



**NEWARK &
SHERWOOD**
DISTRICT COUNCIL

*Kelham Hall
Newark
Nottinghamshire
NG23 5QX*

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Chairman: Councillor R.B. Laughton
Vice-Chairman: Councillor T. Wendels

Members of the Committee:

Councillor Mrs K. Arnold
Councillor Mrs B.M. Brooks
Councillor Mrs C. Brooks*
Councillor G. Brooks
Councillor Mrs I Brown

Councillor M. Buttery
Councillor K. Girling
Councillor Mrs S.M. Michael
Councillor D. Thompson
Councillor K. Walker

Substitutes:

Councillor D. Batey
Councillor Mrs G.E. Dawn
Councillor J. Lee
Councillor Mrs P. Rainbow
Councillor Mrs S. Soar

AGENDA

MEETING: Homes & Communities Committee

DATE: Monday, 30th November 2015 at 6.00pm

VENUE: Room G21, Kelham Hall

**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 01636 655248.

AGENDA

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CONFIDENTIAL AND EXEMPT ITEMS

None

NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the **HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE** held on Monday, 7th September 2015 in Room G21, Kelham Hall at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R.B. Laughton (Chairman)
Councillor T. Wendels (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs K. Arnold, Mrs I Brown, M. Buttery, K. Girling, J. Lee (substitute for G. Brooks), Mrs S.M. Michael, Mrs P. Rainbow (substitute for Mrs B. Brooks), Mrs S. Soar (substitute for Mrs C. Brooks) and D. Thompson.

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillors: Mrs B. Brooks, Mrs C. Brooks and G. Brooks.

15. DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND AS TO THE PARTY WHIP

NOTED: that the following Members declared an interest in the item shown below:

Councillor T. Wendels	Agenda Item No. 6 – CCTV – Shared and Relocation of Control Room (Personal Interest – Employee of Nottinghamshire Police Authority)
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Councillor R.B. Laughton	Agenda Item No. 6 – CCTV – Shared and Relocation of Control Room (Personal Interest – Spouse is Employee of Nottinghamshire Police Authority)
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16. DECLARATION OF ANY INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

NOTED: that there would be an audio recording of the meeting.

17. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH JUNE 2015

AGREED (unanimously) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Community Safety in relation to the review undertaken of the Council’s Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy following legislative changes. The report also sought Members approval for the revised Policy.

The report highlighted that the Council’s Policy had been revised to align with the Government’s change in legislation to ensure that the process was more ‘victim’ focussed. It was noted that the Policy also contained details of the Council’s ‘community trigger’. Also attached to the report was an appendix detailing the powers available under the new 2014 Act.

In response to a query relating to the multi-agency partnership working that took place to deal with specific cases and whether this included any involvement by elected Members, the Business Manager advised that due to the often indepth, personal and sensitive nature of discussions elected Members were not currently included. However, should an elected Member wish to attend, arrangements could be made to facilitate this.

A Member of the Committee raised concerns as to the ongoing costs of using CCTV cameras in the fight against ASB. They commented, that in their experience, when the Police were asked to investigate an incident they often responded that the images were too dark due to poor lighting or that trees close by had obscured the view of the camera. The Business Manager advised that CCTV was only one tool in tackling ASB. She acknowledged the comment in relation to trees and advised that sometimes it was a lengthy process to resolve the matter adding that the Member's comments would be considered.

In relation to the community trigger, Members queried if Officers anticipated whether this would be frequently used. In response, the Business Manager advised that it had been in operation since October 2014 and, to-date, it had not been used throughout the whole of Nottinghamshire.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Draft Anti-Social Behaviour Policy be approved.

19. CCTV – SHARED SERVICE AND RELOCATION OF CONTROL ROOM

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Community Safety in relation to discussions that had taken place concerning the future development and relocation of the CCTV Service and control room.

The report provided the background to the Council's current operations with Ashfield District Council and Broxtowe Borough Council and that Gedling Borough Council had also expressed an interest in joining a shared CCTV Service. Also contained within the report were brief details of the proposed move to a new location and the anticipated costs thereof.

In noting the proposed move to the former Police Control Centre, Members queried where the Police were relocating to and whether it would be appropriate for the CCTV Control Room to be included with this. They were informed that the plans for a new Police Control Room building were already well advanced and that it was not possible to accommodate the CCTV control room within this building, however, the new location for the CCTV Control Room would be on the same site and in close proximity to that of the new Police's Control Room. Members were keen to be advised of the costs of preparing the proposed location at the Police HQ in Arnold once officers had done further work to ascertain these.

Members sought reassurance that the move to the new location would not have a detrimental impact on the service provision for the district. Concern was also expressed about the quality of images from some of the existing cameras and whether there was an programme of replacement scheduled. The Business Manager – Community Safety advised that although the service was to be relocated

at the Police HQ, it would still be managed by local authority employees and that there would be no loss of service provision. It was acknowledged that some of the existing cameras required replacement but that due to the present economic climate in local government there was, at present, no budget provision to facilitate this. The Director – Safety advised that the intention was to embed the current provision at its new location, following which work would commence on looking at how the service could move forward strategically. It was acknowledged that this might mean that Members would be asked to consider whether they wished to authorise a schedule of improvements which would require financial investment.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) approval be given for the Council to enter into a shared service for CCTV with Ashfield District Council and Gedling Borough Council (expanding the existing shared service with Broxtowe Borough Council) and delegated authority be given to the Director – Safety to finalise the terms of the agreement for the shared service;
- (b) Officers continue discussions with Nottinghamshire Police (and Gedling, Broxtowe and Ashfield Councils) with a view to agreeing terms and arrangements for moving the CCTV control room to the Police Headquarters at Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottinghamshire; and
- (c) a further report be submitted to the Committee once the details and costings of the move were known, such report to also include information as to the quality and replacement timings for existing cameras.

20. REPRESENTATIVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Committee considered the report presented by the Director – Safety in relation to how Members wished to receive feedback from representatives on outside bodies which fell within the remit of this Committee.

Members considered the list of organisations and those appointed and agreed that they wanted brief written reports summarising the work undertaken throughout the year to be presented to Committee on an annual basis. However, they requested alternative reporting mechanisms to be put in place for the following two organisations: Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel; and Newark and Sherwood Homes.

In relation to the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel, they agreed that the Council's appointed representative be requested to either provide a written or verbal report twice yearly. In relation to Newark and Sherwood Homes, two of the appointed representatives should be requested to attend Committee on an annual basis to report on their representation on the Board of the Council's company.

AGREED: (unanimously) that

- (a) the Council's appointed representative on the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel be requested to either provide a written or verbal report twice yearly;

- (b) two of the Council's appointed representatives on Newark and Sherwood Homes, be requested to attend Committee on an annual basis; and
- (c) brief written reports summarising the work undertaken throughout the year be presented to Committee on an annual basis for the remaining organisations that fall within the Committee's remit as detailed on the appendix to the report.

21. HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME REVIEW

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Housing Options, Energy & Home Support which sought approval of a project plan for undertaking a full review of the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme, with the intention of implementing this in the Autumn of 2016.

The report noted that a desktop assessment and appraising options for change had been undertaken throughout 2014 with the findings being presented to Members in November 2014. It had subsequently been agreed in March 2015 that the project plan for the full review be presented to the Committee following the May elections. Attached to the report was a Project Initiation Document which gave a broad indicative timetable for progressing the review.

In considering the report Members raised the issue of ex-service personnel being able to register themselves for housing commenting that the process, at present, appeared to be difficult. It was suggested that provision should be made for those who were able to demonstrate a local connection to begin the process early as those being discharged from the services knew when they would require accommodation. The Business Manager advised that the current process did allow for their entry onto the scheme but a local connection must be demonstrated. It was noted that specific reference to the military covenant would be considered when the scheme was reviewed.

In considering the Project Initiation Document Members commented that the order of the Council's strategic priorities should be revised to place people as the number one priority and not prosperity. The Director – Safety advised that the Council's priorities and their order had been determined previously by Members but were due to be revisited later in the year when Members would be asked to review the Council's strategic priorities and set them for the period of the new administration..

AGREED (unanimously) that the Project Initiation Document be approved.

22. PROPOSED REVISION TO THE FIRST CONTACT SCHEME

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Housing Options, Energy & Home Support which sought to inform Members of the proposed changes to the service and funding model for the First Contact Scheme and the implications thereof for the Council. The report provided background as to the current scheme and what the proposed changes would be.

Members commented that the report appeared to be positive of the proposed changes but sought assurances that people would not be overlooked as the scheme moved to a more digital service. In response, Members were advised that the telephone service would remain in place. They were also informed that each participating professional knew their areas and would inform the scheme provider of any potential gaps. The aim was to align all services and the operation of the scheme would be continually monitored to ensure delivery.

Members commented that the participating organisations could use improved technology to make the scheme more efficient both in terms of time taken to process a referral and to reduce running costs. Concern was expressed about vulnerable people being asked to complete forms and undertake telephone interviews, stating that this could be confusing and daunting.

AGREED (unanimously) that NCC's proposed changes to the First Contact Scheme be noted.

23. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE WARM HOMES ON PRESCRIPTION PROJECT

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Housing Options, Energy & Home Support in relation to the innovative pilot and the excellent opportunity it provided to raise the Council's profile by leading the Nottinghamshire project and actively demonstrated the Council's commitment to tackling fuel poverty and health inequalities through effective partnership working.

The report provided Members with the background to the project and what the proposed Nottinghamshire pilot would entail. The report detailed that an externally funded Programme Manager was to be recruited by the Council to develop and co-ordinate the delivery of the Nottinghamshire-wide initiative and that the post holder would work with all 7 district/borough Councils to target eligible householders.

Members agreed that this was an excellent scheme and queried whether it would be means tested at all and whether it would be promoted. Officers advised that part of the scheme would be means tested and that in relation to its promotion, it was noted that its success depended on GPs and CCGs providing the relevant information.

It was noted that the scheme would be of particular benefit to individuals who suffered with respiratory diseases e.g. ex-miners.

Members queried how referrals could be made other than through GPs and CCGs. The Business Manager advised that the scheme was specifically targeted towards persons being referred by their GPs but if Members became aware of any cases they could refer them to the appropriate Business Unit in the Council.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report be noted; and

- (b) a capital funding bid to National Energy Action be supported.

24. UNIVERSAL CREDIT

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Revenues & Benefits presented by the Business Manager – Housing Options, Energy & Home Support in relation to Universal Credit and its implementation within the district.

The report provided detailed information as to the way in which the scheme would be administered and how the Council would be involved. Also provided were comments from Newark and Sherwood Homes and the measures they were putting in place to mitigate the impact of the changes.

A Member of the Committee expressed their concern about the impact the changes would have on vulnerable people, noting in particular those who had existing rent or council tax arrears. Officers advised that a great deal of pre-tenancy work was already and would continue to be undertaken and that electronic payment of rents was being looked into. Whilst acknowledging this, the Member again expressed concern that the use of electronic payments was difficult if the account holder did not have regular payments into their bank account, adding that it was sometime difficult to get to speak to an individual within an organisation who could actually assist in resolving problems.

Members commented that part of their role was to visit constituents and, if necessary, bring their cases to the attention of the relevant organisation. The Business Manager advised that early warning signals were in place for when tenants began to fall into arrears in an attempt to stop the situation worsening.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted and the arrangements being made for the introduction of Universal Credit to the Newark & Sherwood District from 5th October 2015;
- (b) the ongoing actions that Newark and Sherwood Homes were taking to prepare tenants for ongoing welfare reform and the roll out of Universal Credit be noted; and
- (c) a further progress report be brought to the Committee following the introduction of Universal Credit into the district.

The meeting closed at 7.05pm

Chairman

THE SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2015

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise the Committee of the introduction of new Regulations in relation to the requirement to install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in private rented properties and the ability of the local authority to impose a penalty charge for properties in breach of the Regulations.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 came into force on 1st October 2015 and makes requirements upon landlords of properties in the private rented sector.

2.2 From 1st October 2015, a landlord must ensure that:

- A smoke alarm is equipped on each storey of the premises where there are habitable rooms
- A carbon monoxide alarm is in every room in which a solid fuel burning appliance (including a working open fire) is used
- At the beginning of each new tenancy, the alarms are tested and are in proper working order on the day the tenancy begins

2.3 The regulations do not stipulate the type of alarms (such as hard wired or battery powered) to be installed. Landlords are required to make an informed decision and choose the best alarms for their properties and tenants.

2.4 Once the Council has been notified that one or more of the above items has not been provided, we are obliged to serve a Remedial Notice on the landlord giving 28 days for the relevant action to be taken to stop the breach

2.5 If after 28 days no works have been carried out, the Council MUST provide the relevant equipment and have it installed in default at which point, a Penalty Charge Notice will be issued to the landlord which will include a Penalty Charge, plus the cost of the works in default.

2.6 The legislation does not apply to the following types of accommodation:

- Social Housing
- Licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Live-in landlords - where a property has a landlord (or their family) residing within it
- Long leases - lessees who have a right of occupation for 7 years or more
- Student accommodation (halls of residence)
- Hotels and refuges
- Care homes, hospitals, hospices and other NHS accommodation

3.0 Statement of Principles for Determining Financial Penalties

- 3.1 Regulation 8 of The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 provides that the Council may require the landlord to pay a penalty charge if the Council is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the landlord on whom it has served a remedial notice (the notice) under regulation 5 has failed to take the remedial action specified in the notice within the period specified. Furthermore Regulation 13 requires the Council to prepare and publish statement of principles which it proposes to follow in determining the amount of a penalty charge.
- 3.2 Where a penalty charge is made, the Council must have regard to the statement of principles published and in place at the time when the breach in question occurred, when determining the amount of the penalty charge.
- 3.3 Attached as **Appendix One** is the draft Statement of Principles for Determining Financial Penalties. This document sets out the principles which the Council will apply and will have regard to when exercising its powers under regulation 8 of the regulations. The Statement has been produced following discussions with neighbouring local authorities and following a benchmarking exercise with a more extensive range of local authorities with particular reference to the fee level and early payment discount.

4.0 Items for Consideration

4.1 Penalty Fees

The primary purpose of the Council's exercise of its regulatory powers is to protect the interests and safety of the public, although these may have a punitive effect.

4.2 The primary aims of financial penalties will be to:

- change the behaviour of the landlord.
- eliminate any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance with the regulations.
- be proportionate to the nature of the breach of the regulations and the potential harm outcomes.
- aim to deter future non-compliance.
- reimburse the costs incurred by the Authority in undertaking work in default

4.3 In deciding whether it would be appropriate to impose a penalty, the Authority will take full account of the particular facts and circumstances of the breach under consideration. In particular, the Authority will need to be satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the landlord on whom it has served a remedial notice under Regulation 5 has failed to take the remedial action specified in the notice within the period specified.

4.4 A financial penalty allows the Authority, amongst other things, to eliminate financial gain or benefit by the landlord from non-compliance. A financial penalty charge will be considered appropriate where the landlord has failed to comply with the requirements of a remedial notice

4.5 Regulation 8(2) states the amount of the penalty charge must not exceed £5,000. The penalty charge comprises two parts, a punitive element for failure to comply with the absolute requirement to comply with a remedial notice (subject to any representation made by a landlord to the Authority) and a cost element relating to the works carried out by the Authority.

- 4.6 A penalty charge notice must be paid within 28 days beginning with the day on which the notice is served unless the Authority receives written notice from the landlord that he/she wishes the Authority to review the penalty charge notice. However if the payment of the penalty charge is made within 14 days beginning with the day on which the penalty notice is served, the penalty charge will be reduced by an amount specified in the notice.
- 4.7 If a landlord does not agree with the penalty charge notice, they can make a request to the local authority for it to be reviewed. This request must be made in writing and within the time period specified in the penalty charge notice. The Authority will, on receipt of a written notice requesting a review from the landlord consider any representations made by the landlord, and serve notice of its decision whether to confirm, vary or withdraw the penalty charge to the landlord. The landlord can then appeal to the First-tier Tribunal. If an appeal is lodged, the penalty cannot be enforced until the appeal is finally determined or withdrawn.
- 4.8 Although the penalty charge is issued by the local authority the regulations allow for the charge to be recovered on the order of a court, as if payable under a court order.

4.8 Authorisation of Officers

District Councils are also responsible for the enforcement of these Regulations. Officers will need to be suitably authorised by the council to allow them to take any action permitted in the legislation. This action being the service of Remedial Notices and the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice.

5.0 Proposals

- 5.1 The draft Statement of principles for Determining Financial Penalties sets out the council's approach to the imposition of financial penalties under the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015.
- 5.2 It is proposed that the financial penalties to be imposed are:
- For a first offence the fine applied will be £1,000 and an early payment will attract a discount of 25% making it £750
 - For second offences the penalty will be £3,000 to deter continued non-compliance and an early payment will attract a discount of 50% making it £1,500
 - For subsequent offences the penalty will be £5,000 to deter continued non-compliance and an early payment will attract a discount of 50% making it £2,500.
- 5.3 The early payment period is defined as being within 14 days following the day on which the Penalty Notice was served.
- 5.4 It is proposed that the following staff From the Environmental Health Business Unit are authorised to serve Remedial Notice under Regulation 5

Business Manager - Environmental Health
Assistant Manager - Licensing & Enforcement
Senior/Environmental Health Officers

5.5 It is proposed that the following staff From the Environmental Health Business Unit are authorised to serve Penalty Charge Notices under Regulation 8

Business Manager - Environmental Health
Assistant Manager - Licensing and Enforcement

6.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

6.1 Any monies received from the payment of penalties may be used by the authority for any of its functions. It is anticipated that any income from this legislation will be ad hoc and not a recurrent sum that could form part of a sustainable income stream.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- a) the statement of principles for determining financial penalties prepared in reference to the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 be approved;**
- b) the following staff from the Environmental Health Business Unit be authorised to serve Remedial Notice under Regulation 5; and**

**Business Manager - Environmental Health
Assistant Manager - Licensing and Enforcement
Senior/Environmental Health Officers**

- c) the following staff From the Environmental Health Business Unit be authorised to serve a Penalty Charge Notice under Regulation 8:**

**Business Manager - Environmental Health
Assistant Manager - Licensing and Enforcement**

Reasons for Recommendations

To adopt a statement of principles for determining financial penalties in line with the requirements of the requirements of the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations. To have suitably authorised officers to carry out the requirements of the Regulations.

Background Papers

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015

For further information please contact Alan Batty- Business Manager – Environmental Health on 01636 655467.

Karen White
Director – Safety

Newark & Sherwood District Council

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm
(England) Regulations 2015

Statement of Principles for Determining Financial Penalties

November 2015

1.0 The Purpose of this Statement

- 1.1 This statement sets out the principles that Newark and Sherwood District Council (the Council) will apply in exercising its powers to require a relevant landlord to pay a financial penalty.

2.0 The Legal Framework

- 2.1 Regulation 8 of The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (the regulations) provides that the Council may require the landlord to pay a penalty charge if the Council is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the landlord on whom it has served a remedial notice (the notice) under regulation 5 has failed to take the remedial action specified in the notice within the period specified.

3.0 The Scope of the Statement

- 3.1 Regulation 13 of the regulations requires the Council to prepare and publish statement of principles which it proposes to follow in determining the amount of a penalty charge.
- 3.2 The Council may revise its statement of principles and, where it does so, it must publish the revised statement.
- 3.3 Where a penalty charge is made, the Council must have regard to the statement of principles published and in place at the time when the breach in question occurred, when determining the amount of the penalty charge. In particular the Council will have regard to:
- Satisfying the balance of probabilities that the landlord has failed to take the remedial action required in the notice.
- 3.4 This document sets out the principles which the Council will apply and will have regard to when exercising its powers under regulation 8 of the regulations.

4.0 The Purpose of Imposing Financial Penalty

- 4.1 The primary purpose of the Council's exercise of its regulatory powers is to protect the interests of the public, although they may have a punitive effect.

The primary aims of financial penalties will be to:

- change the behaviour of the landlord.
- eliminate any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance with the regulations.
- be proportionate to the nature of the breach of the regulations and the potential

- harm outcomes.
- aim to deter future non-compliance.
- reimburse the costs incurred by the Council in undertaking work in default

5.0 Criteria for the Imposition of a Financial Penalty

5.1 By virtue of regulation 8, a failure to comply with the requirements of a remedial notice allows the authority to require payment of a penalty charge. In considering the imposition of a penalty the authority has regard to:

- the evidence of a breach of the requirement of the Remedial Notice

5.2 In deciding whether it would be appropriate to impose a penalty, the authority will take full account of the particular facts and circumstances of the breach under consideration. Factors which the authority will take into consideration are:

- the Council is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the landlord on whom it has served a remedial notice (the notice) under regulation 5 has failed to take the remedial action specified in the notice within the period specified.

5.3 A financial penalty allows the council, amongst other things, to eliminate financial gain or benefit from non-compliance. A financial penalty charge will be considered appropriate where the landlord has failed to comply with the requirements of a remedial notice.

6.0 Criteria for Determining the Amount of a Financial Penalty

6.1 Regulation 8(2) states the amount of the penalty charge must not exceed £5,000. The penalty charge comprises two parts, a punitive element for failure to comply with the absolute requirement to comply with a remedial notice (subject to any representation made by a landlord to the council) and a cost element relating to the works carried out by the Council.

6.2 The period within which the penalty charge is payable is 30 days beginning with the day on which the penalty charge notice is served.

6.3 The Council has discretion to specify that if a landlord pays the penalty charge within a specified earlier period a reduction in the penalty charge may be applied.

6.4 The Council may also exercise a similar discretion where the landlord gives written notice to the Council that the landlord wishes the authority to review the penalty charge notice.

6.5 Of these two discretions, the Council will, as a matter of course, exercise the discretion to reduce the penalty charge in relation to payment within a specified "early payment" period.

6.6 The specified period for early payment is **within 14 days** beginning with the day on which the penalty charge notice was served.

6.7 **For a first offence the fine applied will be £1,000 and an early payment will attract a discount of 25% making it £750**

For second offences the penalty will be £3,000 to deter continued non-compliance and an early payment will attract a discount of 50% making it £1,500

For subsequent offences the penalty will be £5,000 to deter continued non-compliance and an early payment will attract a discount of 50% making it £2,500.

