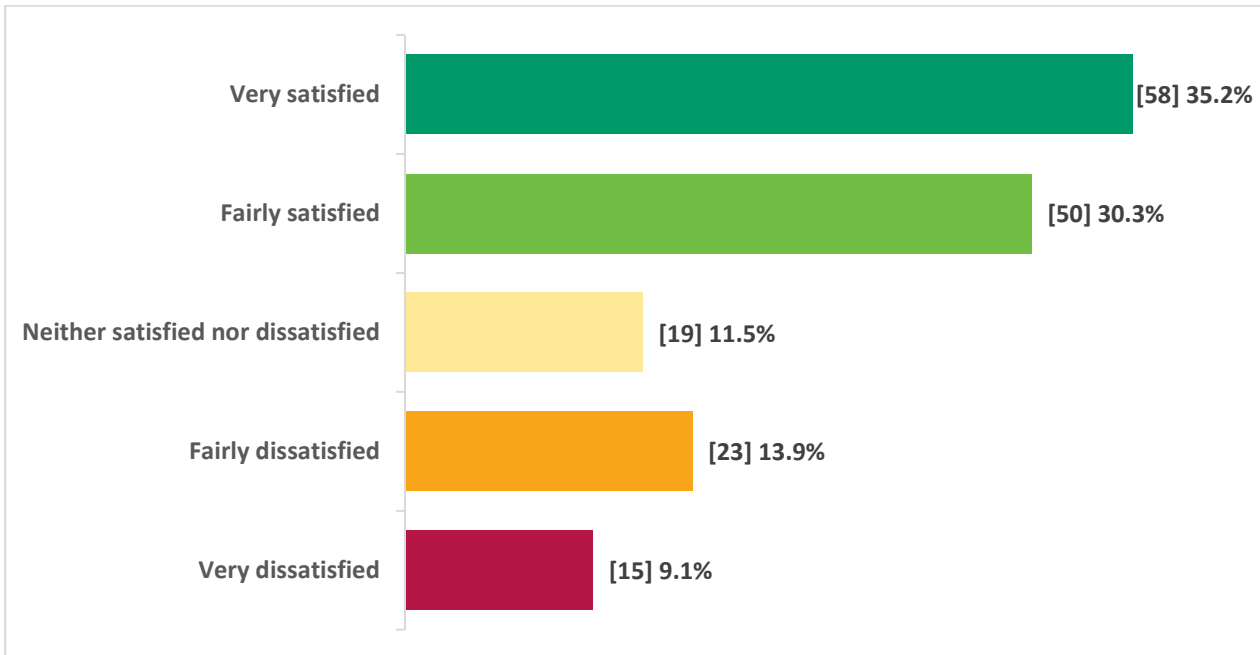
- Residents were asked, “Have you made a complaint to Newark & Sherwood housing services in the last 12 months?”. A total of 20.0% (107 respondents) stated ‘Yes’ compared to 80.0% (428 respondents) who stated ‘No’.
- Those who stated ‘Yes’ were then asked, TP09 above, where 27.6% (29 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied.
- This is the lowest scoring question on the survey by some distance but is a small rise on the 25.8% satisfaction score achieved in the 2022/23 Star survey.



## TP10 – Communal Areas

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing services keeps these communal areas clean and well maintained?

65.5%



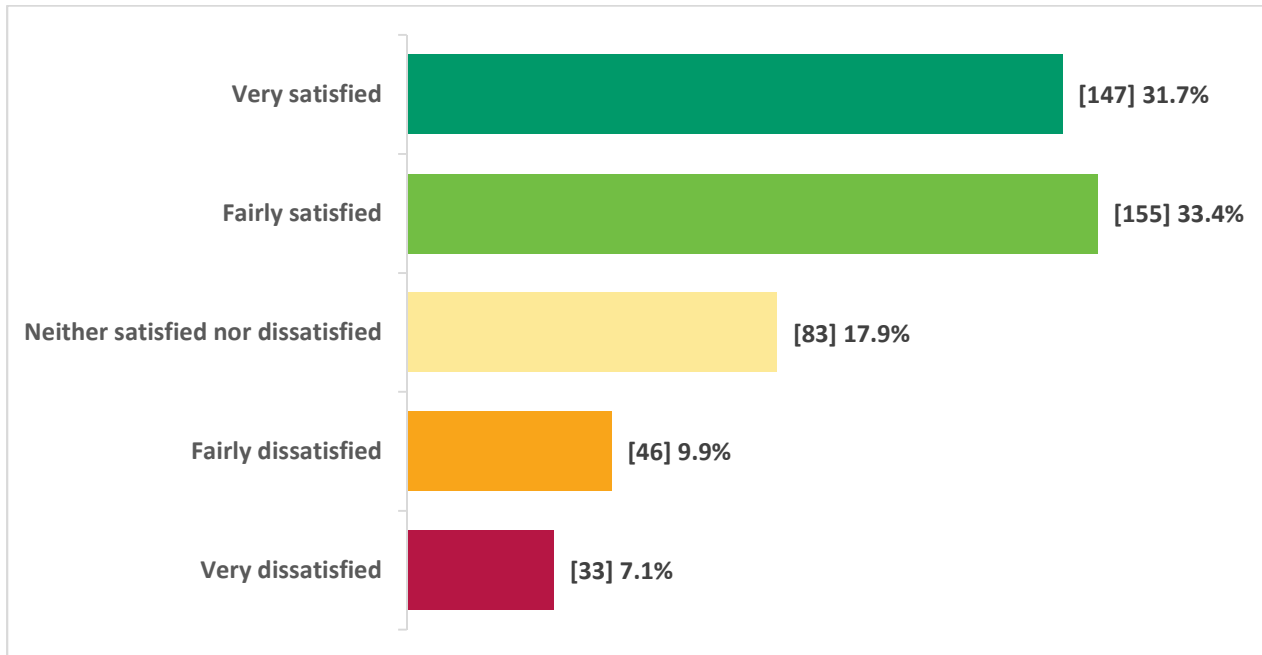
### Analysis

- Residents were asked, “Do you live in a building with communal areas, either inside or outside, that Newark & Sherwood housing services is responsible for maintaining?”. A total of 31.5% (169 respondents) stated ‘Yes’ compared to 63.5% (341 respondents) who stated ‘No’. A further 5.0% (27 respondents) stated that they did not know.
- Those who stated ‘Yes’ were then asked TP10 above, where 65.5% (108 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied.
- General Needs tenants were slightly more satisfied than those in Sheltered – 68% to 65%.
- Tenants living in Flats were the most satisfied at 71% compared with 60% for Bungalows and 56% for Houses.

