



**NEWARK &
SHERWOOD**
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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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 Mrs I Brown

Councillor M. Buttery

Councillor R. Crowe

Councillor K. Girling

Councillor Mrs S.M. Michael

Councillor A.C. Roberts

Councillor D. Thompson

Substitutes:

Councillor D.J. Clarke

Councillor Mrs G.E. Dawn

Councillor Mrs P. Rainbow

Councillor Mrs S. Soar

Councillor Mrs A.A. Truswell

AGENDA

MEETING: Homes & Communities Committee

DATE: Monday, 12 September 2016 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, 13 June 2016 in Room G21, Kelham Hall at 6.00pm.

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

Councillors: Mrs K. Arnold, Mrs B.M. Brooks, Mrs. C. Brooks, Mrs I. Brown, M. Buttery, R. Crowe, K. Girling, Mrs S.M. Michael and A.C. Roberts.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor: Mrs P. Rainbow

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor D. Thompson

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

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

Councillor Mrs. S.M. Michael Agenda Item No. 10 – Affordable Housing Delivery – Disclosable Pecuniary Interest – Joint Land Owner

54. DECLARATION OF ANY INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

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

55. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2016

AGREED (unanimously) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

56. REVIEW OF CCTV ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Community Safety in relation to a review of the Council's existing CCTV system. The report set out the current coverage across the district, how the system operated, the cost of that operation, current usage, areas for potential savings and opportunities for growth. Chief Inspector Andy Rooke of the Nottinghamshire Police Authority was also in attendance at the meeting.

Members considered the information provided by Members and raised a number of specific points. In relation to the possibility of reducing the hours the system was monitored, a Member queried whether there was a time when the likelihood of any incidents occurring was considered to be low. Officers advised that it was likely that such times did occur but without further investigation this was not known. Chief Inspector Rooke advised that from a Police perspective a reduction in monitoring hours would depend on where the cameras were situated and at what time of day.

A Member of the Committee raised a number of issues surrounding the clarity of images. It was noted that the ambient lighting often had an impact on this together with the time of day of the recordings. It was also noted that due to security implications cameras were situated at a high level but that the recordings must still be able to identify the individual. The Member also noted that recent incidents of problems encountered in Newark Town Centre with vehicles entering restricted zones had been reported to the Police but that the Police's response had been that CCTV should not be used to enforce parking restrictions.

In response, Officers advised that clarity of image was an important factor and that investment, to-date, had been to service quality standards but that poor lighting could affect that. In relation to the height of cameras, Members were advised that it was not always the camera nearest to an incident that was monitoring the situation. It could be that a different camera was recording and therefore the angle of such would be able to capture the incident to a standard that would enable identification.

Chief Inspector Rooke advised that due to devolved powers, parking offences were no longer enforced by the Police. Traffic offences were within the Police's remit but offenders would have to be caught by officers whilst actually committing certain traffic offences (other than speeding) as pre-recordings were insufficient for pursuing prosecutions.

In relation to the option to switch to wireless data transmission, a Member noted the potential for budget savings and queried whether this could be brought forward. In response, Members were advised that it was linked to the relocation of the Control Room to the Police HQ which was scheduled for July 2017. The Chairman requested further information as to the actual savings of changing to a wireless data transmission.

In response to a query raised about the relocation to the Police HQ, Members were informed that a full review had been undertaken to choose the most appropriate location. It was reported that due to the ongoing agreements and partnerships with other local authorities, the Police HQ had been considered the most appropriate location. It was noted that this would be in close proximity to the Police Control Room.

In relation to the potential for additional local authorities to join the existing shared CCTV service between NSDC, Broxtowe BC, and Ashfield DC, Members queried how this would impact on staffing levels and the number of hours the cameras would be monitored. In response, Officers advised that the ratio of staff to cameras was determined by using a service standard and that should any additional partners join the shared service this would be reviewed. It was noted that at present cameras were monitored 24 hours a day.

In relation to whether the Police could act on certain motoring offences, Chief Inspector Rooke advised that serious motoring offences could be dealt with through video capture, supported by witness statements etc.

Councillor Mrs S.M. Michael left the meeting at 6:30pm.

A Member queried the involvement and contributions from those Town and Parish Councils where cameras were situated within their boundaries. The Chairman of the Committee suggested that these Town and Parish Councils be canvassed on their

views as to whether the provision of CCTV should continue.

A Member reiterated the previously made comment in relation to the views expressed concerning the adequacy of street lighting, adding that this was an issue as the brightness of the bulbs used had been dimmed for energy efficiency reasons, noting that this did not assist the Police in carrying out their duties or the local community. Officers advised that the effectiveness of the lighting was assessed when each individual camera was rationalised.

As Chief Inspector Rooke was in attendance at the meeting, Members took the opportunity to raise a number of issues with him one of which was the increasing number of speeding vehicles on the A616, particularly through Caunton and Kneesall. It was reported that residents of the villages were finding it increasingly difficult to turn on to the carriageway due to the speed at which the vehicles were travelling. Members queried whether any Police assistance could be given to enforce the speed limits in place. Chief Inspector Rooke advised that the reality of traffic speed enforcement in modern times was through technology and not by a Police Officer in a vehicle. He advised that he would refer the matter to colleagues in the Traffic Division. The same issue of speeding vehicles was also reported as a problem on Lincoln Road with the Chairman advising the Member to contact their County Councillor with a view to possible review of speed limits.