7.0 Procedural Matters

7.1 The regulations impose a number of procedural steps which must be taken before the council can impose a financial penalty. Before imposing a requirement on a landlord to pay a penalty charge the council must, within a period of six weeks from the point at which it is satisfied that the landlord has failed to comply with the requirements of the Remedial Notice, serve a penalty charge notice setting-out:

- the reasons for imposing the penalty charge;
- the premises to which the penalty charge relates;
- the number and type of prescribed alarms (if any) installed at the premises;
- the amount of the penalty charge;
- the obligation to pay that penalty charge or to give written notice of a request to review the penalty charge;
- how payment of the charge must be made
- the name and address of the person to whom a notice requesting a review may be sent.

7.2 Where the Council is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the landlord on whom it has served a remedial notice (the notice) under regulation 5 has failed to take the remedial action specified in the notice within the period specified the council will, on written notice from the landlord served with a penalty charge notice, review the penalty charge imposed. Any such written notice must be received by the Authority not less than 28 days after the day on which the penalty charge notice is served.

7.3 In conducting the review, the council will consider any representations made by the landlord, and serve notice of its decision whether to confirm, vary or withdraw the penalty charge to the landlord. Any review shall be conducted by the Business Manager – Environmental Health and the Director –Safety

7.4 A landlord who, having requested a review of a penalty charge notice is served with a notice confirming or varying the penalty charge may appeal to the First-tier Tribunal against the Council's decision.

7.5 Where the penalty charge is not paid the Authority may recover the penalty charge on the order of a court, as if payable under a court order.

COUNCIL'S DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2016/17 - 2020/21

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the progress to date on the budget for 2016/17 and future years.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 At the meeting of Policy & Finance Committee on 10th September 2015, Members considered the preliminary report on the 2016/17 Budget and agreed the overall strategy including the appropriate basis on which the budget should be developed, including salaries, wages, general inflation, debt charges etc.
- 2.2 Also at this meeting, Policy & Finance Committee agreed the timetable for consideration of the 2016/17 budget provisions. The budget timetable is dictated by the corporate timetable for Policy and operational Committees. The essential deadline is that the Council is able to set the level of Council Tax for 2016/2017 at its meeting on 10th March 2016. Working back from this date a timetable has been drawn up and is attached at **Appendix C**. This timetable enables sufficient time for the budget proposals to be considered by operational Committees and Policy & Finance Committee and also sufficient time for the work to be completed within the Financial Services section and Business Units.
- 2.3 The Council has agreed policies on Budgeting and Council Tax, Reserves and Provisions, Budget Principles, a Charging Policy and Value for Money Strategy which set out the approach to be taken to the budget process. These policies and principles were reviewed and updated by Policy & Finance Committee in September 2015. The Charging Policy is included at **Appendix D**.

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Financial Environment

- 3.1.1 Following the General Election in May 2015, the Government announced an emergency budget in July. This will be followed by a Comprehensive Spending Review, the results of which will be announced at the end of November. It is anticipated that the draft Local Government Finance Settlement will be announced in late December 2015. Although figures have not been announced for Government Grant for future years, the Chancellor has stated that local authorities can expect the same trajectory of cuts to Government Grants to be continued and this has been assumed in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- 3.1.2 Until the draft Local Government Finance Settlement is announced in December, all figures for Government Grant are based on internal estimates. Reductions in Government grant are expected to continue. The current estimates remain unchanged from the approved Medium Term Financial Plan and are:

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£	£	£	£	£
Formula Grant	2,623,630	1,641,110	1,229,100	808,870	381,720

It can be seen that a reduction in grant of approximately £1m is anticipated for the next financial year. Furthermore, by the end of the life of this Council, it is anticipated that Government Grant will have substantially disappeared. However, it must be stressed that the level of Government Grant for 2016/17 will not be known until December 2015 at the earliest. At that point, it is hoped that indicative figures for future years will also be announced.

- 3.1.3 Members will be aware that the business rates retention scheme was introduced in April 2013. Councils are able to keep a proportion of the business rates revenue as well as a proportion of the growth that is generated in their area. The estimated amounts for retained business rates, excluding growth in the area, are shown in the table below:

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£	£	£	£	£
Retained Business Rates	3,337,990	3,433,320	3,502,000	3,572,030	3,641,980

It can be seen that the retained business rates increases each year due to inflation and this will benefit the District Council by £95,330 in 2016/17.

- 3.1.4 Retained Business Rates Growth is now a key component of the Council's annual revenue budget. In the budget for 2015/16, income of £620,000 has been included for Business Rates Growth, and it is anticipated that this will increase to £900,000 for each subsequent year. In addition, the Council will receive approximately £400,000 per year from central Government to compensate for changes to the business rates regime announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement in December 2014.
- 3.1.5 Members will be aware that the level of Council Tax has now been frozen for a number of years. At this stage, it is not known whether or not the Government will continue to allocate a Council Tax freeze grant to those Councils that freeze their Council Tax in 2016/17. Furthermore, the rules on Council Tax increases and the referendum limit are unlikely to be announced until early 2016.
- 3.1.6 The position with regard to general inflation remains complex. The latest (July 2015) CPI figure for inflation shows an annual increase of 0.1%. The Bank of England forecast is for CPI inflation to remain below 2% by the end of 2016/17.
- 3.1.7 One of the major areas of the budget affected by inflation is the cost of salaries and wages. In the Chancellor's summer budget in July 2015, it was announced that public sector pay increases would be restricted to 1% per annum for the next 4 years. The medium term financial plan already included a 1% increase for pay, increments and other salary costs for each financial year. It should be noted, however, that the budget also announced an intention to introduce a National Living Wage. This will impact on the Council's budget and it will be necessary to assess the position on this as further details are announced.

4.0 Budget Pressures

- 4.1 There will undoubtedly be budget pressures in certain areas of the budget that will lead to unavoidable increases in the budget in specific areas. The Council's budget has become more reliant on income and so may on occasions be vulnerable to reductions in the level of income, and would also potentially be vulnerable to a rise in inflation or interest rates.

4.2 The Council will also have to consider demand management in areas such as homelessness, community safety and supporting people and potentially in the following areas where budget pressures are likely to arise:

- Welfare reform
- Increased planning applications, which potentially provide increased income but also an increased workload
- Increased house building in the District gives pressure on services such as refuse collection
- Family Intervention Project and Anti-Social Behaviour as funding streams decline

4.3 Although there has been a clear focus on the need to deliver savings, the Council has also set priorities to develop services in certain areas. This has been through a combination of the development of facilities and assets, and identifying funds for the delivery of specific policies.

4.4 With respect to assets, the Council has developed a National Civil War Centre, is in the process of building a new Leisure Centre in Newark and is progressing the decision to move its headquarters from Kelham Hall. These are included in the Medium Term Financial Plan and all will be provided at no additional cost to council tax payers. Efficiencies in the running costs of these assets against the current asset base have been identified that will support budgets in future years.

4.5 In the March 2013 Budget, the government announced that a flat rate state pension will be introduced from April 2016. This will mean an end to employees in local government pension schemes being able to "opt out" of the state second pension and an end to the 3.4% rebate in National Insurance contributions that public sector employers currently benefit from for those employees that have opted out. This will cost the Council approximately £230,000 per year from 2016/17. This has already been included in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

5.0 Budget Strategy

5.1 Whilst there is always a need to improve efficiency and review existing budgets, the Council's budget gap is significant and should principally be addressed through strategic measures. A number of strategies were considered and approved for the 2015/16 budget as set out in 3.1 above. The current estimate for savings in these areas is:

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	Base Budget	Base Budget	Base Budget	Base Budget	Base Budget
	£	£	£	£	£
Leisure Commissioning	(250,000)	(380,000)	(400,000)	(400,000)	(400,000)
Devolution & Service redesign	(260,000)	(260,000)	(260,000)	(260,000)	(260,000)
Accommodation move	0	0	(395,000)	(500,000)	(510,000)
Collaboration	(50,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)
Total	(560,000)	(740,000)	(1,155,000)	(1,260,000)	(1,270,000)

5.2 Each of these areas will make a significant contribution to the savings required. It is considered that these will remain central planks of the development of the budget for 2016/17 and future years. It can be seen that the savings from these strategic areas will increase over the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

- 5.3 With regard to collaboration with other authorities, at this stage a general savings provision has been included. This is supported by work currently being undertaken on Building Control, Sports and Arts Development, Environmental Health and Planning Administration.
- 5.4 Each year an efficiency review is undertaken to consider the potential for budget savings and for additional income to be incorporated into the budget. This review identifies sustainable savings that can continue to be delivered in future years. For 2015/16 savings of £360,000 were identified and are in the process of being delivered for 2016/17 further savings of £641,000 have been identified. These include an increased vacancy provision based on recent experience, deletion of vacant posts, such as that achieved through the merger of the Policy and Performance Business Units, savings on contracts and increased income.
- 5.5 Capital financing is regularly reviewed to ensure that borrowing is not undertaken unless it is necessary. The latest review has shown that no borrowing is necessary for the current approved capital programme. This includes the new Leisure Centre, the relocation of the Council's headquarters and the vehicle replacement programme. This reduces the capital financing budget (which shows the revenue impact of borrowing) by approximately £500k in 2016/17 and by a similar amount in future years.
- 5.6 The additional savings since the Medium Term Financial Plan was approved in March 2015 are summarised in the table below. The improvements in the Council Tax Base would also provide an effective increase in resources for the Council in addition to these savings.

Savings additional to the approved MTFP

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	Base Budget	Base Budget	Base Budget	Base Budget
	£	£	£	£
Business Rates Growth	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Grant in lieu of Business Rates Growth	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
Efficiency Review	641,000	641,000	641,000	641,000
Capital Financing	497,140	538,920	630,470	1,044,610
Total	1,638,140	1,679,920	1,771,470	2,185,610

Savings per MTFP 1,521,740 1,377,120 1,758,720 2,650,600

- 5.7 It can be seen from this that the additional savings, together with the approved budget strategy, will deliver sufficient savings to develop a balanced budget, provided that individual budgets are prepared on the basis that they do not exceed the levels approved in the Medium Term Financial Plan as adjusted by the savings detailed in this report. Budget Officers have been instructed to prepare their budgets on this basis.

6.0 Draft Revenue Budget Proposals

- 6.1 Business Managers and service budget officers have been working with officers from Financial Services to determine a first draft general fund budget and medium term financial plan. The budgets have been prepared in line with the strategy agreed by Policy & Finance Committee on 10th September 2015.

- 6.2 A summary of the figures to date for the Homes & Communities Committee is shown at **Appendix A** to this report. It should, however, be clearly understood that the figures shown are first draft only and that a substantial amount of work has yet to be completed before any conclusions can be drawn. The figures also exclude all capital charges and recharges for central services. The subjective summary is shown in **Appendix B**.
- 6.3 It should be noted that this shows only the budget for services falling within the remit of the Homes & Communities Committee, but overall, across all services and taking account of 'below the line' costs and income the necessary savings for 2016/17 are almost achieved, however when the overall budget is considered by the Policy & Finance Committee on 3rd December it may refer budgets back where it feels that additional savings need to be made.
- 6.4 The current draft budget shows an increase in 2016/17 with budgets remaining fairly constant throughout the remainder of the medium term financial plan. The increase is due entirely to the payment of grant to Newark Town Council as part of the devolution agreement - this payment was included 'below the line' in the 2015/16 budget process as it was funded out of the savings due to be achieved by devolution of services to Newark Town Council. This is at a time when the Council is facing reducing government grants and other financial pressures. It is important that the Committee continues to scrutinise and review its budget in order to achieve additional savings in future years. The budget has been prepared on existing arrangements, i.e. the Council being based at Kelham Hall. It does not currently include any long term implications of the Moving Ahead Project.
- 6.5 Direct service expenditure net of capital charges and internal central services recharges currently shows an overall increase of £211,650 against 2015/16 budget. As noted above, this relates to the grant payment to Newark Town Council under the devolution agreement. This figure assumes a 1% increase in salary and wages costs overall in 2016/17 and future years. An average of 2% inflation on expenditure and income, as approved by the Policy & Finance Committee at its meeting on 10th September 2015 is included; however budget officers and business managers have been instructed to look for additional savings so that the new budget comes in at or below the 2015/16 budget.
- 6.6 Staffing costs account for approximately 56% of the overall gross service costs excluding housing benefits payments (58% on the Homes & Communities Committee budget) and significant budget savings cannot be achieved without affecting staffing levels.
- 6.7 Major variances between 2015/16 and 2016/17 are shown below:
- 6.7.1 The apparent increase in costs on Energy and Home Support is funded from reserves and shown 'below the line' in the budget.
- 6.7.2 Charges to Active4Today for central services are now shown as actual income as they are receipts from a 3rd party and no longer an internal recharge. This results in the apparent 'saving' on ICT.
- 6.7.3 Increased income from providing front line services for Nottinghamshire County Council have resulted in savings on the Customer Services budget.

7.0 Revenue Budget Bids 2016/17

7.1 As stated above, Members will be aware that the Council is likely to face severe budgetary challenges over the next four years. As other pressures impact on Local Government spending it is anticipated that further cuts may be forced on to Local Government. Consequently, it is not possible for revenue growth bids to be incorporated into the budget for 2016/17 or following years.

8.0 Increases in Fees and Charges

8.1 Members will be aware that a review of charges is considered as part of the budget process each year. With this in mind it is proposed that a **guideline** figure for increases to fees and charges should be set at a minimum of 2% for each year of the medium term financial plan. In preparing income budgets officers should have regard to this guidance and the level of RPI at the time the charges are set. Each type of income should be considered on its own merits and there should be comparative assessment with other local authorities and service providers in the area before final approval of fees and charges by Council. It is important for income levels to be considered **net** of VAT where appropriate, ie to consider the level of income ultimately received by the Council. A comparison of proposed fees and charges for 2016/17 with those charged during 2015/16 is included at **Appendix E**.

8.2 It is important that fees and charges are considered within the framework set out in the Corporate Charging Policy that is included at Appendix D.

8.3 Proposals for increases in fees and charges will be brought to the next meeting of the Homes & Communities Committee on 18th January 2015 for consideration and recommendation to Policy & Finance Committee on 25th February 2016 and Council on 10th March 2016.

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 The figures at this stage in the budget process require a considerable amount of work before they are recommended to Policy & Finance Committee on 25th February 2016.

9.2 It is important that the Committee continues to scrutinise and review its budget in order to achieve additional savings in future years at a time when the Council is facing reducing government grants and other financial pressures.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) the Committee undertakes a review of fees and charges (excepting services which are subject to commissioning and devolution);**
- (b) the current draft Committee budget be incorporated into the overall service budget to be reported to Policy & Finance Committee at its meeting on 3rd December 2015; and**
- (c) the Director - Resources, continues to formulate budget proposals for formal consideration at the Homes & Communities Committee meeting on 18th January 2016 for recommendation to Policy & Finance Committee on 25th February 2016.**

Reason for Recommendations

To ensure that the preliminary figures for the budget are considered by Policy & Finance Committee and that final budget proposals for 2016/17 to 2020/21 are submitted to the Homes & Communities Committee on 18th January 2016 for recommendation to Policy & Finance Committee on 25th February 2016.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact D. Dickinson on Extension 5300 or A. Wasilewski on Extension 5738.

David Dickinson
Director - Resources

BUDGET SUMMARY

HOMES & COMMUNITIES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	15/16 net of 7s 8s & 95101	2016/17 DRAFT BUDGET	MORE/ (LESS) no 7's 95101	2017/18 BASE BUDGET	2018/19 BASE BUDGET	2019/20 BASE BUDGET	2020/21 BASE BUDGET
A10204	MISCELLANEOUS HOUSING (GF)	(610)	(630)	(20)	(630)	(630)	(630)	(630)
A10212	PRIVATE SECTOR SPEECH CALL	(62,660)	(70,450)	(7,790)	(70,450)	(70,450)	(70,450)	(70,450)
A10213	HOUSING OPTIONS	329,100	337,690	8,590	336,570	339,160	341,800	343,950
A10215	STRATEGIC HSG (WAS COMMUNITY)	65,670	68,060	2,390	69,200	69,870	70,540	71,210
A10802	ICT	519,500	457,810	(61,690)	465,650	471,170	477,980	484,520
A10804	CASHIERS	(5,010)	900	5,910	1,800	2,710	3,640	4,590
A10809	CUSTOMER SERVICES	438,020	412,140	(25,880)	416,950	421,540	426,250	430,960
A10810	COMMUNICATIONS & CUST SERVICES	116,760	119,460	2,700	120,410	121,350	122,300	123,270
A10814	LICENSING ADMIN	(42,630)	(42,960)	(330)	(42,070)	(41,580)	(43,110)	(40,640)
A10816	COMMUNITY SAFETY	38,410	38,870	460	39,300	39,760	40,210	40,660
A10820	LICENSING ENFORCEMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A10823	ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	24,670	26,780	2,110	27,530	28,380	29,270	30,140
A10826	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	26,490	27,430	940	27,840	28,250	28,650	29,070
A11126	CCTV	115,360	137,340	21,980	140,640	143,490	146,430	149,370
A11607	ENERGY AND HOME SUPPORT	47,820	72,730	24,910	74,460	74,100	75,800	75,460
A11921	GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS	149,110	388,680	239,570	368,680	360,050	334,000	332,290
A11923	EMERGENCY PLANNING	55,840	53,640	(2,200)	53,330	54,020	54,720	55,420
A15013	IS NON STOCK RECHARGES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	1,815,840	2,027,490	211,650	2,029,210	2,041,190	2,037,400	2,059,190

**BUDGET SUMMARY
HOMES & COMMUNITIES SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY**

CODE	DESCRIPTION	2015/16 INITIAL BUDGET	2016/17 DRAFT BUDGET	More/ (Less)	2017/18 BASE BUDGET	2018/19 BASE BUDGET	2019/20 BASE BUDGET	2020/21 BASE BUDGET
111	SALARIES AND WAGES	1,467,340	1,534,780	67,440	1,511,490	1,526,350	1,541,340	1,556,500
113	NATIONAL INSURANCE	96,310	100,130	3,820	98,880	99,860	100,860	101,870
114	SUPERANNUATION	162,490	174,690	12,200	171,670	173,380	175,070	176,790
	EMPLOYEE SUB TOTAL	1,726,140	1,809,600	83,460	1,782,040	1,799,590	1,817,270	1,835,160
211	REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	750	750	0	750	750	750	750
212	ENERGY COSTS	1,980	2,000	20	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
213	RENT	22,710	22,710	0	22,710	22,710	22,710	22,710
214	RATES	3,200	3,260	60	3,330	3,400	3,470	3,540
215	WATER SERVICES	300	350	50	360	370	380	390
217	CLEANING AND DOMESTIC	80	280	200	290	300	310	320
219	CONTRIBUTION TO FUNDS	2,300	14,300	12,000	14,300	14,300	14,300	14,300
315	CAR ALLOWANCES	15,900	15,220	(680)	15,470	15,730	15,960	16,210
411	EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE	102,810	89,680	(13,130)	90,350	91,030	91,530	92,500
412	MATERIALS	100	100	0	100	100	100	100
431	CLOTHING AND UNIFORMS	1,090	1,110	20	1,130	1,150	1,170	1,190
441	GENERAL OFFICE EXPENSES	30,350	30,900	550	31,030	31,170	31,310	31,450
451	CONTRACTUAL	28,080	20,930	(7,150)	21,350	21,770	22,210	22,650
452	OTHER SERVICES	84,470	73,400	(11,070)	75,110	74,790	76,520	76,210
461	COMMUNICATIONS AND COM	179,820	179,530	(290)	181,650	183,820	186,040	188,300
471	STAFF	4,840	5,020	180	5,080	5,130	5,190	5,240
481	GRANTS	143,110	382,680	239,570	362,680	354,050	328,000	326,290
482	SUBSCRIPTIONS	3,310	3,230	(80)	3,250	3,270	3,290	3,310
491	INSURANCE	35,360	37,490	2,130	39,230	39,960	41,050	41,890
492	CONTRIBS TO FUNDS AND PRC	258,130	234,030	(24,100)	238,510	243,080	247,750	252,490
493	OTHER	114,010	120,200	6,190	119,530	118,860	118,180	117,490
612	TRANSFER PAYMENTS	60,220	65550	5,330	65550	65550	65550	65550
	RUNNING EXPENSES SUB TOT	1,092,920	1,302,720	209,800	1,293,760	1,293,290	1,277,770	1,284,880
922	Contributions From Other Las	0	(20,460)	(20,460)	(20,460)	(20,460)	(20,460)	(20,460)
928	Recharge Non Gf Accounts	(453,980)	(506,080)	(52,100)	(504,450)	(506,690)	(507,700)	(509,410)
931	Sales	(114,700)	(117,200)	(2,500)	(115,200)	(115,200)	(117,200)	(115,200)
932	Fees And Charges	(14,600)	(59,230)	(44,630)	(21,840)	(21,840)	(21,840)	(21,840)
933	Rents	(135,110)	(156,250)	(21,140)	(155,760)	(155,270)	(154,790)	(154,790)
938	Fees And Charges	(184,800)	(122,780)	62,020	(125,120)	(127,520)	(129,970)	(132,480)
939	Other Receipts	(94,420)	(97,200)	(2,780)	(98,130)	(99,080)	(100,050)	(101,040)
941	Interest	(610)	(630)	(20)	(630)	(630)	(630)	(630)
951	Recharge Non Gf Accounts	(5,000)	(5,000)	0	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)
	INCOME SUB TOTAL	(1,003,220)	(1,084,830)	(81,610)	(1,046,590)	(1,051,690)	(1,057,640)	(1,060,850)
	COMMITTEE TOTAL	1,815,840	2,027,490	211,650	2,029,210	2,041,190	2,037,400	2,059,190

2016/17 REVENUE BUDGET TIMETABLE				
Action	Base Budget & General Principles of Budget	Draft Budget	Draft Final Budget	Final Budget Approval & Council Tax Setting
Base budget & general principles of budget				
Budget workshop for Members and/or presentations to Groups				
Business Manager presentation				
Support Services – agree basis for recharging		11 th September 2015		
Working Papers Issued to Budget Officers		Last date 20 th July 2015		
		Budget developed with Heads of Service, Business Managers, Committee Chairs & Opposition Spokespersons		
First draft of treasury estimates based on capital programme reported to September Policy & Finance Ctte.		First week of October		
Draft budgets complete – no support services allocated	30 th September 2015	30 th September 2015		
Budgets uploaded to eFinancials	6 th to 8 th October			
Co-ordination and review of first draft budget and reports prepared.	12 th – 16 th October			
First draft of budget		Economic Development Committee 25 th November 2015 (papers 04/11/15) Leisure & Environment Committee 24 th November 2015 (papers 5/11/15) Homes & Communities Committee 30 th November 2015 (papers 05/11/15) Policy & Finance Committee 3 rd December 2015 (papers 11/11/15)	Policy & Finance Committee 3 rd December 2015 (papers 11/11/15)	

Final treasury estimates completed based on capital performance reported to December Policy & Finance			By end of December	
Support services allocated and uploaded to eFinancials	There may be late changes if Policy & Finance refer budgets back to Committees or change their own budget	23 rd to 27 th November		
Final Committee budgets approved for consideration by Policy & Finance Committee 25 th February 2016			Economic Development Committee 6 th January 2016 (papers 09/12/15) Homes & Communities Committee 18 th January 2016 (papers 22/12/16) Leisure & Environment Committee 26 th January 2016 (papers 07/01/16) Policy & Finance Committee 28 th January 2016 (papers 06/01/16)	
Housing Revenue Account Budget and rent setting report				Policy & Finance Committee 28 th January 2016 to make comments to Council on 9 th February 2016 for approval. (Papers complete by 06/01/16)
Council Tax Discounts Scheme determined				Council 16 th December
Council Tax Base				Officer Decision determined between 1 st December and 31 st January
Revenue Budget Setting				Policy & Finance 25 th February 2016 (papers 03/02/16)
Parish Council Precept information received			(up to) 29 th February 2016	
Council Tax setting				Council 10 th March 2016 (papers 02/03/16)

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE CHARGING POLICY

Revised: July 2015

Date of next revision: July 2016

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1. Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. Purpose of the Policy

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

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

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

3. Processes and Frequencies for Reviewing Charges

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

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

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

4. Factors Relevant to the Annual Review of Charges

Annual reviews of charges will consider the following factors:

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

5. Processes for Setting Charges for New Sources of Income

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

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

A business plan must be prepared.