## TP11 – Contribution to Neighbourhood

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing services makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?

# 65.1%



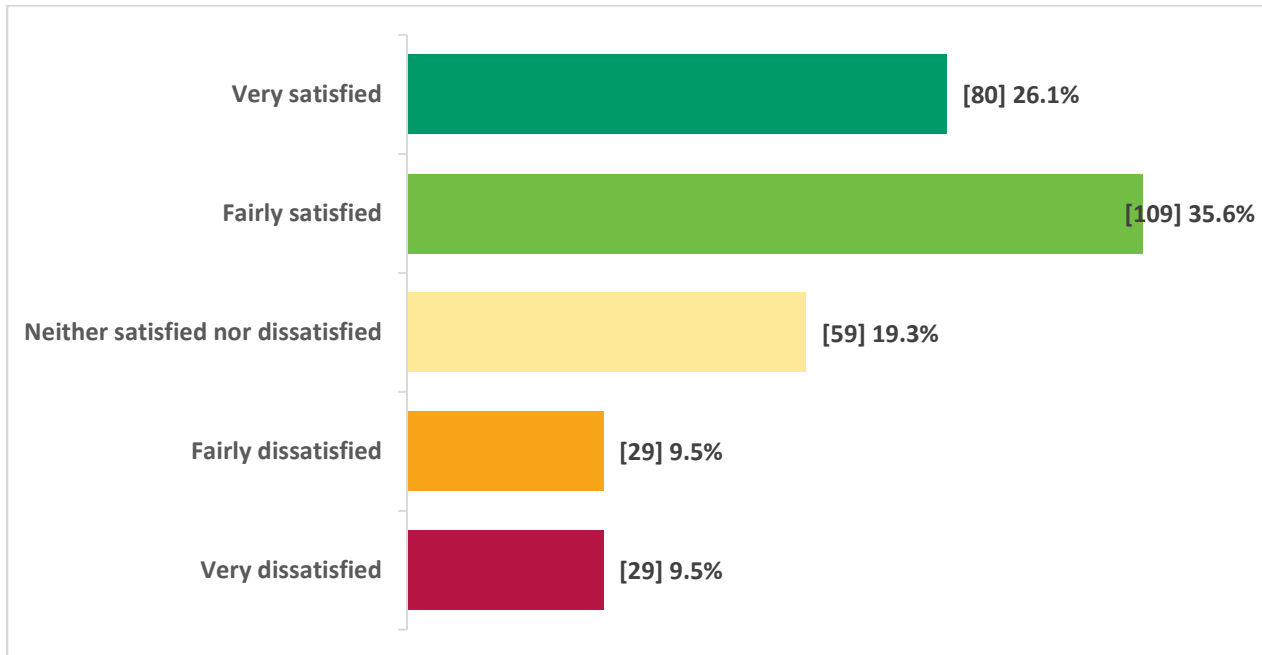
### Analysis

- 65.1% (302 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied.
- A relatively large number of respondents – 145 – were unable to answer this question, replying ‘don’t know / non applicable’. Many said that were not aware of how NSDC contributed to their neighbourhood, regardless of whether they were generally happy with the neighbourhood or not.
- Tenants in sheltered accommodation were 8 points more satisfied than General Needs (68% to 60%).
- Tenants in Flats were 10 points more satisfied than both Houses and Bungalows (72% to 62%).

## TP12 – Approach to Anti-social Behaviour

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Newark & Sherwood housing services approach to handling anti-social behaviour?

# 61.7%



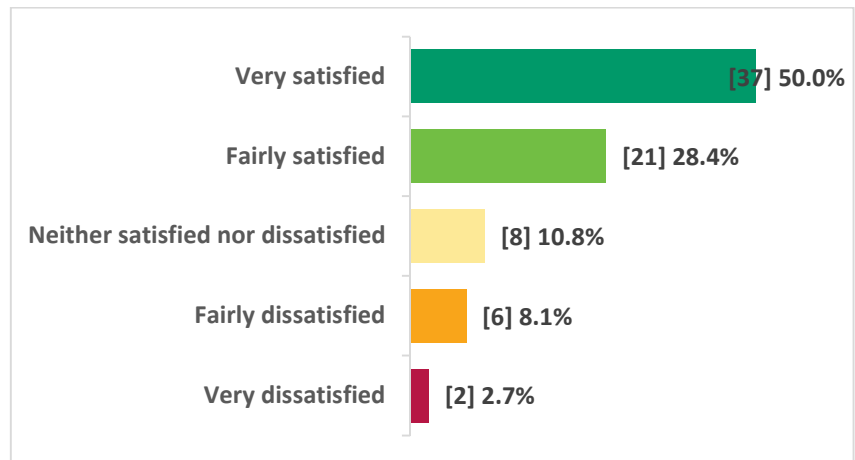
### Analysis

- 61.7% (189 respondents) were fairly or very satisfied.
- As with TP11, a relatively large number of respondents – 239 – were unable to answer this question, replying 'don't know / non applicable'. Many said they were not aware of what NSDC did in this regard, including many who were pleased that they had not experienced anti-social behaviour but were still unable to judge NSDC's contribution.
- The score is a large increase on the 47.8% achieved in the 2022/23 Star survey, although the questions are not directly comparable as in the Star survey it was only directed at people who had made an ASB complaint.
- Sheltered tenants were 6 points more satisfied than General Needs (64% to 58%)
- There was a particularly large difference between the 75+ age group (81%) and the other ages, notably 18-34 (44%).

