



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee: 1 December 2025

Working Group Chair: Cllr Rhona Holloway

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

Lead Officers: Carl Burns, Business Manager - Transformation & Service Improvement;  
Rowan Bosworth-Brown, Senior Transformation & Service Improvement Officer

| Report Summary           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| <b>Report Title</b>      | Out of Remit Activities Working Group – Final Report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Purpose of Report</b> | To share with Members of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee the recommendations put forward by the working group and to seek endorsement where relevant.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Recommendations</b>   | <p>That the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee note and make comment on recommendations a and b:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) that the leader of the Council has written to the Mayor of the East Midlands Combined County Authority on the issue of Flooding (<b>Appendix 1</b>):</li><li>b) that an invitation has been extended to representatives of the Environment Agency to discuss and understand the priorities and areas of focus for this agency within flood prevention in Newark &amp; Sherwood.</li></ul> <p>That the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee endorse and make comment on recommendations c and d:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>c) ensure the continuity of public health services provided by the Council during the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and through the transition process leading up to vesting day, it is recommended that the Healthy Active Lifestyles Manager be appointed to NSDC's LGR implementation group once established; and</li><li>d) extend an invitation to Planning Infrastructure colleagues to a future meeting of the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee, to provide an overview of the service area, including cases where operations extend beyond 'typical' district council responsibilities.</li></ul> |

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 In January 2025, a topic request was submitted by Cllr Paul Peacock to review 'Out of Remit Activities', prompted by concerns of overstretched Council resources and increasing pressures.
- 1.2 These themes emerged through three main channels, the first of which included the 2024 Staff Survey. An all-staff survey is conducted every 18 months aimed at gathering insight into job satisfaction, how staff perceive the Council as an employer and its leadership and management. Results of the survey were indicative of mixed perceptions regarding workload. While a majority reported being able to prioritise tasks effectively, fewer felt their overall workload was manageable. A significant portion of colleagues expressed that serving residents and customers had become more challenging, which could reflect increased operational pressures.
- 1.3 The second was that a Corporate Peer Challenge took place in October 2024, in which a team of external senior local government Councillors and officers undertook a comprehensive review of key finance, performance and governance information to provide robust, strategic, and credible challenge and support. Some key recommendations emerged including a review and prioritisation of the 2023-2027 Community Plan, of which was already underway and resulted in the revised Community Plan. Additional recommendations included ensuring that Councillors understood the longer-term budget pressures, which was timely as part of the process to revise the Community Plan. As well as to continue fostering a positive culture within the organisation and recognise the feedback from some staff of feeling stretched within their workload. An action plan has been implemented to deliver against not only these, but all recommendations within the Corporate Peer Challenge report and can be found here.
- 1.4 The Local Government Reorganisation White Paper was published in December 2024 which set out the Government's ambition to simplify the current tiered structure of local government, striving to put in place universal coverage in England of Strategic Authorities. This has required Newark & Sherwood District Council to work together with the other eight Local Authorities within Nottinghamshire to develop proposals for submission to Government.
- 1.5 Based on the topic request form that was submitted by Councillor Peacock and the aforementioned evidence base, the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee Chair approved the formation of a working group to consider activities outside the Council's remit and balance resident benefits with resource impact.
- 1.6 The Out of Remit Activities Working Group, chaired by Cllr Rhona Holloway, first met on 2 April 2025. The agenda included the introduction of the Review Initiation Document (RID), which set out objectives, key questions, and the scope of the review. The group's remit was to map discretionary activities where the Council steps into spaces that are the primary responsibility of other organisations. The question the group kept revisiting was 'if we didn't provide this service, who would?', this helped to keep the remit of the group clear.
- 1.7 The working group reviewed the Council's organisational structure and evaluated whether any services provided by individual business units fall outside the defined remit, as outlined in the Review Initiation Document. When questions arose, they

were directed to the respective Business Managers to obtain further information about specific services. This allowed the working group to determine whether an activity or service was out of remit and warranted additional investigation. Some examples of smaller focus areas are included below, where a subject was broader more detailed "deep dive" sessions were commissioned. These "deep dives" were carried out as subsequent working group meetings where key officers were invited to present on the relevant topic. **Appendix 2** provides the mapping exercise carried out and highlights areas of the Council where some activities carried out are 'out of remit'.