Any potential new income streams will need to be approved by CMT and Policy and Finance Committee.

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

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

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

6. Calculation of Charges

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

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

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

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

All fees and charges must be calculated in accordance with the current V.A.T. regulations.

7. Concessionary Charges

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8. Discounts

For certain services it will be normal practice to set promotional discounts, Frequent User discounts or group Discounts.

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

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

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

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

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

9. The Use of Market Intelligence

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

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

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

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

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

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

10. Further Guidance

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

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

All fees/charges must be published on the Councils website.

HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
ADVERTISING RATES FOR VOICE MAGAZINE

Size	2015/2016 Existing	2016/2017 Proposed
Full page (210mm wide x 295mm deep)	£1,040 + VAT	£1,060 + VAT
½ page (210mm wide x 147.5mm deep)	£624 + VAT	£636 + VAT
¼ page	£364 + VAT	£371 + VAT
Back (full page dimensions)	£1,275 + VAT	£1,300 + VAT

HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
LICENSING FEES

Type of Licence		Relevant Act or Order*	2015/16	2016-17 Proposed	Duration
1	Hypnotism – Grant	Ref 001	£46	£48	Occasional for specific dates
2	Sex Establishment – Grant/Renewal	Ref 002	£3540	£3540	Up to 1 year
3	(a) Hackney Carriage	Ref 003	£208	£210	Annual
	(b) Private Hire Vehicle –	Ref 003	£160	£163	Annual
	(c) Ambulance Vehicles	Ref 003	£90	£92	Annual
	(d) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers	Ref 003	£94	£110 renewal £175 new applicants	3 years or lesser depending on circumstances
	(e) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers Licence (persons over 65 years)	Ref 003	£32	£40	Per Year
(f) Ambulance Drivers	Ref 003	£63	£70 renewal £90 new applicants	3 years or lesser depending on circumstances	
(g) Ambulance Drivers over 65	Ref 003	£22	£25	Annual	
(h) Private Hire Operators	(i) Basic	Ref 003	£145	£150 £250	3 years 5 years*
	(ii) plus per vehicle		£27	£28	
(i) Ambulance Operators	(i) Basic	Ref 003	£140	£145 £240	3 years 5 years*
	(ii) plus per vehicle Plates		£17	£18	
(j) Knowledge Test	Ref 003	£37	£38	One Off	
(k) Drivers Test	Ref 003	£37	£38	One Off	
(l) Replacement Badge	Ref 003	£16	£16	One Off	

(m)	Replacement Plate	Ref 003	£39	£39	
(n)	Transfer of Plate (No replacement plate to be issued)	Ref 003	£42	£42	One Off
(o)	Temporary Plate/Transfer of Plate (including Plates and magnetic roundals)	Ref 003	£83	£83	One Off
(p)	Temporary Plate/Transfer of Plate (including Plates and stick on roundals)	Ref 003	£70	£70	One Off
(q)	Temporary & Permanent Magnetic Roundels	Ref 003	£16	£16	One Off
(r)	Additional Stick on Roundels	Ref 003	£8	£8	One Off

Fees have been generally increased by approximately 2%. Some fees are unchanged to better reflect the actual costs

***A new 5 year duration of licence has been introduced.**

GAMBLING ACT 2005
DISCRETIONARY FEES

These fees are set at the discretion of the local Authority within a framework on minimum and maximums set in statutory regulations.

No changes are proposed for these fees.

	Bingo	Adult Gaming Centre	Family Entertainment Centre	Betting Premises (Ex Tracks)	Betting On Track
Transitional Fast Track Application	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200
Transitional Non-Fast Track Application	£800	£800	£800	£800	£800
New Application	£943	£943	£943	£943	£943
Application for Reinstatement of Licence	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500
Application for Provisional Statement	£943	£943	£943	£943	£943
Application to Convert Provisional Statement	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600
Application to Vary Licence	£800	£800	£800	£1000	£1000
Application to Transfer Licence	£33	£33	£33	£33	£33
Notification of Change	£51	£51	£51	£51	£51
Copy of Licence	£16	£16	£16	£16	£16
Annual Fee	£475	£475	£475	£475	£475

GAMBLING ACT 2005
FEES SET BY STATUTE

Permit		Fee	Comments
Family Entertainment Centre	Transitional	£100	
	New	£300	
	Renewal	£300	
	Change of Name	£25	
	Copy Permit	£15	
Prize Gaming Permits	Transitional	£100	
	New	£300	
	Renewal	£300	
	Change of Name	£25	
	Copy Permit	£15	
Gaming Machines in Alcohol Licensed Premises	Notification of up to 2 machines	£50	
	Gaming machine permit for more than 2 – existing operator	£100	
	Gaming machine permit for more than 2 – new operator	£150	
	Variation (number of category)	£100	
	Transfer	£25	
	Annual fee	£50	
	Change of name	£25	
	Copy of permit	£15	
<u>Club Gaming and Club Machine Permits</u>	Existing Operators (transition)	£100	
	New Application	£200	
	Renewal	£200	
	Variation	£100	
	Annual Fee	£50	
	Copy of Permit	£15	
Temporary Use Notice		£100	
Small Society Lottery	Exempt Lotteries – Registration Fee	£40	
	Exempt Lotteries – Annual Fee	£20	

LICENSING ACT 2003
FEES SET BY STATUTE

<u>Type of Licence</u>	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Premises licence - Application	Variable	The fee payable depends on the rateable value of the premises which are prescribed/set nationally.
Premises Licence – Annual Fee	Variable	The fee payable depends on the rateable value of the premises which are prescribed/set nationally.
Premises Licence –Additional Fee for Large Events	Variable	The fee payable depends on the rateable value of the premises which are prescribed/set nationally.
Premises Licence – Full Variation	Variable	The fee payable depends on the rateable value of the premises which are prescribed/set nationally.
Premises Licence –Minor Variation	£89	
Personal Licence	£37	
Temporary Event Notice	£21	

There are currently no proposals by Government to increase the fees in 2016/17

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES – ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Committee for the adoption of the Annual Delivery Plan with Newark and Sherwood Homes for the financial year covering 2016/17.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The Management Agreement is the overarching legal agreement between the Council and Newark and Sherwood Homes, with one of its requirements being that an Annual Delivery Plan is formulated and agreed.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Delivery Plan is to set and guide the main activities, standards or targets of the Company's operations for each financial year, set against the Council's strategic priorities, its housing vision and outcomes and the need to sustain a viable Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (HRA BP). It states in Schedule 6 of the Management Agreement that:

The Annual Delivery Plan will dovetail with the HRA Business Plan and will cover:

- *Housing Vision and Outcomes*
 - *Company Governance*
 - *Service delivery*
 - *Procurement and Capital programme*
 - *Finance*
 - *Resources*
 - *Performance Management and regulation*
- 2.3 The Delivery Plan is underpinned by Newark and Sherwood Homes own Business Plan. This sets out the Company's strategic vision, objectives and core values and outlines the tasks, targets and resources which ensure delivery. Their Business Plan identifies priorities for action and expected outcomes, being used as a live document to stretch the Company to deliver its vision.
- 2.4 The current Delivery Plan covering the financial year 2015/16 expires on 31st March 2016.

3.0 Annual Delivery Plan 2016/17

- 3.1 The proposed Delivery Plan for 2016/17 is at **Appendix 1**. Included in this is the progress to date of the key activities in the current Delivery Plan that were set to be achieved by the Company during 2015/16 for the Committee's consideration. This information can be found on pages 17 to 21 of **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 One particular activity scrutinised by the Committee related to the Company's review of 'tenant influence and integration in decision making', with proposals to implement a new structure alongside the development of an implementation plan. The Committee resolved to approve the new structure, with a report to be submitted to a future Committee meeting:

(d) an update report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee highlighting whether the anticipated outcomes for the implementation programme had been achieved.

3.3 Officers of the Council and the Company have worked together to ensure that the draft Delivery Plan for 2016/17, in setting out the Company's key activities for that year, reflects the Council's strategic priorities and work streams such as:

- supporting the Council's housing growth strategy;
- working in partnership with the Council to deliver the extra care new build scheme at Bowbridge Road, Newark (*pending final approvals*);
- the relocation to new offices from Kelham Hall;
- supporting the Council in the implementation of the reviewed housing allocation scheme;
- reviewing the existing rules on publications to ensure transparency;
- seeking to tailor services to vulnerable residents
- formulating and consulting on a monthly or 4 weekly tenancy agreement; and
- exploring the potential for shared support services to deliver greater synergy, resilience and efficiencies.

3.4 The Delivery Plan for 2016/17 also addresses the Council's key challenges and priorities put to the Company at its recent Board 'off-site' planning day, set against the requirement to maintain a viable HRA BP. These are:

Key Challenges

- a) *To be more open and transparent - ensuring wherever possible reports are not confidential and are open to the public.*
- b) *To deliver efficiency*
- c) *To be more flexible (in service delivery) – considering on an individual basis where flexibility would improve service to customers within the existing cost envelope.*

Priorities

To increase stock

- a) *The effective use of stock and Asset Management*
- b) *Income Generation*

3.5 All the above are in addition to the Company delivering the core housing services required under the Management Agreement and measured against the agreed key performance indicators.

Proposals

3.6 The Committee is asked to consider the 2016/17 Annual Delivery Plan for the Company as set out in detail at **Appendix 1** for approval, along with progress in the key activities for this current year. For ease of Members' reference the key actions for the Company going forwards into 2016/17 have been extrapolated from the draft Delivery Plan and are set out in **Appendix 2**.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 The equalities implications involved in issues such as the housing growth strategy, review of the housing allocations policy and the move to new offices have been fully taken into account and recorded as part of those separate projects and reports on these matters.
- 4.2 There may be equalities implications in terms of impact upon persons with protected characteristics arising from the review of the Company's Board and tenant participation review and the Council and Newark and Sherwood Homes will need to assess these fully as part of those separate projects before decisions are taken or policies altered.

5.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

- 5.1 The formulation of the Annual Delivery Plan is an integral document to ensure the effective delivery of the Management Agreement and to sustain a viable HRA BP, influencing the HRA's capital and revenue budgets.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION that:

- a) the progress of the key activities identified in the current Annual Delivery Plan (2015/16) be noted; and
- b) the 2016/17 Annual Delivery Plan for the Council's housing company, Newark and Sherwood Homes, be approved and implemented.

Reason for Recommendations

To comply with the management agreement between the Council and its housing company.

Background Papers

Management Agreement between the Council and Newark & Sherwood Homes (2013)
Appendices to the Draft Delivery Plan

For further information please contact Karen White on Ext 5240 or Rob Main on Ext 5930

Karen White
Director – Safety



Our vision is
"to deliver excellent Housing Services"

DELIVERY PLAN 2016/17

Newark and Sherwood Homes Limited



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Delivery Plan is an annual plan formulated to detail the main activities, targets or standards which will guide NSH's operation under the provisions of the Management Agreement for the next financial year; this is the 2016/17 plan.
- 1.2 The Annual Delivery Plan is required to dovetail with the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (HRABP) and to cover:
 - a) Vision and Outcomes
 - b) Governance
 - c) Service Delivery
 - d) Procurement and Capital Programme
 - e) Finance
 - f) Resources
 - g) Performance Management and Regulation
- 1.3 The plan activities, standards and targets have been updated where required, to reflect and respond to changes impacting on delivery.
- 1.4 A list of this evidence and data used to inform the changes in this 2016/17 Plan is provided at **Appendix A**. Section 9 provides contact details to request any information.
- 1.5 **Appendix B** provides a position statement on delivery of the activities and performance indicators in the 2015/16 Delivery Plan.
- 1.6 The main body of the plan focuses on the 2016/17 year and is structured with one section covering each of the above required areas. It has been formulated to take account of the HRABP, the Management Agreement, Company Constitution and Overarching Service Level Agreement.
- 1.7 The activities of the Company, in providing the housing services required under the Management Agreement, will be delivered in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Management Agreement and the key performance indicators and targets set therein.
- 1.8 Feedback from the Council (as shareholder) has asked for the Company to respond to three key challenges and three areas of priority in the coming year in its delivery within the context of the sustainability of the HRABP
- 1.9 Key Challenges
 - a) To be more open and transparent - ensuring wherever possible reports are not confidential and are open to the public.
 - b) To deliver efficiency

- c) To be more flexible (in service delivery) – considering on an individual basis where flexibility would improve service to customers within the existing cost envelope.

1.10 Priorities

- a) Increasing stock
- b) The effective use of stock and Asset Management
- c) Income Generation

1.11 The key challenges and priorities above have been integrated into this Delivery Plan and associate Action Plan. **Appendix C** to this plan demonstrates activity to support each key challenge and priority.

1.12 This plan provides a strategic overview and the key activities, targets and actions.

1.13 Separate documents related to this Annual Delivery Plan are:

- a) Annual Action Plan
- b) Key Performance Indicators
- c) Service Fee
- d) Works Fee
- e) Annual Procurement Plan
- f) Asset Management Strategy
- g) Asset Management Programme.

1.14 The Management Agreement dated October 2013 between the Council and the Company provides the overall context for the plan, its structure and contents.

2. Vision and Outcomes

Standards and Targets

2.1 The Council's outcomes guide the strategic direction of the Company; to support the delivery of standard outlined by the Council's Strategic Housing Vision:

"To maintain the Council's housing stock to a decent standard, ensuring that it is fit for purpose to meet the needs of current and future tenants, delivering excellent housing services that offer good value for money, inclusive involvement and achieve tenant satisfaction, set against sustaining a viable Housing Revenue Account Business Plan that can deliver the wider associated strategic priorities and objectives of the Council"

- 2.2 The Council's Strategic Housing Vision has 5 outcomes; the individual sections of the plan outline the activities, targets or standards that will guide the Company operation to deliver these.

Outcome 1: Standards

Delivery of the core business to manage and maintain the Council's housing stock to the required standards, within the Management Fee set, ensuring the stock remains fit for purpose.

Outcome 2: Involvement

Tenant involvement and satisfaction drive the operations of the Company and maintain the delivery of excellent housing services.

Outcome 3: Income

Income collection is maximised and efficiencies are generated to ensure the sustained viability of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

Outcome 4: Housing Need

Support the Council to meet the housing needs of the district's residents set against the area's demographic and socio-economic profile through housing growth and regeneration.

Outcome 5: Growth

Expansion into other business areas through innovation and entrepreneurialism to attract inward investment to enhance services to tenants, the properties and neighbourhoods they live in, deliver the Council's strategic priorities and sustain a viable Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

- 2.3 The Council's Strategic Housing Vision outcomes inform and influence the following three core aspects underpinning how the Company operates and delivers:

a) Company Vision:

- ❖ *to deliver excellent housing services,*

b) Company Objectives:

- ❖ To deliver high quality and improving performance in customer satisfaction and all areas of service provision.
- ❖ To provide efficient and effective investment and service solutions targeted to meet local need and deliver sustainable Homes and Communities in the future.

- ❖ To maintain and manage a sustainable and viable financial business plan.
- ❖ To productively deliver growth to meet the Company's and Council's objectives.

c) Company Core Values:

- ❖ Customers First
- ❖ Valuing Everyone
- ❖ Delivering Excellence
- ❖ Continuous Improvement and Value for Money
- ❖ Sharing Information

2.6 The plan, in each section as appropriate, advises of any changes considered to impact on 2016/17 delivery and key activities for the year. Actions continuing from the 15/16 Plan will be incorporated in the annual plan for 2016/17 and only new activities are detailed below.

2.7 Key changes impacting on the 2016/17 plan include:

- The Summer Budget Statement
- Housing and Planning Bill – published October 2015
- Welfare Reform & Work Bill
- Progression of welfare reform
- Formulation and progression of the Moving Ahead Project
- Shareholder key challenges and priorities

2.8 These changes are expected to have an impact in the 16/17 year. At the time of this plans formulation and adoption the indicative impacts have been considered, however, the final position is expected later in the calendar year and as yet specific actions have not been established for inclusion within this plan. A full assessment on the impacts of the above key changes will be completed once full detail e.g. from the Housing and Planning Bill is known. This will allow the Council and Company to establish any additional actions required.

2.9 Two additional actions have been developed to support the Council outcome of Growth.

Additional activities for 2016/17 onwards

- Work in partnership with the Council to support delivery of the Council's housing growth strategy, set against maintaining a viable HRA BP: review of the HRABP; support to deliver outcomes emerging from the Council's programme of Neighbourhood studies;

and appraisal of the development mechanisms that enable the delivery of different housing products.

- o Work in partnership with the Council and Nottinghamshire County Council to deliver the extra care new build scheme at Bowbridge Road, Newark, and support the related implementation arrangements, such as allocations, rent & service charge setting, housing management provision and formulation of the co-operation agreement with the County Council

3. **Governance**

Standards or Targets

- 3.1 The Company operates comprehensive standards to facilitate robust governance incorporating:
- 3.2 *A Strategic Framework*: setting out key documents that shape the activities of the Company.
- 3.3 *Governance Guide*: sets out the standards of operation of the Board as whole and individual Directors of the Board. Details the role of the Board as:

The Board's central role is to direct the organisation's work - that is to determine strategic direction, deliver the terms of the management agreement, and approve overall expenditure and policies.

The Board should:

- Set the Vision – where does the organisation want to operate or what does the organisation want to do.
- Set the Objectives - the stages for reaching the Vision.
- Define the strategy – the details of how the organisation will deliver the Objectives.
- Define the Core Values – how should the organisation act and behave.

Management, that is the implementation, of the above, should be delegated to paid staff.

Additional activities for 2016/17 onwards:

- o Review the existing rules on publications to ensure transparency including, where a document is deemed confidential, there is a clear justification noted. Differentiate whether document is accessible to share holder.

4. **Service Delivery**

Standards or Targets

- 4.1 Service delivery standards are informed by:
- 4.2 *Local Service Standards as required by HCA consumer standards:* determined in consultation with tenants to shape service delivery. These are reported on to tenants in an annual report.
- 4.3 *Objectives:* the nature of the tasks and targets are set for the service to reflect the Council's and the Company strategic objectives. The objectives maintain the focus for the financial viability of the Company along with high performance and satisfaction.
- 4.4 *External Measure and Scrutiny:* this includes externally validated Benchmarked service standard and costs, ISO 9001 Quality Management System Accreditation, Royal Society of Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Gold Accreditation, Customer Service Excellence Accreditation and Investors in Excellence. These external mechanisms are a vital and cost efficient way for the Company to maintain and continuously improve standards.
- 4.5 *Professional Trained Staff:* service delivery is determined by the performance and effectiveness of staff an integral part of enabling and supporting staff is the Company's Investors in People Gold Accreditation which supports the Company's culture determined by core values.
- 4.6 *Involvement and Engagement of Tenants and Service User:* the Company will continue to maintain comprehensive opportunities for tenants to access and influence the service and provides funding to support this. The company completed its review of tenant involvement mechanisms during 2015/16.
- 4.7 *Tenants Panel:* the Panel has the role of scrutinising the activities of the Company and is the final stage in the Company's complaints procedure. Activity of the Panel is publically reported to the Company AGM and the Panel also provide an annual report to the Council.
- 4.8 *Housing Performance Framework:* This will cover the core activities of the Company set against the Management Agreement and HRA BP.
- 4.9 These standards overall remain unchanged and five additional actions have been identified to further drive service improvement, with a key focus on meeting tenant need, tenant involvement and satisfaction.