# Additional Questions

## Lettings

If you rented a property in the last 12 months, how satisfied were you with the overall lettings process?

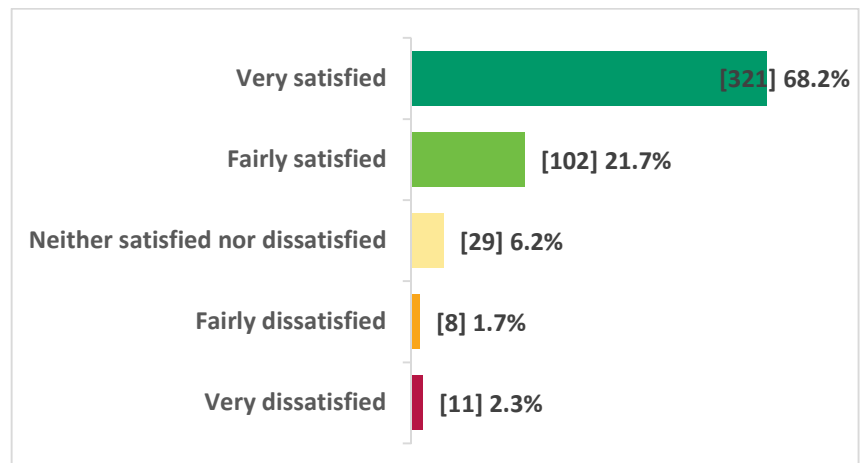


## Analysis

- 74 customers had rented a property in the last 12 months. 78.3% of these (58 respondents) were very or fairly satisfied.
- The result is 14 points lower than the current overall satisfaction score received on transactional surveys for new lettings (92%) and also below the score achieved for the overall lettings process in the Star survey (87.1%).

## Gas Servicing

How satisfied are you with the gas servicing provided by Newark & Sherwood?



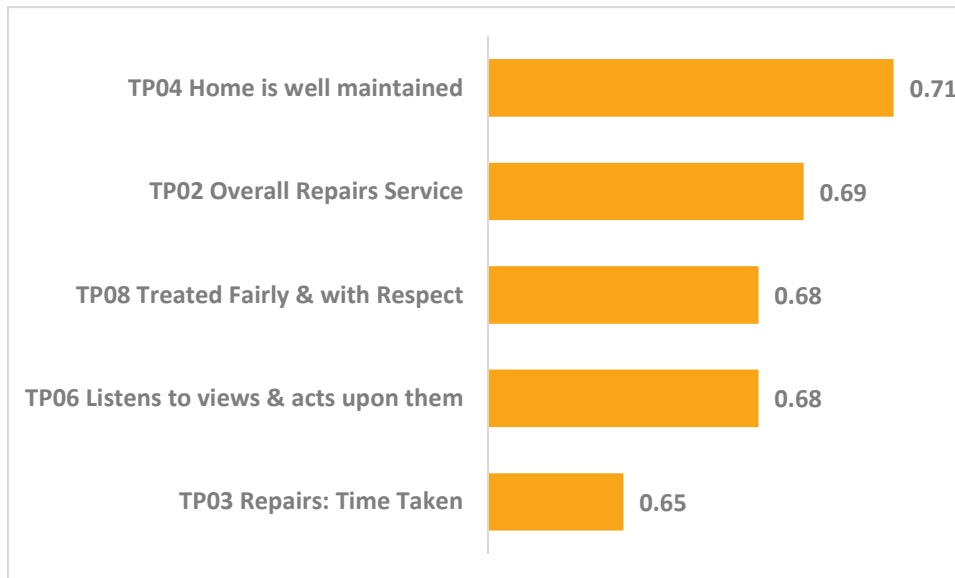
## Analysis

- 471 customers were able to answer this question and 89.8% (423 responses) were very or fairly satisfied.
- The result is just below the current overall satisfaction score received on transactional surveys for gas servicing of 93%, and also the score achieved for the gas servicing arrangements in the Star survey (91.9%).

## Further analysis

### Key Driver Analysis

A Key driver analysis was carried out to learn more about the overall satisfaction score, specifically which of the other questions were most related to the overall satisfaction score.



*Note - The analysis produces a correlation coefficient (or r value for short) with can range from -1.0 to +1.0. This rating can be interpreted using the following guide:*

- An r value close to 1 indicates that there is a strong relationship between the two variables
- A positive r value means that as one variable increases in value, the other variable will increase in value.

All those featured show strong correlations to the overall satisfaction score, all the top 5 have stronger r values than appeared in the key drivers in the 2023 Star report.

Quality of the home comes out as most important driver with home being well maintained and the overall repairs service showing the strongest link to overall satisfaction.

The customer service element of the service is also shown as important to tenants with 'Being treated fairly & with respect' and 'That NSDC listens to your views and acts upon them' showing a strong correlation. The latter was the top key driver in the 2023 Star survey.

## Comments

Comments were collected after TP01 – Overall satisfaction - to explain reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction. A summary of the main themes arising from the comments is below.

Theme	Number of responses
Quality of home	57
Repairs	46
Service is too slow/unresponsive	45
Generally positive	41
Green areas/paths/communal spaces	27
Generally negative	18
Anti-social behaviour	10
Parking/street issues	9
Rubbish/litter/waste	8
More information/better communication	8
Call centre service	4
Gardens	3
Rent & charges	2

The most popular themes mirror the results of the key driver analysis, with quality of home and issues with repairs being those most raised by tenants. Again good customer service is shown as important with a large number of comments relating to wanting the service to act quicker or be more responsive.

# Annex 1 - copy of questionnaire

## Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey

**Q1** Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Newark & Sherwood District Council housing services?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Q2** Has Newark & Sherwood housing services carried out a repair to your home in the last 12 months?