- **Communications & Marketing:** Communication on behalf of other organisations  
Our Communications team share communications or messages from partner organisations such as NCC or the NHS. These messages are key and important messages for all residents to be aware of, such as advice issued in times of extreme hot or cold weather. These messages are not published by us, but reshared only and this is considered standard practice and so is not considered out of remit.

There are some Service Level Agreements (SLA) in place between our Communications team with selected Parish and Town Councils, Arkwood and Active4Today to deliver targeted communication. However, these are paid communication services and as such have been undertaken commercially.

- **Elections & Democratic Services:** Election Database & Websites hosted on behalf of others  
It was queried whether the election database was updated by the Council on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC). It was confirmed by the Business Manager of Elections & Democratic Services that this is not something the Council update on behalf of NCC. Whilst the Council do provide advice to elected members who are elected to both the District and County Councils, no further or additional support is provided. In terms of websites hosted on behalf of others, 16 websites are hosted by the Council on behalf of Parish Councils. This is something that the Council are obliged to run, in order to support Parish Councils with the requirement to have and maintain a website. Both topics were deemed to be within the remit of the Council.
- **Heritage & Culture:** All Services  
When this topic was raised by the working group, as with all other areas the question of 'if we didn't provide this service, who would?' was posed. As the cultural assets belong to the Council, there would not be any other governing body or organisation who would provide the service in our absence and therefore the topic did not comply with the remit of the working group. However, the Business Manager for Heritage & Culture shared an overview of the service with the working group and subsequently a topic request form was submitted and approved by the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee at the meeting in September 2025 to examine expenditure within Heritage & Culture. The working group is due to be established in late 2025 or early 2026.
- **Planning Development:** Planning Enforcement

Planning Enforcement is a discretionary service which is carried out in a proportionate way when tackling breaches of planning control that are of public interest, formal enforcement action is used as a last resort. Where necessary the views of various partner agencies and statutory consultees such as Nottinghamshire County Council, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England may be sought in order that the Council makes an informed decision. The views of other agencies will be of particular importance where their technical or specialist knowledge is required.

- 1.8 During the first session the group reviewed the revised Community Plan to identify areas considered 'out of remit', the first area identified for scrutiny was flood resilience, with key officers invited to present at the June meeting.
- 1.9 **Flood response and resilience.** The second meeting took place on 4 June 2025, the group received presentations from the Director of Communities and Environment and the Business Manager for Public Protection, focusing on flood response and resilience, and the Council's role under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as Category 1 responders.
- 1.10 The session explored the risk of flooding to our local communities and the impact that it has on those communities who have historically been worst affected by flooding. Additionally, the working group heard about the impact that responding to a flooding event has on the Council. This includes the impact on staffing levels available to deliver business as usual activities due to the need to set up a flood response control room which provides around the clock coordination and direction of support. Also, our staff are redeployed in the district delivering aid to those in need, working alongside our key partners to coordinate efforts. We also facilitate the post flood clean-up process, which includes our Community Development team visiting affected areas to ensure residents are aware of the support available to them and our Environmental Services team conduct extra bulky waste collections to dispose of any flood damaged items.
- 1.11 Whilst all these activities are very much considered necessary and of critical importance to our communities, it does come at a financial cost to the Council which the working group explored during the session. The table below was shared with the working group and provides a breakdown of the cost associated with responding to flood events, as well as building greater community resilience to mitigate the impact of future flooding events in 2023/24 through to 2025/26. The Council was able to claim £95,546.00 of the £137,705.73 cost incurred in 2023/24 during storm Henk and Babet back from central government via the Bellwin scheme.

|                                 | 2023/24     | 2024/25   | 2025/26   |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Cost of Flood Response</b>   | £137,705.73 | -         | -         |
| <b>Cost of Flood Resilience</b> | £9,905.72   | £6,030.55 | £4,840.23 |
| <b>Grant Income</b>             | -           | - £95,546 | -         |

|              |                    |                     |                  |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>£147,611.45</b> | <b>- £89,515.45</b> | <b>£4,840.23</b> |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|