Additional activities for 2016/17 onwards

- Develop and enhance a flexible and responsive customer access standard in partnership with the Council and other service providers to create a clear and aligned service 'offer' appropriate to the vulnerability of the individual.
- Formulate and consult on a monthly or 4 weekly tenancy agreement to align with contemporary income payment frequencies and mechanisms (E.g. 4 weekly and electronically), to assist tenants to access electronic payment methods and related personal cost savings e.g utility payments.
- Assess the impact off the new tenant influence mechanisms and formulate a report on the findings.
- Undertake detailed analysis of satisfaction results from the STAR survey to identify any potential opportunities to improve outturns commensurate to evidenced investment.
- Agree the implementation of the revised Council's Allocations Scheme and work in partnership with the Council in the formulation of generic access to housing suitable to an individual's need

5. Procurement and Capital Programme

Standards or Targets

- 5.1 The Company delivers a Capital Programme for the Council to maintain its housing stock:
- a) to the Council approved Decent Homes investment standard 2014
 - b) to maintain an asset base to support a viable Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (HRABP).
- 5.2 *The Capital Programme* is therefore set within the long term view determined in accord with the Council's approved Asset Management Strategy 2014 (AMS). The elements of investment required to be delivered annually are detailed in the Asset Management Programme (AMP). This is reviewed annually to maintain a five year rolling programme.
- 5.3 *Effective procurement* of the Capital Programme requires a robust approach to procurement and asset management in terms of delivery and offering best value for money. Building material and contract costs are currently increasing emphasising the importance of effective procurement.

- 5.4 *Tenant involvement* is, and will remain, integrated in the Company's processes through input in standards and practices to involvement in commissioning and awarding contracts.
- 5.5 *Efficiency and income* maximisation through effective procurement maximises resources available to maintain the Council's HRABP. The Company undertakes modelling, analysis and review to contribute to the management of the HRABP with the Council. The Company Self-Financing Prospectus identifies that prudent growth increases the viability of the plan and therefore best supports the delivery of housing need, all other things being constant. As the Council considers meeting housing need through growth and regeneration where appropriate, the Company will support the delivery of the Council's strategic approach to this.
- 5.6 *Effective asset management* to support the Council's growth priorities. This includes proactive reviewing of land, communal and general sites as well as individual properties and reviewing individual property and land use.
- 5.7 Key changes impacting on procurement and the Capital Programme informing activities for 2016/17 include the introduction of Heat Metering Regulations 2014

Additional activities for 2016/17 onwards

- Assess the impact of Heat Metering Regulations 2014. Appraise and align capital/ revenue resources as required.

6. Finance

Standards and Target

- 6.1 Our approaches are guided by:
- 6.2 *Transparency*: Newark and Sherwood Homes will continue to operate mechanisms that ensure robust financial practices that are open and transparent and will only apply rules of confidentiality in terms of personal data or business or commercial sensitivity. This transparency includes the publication of payments to suppliers greater than £500.
- 6.3 *Assurance and fiscal control*: this is supported by the Company's commitment to employ a company accountant to provide assurance of this practice and to maintain wider measures to ensure fiscal control is maintained. These include:

- a) *External Audit*
- b) *Internal Audit programme*
- c) *Specific financial controls and procedures*
- d) *Financial Conduct Services*

6.4 *Efficiency and inward investment* support the Company's financial viability and the priorities of the HRABP. To guide the delivery of the efficiency requirement of the Management Fee, the Company has an *Efficiency Strategy* which outlines the Company approach and prioritises activities to deliver efficiency and inward investment.

Additional activities for 2016/17 onwards

- o Support the Council in maintaining the viability of the HRABP including where this is supported by: housing growth through new and innovative delivery mechanisms and housing products; supporting the cost analysis and impact assessment of the Housing & Planning Bill and Welfare Reform & Work Bill; and the potential of de-pooling service charges.

7. Resources

Standards and Targets

- 7.1 To maximise resources available to the Company our approach includes:
- 7.2 *A suite of Human Resources policies* including: robust job descriptions, person specifications, job evaluation and recruitment and selection processes to attract and retain the best experience and skilled employees.
- 7.3 *Use of technology and systems* to underpin agile working.
- 7.4 *Cultural and Performance* requirements for all employees and Directors of the Board to meet agreed high quality.
- 7.5 *External assessment and accreditation* mechanism: Investors in People, ROSPA, ISO9001 Quality Management Standard, Customer Service Excellence, Investors in Excellence, Langland's Good Governance in Public Services Standard.
- 7.6 *Joint working, collaboration* and procurement to deliver efficiency.
- 7.7 Staffing resource costs are being pressured in construction, building and development, requiring proactive solutions to recruitment, retention, and delivery.

8. Performance Management and Regulation

Standards and Targets

- 8.1 Our approach to performance management and regulation is comprehensive and includes both internal and external mechanisms:
- 8.2 These processes combined are comprehensive and resilient to provide the opportunity for openness, transparency and timely intervention and support where required.
- 8.3 External activities undertaken by different parties are detailed in the following table**:

Tenants and the Public	Council as Shareholder	External Authority or Body
Tenant Panel Tenants Panel Report Complaints Local Service Standards Tenants Annual Report Tenant Recognition Award for staff Tenant Forum Tenant Scrutiny Panel Performance Monitoring Panel Service Improvement Panel Tenants and Residents Groups	Regular liaison Meetings Quarterly Reporting Assurance Report Annual Delivery Plan Annual Procurement Plan Annual Action Plan Key Performance Indicators Annual Benchmarking Annual Tenant Panel liaison	External Audit Housemark Bench Mark Investors in People gold Customer Service Excellence ISO quality Management System RoSPA Investors in Excellence Gas Safe NICEIC (National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contractors) STAR tenant satisfaction survey Financial Services Authority Companies House CIPFA HCA

- 8.4 A schedule of performance indicators have been determined to be monitored by the Council. These will be forwarded to the Council by the Company to agreed timelines.
- 8.5 To facilitate internal performance management and deliver the requirements of external scrutiny, NSH has comprehensive internal performance mechanisms. These are set to meet clearly defined

expectations and requirements in delivering the Company Vision, Objectives and Core Values and include:

- ❖ Performance Management Framework
- ❖ Employee performance one to one meetings
- ❖ Annual Review of the Board
- ❖ Director of the Board appraisal
- ❖ Staff Development Interviews
- ❖ Touch base meetings
- ❖ Team meetings/ tool box talks
- ❖ Back to the Track for senior management
- ❖ Staff Satisfaction Survey
- ❖ Board Excellence Awards
- ❖ Face to Face meetings with the Chief Executive
- ❖ Staff Recognition Awards
- ❖ Staff Conference
- ❖ Corporate Training

8.6 Where the Company commissions, services or supports third party bodies, all activities are performance managed through appropriate mechanisms, Contracts, or Service Level Agreements.

9. **Summary**

9.1 Sections 1 to 8 of this Plan capture the activities, standards or targets that will guide NSH's operation in 2016/17 to deliver the requirements of the Management Agreement.

9.2 Section 1 highlights how the company is responding and delivering the council's identified Key challenges and Priorities.

9.2 Any document referred to in this plan is available by contacting Newark Sherwood Homes' Executive and Company Support Service via NSH.ECSS@nshomes.co.uk or by contacting 01636 655900.

Evidence and information

- Management Agreement
- Newark and Sherwood Homes Strategic Framework
- House Mark Benchmarking Report
- STAR Satisfaction Survey
- Local Service Standards
- Council's Housing Growth Strategy
- Annual Action Plan

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Appendix B





Performance






Performance Indicators	August 2015 Target	August 2015 Outturn	2015/16 Annual Target	Expected outturn	Proposed 2016/17 Target
Income					
% of rent collected from current tenants as a % of rent owed	96.25%	96.97%	96.25%	98%	96.25%
Amount of current arrears as a % of annual rent debit	6.5	2.01	6.50%	1.80%	6.50%
% of rent loss through dwellings being vacant	2	0.69	2%	0.80%	2%
Former tenant arrears as a % of annual rent debit	4	1.23	0.50%	1%	0.50%
% of current leaseholder arrears	1	0.02	0.03%	0.01%	0.03%
% of rent arrears written off	0.65	0.28	0.65%	0.30%	0.65%
% of supported housing tenants in support charge arrears	6.5	17.96	6.50%	8%	6.50%
Right to Buy					
Number of RTB sales	10.4	7	25	24	25
Average RTB value	No Target	105,250	No Target	£93,000	No Target
Average RTB discount	No Target	60,024	No Target	£46,500	No Target
Asset Management					
% of properties meeting the Decent Homes standard	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% split between responsive repairs (revenue) and Asset Investment Programme (capital)	28.33	28.24	30%	70 / 30 (capital/revenue)	70 / 30 (capital/revenue)
Welfare Reform					
% of general needs tenants under occupying	No Target	14.35%	15.80%	15%	15%
% of general needs tenants under occupying and in arrears	9	12.35	9%	11%	9%
% of tenancies paying by Direct Debit**	70	44.72%	70%	50%	70%
Number of general needs tenants in receipt of housing benefit (Universal Credit)	No Target	1604	No Target	1690	No Target
Number of supported housing tenants in receipt of housing benefit (Universal Credit)	No Target	1544	No Target	1544	No Target
Customer					
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the quality of their home	No Target	Annual	84.50%	84%	85%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the quality of their	No Target	Annual	92.70%	91%	93%





Performance Indicators	August 2015 Target	August 2015 Outturn	2015/16 Annual Target	Expected outturn	Proposed 2016/17 Target
home					
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service	No Target	Quarterly	76%	74%	76%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service	No Target	Quarterly	91%	87%	91%
% of tenants satisfied with supported housing services	No Target	Annual	90%	89%	90%
% of general needs tenants satisfied with landlord / overall service	No Target	Annual	85%	83%	85%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with landlord / overall service	No Target	Annual	90%	89%	90%
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood	No Target	Annual	80.30%	81%	84%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood	No Target	Annual	90.80%	91%	93%
% of properties in low demand	4%	6%	4%	4%	4%
Complaints received referred to Tenant Panel and / or Housing Ombudsman	1	1	4	2	4
Sustainability					
Inward investment achieved	£100,000	£0	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000
Efficiency delivery achieved (as specified in the Management Agreement)	1%	0%	3%	3%	3%
Revenue spend for management and maintenance costs against budget	£3,379,225	£3,110,521	No Target	100%	No Target
Level of reserves	No Target	£3,703,000	No Target	£710,000	No Target
Finance available for growth (e.g. use of RTB receipts, reserves (year end position), debt cap)	No Target	-	No Target	NSDC input	No Target
Change in NSH Stock Size	No Target	7	No Target	0	No Target
Change in NSDC Stock Size	No Target	-7	No Target	+8	No Target





Action Plan 2015/16 – Progress Report






Key:  – In progress  – Behind Target  – Completed

Title	Status Icon	Comment
Procurement sharing opportunities, with the Council, other public bodies and Councils and other housing organisations are maximised.		This task has been realigned to focus on the Moving Ahead Project, detailed and coordinated work is being progressed to maximise the joint opportunities The Company is also working with the Council to progress joint financial modelling to develop the Housing Revenue Account Financial Business Plan growth plans.
Progress and resource delivery mechanisms to support the Council's housing growth strategy and regeneration activities.		A high Level project plan with timeline to end March 2016 is in place. This project has been linked to related aspects of asset Management Strategy, Housing Growth Strategy and HRABP review and will be delivered jointly by Council and Company staff this is a holistic approach to the delivery of Council Housing Growth strategy and Income generation.
Continuation of e project to support agile working.		Declutter project now complete. Agile guidance in implementation, mobile kit implemented for responsive repairs – programme for remainder of delivery pending a supplier problem Target end of July. Capita reviews on schedule, total mobile implemented. Web site review and Open Access progressing. Case management delivery detail being examined to support delivery by end of year.
Liaison with the Council to provide a co-ordinated approach and preparation for the relocation to new offices from Kelham Hall.		The Company e project is progressing a series of actions to maximise Company ability to respond and deliver to the requirements of the Moving Ahead project. Company have a representative on the MAP who is working on joint solutions with Council colleagues to deliver channel shift.

Title	Status Icon	Comment
Develop options of how additional parking could be provided and funding which is over and above a property sustainability or health and safety landlord responsibility.		Options and approaches mapped with detail being formulated to enable consideration and adoption of approach.
Implement Legionella assessment surveys over a five year programme with related capital investment programme.		Surveys commissioned and being undertaken, Costs of identified works is being monitored to inform formation of appropriate programme to accord with legislation in future years and estimate capital and financial provision.
Develop a joint approach with the Council to manage the withdrawal of NCC funding towards supported accommodation.		Completed. Intensive Housing Management Service implemented following consideration by Council and Board
Implement the outcomes from the review of tenant influence and report these to the Council.		The implementation includes the creation of new terms of references, the recruitment of new tenants and the withdrawal from existing practices. All elements have been commenced with the new terms of reference drafted and withdrawal from existing practices nearing completion. The recruitment of new members will continue throughout the summer to support the target of the new arrangements being in operation from October 2015
Liaison with the Council to provide a coordinated approach and consider options to support the channel shift and access to services across the district.		The Company has a range of projects in place that support channel shift and increased access to services. These elements are currently being integrated into a cohesive plan which will form the basis of liaison with Council colleagues to ensure a co-ordinated approach between the Company's plans and the Council's moving forward agenda. This work is also being aligned to the joint work on MAP.

Title	Status Icon	Comment
Review age designation of supported accommodation and link to housing support charge, in context of: the Council's Allocation Scheme and Tenancy Agreement; meeting housing need and demand; and associated risks with any such review e.g. impact upon RTB.		Re-designation links to overall property sustainment and the viability of the HRABP. Careful analysis will be undertaken and linked to the allocation review. Council and Company colleagues have jointly discussed and agreed the approach to reviewing the Allocation Policy. The project implementation document was submitted for consideration and approved by Homes and Communities committee in September 2015.
Support the Council to progress and deliver new models of housing support, such as that associated with Nottinghamshire County Council's Extra Care programme and younger adults with learning disabilities.		A range of actions have been undertaken to support the Council in progressing new models of housing support including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progression of Bowbridge Road development to deliver extra care housing. 2. Provision of Intensive Housing Management Services at Vale View and, pending Board approval, at Scarborough Road. 3. Further discussions with NCC with regard to provision of accommodation for young adults with learning disabilities. 4. Discussions with other local delivery partners with regard to expansions of Careline Service.
Continuation of management of the withdrawal of Nottinghamshire County Council Supporting People funding and subsequent service remodelling in liaison with the Council.		Complete for all elements with the exception of Vale View. Consultation on charge changes progressing positively post withdrawal of Supporting People funding and implementation of IHMS. Consultation completed and formal notices issued to complete the withdrawal process by the end of August 2015.
Continuation of progression of implementation of electronic governance to be completed by end of 2016/17.		Some Directors of the Board have now migrated to predominantly electronic ways of working. A project plan is being developed to migrate the remaining Board members to electronic working inclusive of the necessary support and training. Timescale for completion is March 2016.

Title	Status Icon	Comment
Review of Council policies in delivery of ASB, improve coordination across Company, Council and with other agencies to remove duplication, link to the Council's community safety commissioning project including requirements of Crime and Policing Act 2014.		Work has progressed with Council colleagues and following the completion of the Council's revised ASB policy the Company's revised Policy can be determined. This will be presented to the January meeting of the Board for approval.
Undertake the Board annual review including consideration of the Board's composition and the role of the Chairman and make recommendations to the Council on possible changes.		Annual Review completed. Update Report on progression of resolutions on Board agenda for meeting on 16 th July 2015.
Progression of access to services digitally to support and align service access to the implementation of Welfare Reform.		The Company has a range of coordinated tasks being progressed as part of the overall e-project which deliver this task. To date the de-clutter task has been completed which has removed paper and enhanced access to electronic data. Agile working is being rolled out in the near future supported with updates to the IT kit. The website review project is underway and planned to be completed on target which will support the implementation of open access across the key service areas. The work being progressed also has linkages to the Moving Ahead Project.
Enhancing communication to raise awareness of how tenants influence the Company and the services it provides.		New tenant influence mechanisms are being implemented which support the opportunity to refresh the communication messages as part of the implementation process. The Company has also introduced a review of its communication media and has a new approach being progressed for Home from Homes and other regular publications. The website is in the process of being updated as part of the e-project and part of the update is focusing on maximising the messages delivered through the website communication.

Title	Status Icon	Comment
Options for de-pooling of services charges included in the rental charge are developed to consider enhanced tenant service choice and HRABP viability.		This task as been put on hold for this year in liaison with Council colleagues due to the requirement to evaluate the Housing Revenue Account and progress other associated financial work strands with reference to the Elphicke House Report, proposals on rent reduction and Welfare Reforms.
Progression of support for and promotion of use of mechanism for electronic payment of rent and other charges as preferred payment method.		Work continues to promote electronic payment of rent. There are linkages to tasks CORKT 0115, 1615, 3015 and the Moving Ahead project. A holistic approach to the overall work is being taken to aligned delivery of all relevant tasks to ensure effective coordination to maximise delivery outcomes. The Company has updated the Tenancy Agreement for the Company owned properties to deliver the task outcomes
Progression of a preference to provide services digitally/electronically.		In addition the website review includes the development of Open Access which is the system which supports the extension of access to digital services across key business areas.
To actively explore and identify further services to review that have potential for shared services with the Council and other bodies to deliver greater synergy, resilience and efficiency and reduce areas of duplication.		This project is being focused to deliver the efficiencies from the Moving Ahead Project and work is being progressed with Council colleagues to develop shared access services and joint approaches to channel shift.
Procurement practices are delivered accordance with the requirements of the new EU Procurement Directive 2014.		A review of the legislation has been undertaken and the changes required have either been implemented or are planned to deliver within the required timelines.

Appendix C – Actions to meet Council identified Key Challenges and Priorities.

Action	Key Challenges			Priorities		
	To be more Open and Transparent	To deliver efficiency	To be more flexible	Increase Stock	Effective use of stock and Asset Management	Income Generation
Governance Guide	✓					
Meetings procedure	✓					
Board Annual Review using Langlands Good Governance Standard	✓					
NEW TASK Review the existing rules on publications to ensure transparency including, where a document is deemed confidential, there is a clear justification noted. Differentiate whether document is accessible to share holder.	✓					
Progression of support for and promotion of use of mechanism for electronic payment of rent and other charges as preferred payment method.		✓	✓			
Progression of a preference to provide services digitally/electronically		✓	✓			

	Key Challenges			Priorities		
Action	To be more Open and Transparent	To deliver efficiency	To be more flexible	Increase Stock	Effective use of stock and Asset Management	Income Generation
Progression of a preference to provide services on a Self Service basis.		✓	✓			
NEW TASK Assess the impact off the new tenant influence mechanisms and formulate report on the findings.	✓		✓			
NEW TASK Undertake detailed analysis of satisfaction results from the STAR survey to identify any potential opportunities to improve outturns commensurate to evidenced investment.	✓		✓			
Liaison with the Council to provide a coordinated approach and consider options to support the channel shift and access to services across the district.		✓	✓			
Liaison with the Council to provide a co-ordinated approach and preparation for the relocation to new offices from Kelham Hall (MAP project).		✓				

	Key Challenges			Priorities		
Action	To be more Open and Transparent	To deliver efficiency	To be more flexible	Increase Stock	Effective use of stock and Asset Management	Income Generation
Procurement sharing opportunities, with the Council, other public bodies and Councils and other housing organisations are maximised.		✓				
Continuation of e project to support agile working.		✓	✓			
To actively explore and identify further services to review that have potential for shared services with the Council and other bodies to deliver greater synergy, resilience and efficiency and reduce areas of duplication.		✓				
NEW TASK Formulate and consult on a monthly or 4 weekly tenancy agreement to align with contemporary income payment frequencies and mechanisms (E.g. 4 weekly and electronically), to assist tenants to access electronic payment methods and related personal cost savings e.g utility payments.		✓				
NEW TASK Develop and enhance a flexible and responsive customer access standard in partnership with the Council and			✓			

	Key Challenges			Priorities		
Action	To be more Open and Transparent	To deliver efficiency	To be more flexible	Increase Stock	Effective use of stock and Asset Management	Income Generation
other service providers to create a clear and aligned service offer appropriate to the vulnerability of the individual.						
Delivery of joint project within the 2015/16 Delivery Plan – ‘Progress and resource delivery mechanisms to support the Council’s housing growth strategy and regeneration activities’				✓		
Proactive identification of sites with development potential across the district				✓	✓	
NEW TASK Agree the implementation of the revised Council Allocations Scheme and work in partnership with the council in the formulation of generic access to housing suitable to the individual’s need.			✓		✓	
Support of the HRABP review				✓		
Asset Management Strategy – with annual					✓	

	Key Challenges			Priorities		
Action	To be more Open and Transparent	To deliver efficiency	To be more flexible	Increase Stock	Effective use of stock and Asset Management	Income Generation
review						
NEW TASK Work in partnership with the Council to support delivery of the council's housing growth strategy, set against maintaining a viable HRA BP: review of the HRABP; support to deliver outcomes emerging from the council's programme of Neighbourhood studies; and appraisal of the development mechanisms that enable the delivery of different housing products.				✓	✓	
** NEW TASK** Work in partnership with the Council and Nottinghamshire County Council to deliver the extra care new build scheme at Bowbridge Road, Newark, and support the relate implementation arrangements, such as allocations, rent & service charge setting, housing management provision and formulation of the co-operation agreement with the County Council.				✓	✓	

Action	Key Challenges			Priorities		
	To be more Open and Transparent	To deliver efficiency	To be more flexible	Increase Stock	Effective use of stock and Asset Management	Income Generation
NEW TASK Support the Council in maintaining the viability of the HRABP including where this is supported by: housing growth through new and innovative delivery mechanisms and housing products; supporting the cost analysis and impact assessment of the Housing & Planning Bill and Welfare Reform & Work Bill; and the potential of de-pooling service charges.		✓		✓	✓	✓
NEW TASK Assess the impact of Heat Metering Regulations 2014. Appraise and align capital/ revenue resources as required.					✓	
Growth Strategy				✓		✓
Lifeline provision to the private sector			✓			✓
Success of Photovoltaic works through the Feed In Tariff					✓	✓

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V.8

Annual Action Plan 2016/17

New Actions

- i. Undertake a detailed analysis of the satisfaction results from the STAR survey to identify any potential opportunities to improve outturns commensurate to evidenced investment.
- ii. Assess the impact of the new tenant influence mechanisms and formulate a report on the findings.
- iii. Review the existing rules on publications to ensure transparency including, where a document is deemed confidential, there is a clear justification noted. Differentiate whether document is accessible to share holder.
- iv. Formulate and consult on a monthly or 4 weekly tenancy agreement to align with contemporary income payment frequencies and mechanisms (E.g. 4 weekly and electronically), to assist tenants to access electronic payment methods and related personal cost savings e.g utility payments.
- v. Develop and enhance a flexible and responsive customer access standard in partnership with the Council and other service providers to create a clear and aligned service offer appropriate to the vulnerability of the individual.
- vi. Assess the impact of Heat Metering Regulations 2014. Appraise and align capital/ revenue resources as required.
- vii. Agree the implementation of the revised Council Allocations' Scheme and work in partnership with the Council in the formulation of generic access to housing suitable to the individual's need.
- viii. Work in partnership with the Council to support delivery of the Council's housing growth strategy, set against maintaining a viable HRA BP: review of the HRABP; support to deliver outcomes emerging from the Council's programme of Neighbourhood studies; and appraisal of the development mechanisms that enable the delivery of different housing products.
- ix. Support the Council in maintaining the viability of the HRABP including where this is supported by: housing growth through new and innovative delivery mechanisms and housing products; supporting the cost analysis and impact assessment of the Housing & Planning Bill and Welfare Reform & Work Bill; and the potential of de-pooling service charges.
- x. Work in partnership with the Council and Nottinghamshire County Council to deliver the extra care new build scheme at Bowbridge Road, Newark, and support the relate implementation arrangements, such as allocations, rent & service charge setting, housing management provision and formulation of the co-operation agreement with the County Council.

