

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, 6 March 2023 at 6.00pm.

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

Councillor L Brazier, Councillor Mrs B Brooks, Councillor S Carlton,  
Councillor M Cope, Councillor D Cumberlidge, Councillor Mrs L Dales,  
Councillor P Harris, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor Mrs L Hurst,  
Councillor J Kellas and Councillor M Pringle

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor L Goff

70 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

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

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

72 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2023

The minutes from the meeting held on 30 January 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

73 WORK OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM PRESENTATION

The Committee considered the report and presentation given by the Business Manager – Regeneration & Housing Strategy and the Senior Health Improvement Officer which sought to give Members an overview of the work undertaken by the Community Development & Health Improvement Team.

Members were provided with details of the team structure within the Business Unit and the remit of each of the Officers' roles. The work undertaken within Community Development and Health Improvement were listed within the presentation with Officers providing further details as to what each of the headings entailed. Members were also provided with information as to upcoming events in 2023/24.

In considering the presentation a Member raised an issue in relation to the aspiration of a smoke free county, specifically that of young people vaping. He stated that the current trend for using fruit flavoured pastel coloured vapes was of concern, noting that they contained up to 40/50 cigarettes worth of nicotine and queried whether the user was aware of those levels. In response, Members were advised that this issue

had been strongly raised at the County Council and also with Public Health. It was noted that vaping's original intention had been as a tool to stop smoking but that it was now being used for very different reasons.

In relation to the Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP) a Member praised the recent work of Officers at the Young People's Centre in Ollerton and the positive impact that and the other CAPs in the area had in helping young people to make the choice to stop drinking, smoking and using other substances.

Speaking in support of the work undertaken by the Community Development Team, a Member stated that he would like to receive further information about the Best Start scheme and also that he be contacted should he be able to assist in the work with resettling families fleeing the war in the Ukraine.

A Member raised the issue of littering from vehicles in his community and that he believed this to be a community cohesion matter. He queried what work could be done in partnership with Environmental Services to address some of the littering. Officers advised that there had not been a piece of work undertaken on that specific issue but it would be dealt with by the Council as a whole. She advised that the Council would engage with any group that was travelling through the district with specific issues being dealt with by Environmental Services.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the presentation on performance to date be noted; and
- b) the contents of the presentation be noted.

#### 74 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE - Q3

The Committee considered the report of the Transformation & Service Improvement Officer which presented to Members the Quarter 3 Community Plan Performance report. Members were asked to review the Community Plan Performance report attached as Appendix 1 together with the revised performance targets for 2023/24 attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

In response to questions raised prior to the meeting, the Officer advised that in relation to the 45% reduction in footfall the suggestion that one contributing factor may be the traffic in the Newark town centre and the A46 on Fridays. This led to people doing less trips into the town centre but it should be noted that the dwell time was longer. The Officer advised that Fridays had the greatest reduction in footfall compared to other days. It was also suggested that a further contributing factor, when comparing it to previous years, could be that in 2021 a higher number of people were visiting shopping areas due to the lifting of covid restrictions.

In relation to the Shop Watch scheme, a Member queried as to the reason why national organisations had not signed up. It was noted that a response would be provided after the meeting. The Member also suggested that in relation to the planned and programmed food inspections, as noted on page 35, whether they could be spread out over a 10-month period rather than being held over until the final quarter of the year.

A Member commented that she had queried whether, in relation to repairs carried out by contractors to tenants' homes, any first-time targets for repairs existed. She had been advised that no such target existed and suggested that this may be an area for consideration in the future.

In noting the proposed revision to the occupancy target for the Newark Beacon, a Member commented that there was already an issue with parking on adjacent streets and queried whether this had been taken into consideration. He was advised that the comments would be forwarded to the relevant Officer.

In relation to the Speedwatch Initiatives, a Member queried whether many parish councils had requested training and whether there was a cost implication. It was noted that a response would be provided after the meeting.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Community Plan Performance report and the changes in performance targets for 2023/24 be noted.