- 1.12 The Bellwin scheme is a discretionary emergency financial assistance programme provided by the UK government to local authorities. It is activated when an emergency or disaster results in significant expenditure on immediate actions to safeguard life or property, or to prevent suffering and severe inconvenience among residents. The scheme reimburses eligible costs incurred during the immediate response phase but does not cover longer-term recovery or repair. Activation is not automatic and is subject to ministerial approval under Section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. <sup>1</sup>
- 1.13 The session also revisited a meeting held in November 2024, in which the Council hosted a Flood Impacts and Mitigation session with Bassetlaw District Council. The session outlined local flooding history, risks, emergency response, and actions taken to build resilience. It also identified challenges at regional and national levels and explored solutions, including brokering meetings with Ministers for funding action, scoping an East Midlands Flooding Taskforce, linking Environment Agency priorities with strategic investment, and advocating for Government investment in flood alleviation. Formal communication between the Leader of the Council and Mayor of the East Midlands Combined County Authority has taken place already, however the working group recommended follow up communication to reemphasise the severity of flooding impacts on local communities in Newark and Sherwood.
- 1.14 **Business Manager Comment**  
Flooding events are a sad reality for our district, and we are acutely aware of the impact these have on our residents. The Council has provided Flood Resilience Grants to Town and Parish Councils over the last two years to assist in building community resilience and ensuring that much needed and appropriate equipment is sited locally to enable a rapid deployment when required. Flood warden training is now held annually at NSDC and offers new and refresher training. It is important to note that not all areas across the district have trained flood wardens in place, and we would urge all town and parish councils to continue to build on their on local resilience for their local areas and recruit flood wardens where they are lacking.
- 1.15 The third meeting took place on 23 June 2025, the group received presentations from the Business Manager for Housing Strategy and Regeneration, as well as the Healthy Active Lifestyles Manager. The presentation focused on defining what activities within Public Health are deemed to be out of the District Council's remit and exploring the role of the NHS and Nottinghamshire County Council. The working group also heard more about the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and how that delivers on the ambitions set out within the 2023-2027 Community Plan.
- 1.16 The 2022–2026 Health and Wellbeing Strategy identifies a significant disparity in life expectancy within Newark and Sherwood, with a gap of 9.1 years for men and 9.4

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<sup>1</sup> [Bellwin scheme of emergency financial assistance to local authorities: guidance notes for claims - GOV.UK](#)

years for women between the most deprived and most affluent areas. This indicates that individuals residing in the district's most disadvantaged communities live, on average, nine years less than those in the most affluent areas. The strategy details the work already being undertaken to reduce this gap, address health inequalities, and outlines support mechanisms for community members who are most in need of support. It acknowledges the additional challenges posed by the rising cost of living, which can make it more difficult for families to access healthy food, as well as the increased incidence of seasonal illnesses during colder months, further straining NHS resources. Recognising these factors, the strategy emphasises the importance of ongoing collaboration with partners and stakeholders to implement programmes and initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes across Newark and Sherwood.

- 1.17 Research commissioned by Sport England in 2023 <sup>2</sup> regarding the calculation of the social and economic value of sport and physical activity in England was presented to the group. The study indicated that for every £1 invested in community sport and physical activity, almost £4 in value is generated for the English economy and society. Furthermore, the research demonstrates that physical activity significantly contributes to the prevention of various serious physical and mental health conditions, providing an estimated £9.5bn in economic value. The study also examined the relationship between engagement in sports and physical activity and enhanced life satisfaction.
- 1.18 The impact of community engagement within public health was explored, with the relationship between social connection and the reduction in risk of chronic disease and serious illness. Social connection has also been proven to improve our ability to manage stress, anxiety and depression, foster healthy eating and physical activity habits, as well as improving quality of sleep. Examples of how we promote social connection through community engagement were shared, such as the Best Years Hubs and Chop and Chat sessions.
- 1.19 The group discussed the challenges faced by district Councils in delivering initiatives cascaded from the NHS and County Council, particularly the lack of corresponding funding. Members highlighted the difficulty in measuring outcomes and evidencing the district's contribution to the prevention agenda, noting the absence of financial data to support this. The group considered the development of a formalised approach to quantifying the Council's work, including a request to Nottinghamshire County Council for a report on return for investment, and the need for funding to research the impact of public health services at a district level. The importance of tracking support provided by Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and social prescribers was emphasised, alongside national efforts by CIPFA, Public Health England, and the Kings Fund to develop a broader evidence base. The group also discussed the importance of maintaining continuity of Public Health services throughout Local Government Reorganisation and beyond.