Progressing Actions

- xi. Continuation of progression of implementation of electronic governance to be completed by end of 16/17.
- xii. Continuation of the Company's e project to support agile working.
- xiii. Liaison with the Council to provide a co-ordinated approach and preparation for the relocation to new offices from Kelham Hall.
- xiv. Liaison with the Council to provide a coordinated approach and consider options to support the channel shift and access to services across the district. Including the progression of a preference for Company service delivery and access to be digital, electronic and self-service.

(Note: xiii and xiv will be progressed within and linked to the Council's Moving Ahead Programme and shaped to deliver a coordinated and joined up service delivery approach.)

- xv. To actively explore and identify further services to review that have potential for shared services with the Council and other bodies to deliver greater synergy, resilience and efficiency and reduce areas of duplication.
- xvi. Procurement sharing opportunities, with the Council, other public bodies and Councils and other housing organisations are maximised.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING: NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES & THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with performance information relating to the operations of Newark and Sherwood Homes (NSH) in accordance with the Management Agreement and Annual Delivery Plan.
- 1.2 The report will also provide the Committee with an update on current performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 During the process to formulate the new Management Agreement with NSH, the Policy Committee at its meeting on 19th September 2013 resolved that the Homes & Communities Committee have the remit to '*undertake scrutiny of the operational performance of the Council's wholly owned housing management company*', with the Policy Committee taking responsibility for the determination of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for NSH.
- 2.2 In establishing the suite of KPI's there was a need to ensure that the Council has in place a robust performance framework that includes a core set of strategic KPI's covering the expectations of the new management agreement (including the service specification) and to sustain the viability of the Council's Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (HRA BP). Set alongside this was the need to avoid duplication between the respective monitoring roles and responsibilities of the Company's Board and the Council in order to make the best use of resources and to ensure a consistent, transparent framework is adopted.
- 2.3 The Board already consider and scrutinise a comprehensive range of performance information covering housing management & maintenance, the housing capital programme, rents, governance, diversity, staffing, risks, costs/finance, income, management costs, satisfaction, complaints and health & safety compliance. This is so the Board can robustly challenge the operations of the Company to ensure it functions properly and meets its vision "to deliver excellent Housing Services".
- 2.4 Policy Committee considered the above points and agreed to the strategic KPI's as set out at **Appendix A**, which the Council monitors and scrutinises through the remit of this Committee.
- 2.5 The report that was presented to the Policy Committee at its meeting on 19th September 2013 advised that the set of KPI's be presented to Members bi-annually and by exception where a red indicator appeared within a set of tolerance levels for each KPI. A quarterly finance statement would still be reported covering HRA income.
- 2.6 To compliment the KPI'S and ensure ongoing scrutiny of NSH, the management agreement stipulates that the Company provides in consultation with the Council the following documents annually:

- a) Delivery Plan
Along with setting the Company's main activities, targets or standards under the provisions of the management agreement for each financial year, it also records the KPI's, benchmarking information and work of the Tenants Panel.

The Committee will note that the Annual Delivery Plan for 2016/17 is being presented at this meeting for approval.

- b) Asset Management Programme
- c) Tenant Panel Feedback/Work Programme
Tenant Panel representatives presented the Panels Annual Report to the Committee at its meeting on 26th January 2015. It was noted that the review of the repairs function was still to be finalised and the Committee invited the Panel to present their findings once completed. In this respect the Panel are now looking to finalise their report for consideration by the Company's Board, which will then be followed by a report to this Committee.
- d) Assurance Report *(covering financial affairs & governance)*
- e) Details of formal complaints *(outcome)*
- f) List of let contracts
- g) Procurement Plan
- h) Management Fee

2.7 The majority of the above matters have to be approved by the Policy & Finance Committee, prior to which consultation is undertaken with the Strategic Housing Liaison Panel.

2.8 All the KPI's are recorded and monitored on the Council's Performance Management System, Covalent. Senior officers of the Council and Company meet on a regular basis to review the workings of the management agreement, discuss progress to deliver the Annual Delivery Plan and how the Council's strategic objectives are being met to ensure both parties obligations under the management agreement are being scrutinised and reviewed.

3.0 Newark and Sherwood Homes Performance

3.1 An overview of NSH performance for Quarter 2 of 2015/16 is provided at **Appendix B**, which shows a positive picture with the majority of KPI's meeting or exceeding the targets set. The paragraphs below will provide narrative to some key points of focus.

Customer

3.2 Under the Customer heading at **Appendix B** the KPIs relating to the Survey of Tenants and Residents (Star Survey) for period 2014/2015 are now available. For this period, the survey results indicate that there has been a slight decline in the majority of satisfaction levels recorded. The Company report that the decline does not accord with the levels of performance being achieved or the satisfaction levels obtained through their internal mechanisms. The Company are to undertake an analysis to gain an understanding of the level of satisfaction demonstrated through the STAR survey and consider whether any additional actions should be undertaken

Income

- 3.3 The KPI covering '*% of supported housing tenants in support charge arrears*' is currently significantly higher than that of the target, which is primarily due to changes in the responsibility for payment of the charge further to the withdrawal of supporting people subsidy.
- 3.4 Each customer impacted by the withdrawal of the subsidy has been contacted to ensure they are aware of the changes and support provided to enable them to pay the charge. For those tenants who have not paid the charges, a personal visit has been progressed with a tailored support plan and work continues with those households as required to support income maximisation.

Welfare Reform

- 3.5 As the Committee will note the '*% of general needs tenants under occupying and in rent arrears*' is above target but has decreased from the previous 2014/15 figure. Many of the tenancies impacted by under occupation and the spare room subsidy are challenging cases and the Company are working with each household to deliver tailored actions seeking to reduce arrears and to support sustainable tenancies.
- 3.6 The second KPI of interest is the '*% of number paying by direct debit*', the figure is still significantly below target but the percentage has increased from 2014/15. The Company have specific work strands focused on having a positive impact on this performance and continue to promote the benefits of direct debit sign up through a range of communication methods.

4.0 Housing Revenue Account Performance

- 4.1 The rent debit as at 30th September 2015 is £10,709,099.53; this rose against a profiled budget of £10,253,630. The debit amount raised takes account of empty properties (voids) but bad debts are dealt with at year end.
- 4.2 The HRA BP carefully manages the debt position of the HRA and it can be seen that the Council is able to maintain a good headroom level in which to operate and deliver HRA capital schemes.

HRA Headroom calculation	£000
Housing Revenue Account – Borrowing Cap	112,475
Housing Revenue Account CFR (capital Financing Requirement) as at 31 March 2014	104,175
Headroom as at 31st March 2015	8,300

- 4.3 In accordance with the Management Agreement, the Council is now formulating the management fee for the financial year 2015/16 in negotiation with the Company for approval by the Policy & Finance Committee.

5.0 Proposals

5.1 The Committee note the performance information supplied in relation to the activities of Newark & Sherwood Homes, set against the requirements of the Management Agreement, and the HRA making any observations as appropriate.

6.0 Equalities Implications

6.1 The KPI's set to monitor the activities of NSH include an assessment of tenant satisfaction for the core housing services provided by NSH. Here further interrogation could be made where satisfaction levels decline and adversely impact on equality and diversity issues for tenants.

7.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

7.1 The establishment of a robust housing performance framework to monitor the activities of NSH is critical to ensure delivery of the core principles of the management agreement, to sustain a viable HRA Business Plan and to measure delivery of the wider strategic housing priorities.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the strategic performance information supplied in relation to the activities of Newark and Sherwood Homes and the Housing Revenue Account is noted with the Committee making any observations as appropriate.

Reason for Recommendation

To ensure a robust performance framework is put in place to monitor the strategic performance activities of Newark & Sherwood Homes in accordance with the management agreement and to sustain a viable HRA Business Plan.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Rob Main, Strategic Housing on ext: 5930.

Karen White
Director – Safety

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES - KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	Frequency
Income	
% of rent collected from current tenants as a % of rent owed	Quarterly
Amount of current arrears as a % of annual rent debit	Quarterly
% of rent loss through dwelling being vacant	Quarterly
Former tenant arrears as a % of annual rent debit	Quarterly
% of current leaseholder arrears	Quarterly
% of rent arrears written off	Quarterly
% of supported housing tenants in support charge arrears	Quarterly
Right to Buy	
Number of RTB sales	Quarterly
Average RTB value	Quarterly
Average RTB discount	Quarterly
Asset Management	
% of properties meeting the Decent Homes standard	Quarterly
% split between responsive repairs (revenue) and Asset Investment Programme (capital)	Annual Statement
Welfare Reform	
% of general needs tenants under occupying and in rent arrears	Quarterly
% of tenancies paying by Direct Debit	Quarterly
Number of general needs tenants in receipt of housing benefit (Universal Credit)	Quarterly
Number of supported housing tenants in receipt of housing benefit (Universal Credit)	Quarterly

Performance Indicators	Frequency
Customer	
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the quality of their home	Annual Statement
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home	Annual Statement
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service	Annual Statement
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service	Annual Statement
% of customer satisfaction with responsive repairs	Quarterly <i>(Recording to commence 2015/16)</i>
% of tenants satisfied with supported housing services	Annual Statement
% of general needs tenants satisfied with landlord/overall service	Annual Statement
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with landlord/overall service	Annual Statement
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood	Annual Statement
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood	Annual Statement
% of properties in low demand	Quarterly
Complaints received referred to Tenant Panel and/or Housing Ombudsman	Quarterly
Sustainability	
Inward investment achieved	Annual Statement
Efficiency delivery achieved (as specified in the Management Agreement)	Annual Statement
Revenue spend for management and maintenance costs against budget	Annual Statement
Level of reserves	Annual Statement
Finance available for growth (e.g. use of RTB receipts, reserves (year-end position), debt cap)	Annual Statement
Change in Stock Size	Annual Statement

**NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES ACTUAL PERFORMANCE 2015/16
Quarter Two Performance**

Performance Indicators	Performance 2015/2016	Annual Target 2015/2016	Performance 2014/15	Performance 2013/14
Income				
% of rent collected from current tenants as a % of rent owed.	98.27%	96.25%	98.75%	98.73%
Amount of current arrears as a % of annual rent debit (measure of bad debt).	1.85%	6.50%	1.46%	1.54%
% of rent loss through dwellings being vacant	0.66%	2.00%	0.60%	0.73%
Former tenant arrears as a % of annual rent debit	1.24%	3.50 %	0.98%	0.74%
% of current leaseholder arrears	0.03%	8.00%	0.01%	New
% of rent arrears written off	0.00%	0.65%	0.28%	0.13%
% of supported housing tenants in support charge arrears	21.08 %	6.50%	17.82%	New
Right to Buy				
Number of RTB sales	3	24	24	27
Average RTB value	Awaiting Data		£90,781	£109,407
Average RTB discount	Awaiting Data		£44,758	£55,201
Average Sale Price	Awaiting Data		£46,022	£54,207
Asset Management				
% of properties meeting the Decent Homes standard	100.00%	100.00%	100%	100%
% split between responsive repairs (Revenue) and Asset Investment Programme (Capital)	25.94%	30%	26.30%	New
Welfare Reform				
% of general needs tenants under occupying and in rent arrears (2915 General Need Units)	10.30%	9.00%	11.02%	New
% of tenancies paying by Direct Debit	43.27%	70.00%	39.97%	36%
Number of general needs tenants in receipt of housing benefit (Universal Credit)	1,579	Not Applicable	1,609	New

Performance Indicators	Performance 2015/2016	Annual Target 2015/2016	Performance 2014/15	Performance 2013/14
Number of supported housing tenants in receipt of housing benefit (Universal Credit)	1561	Not Applicable	1,531	New
Customer				
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the quality of their home - Survey of Tenants and Residents (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		84.00%	84.5%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		91.00%	92.70%
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		74.00%	76%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		87.00%	91%
% of tenants satisfied with supported housing services (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		89.00%	90%
% of general needs tenants satisfied with landlord/ overall service (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		83.00%	85%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with landlord/overall service (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		89.00%	90%
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		81.00%	80.3%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood (<i>Star Survey</i>)	Annual Statement		91.00%	90.8%
% of customer satisfaction with responsive repairs (<i>Collated from returned tenant satisfaction surveys on completion of a responsive repair</i>).	NSH updating performance system to enable reports to be generated.		98.00%	New
% of properties in low demand	6.00%	4.00%	4%	New
Complaints received referred to Tenant Panel and/or Housing Ombudsman	2	4	1	New

Performance Indicators	Performance 2015/2016	Annual Target 2015/2016	Performance 2014/15	Performance 2013/14
Sustainability				
NSH - Inward investment achieved	Annual Statement	£150,000	£722,350	£413,000
NSH – Management fee efficiency delivery achieved (as specified in the Management Agreement)	Annual Statement	3%	5%	No data
NSH - Revenue spend for management and maintenance costs against budget	Annual Statement	£3,837,250	£8,765,715	New
Level of HRA reserves	Annual Statement	£2,000,000	£2,000,000	£5,400,991
HRA Finance available for housing growth (i.e. RTB receipts, reserves (year end position), borrowing headroom, NSH reserves)	Annual Statement		£8,350,000	New
Change in Council Housing Stock Size	Annual Statement		5,439	5,438

CAPITAL FUNDING SECURED FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE WARM HOMES ON PRESCRIPTION PROJECT

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To notify Members of a successful bid to the National Energy Action Warm and Healthy Homes Fund for £325,000 of capital funding to install energy efficiency measures for fuel poor residents with long-term health conditions made worse by living in a cold home.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) as a member of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities' Energy Partnership (LAEP), has been working closely with the LAEP Co-ordinator, Public Health and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to help ensure the partnership's capital funding bid to the National Energy Action Warm and Healthy Homes Fund was successful.
- 2.2 The LAEP received notification of the successful award of £325,000 on 9th of October 2015 and is one of 10 healthy housing partnerships across the country awarded an equal share of a total fund of £3.25m.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 The funding will be used to support the Derbyshire Healthy Home and the Nottinghamshire Warm Homes on Prescription projects (details outlined in a previous report to this committee in September 2015) providing households most at risk of fuel poverty and cold-related illnesses with heating, insulation and other measures.
- 3.2 200 households will be assisted in total, 100 across Nottinghamshire and approximately 35 in the Newark & Sherwood district with this funding.
- 3.3 NEA requires significant levels of engagement around project delivery, communications strategy, development support and oversight, monitoring, evaluation and community engagement activity and these arrangements are currently being put in place.
- 3.4 A Programme Board will be established with representatives from each of the district/borough councils, Public Health and the CCGs.
- 3.5 Quarterly steering group meetings will be convened, with regular progress reports and a programme schedule developed by the newly-appointed Programme Manager, hosted by the Council.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 Positive impacts on householders' health and wellbeing are anticipated, providing evidence to demonstrate cost savings to the NHS (particularly around anticipated reductions in emergency admissions to A&E, a key CCG target) with the aim of attracting future funding to expand and perpetuate the service. (An additional £190K has already been secured from a range of other sources to support the Nottinghamshire project).

5.0 Impact on Budget

5.1 There are no implications to the Council's budget contained within the report.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

Reason for Recommendation

To demonstrate the Council's commitment to tackling fuel poverty, health inequalities and partnership working, leading on an innovative and ambitious county-wide project.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Leanne Monger, Business Manager – Housing Options, Energy and Home Support on extension 5545.

Karen White
Director - Safety

SHERWOOD & NEWARK CITIZEN ADVICE BUREAUX - CORE SERVICE PERFORMANCE OUTTURNS 2014-15.

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform Members that Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureaux (S&NCAB) have broadly achieved the agreed performance targets in respect of core advice service provision to residents in the district for the financial year 2014-15, as set out in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between S&NCAB and the Council, for which grant funding is awarded.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 In broad terms, under the agreed SLA for 2014-15, S&NCAB agreed:

- To provide support to all sections of the community within the Newark & Sherwood District who require it.
- Operate its core advice services from its offices on Forest Road, Ollerton and Keepers Cottage, Newark under the agreed lease arrangements with NSDC
- Maintain and continue to develop the outreach in the districts rural communities.
- To supply appropriate administration support where necessary, training and line management support to its staff and volunteers.

2.2 The Council agreed to provide a grant of £88,330 for the period 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016 (which included a 10% retention figure linked to delivery of agreed performance outturn targets) and informal support to the S&NCAB to add value to the service offer provided.

3.0 Core Advice Services

3..1 The core advice service relates to the drop in information and advice services that S&NCAB offers through face-to-face, phone and email services, which are covered by the Advice Quality Standard and online via adviceguide.org.uk.

3.2 To help clients' access advice, they are greeted with a reception service at both offices in the district followed by a Gateway Assessment. This involves identifying client's issues and the next course of action, which may be immediate generalist advice or referral to internal or external specialist services.

4.0 Performance Outturns and Annual Report

4.1 The nominated SLA managers for the Council and S&NCAB meet quarterly to review agreed performance outturns, which are provided below for 2014/15:

	Target	Outturn
Number of clients seen per year	5,000	4805
Number of clients seen per year – Sherwood	Data Only	1962
Number of clients seen per year – Newark	Data Only	1664
Number of clients seen per year – Other	Data Only	1179
Number of contacts (captures repeat/re-occurring)	Data Only	13,044
Number of problems dealt with per year	20,000	16,468
The top five/six advice needs - the number of new social policy issues recorded for each category	Data Only	
Debt		8,620
Welfare Benefits		4,124
Housing		645
Employment		600
Consumer		173
Fuel Poverty (!0% of income)		199
Income Maximisation per year (Benefit Claims)	£ 1,000,000.00	£2,948.810
Debt Handled per year	£10,000,000.00	£10,280.154
Number of volunteers recruited and trained per year	12	22
Average of hours worked by volunteers	Data only	14,000
Value	Data only	£215,000
Case studies	4	In annual report
Training session for front facing staff of the Council, such as but not limited to, Customer Services	1	4

4.2 Whilst the number of clients seen is slightly below target, there is an increased level of complexity with the cases that do present, which have multiple issues to be dealt with. S&NCAB have surpassed other targets and are the highest performing CAB in the County for the level of income maximisation achieved.

4.2 In addition, the SLA requires S&NCAB to produce a comprehensive annual report to evidence the impact of the core advice service locally, supporting the Council's strategic priorities, which is attached as an appendix.

5.0 Equalities Implications

5.1 S&NCAB provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. It values diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

6.0 Impact on Budget

6.1 There is no impact on the Council's budget as grant funding of £88,330 was included in the budget approved by full Council on 10th March 2015. A10% retention is held back until performance information is confirmed and release of the retained funds is then approved by the Council's nominated manager.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee note the contents of the report, particularly the performance outturns and annual report (attached as an appendix) regarding the provision of core advice services to residents in the district by Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Leanne Monger, Business Manager – Housing Options, Energy and Home Support on extension 5545.

Karen White
Director – Safety

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau: Impact report

2014/2015

Published September 2015



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Newark & Sherwood District Councils Priorities:

This report demonstrates how our advice services directly Links to the councils strategic plans for **Prosperity, People, Place and Public Service**.

We support **prosperity** by delivering interventions that will help to connect those in need of work with the economic opportunities that arise e.g. apprenticeships, graduate trainees and placements. Our numerous volunteering opportunities often lead on to paid sustainable work for many individuals. Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice bring additional money into the District via a number of channels including active fundraising to all sectors and through welfare benefit gain for clients.

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice are all about helping **people**. We deliver services and engage with isolated older people in their community through taking our advice to them by home visits. We work in close partnership with the Council's First Contact scheme to achieve positive outcomes for **people**.

A key part of what we deliver supports **younger people** and families to alleviate child poverty and financial isolation whether this is by giving them access to foodbanks, specialist Debt & Welfare Benefits advice or providing **younger people** with training opportunities.

The debt and homeless prevention project successfully undertakes intervention work with the most **vulnerable families** keeping **people** in their homes and saving Newark & Sherwood District Council valuable resources in monetary terms.

As a charity our strategic aim is to support the **place** our clients live in and encourage our clients to take part in developing plans to improve places and communities that affect their lives. Through supporting Newark & Sherwood District Councils strategies we can contribute valuable data, information and ideas for instance when planning to increase the amount of affordable housing.

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice are keen to support the Council in its **public service** and contribute to alternative ways of meeting its statutory responsibilities. We welcome localism and working with our local town and parish councils to meet clients' needs. We embrace the new commissioning environment and being accountable for what we deliver.

We are working with NSDC frontline staff to ensure they can refer their customers to the Citizens Advice through new channels of delivery including digital.

Using trained volunteers and specialist advice and support, a core part of our work is to empower clients to take charge of their lives and promote self-help. This investment in individuals encourages a less reliant culture on public services and a sustainable community going forward.