## 75 CUSTOMER PROMISE AND CUSTOMER STRATEGY WG UPDATE

The Committee considered the joint report of the Business Manager – Customer Services, the Transformation & Service Improvement Manager and the Transformation & Improvement Officer which sought to present to Members the Customer Promise, an outcome of the Customer Strategy Working Group which would be the keystone of the Council's Customer Experience Strategy.

It was noted that the Customer Promise, attached as Appendix One to the report, was customer facing and had been designed to be accessible for the customer in an impactful and easily digestible format.

As Chairman of the Customer Strategy Working Group, Councillor Harris commented that the Group had met on three occasions and had developed the Customer Promise as the key principles to guide all customer interactions. He noted that in considering the need for an operational change to meet the promises, the Working Group had determined that a pilot project be implemented to extend the operating hours of the Customer Services Team by one hour on a Monday, which was the busiest day, to answer calls or emails and also to respond to social media posts or webchat. The hours suggested for this were 08:00 to 09:00 hours or 17:00 to 18:00 hours.

In considering the report all Members welcomed the Customer Promise, commenting that it provided clear and concise information for customers. It was also suggested that consideration be given to translating it into different languages and to providing a large print version.

Members all agreed that the pilot project should run from 08:00 to 09:00 hours with Councillor Harris stating that he would inform the Portfolio Holder of the Committee's recommendation. In closing the debate the Chairman joined all Members in thanking the Customer Services Team for their excellent work as the first point of contact for the Council.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Customer Promise be endorsed; and
- b) the proposed pilot project be endorsed with the extended hours of operation being 08:00 to 09:00 hours.

76 TENANT ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Housing Income & Leaseholder Management, presented by the Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing which sought to provide Members with an update of the arrangements for compiling the Tenant Annual Report for 2022/2023 and to explain its purpose and how it linked in with wider performance scrutiny of housing services.

It was reported that landlords were required to provide timely and relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in a format agreed with tenants. Paragraph 2.0 of the report provided information on how the 2022/2023 Tenant Annual Report was to be developed and the timeline for achieving that. It also noted the involvement of the Local Influence Network Chairs and the Portfolio Holder for Health & Homes in its development with the suggested contents being listed at paragraph 2.4. In presenting the report, the Director advised Members that it was anticipated that there would be further direction from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) which would result in an amendment to the proposed approach detailed in the report.

In considering the report a Member queried whether the Local Influence Network Chairs would be participating in estate walkabouts. The Director advised that estate walkabouts were under review but she would pass the suggestion on the Tenant Engagement Board.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the purpose of the Tenant Annual report be noted; and
- b) the approach set out in Section 2 of the report to develop the Tenant Annual Report be endorsed, noting that this may be subject to change following the anticipated further direction from the RSH.

77 PROJECTED GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2023 AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Financial Services which sought to update Members of the forecasted outturn position for the 2022/23 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue and capital budgets. The report also provided details of performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income and reported major variances from planned budget performance, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

The report provided information as to the current position, as at 31 December 2022. This included a projected favourable variance against the revised budget of £0.577m on service budgets, which represented a 3.52% of the total service budgets. Non-service expenditure was projected to have a favourable variance of £1.111m against the revised budget of £16.545m, with it being noted that the budgets related primarily to income from council tax, national non-domestic rates and investment interest.

In relation to the HRA, it was reported that there was a projected unfavourable variance against revised budgets of £0.16m, details of which were reported in Table 2 and Appendix B of the report. A summary of the position for the Capital Programme as at 31 December 2022 was detailed at paragraph 1.10 of the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the General Fund projected favourable outturn variance of £0.577m on services be noted;
- b) the Housing Revenue Account projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.196m on services be noted; and
- c) the capital outturn position of £60.393m be noted.

78 CABINET FORWARD PLAN (FEBRUARY TO MAY 2023)

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

79 MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2023

NOTED the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17 January 2023.

80 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

NOTED the items listed for future meetings.

Meeting closed at 7.17 pm.

Chairman