- Yes
- No

**Q2a** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from Newark & Sherwood housing services over the last 12 months?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Q2b** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Q3** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood provides a home that is well maintained?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Q4 Thinking about the condition of the property or building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood provides a home that is safe?**

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not applicable / don't know

**Q5 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing services listens to your views and acts upon them?**

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not applicable / don't know

**Q6 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing services keeps you informed about things that matter to you?**

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not applicable / don't know

**Q7 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: "Newark & Sherwood housing services treats me fairly and with respect"?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not applicable / don't know

**Q8 Have you made a complaint to Newark & Sherwood housing services in the last 12 months?**

- Yes
- No



**Q8a How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Newark & Sherwood housing services approach to complaints handling?**

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Q9 Do you live in a building with communal areas, either inside or outside, that Newark & Sherwood housing services is responsible for maintaining?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Q9a How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing services keeps these communal areas clean and well maintained?**

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Q10 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Newark & Sherwood housing services makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?**

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not applicable / don't know

**Q11 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Newark & Sherwood housing services approach to handling anti-social behaviour?**

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not applicable / don't know

**Additional questions**

**Q12** If you rented a new property in the last 12 months, how satisfied were you with the overall lettings process?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not applicable / don't know

**Q13** How satisfied are you with gas servicing provided by Newark & Sherwood?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not applicable / don't know

**Q14** The council has a wide range of ways of tenants getting involved, would you be interested in getting involved?

- Yes
- No

**Q15** If yes, are you happy for us to share your details with the council so they can contact you about getting involved?

- Yes
- No

**Q15a** Finally is there anything you would like to say relating to the service provided by Newark and Sherwood housing services?

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## Forward Plan

For the Period January 2024 - April 2024



### What is the Plan?

This Forward Plan sets out all of the Key Decisions that are expected to be taken during the period referred to above. The Council has a statutory duty to prepare this document, in accordance, with the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended). The Plan is published monthly and will be available on the [Council's Website](#).

### What is a Key Decision?

The decisions listed in this plan are 'Key Decisions'. A Key Decision is one that is likely to:

- (a) Result in the Council spending or making savings of over £150,000 revenue or £300,000 in capital, or;
- (b) Where the impact of the decision would be significant in terms of its impact on communities living or working in two or more Wards.

Under the Council's Constitution, Key Decisions are made by the Cabinet, Portfolio Holders, or officers acting under delegated powers.

### Exempt Information

The plan also lists those 'Exempt' Key Decisions which are going to be taken over the next four months. Exempt Key Decisions are those decisions which have to be taken in private. This is because they involve confidential or exempt information which cannot be shared with the public.

Agenda papers for Cabinet meetings are published on the Council's website 5 working days before the meeting [here](#). Any items marked confidential or exempt will not be available for public inspection.

Any background paper listed can be obtained by contacting the Responsible Officer. Responsible officers can be contacted on 01636 650000 or [customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)

<b>Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary</b>	<b>Decision maker</b>	<b>Date Decision to be taken</b>	<b>Responsible Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption</b>	<b>Date decision can be implemented</b>
Cost of Living Support for 2024/25	Cabinet	23 Jan 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy cara.clarkson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	30 Jan 2024
2024/25 Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent Setting	Cabinet	23 Jan 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services Nick.Wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	30 Jan 2024
Review of Empty Homes Premium	Cabinet	23 Jan 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services Nick.Wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	30 Jan 2024
46 Northern Bypass, Newark Gateway and Lorry Park	Cabinet	23 Jan 2024	Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Economic Development	Matt Lamb, Director - Planning and Growth Matt.Lamb@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	30 Jan 2024
Biodiversity Net Gain Policy	Cabinet	23 Jan 2024	Portfolio Holder - Biodiversity & Environmental Services	Matt Lamb, Director - Planning and Growth Matt.Lamb@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	30 Jan 2024

<b>Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Date Decision to be taken</b>	<b>Responsible Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption</b>	<b>Date decision can be implemented</b>
Alexander Lodge Service Offer	Cabinet	23 Jan 2024	Portfolio Holder - Housing	Maria Cook, Assistant Business Manager - Housing and Estates Management Maria.Cook@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	30 Jan 2024
Final 2024/25 General Fund Revenue Budget	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services Nick.Wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024
Capital Programme - General Fund and Housing Revenue Account 2024/25 to 2027/28	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services Nick.Wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024
Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2027/28	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services Nick.Wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Customer Engagement Strategy	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Deborah K Johnson, Director of Customer Services and Organisational Development deborah.johnson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024
Stodman Street Update	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Kevin Shutt, Housing Development Manager HRA kevin.shutt@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt	27 Feb 2024
Mansfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee - New Crematorium	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance, Portfolio Holder - Public Protection and Community Relations	Sue Bearman, Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services Sue.Bearman@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt	27 Feb 2024
Biodiversity Net Gain Implementation	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder - Biodiversity & Environmental Services	Matt Lamb, Director - Planning and Growth Matt.Lamb@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Housing Revenue Account Community Centre Policy	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder - Housing	Julie Davidson, Business Manager- Housing and Estates Julie.Davidson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024
Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-2027	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder - Housing	Maria Cook, Assistant Business Manager - Housing and Estates Management Maria.Cook@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024
Draft Public Spaces Protection Orders	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder - Public Protection and Community Relations	Jenny Walker, Business Manager- Public Protection jenny.walker@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024
Playing Pitch Strategy	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder - Health, Wellbeing & Leisure	Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy cara.clarkson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Recreation & Facilities Strategy	Cabinet	20 Feb 2024	Portfolio Holder - Health, Wellbeing & Leisure	Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy cara.clarkson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2024
Performance Framework	Cabinet	5 Mar 2024	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance & Finance	Deborah K Johnson, Director of Customer Services and Organisational Development deborah.johnson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	12 Mar 2024
Yorke Drive Regeneration Update	Cabinet	26 Mar 2024	Portfolio Holder - Housing	Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy cara.clarkson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt	4 Apr 2024
Public consultation on the Draft Developer Contributions Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	26 Mar 2024	Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Economic Development	Matthew Norton, Business Manager - Planning Policy and Infrastructure matthew.norton@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	4 Apr 2024



Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Public consultation on the Draft Affordable Housing SPD	Cabinet	26 Mar 2024	Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Economic Development	Matthew Norton, Business Manager - Planning Policy and Infrastructure matthew.norton@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk, Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy cara.clarkson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	4 Apr 2024
Public Consultation on the Draft Newark & Sherwood Statement of Community Involvement	Cabinet	26 Mar 2024	Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Economic Development	Matthew Norton, Business Manager - Planning Policy and Infrastructure matthew.norton@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	4 Apr 2024

## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Cabinet** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 31 October 2023 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chair)

Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Crosby, Councillor K Melton,  
Councillor M Spoons, Councillor P Taylor and Councillor R Holloway

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor L Brazier and Councillor E Oldham

### 43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillors K Melton, P Harris, P Rainbow and K Roberts declared other registerable interests in relation to Agenda Item No. 14 – Southwell Leisure Centre Works – as Trustees of Southwell Leisure Centre appointed by the District Council. The Director – Customer Services & Organisational Development declared an interest in the same item as a Director of Active4Today.

### 44 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.

### 45 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 12 AND 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

The minutes from the meetings held on 12 September 2023 and 19 September 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 46 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Leader and Chair referred to the recent flooding in the District and thanked District Council colleagues who helped with the response effort. He also welcomed the reversal of the government's decision to close railway ticket offices and the Leader also expressed his thanks to the Customer Services Business Unit for their performance in processing housing support fund referrals.

### 47 COMMUNITY PLAN 2023 - 2027 (KEY DECISION)

The Chief Executive and Transformation & Improvement Officer presented a report which set out the draft Community Plan for 2023-2027 which was the key direction setting document which outlined the priorities and vision of the Council for the four-year term following the May 2023 election. The draft plan was attached as an appendix to the report, and it was noted that appropriate amendments had been made following comments made by the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee which were also detailed in the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) review the Community Plan and the accompanying comments carried forward from the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee; and
- b) endorse and recommend the Community Plan to the meeting of Full Council to be held on 12 December 2023 for approval.

Reasons for Decision

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.

Options Considered

The report details the process by which alternative options for inclusion in the plan have been considered.

48 LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2024/25

The Business Manager – Revenues and Benefits presented a report in relation to 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 (DWP). By applying the annual uprating of income and disregards to the 2024/25 scheme, the Council would 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 were being used in the current scheme.

AGREED (unanimously) 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 the 2024/25 financial year.

Reasons for Decision

To ensure the Council discharges its responsibilities to agree its Council Tax Support scheme by 31 January 2024.

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.

49 UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Regeneration & Strategic Housing presented a report which provided an update on the delivery of proposals to assist tenants, residents, local businesses and employees with the rise in the cost of living. The report set out the

progress against the cost of living action plan which captured the range of projects and activities designed to offer such cost of living support, and provided details of proposed additional activities for the remainder of 2023/24.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the progress against the Cost-of-Living Action Plan as outlined in section 2 of the report;
- 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.

#### Reasons for Decision

To support tenants, residents, businesses and employees with the ongoing challenges of the cost of living.

#### 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.

## 50 DIGITAL STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Business Manager – ICT & Digital Services presented a report which provided the Cabinet with an update on the Digital Strategy Action Plan. The digital strategy was created with the three initiatives of Place, Customer and Council, with the community at the heart of the initiatives. The progress against the Action Plan was detailed in the appendix to the report. The Cabinet welcomed the progress and made a link to the economic strategy going forward.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- 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.

#### Reasons for Decision

To ensure that the Council provides communities with digital services and platforms that are expected, within budgets, time, and quality.

Furthermore, ensuring the Council is more efficient and effective through the use of digital technologies including cost benefits and improvements to Council services.

#### Options Considered

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.

#### 51 TRANSFER OF SECTION 106 COMMUNITY FACILITY CONTRIBUTIONS TO FARNSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The Business Manager – Regeneration & Strategic Housing presented a report which sought approval for the transfer of Section 106 contributions held by the District Council for community facilities in Farnsfield, to Farnsfield Parish Council. The contributions held could be used to improve community facilities in the parish of Farnsfield at the village hall, bowls, football, cricket or tennis clubs as deemed appropriate. The Cabinet considered that parish councils were best placed to determine projects in their areas in accordance with any requirements of the Section 106 agreements.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- 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.

#### Reasons for Decision

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

#### Options Considered

The Section 106 receipts held under these two agreements must be 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.

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.

52 NEWARK CASTLE GATEHOUSE PROJECT - DELIVERY PHASE APPLICATION (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Heritage, Culture & Visitors presented a report which updated the Cabinet on the progress and revised costs of the Castle Gatehouse Project and sought approval to submit the delivery phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The report detailed the aims and objectives for the project and the timescale for delivery which needed to meet both Heritage Fund and Towns Fund requirements.

The report identified the key documents which would be commissioned as part of the development phase which would form the application to the Heritage Fund, provided some sample of designs for the project, and also included options around the charging model.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- 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.

Reasons for Decision

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.

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.

Options Considered

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.

53 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - HOUSING OUTTURN 2022/23 AND FUTURE DELIVERY OF NEW HOMES (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Regeneration & Strategic Housing presented a report which provided an update on the progress of the Council’s Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Development Programme in 2022/23 and proposals for future housing delivery. The report reflected on the HRA Development Programme which had delivered 279 properties since 2017. The report demonstrated a highly successful and value for money programme despite the challenges faced.

The report proposed the allocation of S106 affordable housing contributions to three sites which would provide additional affordable one bed bungalows, and set out plans for the future programme to build new housing, which included a smaller discreet development programme of up to 50 units being brought forward subject to capacity and affordability.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- 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 section 2.21 of the report to the new development programme within the obligations of the S106 agreements.

Reasons for Decision

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.

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) would 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.