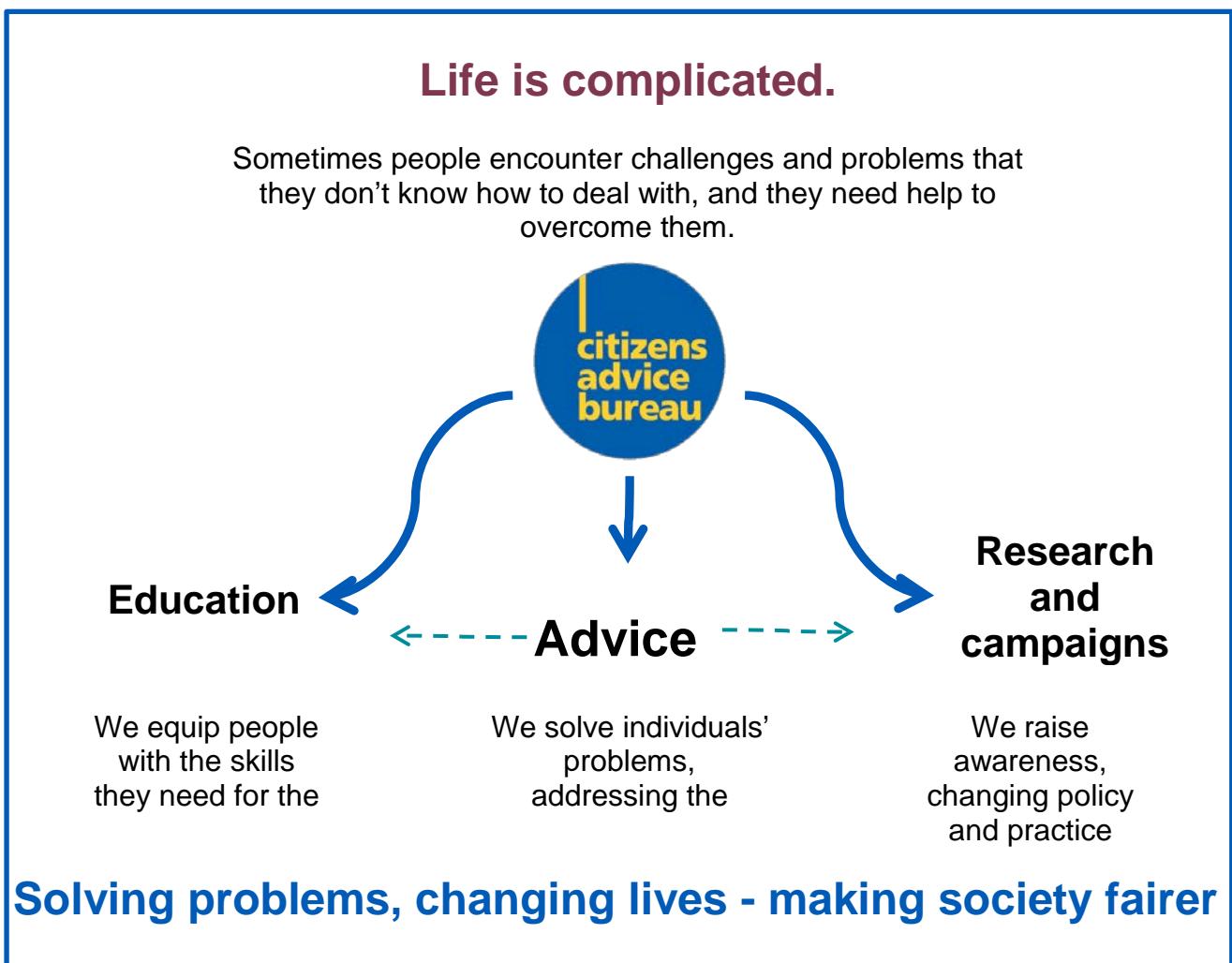
Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice bureau: what we do

Sherwood & Newark CAB helps people to solve problems: through advice and education provision, as well as our campaign work

Advice and education

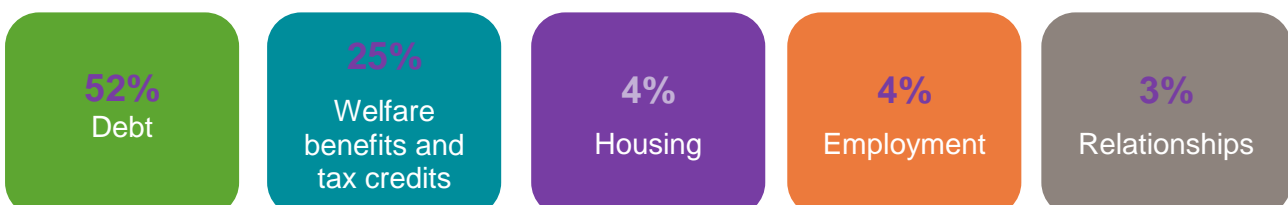
Our service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

Clients can access our service face-to-face, by phone and via home visits. Some clients are empowered to solve problems by themselves; those requiring more support receive specialist casework. In order to prevent problems re-emerging, we also run educational services such as financial capability or energy efficiency training sessions in collaboration with local partners.



In 2014/15, Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau advised 4,805 clients on over 16,468 problems.

Our top five advice issues were:



Our clients often come to us with more than one problem. As we deliver holistic support, we are able to help address multiple issues, with our services targeting the underlying issues as well as the symptoms of clients' problems.

By offering advice and education across key areas such as benefits, debt, housing, employment and homeless prevention, we aim to bring about positive changes in people's lives. This ranges from advice outcomes, such as maximising household income, preventing homelessness and improving health and wellbeing, through to softer benefits, such as improved family relationships.

We help clients deal with pressing issues, and help to empower them with the necessary skills and abilities for the future.

Research and campaigns

We also aim to achieve broader changes for the local community. Our clients' stories give us a wealth of insight into challenges faced by local residents. Where we encounter systemic barriers that prevent us from helping our clients, we work with partners in local government and other agencies to improve the policies and practices that affect the local population. We also undertake research and campaigns work using our insight to make society fairer. In doing this we help our clients, and anyone affected by similar issues in our community.

We are part of the **Citizens Advice service**.

The Citizens Advice service is the UK's largest provider of free advice for members of the public. Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau is part of a network comprising of 310 member Citizens Advice Bureaux. Each bureau operates as an individual charity.

Together, the service delivers advice services from over 2,649 community locations in England and Wales. In addition to the advice provided through bureaux, Citizens Advice is responsible for the national consumer helpline and offers self-help through our website, Adviceguide.

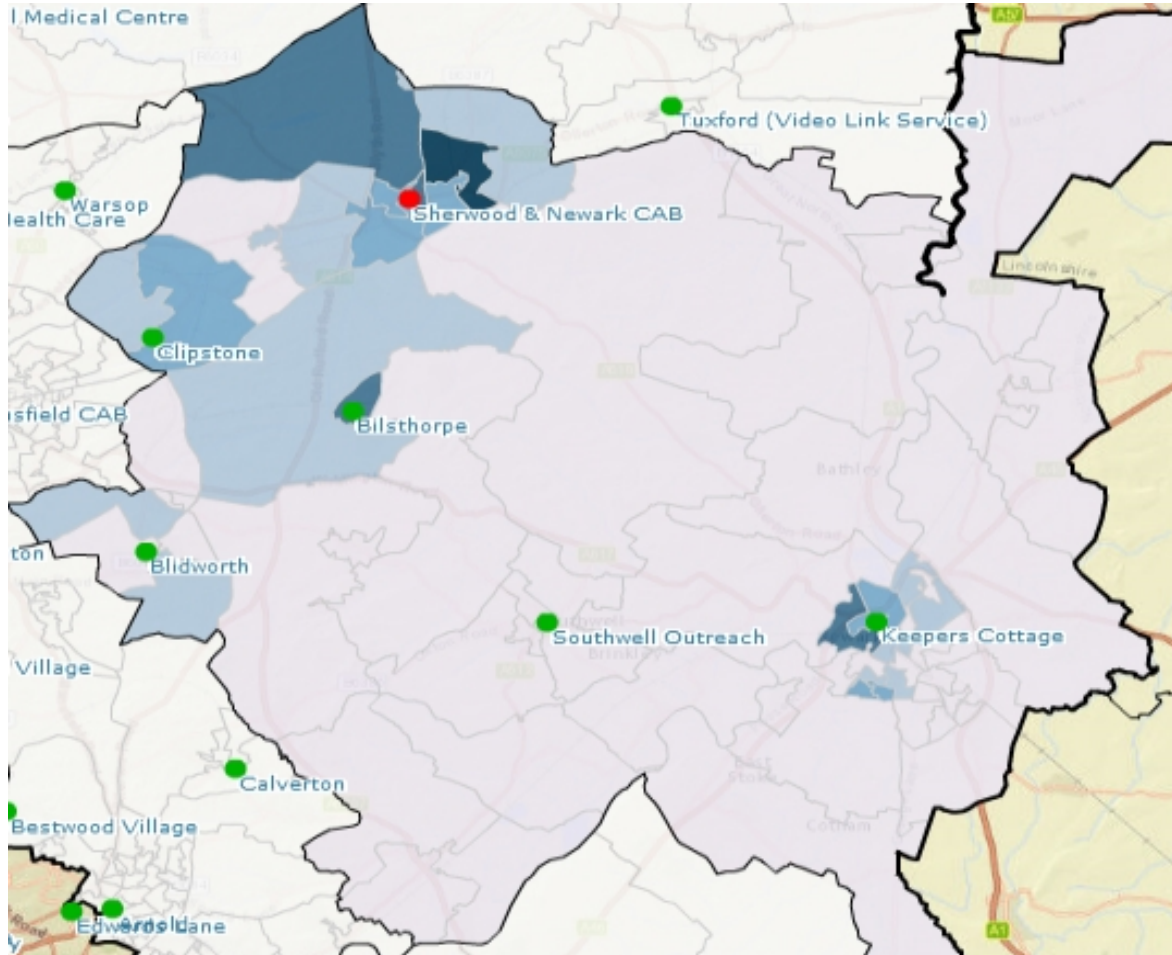
A charity for the local community

Sherwood & Newark CAB has been part of the local community since 1978. Our service is an independent charity run by 15 paid staff (10 full time equivalent) and 40 volunteers. Together, our team makes a huge contribution to the locality.

Our main offices are located in the centre of Ollerton & Newark and we also run three outreach projects in local GP surgeries. This enables us to reach out to a diverse and broad client base.

We advised around 5.2 per cent of the local population in 2014/2015

We offer advice across the whole District



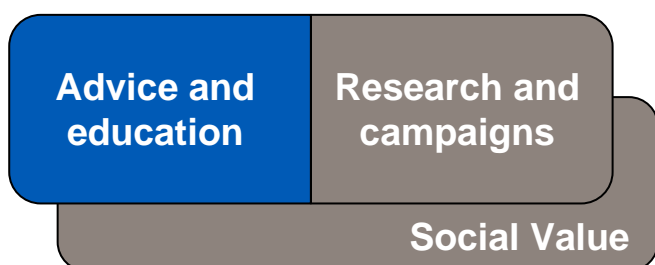
Our funding

The core funding for our service is a grant from Nottinghamshire County Council; Newark & Sherwood District Council and local Town & Parish Councils. We also have funding contracts with the Money Advice Service (MAS), the Coalfields Regeneration Trust and the Big Lottery Fund (BLF).

Outcomes of advice and education provision in 2014/15

We measure the impact of our provision by assessing whether clients' problems are sorted.

In 2014 Citizens Advice conducted a large-scale national survey with a



representative sample of 2,700 CAB clients, to find out what happened to them following advice.

The overarching idea was to pose a simple question: 'What did CAB do for you?'

2 in every 3 clients said their problem is now partly or completely sorted out.



Only 1 in 7 said that their problem had not been sorted. This is often due to systemic barriers that prevent clients from resolving their problem. We undertake research into and campaign on such issues to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

This research sample was representative of the overall service in terms the type of problems clients had, how they accessed the service and their demographic profile. Therefore, we can say with confidence that Sherwood & Newark CAB solves 2 in every 3 clients' problems.

It also proved that CAB advice delivers equitable results: our problem resolution rate is the same whoever you are, whatever your problem and however you access our service.

In cases where we are able to identify a specific advice outcome, we record it in our case management system. Advice outcomes may also have a financial amount identified such as ongoing benefits awarded or debts written-off.

In 2014/2015 Sherwood & Newark CAB recorded the following average value per client:



Sherwood & Newark CAB Client experience in 2014/15

It is also important to us that our clients have a positive experience and receive a good service from us. Our clients report being very positive and satisfied:



The impact of advice and education

The problems that clients seek advice about often have a significant negative impact on their lives, ranging from stress and depression through to relationship difficulties with partners or family.

Citizens Advice's national outcomes and impact research showed that experiencing negative detriment thanks to a problem is more normal than exceptional for our clients:

71 per cent of clients had experienced at least one negative impact prior to advice

Some clients can become trapped in a 'vicious cycle', with problems in different areas of their life reinforcing each other over time. In this situation, clients may struggle to think clearly and solve problems, and this is when they turn to us for help.

In addition to solving specific problems, Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau's holistic support can help clients to achieve a range of outcomes beyond their immediate advice needs, from better health and wellbeing through to improved capacity to deal with problems independently.

86 per cent had experienced at least one positive impact following advice.



We have significant impact in the areas where clients experience greatest need, particularly in supporting mental well-being.

Stopping problems from escalating, and reducing the impact they have on clients' lives, means that local and national government do not incur the cost of resolving the potential consequences: loss of employment, homelessness and poor health.

The following story is just one of countless examples where we have made a significant difference to a client's life, by resolving an issue that was badly affecting them.

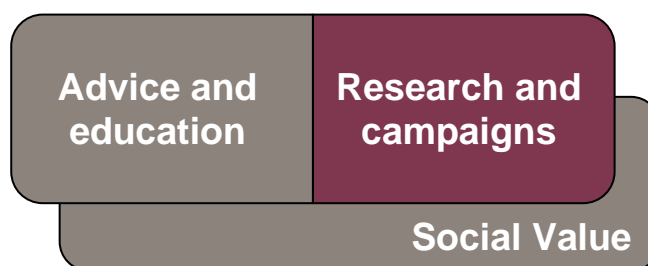
A local case study:

Bob is retired and lives with his wife who is disabled and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, mobility component because she had physical problems walking. His wife had been diagnosed with Dementia some months earlier which had deteriorated to the point that he was unable to leave her on her own. He had asked the Department for Work & Pensions to look at her DLA award again because she now had substantial care needs. Bob had completed forms giving details of her needs and the care he had to provide but the decision was that she did not meet the criteria for the care component. He then came into Bureau for help and we advised that he could challenge this decision.

We wrote to the Department for Work & Pensions on behalf of his wife asking them to look at their decision again and giving details of the help and supervision to keep her safe that his wife needed on a daily basis. The decision was changed and she was awarded the highest rate of the care component for an indefinite period. This award in turn gave them entitlement to increased help with their Council Tax. Bob was then able to use the extra money to pay people to come in and help him with her care.

Outcomes of research and campaigns activity in 2014/2015

Sherwood & Newark CAB works to improve local and national policy and practice, through our research and campaigns work that draws on our unique and extensive knowledge of issues that affect our clients' lives.



We do this locally by working with partners in local government and other agencies to improve the policies and practices that affect the community. We also work collectively with other CABs to inform public policy and help regulators, as well as influence private industry to make services fair for consumers. This enables us to solve broader problems, creating fairer circumstances for the wider public, as well as our immediate client base.

Key examples of Sherwood & Newark CAB's achievements in 2014/2015 include:

Payday loan companies – the bureau provided evidence on constant pressure by the payday loan company Toothfairy for a client to pay £40 per week, which she could not afford. Toothfairy was subsequently closed down following complaints about their practices. Nationally, Citizens Advice campaigned for payday lenders to be properly regulated and to stop irresponsible advertising. The Financial Conduct Authority has now introduced tough new rules on payday lenders.

Sanctions – various evidence has been submitted by the bureau regarding sanctions applied to JSA claimants. Such sanctions appear to be unreasonably applied in some circumstances.

Internet – evidence submitted on the increasing demand by the DWP (and others) to make benefit claims online, even where clients have pointed out their significant problems in managing this. Nottinghamshire Citizens Advice bureaux (including Sherwood & Newark) are currently completing a survey report on the extent to which people can readily access the internet.

Citizens Advice is campaigning for:

- an end to extortionate fees levied on renters by letting agents (NB agents must now advertise their fees).
- all local authorities in England to set up a register of landlords that tackles the specific problems in their area.
- tenants to be entitled to rent refunds where the property they're living in is dangerous or not fit to live in.
- an end to retaliatory evictions.
- all tenants to get reasonable notice before having to move out, even when caught up in a landlord's eviction

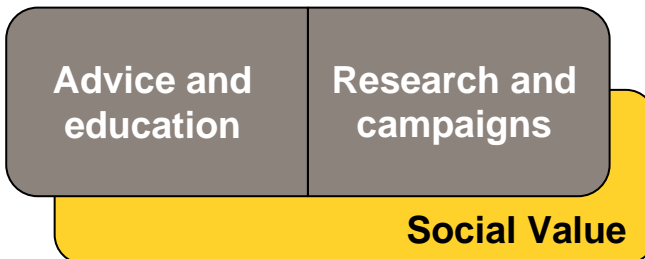
In addition to local and national campaigning, we empower clients and communities to engage with society and make a difference to the issues that matter. Increased

community engagement can boost social cohesion, and a greater sense of citizenship can have real value for society. The importance of this is underscored by government commitment to promote social action, and build stronger united communities, as well as understanding the capacities for communities to create and embed social action and participation at their core¹.

Our social value

CAB social value: the additional benefits of our service delivery

Sherwood & Newark CAB creates a range of additional benefits to the community through the way we deliver our services, as well as the outcomes achieved from our advice and education provision, and our campaigning work.



This is our social value: generated through the work we already do with local people and communities, and our investment in them.²



It covers the value of working with volunteers, our support for local communities, and the capacity of our national network.

We Benefit everyone locally

Sherwood & Newark CAB's value to society in 2014/15:

For every £1 invested in the local Citizens Advice service we generate at least:

£1 =

£1.61	in fiscal benefits	£9.83	in public value	£13.60	in benefits to individuals
	Saving to		Wider economic and		

<p>government, Reduction in health service demands, local authority homelessness services and out-of-work benefits for clients and volunteers.</p> <p>Total: £673,441</p>	<p>social benefits Improvements in participation and productivity for clients and volunteers.</p> <p>Total: £4,117,802</p>	<p>Value to our clients Income gained through benefits, debts written off and consumer problems resolved.</p> <p>Total: £5,695,706</p>
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Sherwood & Newark CAB's Savings to other government departments	
NHS	£102,322
DWP	£238,811
CSJ	£9,795
Housing providers	£222,408

Our community engagement, and local partnerships

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau plays an integral role within the local community. By helping local residents resolve their problems, we gain considerable insight into the challenges facing the local community, and this enables us to understand, respond and adapt to local needs. We also share this information and initiate action, working with others to develop the partnerships and services that will make the community stronger. This enables us, and local partners, to achieve changes in policy and practice that can help to solve and prevent broader problems.

Newark & Sherwood Advice Hub

The Big Lottery project - Advice Service Transition Fund enabled us to start the Newark & Sherwood Advice Hub. This project developed over 2 years and concluded at the end of July 2015.

- **This project successfully increased access to advice services** for residents within the district through the opening of a new advice service in Newark Town Centre and outreach advice sessions in other population centres held weekly at 4 locations.
- **5 digital self-help points** were established at partnership locations across the district.
- **The number of volunteers involved in service delivery increased** through effective recruitment campaigns and established training programme to bring to competency across key skill areas.

- **The project introduced financial capability training:**
 - as part of pre-tenancy processes for people bidding for social housing through My Home My Money pilot
 - as part of move towards independence activities for sixth forms in local schools through Money Smart sessions
 - as support for parents in children’s centres through individual Managing My Money sessions and Money Matters for the Family course
 - in one to one sessions
- **Skills Passport quality standard training** – delivered to 32 Volunteers

The subgroup approach taken by this project has brought together delegated individuals from HUB organisations across the district to explore ways of improving advice delivery in open dialogue with a common purpose.

The second year consolidated relationships between organisations developed in the first year and introduced new organisations. As all organisations involved in the HUB deliver face to face client-services in the district, benefits from HUB activity through training, collaboration and networking will continue to be passed on by those organisations through service delivery.

Newark & Sherwood District Council were a key partner on the partnership board, Led by the Business Manager of Housing Options, Energy & Home Support and offered valuable support and expertise to help drive the project forward.

The value of volunteering

Value of volunteering at Sherwood & Newark CAB	
Fiscal benefit of volunteering total £	£266
Public value of volunteering total £	£175,486

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau benefits from the contribution of **40 local volunteers**. Our ongoing investment in our volunteers’ training and development enables us to provide a quality service to our clients. By ensuring a supportive and constructive working environment, we enable a full range of local residents with different skills and backgrounds to volunteer, taking an active role in this community.

This investment also has tangible benefits for the individual, our community, and society at large as a result. Our understanding of the impact we have on our volunteers, as well as Citizens Advice research with 1,500 CAB volunteers, illustrates this value.³

CAB volunteering improves individuals’ personal skills and abilities, and crucially develops the way that they feel about themselves, their capabilities and their community:

- All CAB volunteers gain at least one practical skill (such as problem solving, communication skills and team work).
- 9 in 10 have an increased sense of purpose or self-esteem

This can have a significant impact on individual lives:

- 4 in 5 believe that they have increased their employability
- 4 in 5 believe volunteering has a positive effect on their physical or mental health

Such improvements have knock-on effects for society, through happier, healthier and more productive citizens. This has a value in terms of volunteer contribution to society, and reduced costs of provisions for those people that otherwise might have required state support, through the NHS or benefits system. For example:

- Volunteering in a bureau can reduce the barriers that prevent people moving into work - 9 in 10 agree that CAB volunteering is helping them to move into employment, education or training.
- *Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau works with 7 volunteers who are currently unemployed - 3 are 16-25 year olds not in education, training or employment (NEET). 2 are in education. Last year, 10 of our unemployed volunteers left us for paid employment, training or education.*
- Citizens Advice research shows that all retired volunteers believe volunteering keeps them mentally active. Stopping work can have detrimental effects to older people's wellbeing, through reduced sense of purpose, structure and loneliness. At Sherwood & Newark CAB, *we currently have 25 retired volunteers*, who we enable to play an active role in their community.