## **2.0 Proposal/Options Considered**

- a) **The leader of the Council has written to the Mayor of the East Midlands Combined County Authority on the issue of Flooding (Appendix 1).** In accordance with the committee's recommendation, the Leader of Newark and Sherwood District Council

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<sup>2</sup> [The return on investment of sport and physical activity in England in 2022/23](#)

wrote to the Mayor of the East Midlands Combined County Authority to request support in convening a meeting with key stakeholders and Government Ministers regarding flood mitigation in the Trent Valley and other regularly affected areas. The correspondence highlighted the ongoing efforts by both Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw District Councils to progress this issue, the current lack of advancement, and sought clarification on whether such a meeting should be held within the remit of the Farming and Rural Affairs Committee or separately.

- b) **An invitation to attend PPIC has been extended to representatives of the Environment Agency (EA).** Members of the committee and the working group have been invited to submit questions for the EA prior to the meeting held on 1 December 2025 and will be responded to at the meeting. It is also expected to provide committee members with further insights into the EA's role within flood prevention, as well as key priorities and projects which have been identified as areas of focus within Nottinghamshire, specifically those affecting Newark and Sherwood. As well as to highlight areas where further support or collaboration is needed.
- c) **To maintain the continuity of public health services delivered by the Council throughout the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the transition period up to vesting day,** it is recommended that the Healthy Active Lifestyles Manager be appointed to NSDC's LGR implementation group once established. This appointment will help ensure the Council continues to safeguard and support residents who depend on these services, while also advocating for the ongoing necessity of such provisions within our communities.
- d) **Extend an invitation to Planning Infrastructure colleagues to attend a future meeting of the Policy Performance and Improvement Committee,** to provide an overview of the service area, including cases where operations extend beyond 'typical' district council responsibilities. This topic was initially planned to take place as a "deep dive" working group session. However, due to demands on the service area, including the significant impact that Local Government Reorganisation has had in order to meet the upcoming business case submission deadline, the working group agreed this topic was to be delayed and scheduled to come forward via a presentation to the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee at a later date.

### 3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability. Where appropriate, suitable expert comment has been added.

Financial Implications: FIN25-26/7007

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report. All proposed actions are expected to be delivered within existing resources and current operational arrangements. While the report references historical costs associated with flood response and resilience, these are not linked to any new financial commitments.

## Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

- 3.2 As the Council navigates through the early steps of LGR it is becoming increasingly important to consider all services that are currently delivered. Assessing those that are typically 'out of the remit of a typical council' has been a useful exercise and has highlighted some of the key areas where the council is delivering above and beyond for the residents of Newark & Sherwood. The implications of any restructure include the challenge of maintaining service delivery and there is appropriate concern that those initiatives deemed as 'additional' may not be maintained by the new authority. However, LGR will also provide new opportunities to bring together similar initiatives from across the new unitary area. Section 2.0 details a particular concern around the delivery of services by our healthy places team and the recommendation proposing the council's lead in that area is involved in the implementation phase. Whilst this is supported by the NSDC LGR project team the implementation plan is at this time unclear, and we may find it difficult to ensure the service is considered throughout every stage up to and after vesting day.

### **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.

*Topic request form*

*Peer challenge report*

*Topic request form H&C*



Mayor Claire Ward,  
East Midlands Combined County  
Authority,  
Council House,  
Corporation Street,  
Derby  
DE1 2FS

Appendix 1:

**Newark and Sherwood District Council**

Castle House  
Great North Road  
Newark, Nottinghamshire  
NG24 1BY

[www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)

**[Cllr Paul Peacock](#)**

**[Leader of Newark and Sherwood District  
Council](#)**

07956370984

[Paul.Peacock@Newark-Sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.Peacock@Newark-Sherwooddc.gov.uk)

21 November 2025

Dear Mayor Claire Ward,

As the Leader of Newark and Sherwood District Council and the Portfolio Holder for Farming and Rural Affairs, I am writing to the East Midlands Combined County Authority ahead of future discussions regarding the role and remit of the Farming and Rural Affairs Committee, to request your support.

Newark and Sherwood District Council has previously undertaken work with the East Midlands Combined County Authority to broker a meeting to bring together key stakeholders, including Government Ministers, to discuss supporting feasibility work looking at flood mitigation across the Trent Valley and other areas that are regularly affected by flooding. This is something that both Newark and Sherwood District Council and Bassetlaw District Council have been pressing for some time. However, to date we have been unable to progress this any further and a suitable meeting has not yet been arranged.