54 DEVOLUTION RETROFIT FUNDING (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Housing Maintenance & Asset Management presented a report which sought approval for government grant funding of £583,500 to be added to the housing assets capital programme to fund decarbonisation measures in 38 social housing properties. The funding had been allocated in preparation for the establishment of the East Midlands Combined Authority. The project would deliver domestic energy efficiency and low carbon retrofit activities through the Midlands Net Zero Hub.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) endorse the project plan and accept receipt of grant funding of £583,500 from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC), which will be drawn down in arrears; and
- b) approve an increase in the Capital Programme of £583,500 in 2023/24 fully funded by DLUHC grant.

Reasons for Decision

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.

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.

55 SOUTHWELL LEISURE CENTRE WORKS (KEY DECISION)

The Director – Resources, Section 151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive and Business Manager – Corporate Property presented a report which advised the Cabinet of the condition of Southwell Leisure Centre and the essential works that were required to the dry side and wet side facilities, and also updated the Cabinet on the decision taken to close the main pool at the centre from 29 October 2023 to 1 December 2023 in order to carry out further investigatory works.

The report summarised the works required under fire safety and general repairs following a full feasibility of a programme of works undertaken by Lindum, and in respect of the pool, Asher Swimpool Centre Limited had been instructed to undertake a condition survey, the full details of which were contained in an exempt appendix.



The costs for the fire safety and general repairs were set out, but it was noted that in relation to the larger programme of works there was a potential for temporary closure of the centre which would result in a loss of net income. It was also noted that there were likely to be significant costs resulting from the pool survey, details of which would be brought to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- 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.

#### Reasons for Decision

To mitigate the risk of failure of the main pool and carry out the essential fire safety and general repair works to the building.

#### 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.

(Having declared an interest, Councillor K Melton did not vote on this item).

## 56 REVISIONS TO THE COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Regeneration & Strategic Housing presented a report which proposed revised criteria for allocations against the Council’s community grant scheme. In 2022/23 the Council offered a combined community grant scheme which consolidated a number of previous grant allocations and allocations under the scheme totalled £151,000, supporting 56 organisations. Given the criteria for the scheme was left relatively open, the demand on the scheme far exceeded the funds available. Therefore, this report proposed additional criteria to prioritise spend for 2023/24. The budget for 2023/24 had been set at £100,000 and a timeframe for allocations under the scheme was set out in the report, with a cross party panel being convened to consider applications.

AGREED (with 6 votes for and 1 abstention) that Cabinet approve the revised

criteria for grant allocations as set out at sections 2.3 and 2.4 of the report.

Reasons for Decision

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

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.

57 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 Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

58 SOUTHWELL LEISURE CENTRE WORKS - EXEMPT APPENDIX

The Cabinet considered the exempt appendix in relation to works at Southwell Leisure Centre.

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

Meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

Chair

## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Cabinet** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 5 December 2023 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chair)

Councillor S Crosby, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor K Melton,  
Councillor E Oldham, Councillor M Spoons and Councillor P Taylor

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor R Cozens and Councillor R Holloway

### 59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

### 60 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.

### 61 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Subject to an amendment to Minute No. 55 to read 'there was a potential for temporary closure' in the third paragraph, the minutes from the meeting held on 31 October 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 62 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Leader and Chair referred to the successful Levelling Up fund bid, after the announcement that Sherwood would benefit from a £20million investment as part of round three of the Levelling Up fund.

### 63 BUDGET PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 2 - 2023/24

The Business Manager - Financial Services presented a report which detailed performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income; reported on major variances from planned budget performance; and reported on variations to the Capital Programme for approval; in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Members heard that despite an unfavourable variance of £418,000 for the net cost of services, it was forecast that the Council would be able to transfer £422,000 into reserves at the end of the year. The HRA also showed a favourable variance of £113,000 likely to be able to transferred to the major repairs reserve at the end of the year. The report included details of the summary position for the Capital Programme split between the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, with a forecast outturn of £81.237m.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- (a) note the General Fund projected favourable outturn variance of £0.422m;
- (b) note the Housing Revenue Account projected favourable outturn variance of £0.113m to the Major Repairs Reserve;
- (c) approve the variations to the Capital Programme at Appendix E;
- (d) approve the Capital Programme revised budget and financing of £81.237m; and
- (e) note the Prudential indicators at Appendix H.

Reasons for Decision:

To consider the forecast outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets.

Options Considered:

Not applicable.

64 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 2 - 2023/24

The Director – Customer Services & Organisational Development presented the Community Plan Performance report for Q2 highlighting various projects and services including a new community hub in Ollerton, an improved facility for tenants to report repairs and investment in playparks. The report also detailed the fixed penalty notices issued by the Council for fly-tipping, littering and failure to have correct waste carrier and transfer documents.

The Committee welcomed the report, particularly the reduction in fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour and the very well received investment in playparks.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

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

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the Cabinet to monitoring performance management and compliance to drive improvement.

Options Considered:

Not applicable.

65 HOUSING SERVICES COMPLIANCE REPORT

The Portfolio Holder - Housing presented the Housing Services Compliance report to provide an update on the position at the end of Q2 2023/24 with regard to compliance assurance overview and actions arising. The Business Manager - Housing Maintenance & Asset Management was in attendance and explained the work undertaken to gain access to properties to ensure compliance. The Cabinet noted the numbers of non-compliance cases and heard that with regard to oil servicing it was now only one property which was non-compliant and an appointment for a service had been made. The delay in the grant of injunctions was noted and Members heard that the team were seeking to work 6 months ahead to ensure all services could be undertaken within the required timescales to ensure compliance.

AGREED that Cabinet:

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

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the Cabinet to monitor performance and compliance relating to the Council's legal and regulatory landlord responsibilities for 27 building safety measures including fire protection, gas, asbestos, electrical and water.

Options Considered:

Not applicable.

Meeting closed at 6.24 pm.