By strengthening communities and bringing people closer together, this improves social cohesion and gives people a greater stake in their locality - 3 in 4 volunteers feel better equipped to be an advocate for their community. This can lead to greater action on behalf of a community, and CAB volunteering can inspire and prepare individuals for this.

CAB volunteers can also act as sources of advice, support and knowledge for their friends and families – with 4 in 5 saying that they have fulfilled this role. Overall, the informal networks of advice that stem from the CAB volunteering experience create resilient communities.



Part of the CAB service

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau takes on board all of the benefits of being part of the national Citizens Advice service, delivering a better local service as a result.

Our established national brand makes us a household name, and clients access a well-known and trusted service. Out of 22 national charities, the Citizens Advice service is ranked by the general public as being the most helpful, approachable, professional, informative, effective/cost effective, reputable and accountable⁴.

Being part of a national infrastructure, which gives us access to support and additional services, adds to our credibility and reliability. CABs support each other, sharing

knowledge of challenges and good practice, so we can best use our resources to support our clients. It is also this network that enables us to come together to do more, be it to campaign on big issues, inform national policy or connect people with society.

In focus: welfare benefits and tax credits

Why is welfare and benefits advice needed?

Around 30 million people in the UK receive income from at least one social security benefit or tax credit.

This is roughly half the total population.⁵ However, despite the receipt of a benefit or tax credit being common-place, there is a need for welfare and benefits advice.

The benefits system is complex and can be difficult to understand

Claimants need different levels of support to understand their entitlement, or to complete forms with full and accurate information.

Welfare reform is significantly altering the way that people receive benefits

We act as a first port of call for many looking to get advice about how this will affect their lives, and to get help in managing the transition from one set of rules to another.

People don't always claim what they are entitled to

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) estimate that £12.3 billion went unclaimed in 2009/10⁶ – which, if claimed, could have improved living standards for many.

The claiming process can involve both official and claimant error

The DWP estimate that £3.3 billion in benefits are overpaid in error, and £1.4 billion are underpaid (with approximately over a third due to official error).⁷ People sometimes need support to address these errors.

Without help, people are unsure when or how to appeal

Claimants need support to understand whether there are grounds to challenge a decision on benefit entitlements, and to navigate the process for doing this.

What do we do?

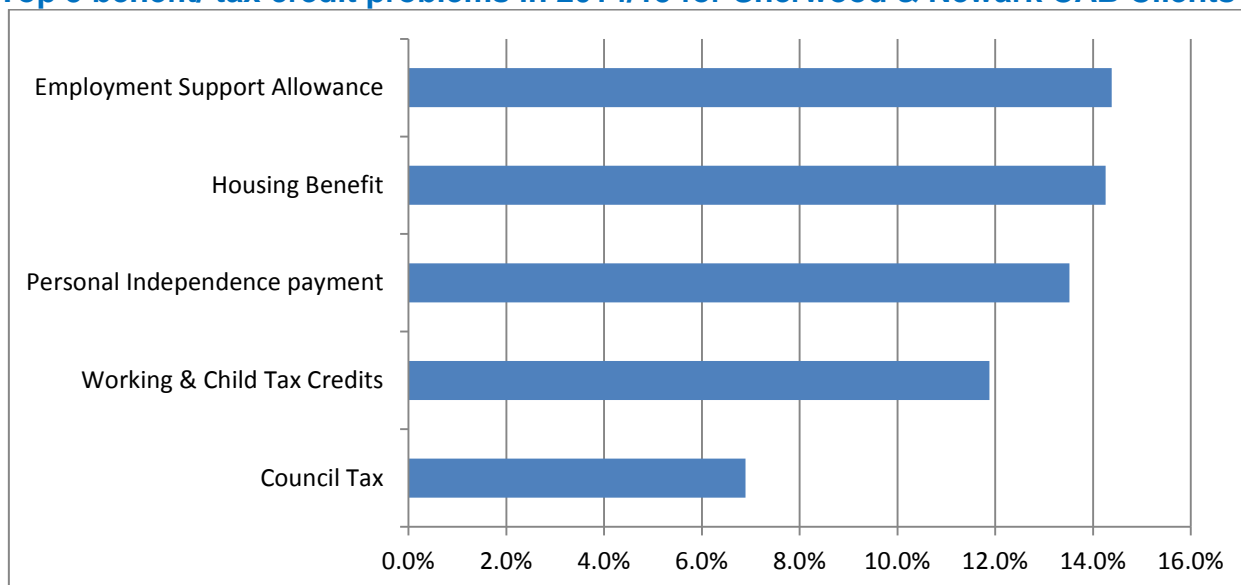
In 2014/15, Citizens Advice Bureaux nationally helped clients with over 1.8 million benefit and tax credit problems

In 2014/15, Sherwood & Newark CAB helped clients with over 4,124 benefit and tax credit problems

The Citizens Advice service provides free, independent and confidential information and advice on welfare benefits, offered over the phone and face-to-face.

Problems with employment and support allowance (ESA) remained the most frequently recorded problem at Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureaux, accounting for 4 per cent of all problems, 14.4% per cent of all benefit and tax credit problems.

Top 5 benefit/ tax credit problems in 2014/15 for Sherwood & Newark CAB Clients



Through adviceguide.org.uk, the service also provides extensive self-help information online. In 2014/15, there were around 8.5 million views of welfare benefit and tax credit content pages - around 18 per cent of the 47 million total views to all content pages.

Solving problems, changing lives

Research in 2014 has shown that, after contacting a Citizens Advice Bureau:



2 in 3 benefit and tax credit clients have their problem solved

Our key advice outcomes in this area of advice include non-financial outcomes (e.g. resolving an administration problem or challenging discrimination) and benefit and tax credit gains (ongoing and lump sum).

Where possible, we record annualised values for benefit gain outcomes achieved for clients in our case management system.

A local benefit case study:

Adam was referred to Bureau via a local NHS project with his family who are Eastern European and had recently moved into this area. They were unable to speak any English. Adam was working but had suffered a heart attack later finding out he had a serious heart condition meaning it was unlikely he would be able to return to work. Adam and his wife had no income at all and were living off savings and support from his son-in-law and daughter who lived with them. With no money to pay for his prescriptions, Adams health problems exacerbated.

Sherwood & Newark CAB visited Adam in his home in partnership with his NHS worker and an Interpreter. We managed to establish a claim for Employment & Support Allowance for the Adam and his wife. We also advised his daughter and son-in-law on their entitlements as his daughter had also recently stopped working pending the birth of their second child.

Benefit gain outcomes for Sherwood & Newark CAB clients recorded in 2014/2015 included:	
Outcome	Average value per clientⁱ
Ongoing gain	£6,398
One-off gain	£2,200
New benefit award or increase	£6,000
Benefit award or increase following appeal	£5,500
Money put back into payment	£5,900
Overpayment reduced or not recovered	£5,100
Social fund award	£600
Benefit compensation or ex-gratia payment	£1,600
Total Benefit gained for clients	£2,948,810

How does this help?

Welfare advice services are effective in addressing the problems associated with benefits and tax credits. An evidence and policy review by the Centre for Social and Economic Inclusion found that advice services are successful in improving take-up of benefits and delivering significant financial gains for clients⁸.

The extra money that clients gain helps to improve living standards because it enables additional spending on fuel, food, education, recreation and transport. This in turn may

ⁱ Excludes clients with an outcome where no value was recorded.

contribute to the reduction of social exclusion. Clients also report better mental health after receiving welfare rights advice⁹:



80 per cent of benefit and tax credit clients felt less stressed, depressed or anxious after advice

Local economies benefit from claimants who spend their money locally. In fact, research by Sheffield Hallam University shows that an estimated £19 billion loss of benefits through welfare reform could depress the economy by as much as £30.4 billion a year^{10&11}.

There is also growing evidence that delivering welfare rights advice is cost effective. For example, a study by the Office of Public Management (OPM) on the impact of Macmillan's welfare rights service¹² concluded that for every £1 spent on delivering the service there was a £20.80 return in benefit claims, compensation and financial rewards, which is crucial for alleviating the significant financial costs of cancer¹³.

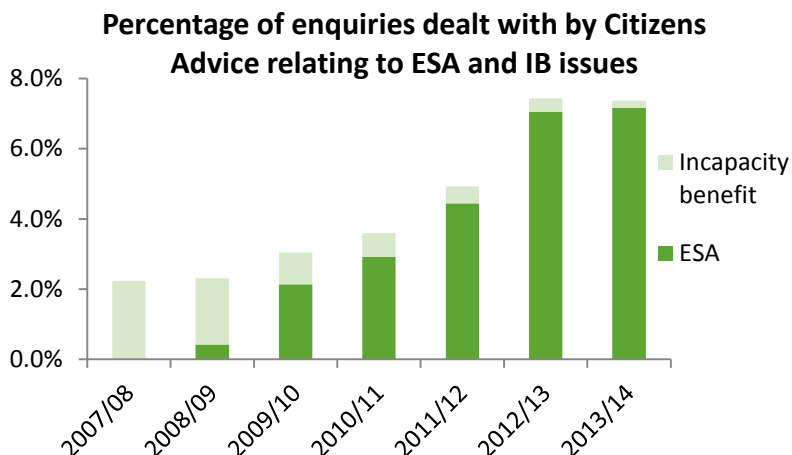


Looking ahead

Welfare reform

Welfare reform is significantly altering the way that people receive benefits, and we act as a first port of call for many looking to get advice about how this will affect their lives.

One such example of this is the where incapacity benefit has been stopped, and people have been moved on to ESA. Our service now helps more people with ESA than any other issue.



The new system is complex, with the new rules making it very difficult to determine who is fit for work and who is not. Those that are sick, disabled or lose their job risk being unsupported while their claim is being processed.

This can lead to significant detriment and stress for the individual, with potential knock-on effects to local authorities and society as a result.

Sherwood & Newark CAB is contributing to the national campaign on making ESA fit for work, raising awareness of the issues our client face and the negative impact this has, asking Government to make sure the tests are fair, consistent and right first time.

We are also planning ahead for further radical welfare reform changes ahead. Universal Credit is the single welfare payment that has started to replace six existing benefits, including those paid to people in employment on low incomes. This will require claimants to make significant behaviour changes to manage new ways of receiving their benefits.

9 in 10 CAB clients are not ready for Universal Credit

Citizens Advice research shows that 50 per cent of our clients will be affected by Universal Credit, and that 9 in 10 will need help managing the transition successfully, e.g. help with budgeting or getting online.¹⁴ We are working to understand how we can best help individuals affected, recognising that in a time of continuing austerity, our holistic support will be in increasing demand.¹⁵

Our understanding of the ways that benefit changes are affecting local people gives us a vital insight into the impact of welfare reform on the local community. Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau is working closely with local partners to support local people through welfare reform, including assisting people with personal budgets and we constantly look to develop strategic partnerships to address the challenges it brings.

It is estimated that 15,663 people in Newark & Sherwood will feel the impact of universal credit.

In focus: debt

Why is debt advice needed?

In October 2014, total personal debt in the UK reached a record high of around £1.45 trillion, which is an average of £55,000 per household¹⁶.

Debt is not necessarily a problem where people and households are able to manage their liabilities. Debt becomes problematic when repayments and other commitments cannot be made without reducing other expenditures below normal minimum levels.

The 2012 Debt Track Survey commissioned by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills¹⁷ showed that:

22 per cent of households said that they ' constantly struggle ' to keep up with bills and payments or were falling behind	11 per cent of households were in financial difficulty – more than three months in arrears on bills and payments, or already involved in a formal debt action	Low income households with little or no savings were more likely to experience financial difficulty
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Problem debt has direct costs for government and society. The Legal Service Research Centre (LSRC) estimates that the typical debt problem costs £1,000.¹⁸ This includes costs for local authorities, such as providing temporary accommodation, and costs to health commissioners for treating problems such as stress.

The same LSRC research also shows that problem debt has a negative effect on an individual's relationships, employment, education and plans for the future. There is also strong evidence of a correlation between debt and mental health problems.¹⁹ This is echoed by Money Advice Service (MAS) research which demonstrated that 1 in 2 people that had debts also had a diagnosed mental health condition.²⁰

Of an estimated 5.3 million households that would have benefited from free debt advice in 2011, only 2.6 million accessed this advice.²¹ Almost half of them turned to one of four advice agencies including Citizens Advice.²²

What do we do?

In 2014/15, Citizens Advice Bureaux nationally helped around 450,000 clients with over 1.6 million debt problems

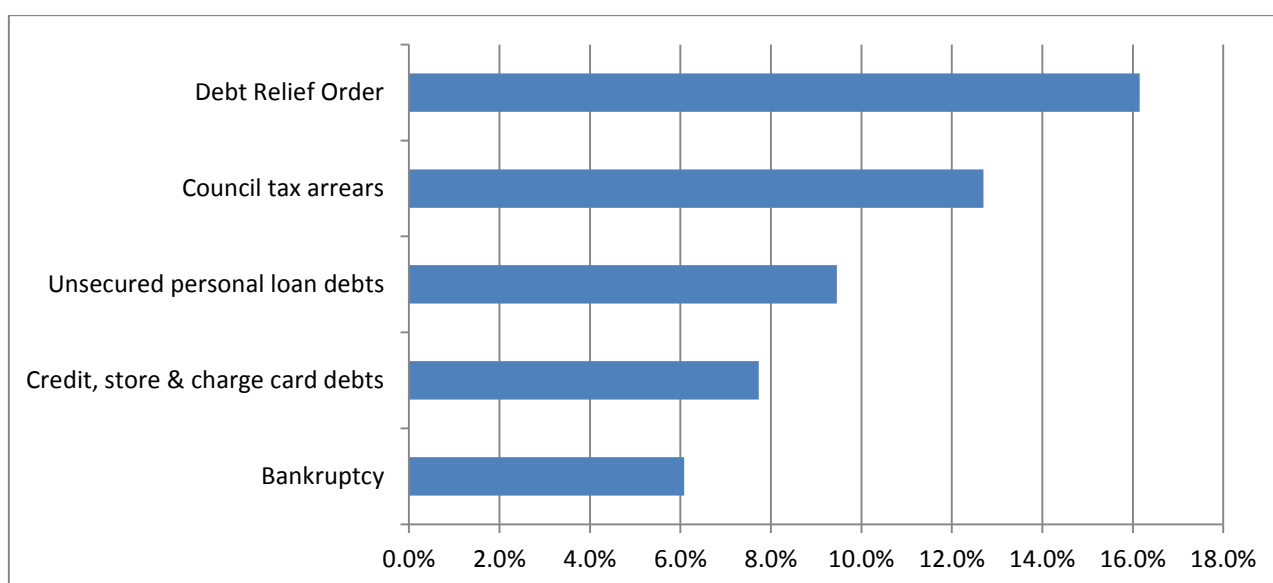
In 2014/15, Sherwood & Newark CAB helped around 944 clients with over 8,620 debt problems

The Citizens Advice service offers a combination of generalist and specialist advice, so that we can tailor the service to clients' needs. We work with clients to assess their liabilities, draw up a financial statement and identify ways to resolve their problems. In some cases we may act on clients' behalf, for example by liaising with creditors.

Community Debt and Homeless Prevention Project (£50,000) is a Newark & Sherwood District Council and Newark & Sherwood Homes funded project to provide a district wide money advice, income maximisation and help at court service for residents at risk of losing their homes. Referrals are received from Housing Options, Newark & Sherwood Homes and other agencies. This very successful project is due to run until 31st March 2016. The project receives.

Free Face to Face Debt Advice Project: (£74,392) The Free Face to Face Debt Advice Project (previously known as the Financial Inclusion Fund) is a government initiative to tackle financial exclusion. It has been designed to target three priority areas: access to free face to face money advice; access to banking services; and access to affordable credit. The bureau receives funding from The Money Advice Service (MAS) through the Community Advice & Law Service which administers the East Midlands Money Advice Initiative (EMMA). This project funds face to face debt advice and provides funding for debt caseworkers who give advice and assistance to clients on managing debts and debt related problems. The project is due to run until 30th September 2017.

Top 5 debt problems in 2014/15 for Sherwood & Newark CAB Clients



Through adviceguide.org.uk, the service also provides extensive self-help information online. In 2014/2015 there were around 3.9 million views of debt and money content pages.

Solving problems, changing lives

Research in 2014 has shown that, after contacting a Citizens Advice Bureau:



2 in 3 debt clients have their problem solved

A key outcome of our service is to help clients make their debt problems more manageable by prioritising and rescheduling debt. Rescheduling debt repayment covers: debt management programmes, individual voluntary arrangements, administration orders, re-mortgages and mortgage rescue schemes.

When debts are rescheduled, priority debts will be paid first, which includes Council Tax, Local Authority housing arrears, and income tax. Therefore rescheduling debts creates direct benefits to both local and national government.

LRSC research concluded that those receiving debt advice achieve better outcomes than those who do not. There was also evidence that debt advice improves people's understanding of their personal finances and helps them to better target priority debts.¹⁸

In some circumstances, debts may be written off entirely. Examples include: bankruptcy, debt relief orders and the waiving of unpaid charges.

Outcomes recorded 2014/15	Average value per client ⁱⁱ	Outcomes recorded 2014/15	Average value per client ⁱⁱ
Debt rescheduled	£5,146	Debts written-off	£19,784
Debt repayment negotiated	£4,800	Debt relief order	£9,500
Token debt repayments	£5,400	Bankruptcy	£46,700
Debt management plan	£9,000	Other debt write-off	£2,900
CASH flow	£6,800	Individual voluntary agreement	£33,600
LA/ RSL mortgage rescue	£51,500		

Sherwood & Newark CAB Handled
£10,280,154 of Debt in 2014/15
of which £1,773,703 was Newark & Sherwood Debt Project cases.

A local debt case study:

Elsa age 73 years lives alone in LA rented property and receives State Pension and Pension Credit. Elsa came to the CAB as she has been struggling to meet her contractual payments on outstanding credit card debts of over £6,000. Elsa believed she would be sent to prison if she defaulted and had restricted her food and heating costs in order to make minimum payments to her creditors.

ⁱⁱ Excludes clients with an outcome where no value was recorded.

We advised on priority of her debts and the enforcement powers of non-priority creditors. We also advised on relevant debt management options and Elsa decided on a repayment plan. We assisted her to draw up a realistic budget and established that she had a small surplus income. We then negotiated reduced offers with her creditors and set up an affordable payment plan.

Elsa is very relieved that her debts are still being paid but at a more affordable rate and she can now afford to turn the heating on.

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice works in partnership with Newark & Sherwood Districts Council's Energy Team to support the Nottinghamshire Warm Homes Project.

Recent Citizens Advice research found that advice benefitted not just our debt clients' financial health but also other areas of their lives too, especially their mental well-being:



89 per cent felt less stressed, depressed or anxious



65 per cent had more money or control over their finances



53 per cent reported improved physical health



31 per cent had a more secure housing situation



24 per cent had better relationships with other people



18 per cent found it easier to do their job or find a job

This demonstrates the wide-reaching negative impact that being in debt can have on people's lives, and how advice can counter this detriment.

Looking ahead

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau has worked hard to raise awareness of the debt problems experienced by the local population. Our actions in influencing local policy and practice include leading a local campaign on payday lending that attracted interest of a local MP, as well as contributing evidence to a national campaign on payday lending.²³

This national campaign ensured:

- New stricter rules for payday lenders, and the cost of credit will be capped by 2015
- Consumers are more aware of the implications of taking out payday loans
- Fewer people will be misled about payday loans thanks to complaints made by our campaigners about irresponsible adverts.

This helps all the people that will take out an estimated 10 million payday loans this year. Ensuring creditors act reasonably, and that people can access financial services not only makes society fairer, but also reduces financial exclusion and further debt.

We have also identified that council tax arrears are a growing problem, one that we are increasingly working with clients to manage, as well as local government. Between April 2014 and March 2015, Sherwood & Newark CAB clients seeking help with debt:

1 in 3
had a council tax
arrears issue

We saw
344 people
with a council tax
arrears problem

That's a
28 per cent
increase in problems
with council tax arrears

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice intervention Supports clients to make realistic payments towards their council tax arrears. This directly benefits Newark & Sherwood District Council by the increased revenue collected.

In focus: financial capability

Why do people need financial capability education?

Information and advice can only go so far in helping people with problem debt if they do not have the skills to manage their money. Even those without problem debt may struggle with living costs or to provide for their future, if they lack important financial capability skills.

Financial capability is about the skills, knowledge and confidence required to make the right financial choices and avoid crises. The Money Advice Service (MAS) estimate that around 31.5 million or 65 per cent of UK adults require some level of financial capability support.²⁴

What do we do?

Improving an individual's financial capability can change the way they approach their finances, empowering them to make the most of their income and to provide for their future, whether or not they are struggling with debt.

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau runs a financial capability training project in collaboration with local partners including secondary schools and voluntary organisations.

In 2014/15 Sherwood & Newark CAB's Financial capability training successfully delivered to 520 beneficiaries, via group sessions or individual support to; young people, older people, parents/families, social housing tenants, jobseekers, volunteers and frontline workers.

Financial capability education improves money management behaviour, which:

Prevents crises

- Reducing risky borrowing behaviour leading to problem debt
- Improving take-up of benefits and entitlements to counter 'income shock'
- Improving resilience by encouraging the build up of emergency funds
- Expanding access to appropriate financial products and more economical utility tariffs
- Identifying debt issues at an earlier stage so they are addressed sooner

Improves access to services

- Getting out to hard-to-reach groups and maximising accessibility
- Increasing their awareness of services they can access, through bureaux and other providers
- Negating fears about the social stigma of debt by providing confidential and impartial advice

Empowers communities

- Increasing confidence and motivation around money management and financial products
- Spreading financially capable behaviours by learners sharing new skills and knowledge with friends and family
- Frontline workers increasing their knowledge and ability to give early help and signposting to clients

How does this help?

Citizens Advice is committed to monitoring the effectiveness of financial capability work undertaken nationally. Independent evaluations have contributed to over 20 financial capability project reports. Published in 2012, our most recent evaluation of training offered to social housing tenants revealed better outcomes for learners than those who did not attend the training²⁵.