I would be grateful for feedback as to the progression of this meeting as I see flooding as a priority theme for the Trent Valley area as well as the wider East Midlands Combined County Authority area. It would be useful to understand whether the meeting originally proposed with the East Midlands Combined County Authority and Ministers should take place outside of the Farming and Rural Affairs Committee, or whether the East Midlands Combined County Authority intends for this to be included within the Committees remit.

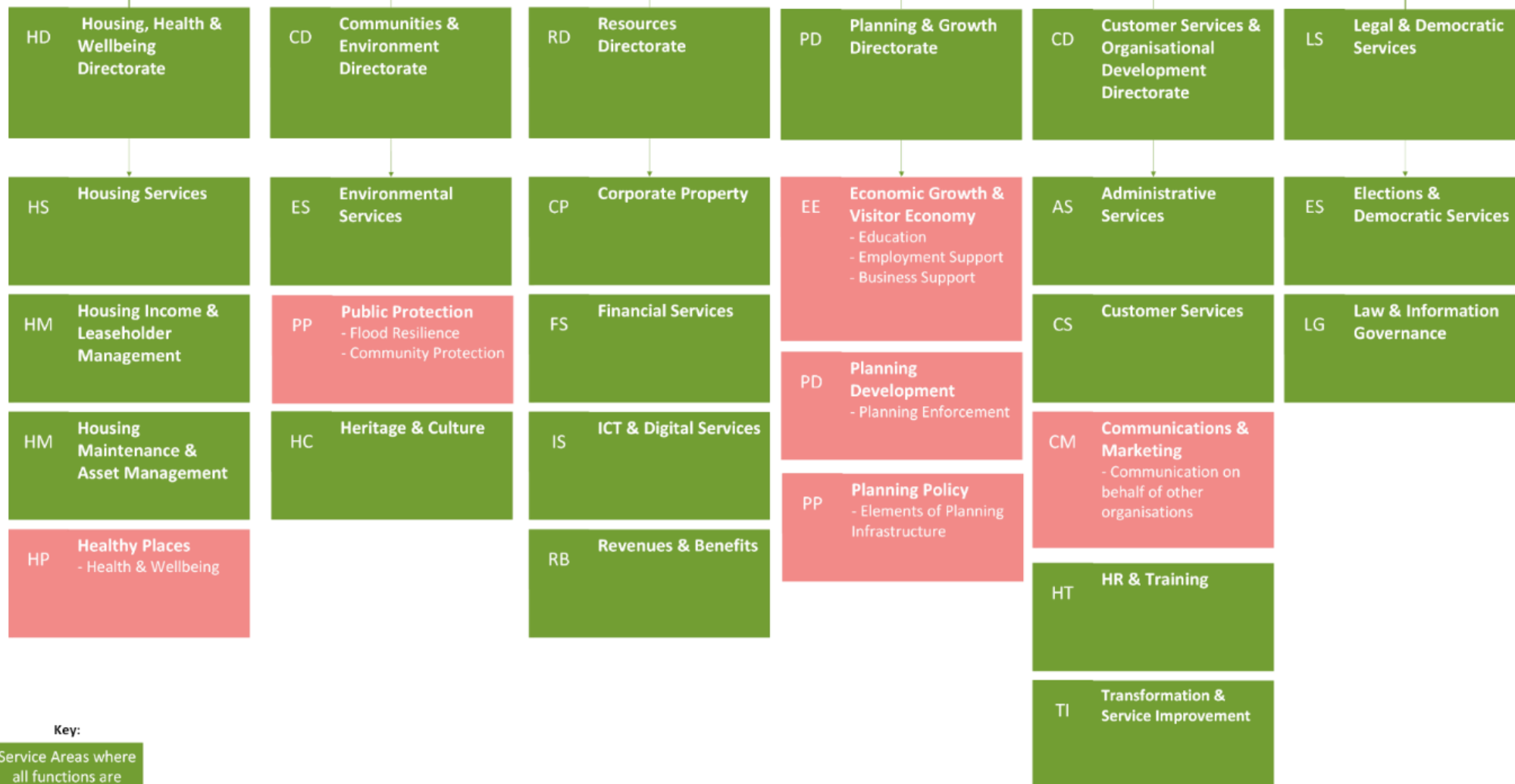
Yours sincerely,  
Councillor Paul Peacock,

Leader of Newark and Sherwood District Council

SERVING PEOPLE, IMPROVING LIVES



Appendix 2:



Key:

Service Areas where all functions are within the District Council's remit

Service Areas with some functions outside of the District Council's remit

Left intentionally blank.