Chair

## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Cabinet** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 19 December 2023 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chair)

Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Crosby, Councillor L Brazier,  
Councillor K Melton, Councillor P Taylor and Councillor R Holloway

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor N Allen, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor S Michael and  
Councillor P Rainbow

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor E Oldham and Councillor M Spoors

### 66 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor K Melton declared an other registerable interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 12 – Southwell Leisure Centre Pool Works - as a Trustee of Southwell Leisure Centre, but advised that he did not consider there was any conflict of interest which would prevent him taking part in any debate and vote on the item.

### 67 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.

### 68 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Leader had no update, but Councillor K Melton as the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change took the opportunity to clarify that he had visited the Sheffield Energy Recovery Facility as part of his brief as Portfolio Holder in order to learn about where waste from our District went.

### 69 CORPORATE PROPERTY OVERVIEW

The Business Manager – Corporate Property presented a report which provided some background and overview of the changes to the Corporate Property Business Unit over the past five years and detailed the functions performed and latest performance.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet review the report and note the positive impact of the Business Unit on service delivery and financial contribution to the overall budget of the Council.

#### Reasons for Decision:

To inform Members of the wide responsibilities and performance of the Corporate Property Business Unit.

Options Considered:

Not applicable, with the report providing an overview of the Corporate Property Business Unit.

70 SHERWOOD AVENUE PARK (KEY DECISION)

The Director – Communities & Environment presented a report which put forward proposals that would lead to significant investment and improvement in Sherwood Avenue Park in Newark. In the absence of the Portfolio Holder, the Director – Communities & Environment read a statement indicating her support for the exciting vision for the park and the excellent partnership work behind the scheme proposals. The concept design and detail were set out in the report and appendices along with the breakdown of the different funding elements.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) formally supports the development of the scheme as set out in the report and appendices and in line with the cost plan;
- b) agrees that Section 106 monies from the Arkwood development on Lord Hawke Way are allocated to the scheme;
- c) approve the Capital Programme budget of £520,400 financed by Section 106, Shared Prosperity Fund, Capital Receipt and Newark Town Council Contribution;
- d) supports a short period of public consultation in the New Year, to ensure the plans align with community feedback and aspirations for the site; and
- e) subject to no material changes being required from the consultation exercise, the scheme and its packages are formally tendered and the scheme is progressed through to delivery.

Reasons for Decision:

The recommendations align with the Community Plan objectives in relation to health and wellbeing and the environment and in response to resident feedback as evidenced through the latest resident survey, which placed growing emphasis on parks and play areas. It is also in line with the strategy for increased town centre living, whilst the park and all of its proposed improvements are free to access.

Options Considered:

Given the age of the park, its prominence in the town centre and the links to the Council's Community Plan objectives, doing nothing is not deemed to be a viable alternative. Scope does exist to reduce the scope of the intervention, but this is not deemed desirable given the funding package that has been put together and the community desire for improvement that has been expressed to date.

71 INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Planning Policy & Infrastructure presented a report which provided an update on matters set out in the Infrastructure Funding Statement for 2022/23 and sought approval for the publication of the 2023 Statement by the end of the calendar year. The report provided a summary of CIL and developer contributions income and expenditure.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve the publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement, which has been produced in accordance with the legislative requirements, before the end of the calendar year.

Reasons for Decision:

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

Options Considered:

None. There is a requirement to publish the Infrastructure Funding Statement by the end of the calendar year.

72 OLLERTON TOWN CENTRE UPDATE AND PURCHASE OF PROPERTY (KEY DECISION)

The Director – Planning & Growth presented a report which updated the Cabinet on the progress of the Ollerton Town Centre Regeneration Scheme including land acquisition and funding updates given the recent announcements regarding the national Levelling Up Fund Round 3. The Cabinet welcomed this funding and how the scheme had evolved to likely uses including a library, public sector hub, a cinema, housing, business and commercial space and a transport and mobility hub.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note and welcome the progress on the Ollerton Town Centre Regeneration Scheme;
- b) note and welcome the Government announcement that the Ollerton Town Centre Regeneration Scheme, along with Clipstone Mansfield Road development, has been identified to benefit from £19,995,358 under the Levelling Up Fund Round 3 (LUF3);
- c) delegate to the Director - Resources, in consultation with the Director - Planning & Growth, Business Manager - Corporate Property and Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Sustainable Economic Growth, authorisation to negotiate and purchase in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Acquisitions and Disposals Policy the former Lloyds Bank on Forest Road for the Maximum Offer detailed at paragraph 2.2 of the report and in the Exempt Appendix B;
- d) delegate to the Director - Resources, in consultation with the Director - Planning & Growth, Business Manager - Corporate Property and Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Sustainable Economic Growth, authorisation to negotiate terms



for necessary land assembly and lease deals with the Ollerton Regeneration Partners and prospective tenants, subject to completion of a Full Business Case to be presented to a future Cabinet, which includes Town Council Offices, a piece of brownfield land referred to as the Courtalds site and The Forest Centre;

- e) delegate to the Director - Resources, in consultation with the Director - Planning & Growth, Business Manager - Corporate Property and Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Sustainable Economic Growth, authority to agree and enter terms with Government to access the £19,995,358 LUF3 Funds, including any further updates that may be required for the LUF3 projects given the time elapsed between the bid and confirmation of success;
- f) agree additional revenue budget of £150,000 from the change management reserve in 2023/24 to allow acceleration of feasibility design work in advance of receipt of LUF3 funding, with delegation to the Director - Planning & Growth, in consultation with the Business Manager - Corporate Property and Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Sustainable Economic Growth;
- g) request a future update to Cabinet, including timetable for submission of a planning application and development of final Business Case; and
- h) request update report(s) following all negotiations to seek approval for future capital budget requirements.

Reasons for Decision:

To allow progression, at pace, the development of the LUF 3 Ollerton Town Centre Regeneration Scheme with the Ollerton Development Partners and prospective tenants, including all necessary land deals, such that the Council can provide appropriate updates and implementation timelines to Government in order to access the LUF 3 funding.