Key findings included:

78 per cent
of learners changed
how they managed
their money

20 per cent
of learners changed
their savings behaviour

£10
on average better off
per week

In focus: housing

Why is housing advice needed?

Poor quality housing...

In 2012, 4.9 million dwellings (22 per cent) failed to meet the decent homes standard, according to the English Housing Survey²⁶.

For the private rented sector, the figure was 33 per cent, compared to 15 per cent in the social sector.

Homelessness...

Between October 2012 and September 2013, Shelter estimate that 1 in every 105 households in England were put at risk of losing their home through a repossession claim²⁹. Mortgage possession claims have reduced from a peak in 2009³⁰, but landlord possession claims have increased.

Provisional data for 2012/13 suggest that the number of eligible applications for statutory homelessness has continued its increase since 2009/10. Applications identified as 'priority need' have also increased³¹. In September 2013, over 57,000 households in England were in temporary accommodation, an 8 per cent increase from the previous year³².

...can affect children's life chances

Research from Shelter suggests that poor quality housing is associated with: ill health and disability, mental health and behaviour problems, lower educational attainment and greater likelihood of experiencing unemployment and Poverty^{27&28}.

...costs local and national government

A review by the Department for Communities and Local Government has estimated the cost of homelessness per person at £24,000 to £30,000, borne by the Department for Work and Pensions, the NHS, the criminal justice system and local authorities. The report also highlights that local authority expenditure on homelessness in 2010-11 totalled almost £345m³³. Research from Crisis illustrates how an individual case can reach two to three times this estimate³³.

What do we do?

In 2014/15, Citizens Advice Bureaux helped around 265,000 clients with over 439,000 housing problems

In 2014/15, Sherwood & Newark CAB helped around 369 clients with over 645 housing problems

Homelessness in our area

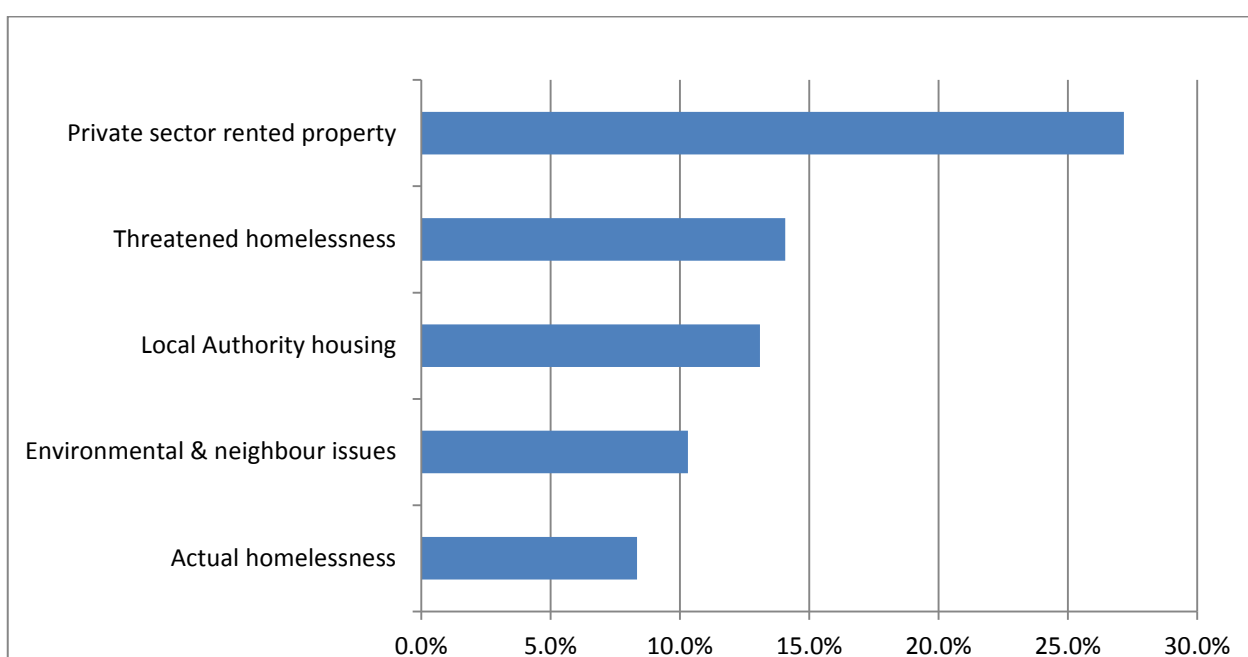
Homelessness is a social determinant of health and an indicator of extreme poverty. Statutorily homeless households contain some of the most vulnerable members of

society. Residents of Newark and Sherwood who have housing problems and are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless use the CAB service to help keep a roof over their heads.

- 176 clients living in Newark and Sherwood were advised about threatened or actual homelessness
- Amongst clients with housing problems, those with mental health problems have a higher incidence of homelessness than other clients

The Citizens Advice service provides free, independent and confidential information and advice on housing, offered over the phone and face-to-face.

Top 5 housing problems in 2014/15 for Sherwood & Newark CAB Clients



Through adviceguide.org.uk, we also provide extensive self-help information online. In 2014/2015 there were around 2.6 million views of housing content pages.

Citizens Advice Bureaux also work with Shelter as part of the National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS). NHAS aims to make sure that no one is homeless or badly housed through want of expert advice³⁴. It helps to keep advice agencies and local authorities equipped with appropriate and accurate information through training, consultancy and other services.

Solving problems, changing lives

Research in 2014 has shown that, after contacting a Citizens Advice Bureau:



2 in 3 housing clients have their problem solved

We know that this resolution rate is consistent across clients that are experiencing threatened or actual homelessness, and rises to 3 in 4 clients having their problem solved where the issue is about a private sector rented property.

Key housing advice outcomes include avoiding homelessness, solving disputes, securing accommodation and financial gains (e.g. recovery of deposits and repairs).

A local housing case study:

Sarah is single and disabled with two teenage children started renting privately in mid-2012. She had numerous problems with the property, including rising damp, but was merely given a can of paint and told to paint over the damp, even though she was told the damp proof course needed replacing. In late 2014 water started pouring through the ceiling of one of the bedrooms. A plumber said the flashing round the chimney needed replacing, but no work was done on it.

Out of desperation, Sarah decided to move elsewhere to a better maintained property – the agents said “Was it the damp problems? I’m surprised you lasted so long!”

However the landlord refused to return her £475 deposit due to her failure to give the full months’ notice required under the tenancy contract.”

In 2014, Sherwood & Newark CAB helped to campaign for tenants’ rights over issues outlined in the case study.

Looking ahead

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau has worked closely with local partners to tackle housing problems in the local area. Key achievements include:

- Helping to identify and report rogue landlords
- Working in close partnership with NSDC Housing options team and Newark & Sherwood Homes to prevent homelessness.

At a national level, Citizens Advice has previously campaigned with housing charity Shelter to get an amendment included in the Housing Bill. Following the success of this important campaign, legislation on tenancy deposit protection was implemented from April 2007. Since then, all new assured short-hold tenants have been able to safeguard their deposits by law. As of March 2014, more than two million deposits worth over £2.8 billion had been protected.³⁵

In focus: employment

Why is employment advice needed?

Research from the Legal Services Commission (LSC) shows that around 1 in 20 people experience an employment problem over an 18 month period³⁶. Examples of employment

problems include disputes and grievances over pay, contracts and dismissal, problems related to redundancy or retirement, and discrimination or failure to comply with the Equality Act 2010 at work³⁷.

Problems can have a significant impact on employees, employers and the economy.

Employees	There were 428,000 cases of work-related stress in Great Britain during 2011/12, accounting for 40 per cent of work-related illness. The main causes of stress were pressure, lack of support and violence or bullying ³⁸ .
Employers	Increased staff turnover due to employment problems may generate additional costs for employers, who spent an average of £1,800 per hire, filling vacancies in 2013 ³⁹ .
Economy	More than 10 million working days were lost as a result of work-related stress in 2011/12 ⁴⁰ .

In order to deal with these problems effectively, it is important that people have access to employment advice, and that cost is not a barrier to this.

Recent changes, however, have introduced fees for employment tribunals. Employees who want to bring a simple claim, such as unpaid wages, now need to pay £160 issue fee followed by a £230 hearing fee. These fees rise to £250 and £950 respectively for more complex claims, such as unfair dismissal or whistleblowing⁴¹.

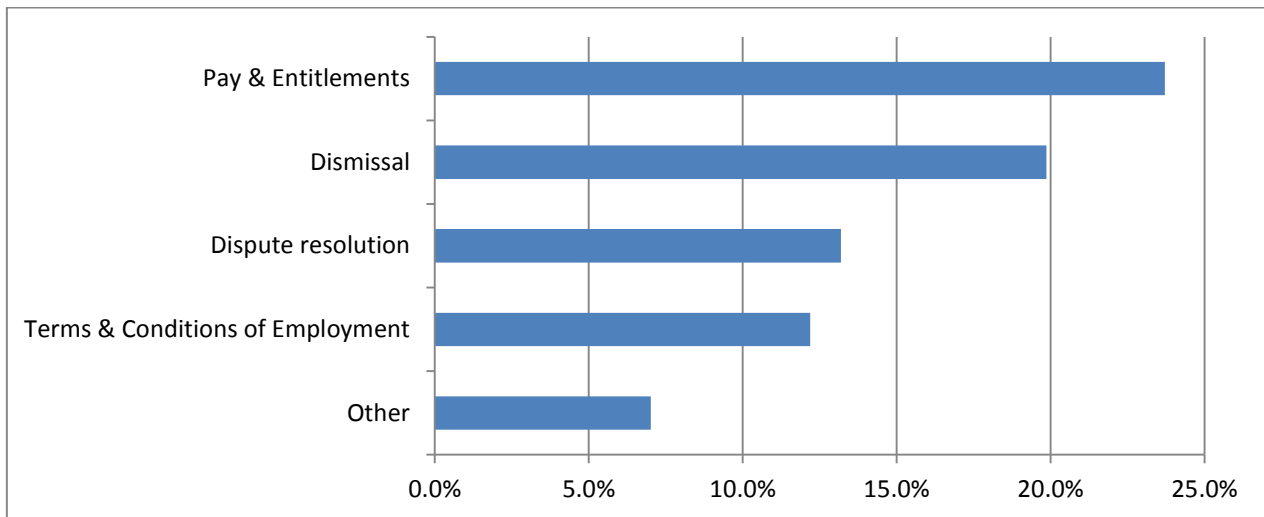
What do we do?

In 2014/15, Citizens Advice Bureaux helped around 212,000 clients with over 381,000 employment problems

In 2014/15, Sherwood & Newark CAB helped around 372 clients with over 600 employment problems

The Citizens Advice service provides free, independent and confidential information and advice on employment, offered over the phone and face-to-face.

Top 5 Employment problems in 2014/15 for Sherwood & Newark CAB Clients



In addition to face-to-face and telephone advice, Citizens Advice provide extensive self-help information on a wide range of topics through our website, adviceguide.org.uk. Many use Adviceguide to check or confirm their rights and responsibilities at work. In 2014/2015 there were over 5.4 million views for employment content pages.

Solving problems, changing lives

Research in 2014 has shown that, after contacting a Citizens Advice Bureau:



2 in 3 employment clients have their problem solved

We know that this resolution rate is consistent across clients who are addressing issues with their pay and entitlements, or the terms of conditions of their employment. For clients involved in dispute resolution, we help 3 in 4 get their problem solved.

Key outcomes in this area include a range of non-financial outcomes (such as reinstatement, terms and conditions enforced and harassment stopped), and financial outcomes (such as compensation and awards).

A local employment case study:

Peter visited an outreach for advice, having been dismissed from a care home. He had been working as a care assistant but was suddenly sacked for alleged “poor performance”, despite having satisfactory appraisal only days beforehand. It transpired that there had been an incident about 6 weeks beforehand involving a resident and a visitor, which Peter had witnessed and which resulted in a safeguarding report being made to the relevant authorities. It appeared that the incident may have been played down when reported and Peter had expressed concerns.

Following his visit to the bureau for advice, the bureau helped Peter draft a formal complaint to the care home regarding the dismissal. When no response was received, the bureau assisted with an Employment Tribunal claim for unfair dismissal on the ground of whistleblowing, with all its attendant paperwork, including a claim for fee remission.

The bureau obtained the help of a pro bono barrister in the preparation of the case, assisted Peter at the Employment Tribunal itself (two hearings plus a preliminary telephone hearing) and Peter won his case, with compensation for unfair dismissal. The whole process took approximately 17 months to resolve.

Looking ahead

Sherwood & Newark Citizens Advice Bureau has worked closely with local partners to tackle employment problems in the local area. Key achievements include working with local employers to:

- Improve arrangements for agency workers;
- Reduce the wait for first payment to new works from six weeks to two weeks.
- Provide free and impartial advice within the workplace to staff who had recently been made redundant.

Citizens Advice is also currently looking at the impact of employment tribunal fees on people's decisions to enforce their employment rights.

In focus: health and wellbeing of our clients

What are the problems?

Our work intersects with health and wellbeing at a number of different key points:

Our clients experience social inequality... ...which results in health inequalities

Our clients come to us about significant issues in their lives that can be tied to social inequality. CAB clients and their families are often at risk of fuel debt or child poverty:

- **73,000** were advised on energy-related consumer problems and/or fuel debt
- **37 per cent** of CAB clients advised on debt or benefit had dependent children.

Furthermore, 29 per cent of all CAB clients declared a disability or long term health condition, a higher proportion than the national average. These clients can experience problems with changes to their benefits under welfare reform, which may have reduced their income.

Having a problem...

People who come to CAB often need help with serious problems that are having significant repercussions on multiple aspects of their lives, making them feel powerless as a result. Experiencing negative detriment thanks to a problem is more normal than exceptional for our clients.

These problems may come as important life stages for an individual, where their troubles could be resolved or further escalate. A clients' wellbeing is directly affected by the impact of these problems on their lives.

Problems with health and care services...

Problems with health and care services include those related to availability of care/treatment, residential care charges and NHS charges such as dental charges or prescriptions. They can create serious difficulties for individuals, families and others who support people experiencing ill-health.

The Marmot Review, 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives', provided clear evidence that people in lower socioeconomic groups have less chance of leading a healthy life than those in higher socioeconomic groups.⁴² Areas of inequality include: mortality, morbidity, self-reported health, mental health, and injury from accidents and violence.

One of the key messages of the review is that health inequalities result from social inequalities. In addition to adequate provision of health service, tackling health inequalities requires action to improve social determinants of health.

...impacts on clients' health and wellbeing

66 per cent of our clients report feeling stressed, depressed or anxious as a result of having a problem, while 30 per cent felt it was having an impact on their physical health.⁴³ CAB clients also demonstrate a lower than UK average wellbeing score prior to advice.

Evidence shows that there is a direct correlation between debt and poor mental health. People with debt problems are twice as likely to develop major depression⁴⁴ and those with existing mental health problems are nearly three times more likely to be in debt.

... that they need help to resolve

In 2014/15, Sherwood & Newark CAB helped around 79 clients with health and care problems.

We work with the NHS and other care providers to resolve clients' problems, and help them to access the care they need. Through adviceguide.org.uk, we also

provide extensive self-help information online.

What do we do?

We work in areas

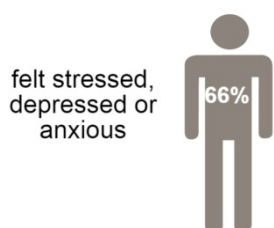
500,000 of the 2 million clients that CABs see nationally live

of deprivation	in the 20 per cent most deprived lower level super output areas (LOSAs). There is also often a correlation between where our clients live in these areas of deprivation, and where we situate our offices and outreaches.
We work directly with clients in health settings	Nationally, Citizens Advice Bureaux currently work out of 723 health locations, of which 614 are GP surgeries. In addition, in 2014/15, services were delivered from an additional 362 health locations on an ad hoc basis.
We provide advice and support to solve clients' problems	We help clients have tangible progress towards sorting out their problems, which may be impacting on their health and wellbeing. We also address the social determinants of health by resolving problems in areas such as welfare benefits, debt and housing - increasing incomes in low-income households, which can lead to better standards of living.

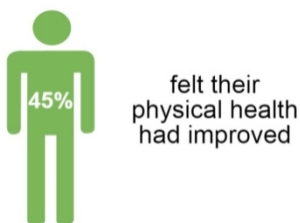
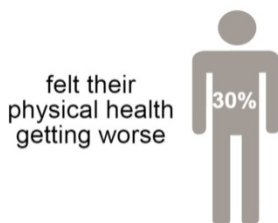
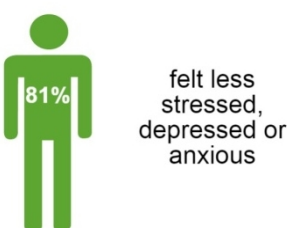
Solving problems, changing lives

By solving clients problems, we truly change lives. Our national outcomes and impact research evidences the impact that advice has on clients' mental and physical health:

Before advice



After advice



A review of evidence by Health and Social Care in the Community has also explored the complex relationships between advice provision and health and wellbeing⁴⁵. The review suggests that positive financial outcomes can have secondary impacts on mental health in particular.

In this context, the evidence that debt advice reduces stress and anxiety is especially clear.

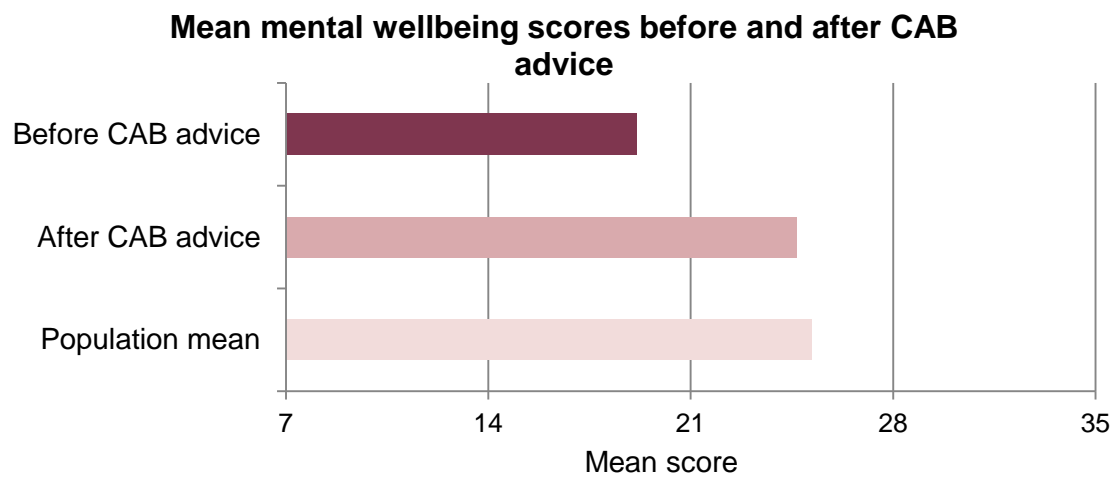
How does this help?

Helping clients to address problems that are having a real impact on their lives, may overall improve their wellbeing.

In 2012/13, Citizens Advice piloted a scale used by the NHS to measure mental wellbeing⁴⁶. The aim was to assess changes in clients' mental wellbeing before and after receiving advice on different topics (e.g. debt). On this particular scale, the minimum possible score is 7, and the maximum 35. The results showed:

- Before advice: the average mental wellbeing score was 19.14 - six points below the UK population mean

- After advice: four to six weeks later, the average mental wellbeing score was 24.67 – just short of the UK population mean



The holistic dimension of our advice is also important in the context of health inequalities. By helping our clients to make material differences to their lives as a whole, we may help mitigate the socioeconomic inequalities that give rise to the health inequalities in our society. This is ultimately good for the client as well as for local and national government that may otherwise have to intervene should an individual's circumstances continue to escalate.

Looking ahead

The Citizens Advice service is continuing to determine our impact on our clients' health and wellbeing, including identifying which interventions in which circumstances are most effective. These include the following wellbeing-research projects:

- A two year clinical trial funded by the NHS Institute of Research assessing the clinical and cost effectiveness of a primary care debt counselling advice service to usual care, for patients with depression and debt.
- Continuing local evaluation work on the impact of advice intervention in health settings or for clients or for clients with specific health problems, ranging from mental health to an array of health conditions, such as tuberculosis, cancer, dementia, HIV to name a few.

Looking ahead

Sherwood & Newark CAB is evolving to continue to provide the best support for our clients, embrace new opportunities and meet the challenges faced by the local community.

Welfare reform

Welfare reform is significantly altering the way that people receive benefits, and we act as a first port of call for many looking to get advice about how this will affect their lives. Our understanding of the ways that benefit changes are affecting local people gives us a vital

insight into the impact of welfare reform on the local community. We constantly look to develop strategic partnerships to address the challenges it brings.

Service improvement

At Sherwood & Newark CAB, we ensure that we deliver the most effective support possible for our clients, including making changes to the way we deliver our service, and trialling new methods.

Our planned service improvements are:

- implementing a phone strategy that will maximise the number of people we can help at first point of contact and continue to provide more in-depth assistance for those who need it
- Continuing to develop strong referral networks through support provided by the Advice Services Transition Fund (ASTF)
- A potential move to share the District Councils new premises in 2017

Embracing new opportunities

As well as improving our advice delivery, we also are looking ahead to ways that we can work more closely with different groups within our community.

Our future work with new audiences will include:

- Looking to work with more young volunteers, and engage with local schools with particular focus on financial capability awareness.
- Exploring digital avenues to deliver advice through webchat and email

We will also continue to build on our partnership work, engaging and sharing our insight with interested parties, to benefit and empower the local area.

We would like to continue:

- working with our local authority as a strategic partner – responding to opportunities presented by Localism, or address challenges of welfare reform
- Help Newark & Sherwood District Council meet their 4 priorities of Prosperity, People, Place and Public Service
- working with health commissioners and health and wellbeing boards
- Representing CAB at the local Health Forums

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Aims and principles

The Citizens Advice service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. It values diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

The service aims:

- to provide the advice people need for the problems they face
- to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

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