Options Considered:

It remains an option to pause, stop, or reduce the scale of ambition of the LUF3 projects in Clipstone and Ollerton. This has been discounted given the desperate need to invest in these communities through transformational proposals such as those forming the Ollerton Town Centre Regeneration Scheme. The Regeneration Partners, including the District Council, remain committed to the project.

73 PLANNING DEVELOPMENT - PLANNING APPLICATION BUDGET

The Director – Planning & Growth presented a report which provided an update on the Planning Development Business Unit in terms of the emerging legislative and operational service challenges, the planning fee increase effective as from 6 December 2023, and proposals for an increased staffing budget to build in greater capacity, including the creation of an Assistant Director post.

AGREED (unanimously) to increase the Planning Development staffing budget to £1,023,170 based on forecast planning fee income to £1,031,700 from 2024/25.

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the Planning Development Business Unit to review resources in order to implement some of the many changes resulting from legislation and the actions identified within the Community Plan – both directly for the service as well as actions for other departments that require our resources.

Options Considered:

There is an option to do nothing but this is not considered viable given the current pressures on the service.

74 DAMP AND MOULD POLICY (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Business Manager – Housing Maintenance & Asset Management presented a report which set out and sought approval for a Damp & Mould Policy which set out the Council's approach to tackling and preventing damp and mould in Council owned homes. It was noted that the Policy Performance & Improvement Committee and the Tenant Engagement Board had both recommended approval of the policy.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet endorse the Damp & Mould Policy for approval as recommended by the Local Influence Network Chairs.

Reasons for Decision:

As detailed in the report, to meet legislative requirements and adhere to guidance and regulations.

Options Considered:

There are no viable alternatives and taking no action would mean failure to meet our regulatory requirement to ensure that we have measures in place to appropriately tackle cases of damp and mould and keep tenants safe in their homes.

75 BUILDING SAFETY IN THE HOME POLICY (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Business Manager – Housing Maintenance & Asset Management presented a report which set out and sought approval for a Building Safety in the Home Policy which set out how tenants and leaseholders in Council owned homes can raise safety concerns and the Council's responsibilities to keep homes warm, safe and decent. It was noted that the Policy Performance & Improvement Committee and the Tenant Engagement Board had both recommended approval of the policy.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet endorse the Building Safety in the Home Policy for approval as recommended by the Local Influence Network Chairs.

Reasons for Decision:

The Policy supports the Council's Community Plan to create more and better quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority.

Options Considered:

There were no viable alternatives and taking no action would mean failure to meet our regulatory requirement to ensure that we have measures in place to keep tenants safe in their homes.

76 SOUTHWELL LEISURE CENTRE POOL WORKS (KEY DECISION)

The Business Manager – Corporate Property presented a report which provided the Cabinet with an update on the outcome of the investigation works to the main pool and a summary of the repair and replacement options with costs, and an update on the works being carried out to the 'dry side' of the centre.

During the closure of the main pool water level measurements were recorded and the findings showed a sizeable leak with a water loss which was beyond the average for the type and size of pool by an extreme margin. Therefore, operating the main pool was considered viable. The pool leak remediation options were set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the progress of works to the dry side;
- b) approve the continued closure of the main pool;
- c) approve the additional revenue budget of £12,300 from the Change Management Reserve to fund the engineered solution to safeguard the structure of the main pool as set out in section 2.5(d) of the report;
- d) note that the learner pool would continue to operate;
- e) note the continued arrangements to support users of Southwell main pool to swim at other venues;
- f) approve, in principle, the option of developing a new swimming facility (main pool, teaching pool plus associated changing facilities) on land adjacent to the current Southwell leisure centre, as set out in section 2.5(c)(2) of the report subject to detailed feasibility being undertaken and agreement of land transfer with the current landowner(s); a further report being brought back to Cabinet for approval as soon as practicable;
- g) approve the capital budget of £5.5m financed by borrowing for the estimated build cost of the replacement pools as set out in 2.5(c)(2) of the report noting that reports will be brought to Cabinet on revised estimated costs as the feasibility project progresses;

- h) approve a revenue budget of £25,000 from the Capital Feasibility Reserve to carry out design works to RIBA Stage1 for a new Leisure Centre which incorporates the new pool building; the design works to be procured on in principle agreement of land transfer to the Council; and
- i) request officers to work up options, costings and methods of finance for the replacement pools to form part of aspirations for a wider development of a new leisure centre on the site, in conjunction with partners and relevant landowners.

Reasons for Decision:

To provide a long-term, value for money solution for the provision of swimming and other leisure centre activities at Southwell.

Options Considered:

The four possible alternative options were detailed in full in section 2.5 of the report.

77 CCTV SYSTEM REVIEW (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Public Protection & Community Relations and Business Manager – Public Protection presented a report which sought approval of the recommendations proposed following the Member review of the Council’s CCTV systems. The report provided a detailed picture of what CCTV systems the Council held and made recommendations based on the findings of the ASB Policy & Performance Improvement working group which were first presented to the Cabinet on 21 February 2023.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve:

- a) the CCTV replacement scheme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- b) the recommendation for all CCTV cameras moving forward to become in the full ownership of NSDC as detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the report;
- c) the continuation of NSDC’s membership in the CCTV partnership;
- d) the creation of a CCTV Project to undertake a detailed feasibility exercise to provide a full business case on the possibility of bringing CCTV in house; and
- e) the allocation and draw down of £8,200 from the Capital Feasibilities Reserve to be allocated to the CCTV Revenue Cost Centre.

Reasons for Decision:

To enhance the Council’s management of their CCTV systems in addition to improving and updating our coverage across the district in line with the Community Plan objective of maximise the use and effectiveness of CCTV to deter crime and bring offenders to justice.

Options Considered:

To continue with the current CCTV partnership accepting that the Council will continue to share Control Room resources with partners and the service level will remain as now.

To delay the replacement programme until cameras fail beyond economic repair.

78 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

79 OLLERTON TOWN CENTRE UPDATE AND PURCHASE OF PROPERTY - EXEMPT APPENDIX

Meeting closed at 7.46 pm.

Chair