In relation to issues of nuisance on the Market Place in Newark with unauthorised vehicles, a Member suggested that a 'sting operation' may be useful and the bollards being utilised to aid such an operation. Chief Inspector Rooke advised that he would speak with the District Commander and ask for a review of the situation to be undertaken.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report be noted;
- (b) the project to relocate the CCTV Control Room to the Police HQ be approved in principle and that Policy & Finance Committee be recommended to approve that provision be made within the capital programme to fund the CCTV Control Room Relocation Project; and
- (c) a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee detailing:
 - (i) the heads of terms to be agreed with the Police for the lease of accommodation at their HQ;
 - (ii) progress on the relocation project;
 - (iii) responses from the letter to be sent to Town and Parish Councils in relation to the CCTV provision within their areas; and
 - (iv) further information as to the actual savings of changing to a wireless data transmission.

57. HOUSING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK: TENANTS' PANEL

The Committee considered the report presented jointly by the Business Manager – Strategic Housing and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Tenants' Panel in relation to the role of the Panel, details of its Annual Report, its Work Programme for 2015/16 and the completed scrutiny report covering the area of property maintenance.

In relation to property maintenance, the Chairman advised that consideration had been given to using a different methodology to assess the effectiveness of repairs. In the main, tenant satisfaction was high although communication with Newark and Sherwood Homes (NSH) was raised as an issue, noting that this was often around the original reporting of the repair request. It was also noted that a meeting had been held with NSH Repairs Managers who had given an undertaking that the logging of repairs would be improved.

In relation to the change in the reporting of repairs, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panel were asked:

- i) Were tenants now properly consulted with?
- ii) Were tenants being listened to? and
- iii) Following the change, was the new system better/no different/worse?

In response, the Vice-Chairman commented that it was her personal opinion that the thoughts of tenants were not valued and they were not listened to, however, as the new system had only been in operation for a short period of time it was not possible to say whether it had brought about any improvements to-date.

Whilst acknowledging the conclusion of the scrutiny exercise, which resulted in an 88% tenant satisfaction figure, Members queried how many responses had been received commenting that if the response rate was low, this would not be a reliable indicator. The Vice-Chairman of the Tenants' Panel stated that they would have had more confidence in the results had they carried out the survey themselves.

In relation to the Tenants' Panel's current work programme it was confirmed that work had been commenced on Welfare Reform and Anti-Social Behaviour.

A Member of the Committee advised that communication with NSH was sometimes difficult unless the tenant knew to ask for a specific person who could deal with their call. The Member also queried whether it was still the case that requests and replies would be logged and replied to within 10 working days. Officers advised that the arrangements for the logging of calls would be published on the new website when this was made live at the end of July 2016. It was suggested that it would be useful to have a FAQs page as currently tenants often sought information through social media.

AGREED (unanimously) that the proposal details as set out in Paragraph 4.1 to the report be approved.

58. HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME REVIEW 2015/16 – IMPLEMENTATION

The Committee considered the report presented jointly by the Business Manager – Housing & Safeguarding and an Officer from Newark and Sherwood Homes (NSH) in relation to the options available to facilitate the implementation of the revised

Allocations Scheme. Contained within the report were details of what NSH would be required to do to implement the revised Allocations Scheme.

In response to a query raised as to what additional resources would be required for Option 3, Officers advised that there would be local office support at Kelham Hall and also at the new Council offices, when opened. Face to face assistance would be provided to enable tenants to make applications through the Allocations Scheme and also to complete direct debit mandates.

In relation to the proposed requirement for tenants to pay their rent via direct debit, a Member of the Committee highlighted that this may be problematic for some tenants as they would have insufficient funds and would likely incur bank charges for being overdrawn. Members considered this point however the general consensus was that these issues could be overcome through the help, support and assistance given to tenants in opening and managing their accounts.

AGREED that:

- (a) the implementation of the revised Allocations Scheme using Option 1 – Implementation of the Revised Allocations Scheme using online self-service options be approved; and
- (b) the recommendation detailed in paragraph 4.1.7 relating to the requirement for tenants to pay their rent via direct debit be approved.

59. GENERAL FUND BUDGET PERFORMANCE REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2016

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager & Chief Financial Officer – Financial Services which compared the General Fund net expenditure for the Committee for the period ending 31 March 2016 with the profiled budget for the period.

AGREED (unanimously) that the overall position of the Homes & Communities Committee net expenditure compared to budget at 31 March 2016 be accepted.

60. RECONSTITUTION OF WORKING PARTIES/TASK & FINISH GROUPS

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive which sought to reappoint representatives to the Local Development Framework Task Group and to reaffirm the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson as the Committee's representatives on the Strategic Housing Liaison Panel.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Committee reaffirm the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson as the Committee's representatives on the Strategic Housing Liaison Panel; and

- (b) the Committee nominate Councillors Mrs A.C. Brooks and R.B. Laughton to continue as their representatives on the Local Development Framework Task Group.

61. AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Strategic Housing in relation to the Council’s recent development programme and future anticipated delivery of affordable housing across the district. Contained within the report was information on the number and type of units that had been developed in 2015/16 and the anticipated delivery for the next 4 financial years.

It was acknowledged that affordable housing development was to be applauded however, a Member of the Committee stated that the issue of existing homes across the district that had not been occupied for a long period of time needed to be addressed, adding that these could assist in housing those waiting for properties. Officers advised that attempts had been made in the past to trial empty homes schemes but in the past there had been no appetite from property owners to participate. The Chairman requested that a report be brought back to Committee giving details of possible options, to include information from other local authorities who had successfully run such schemes.

A Member also queried whether it was feasible to purchase properties that were for sale and then refurbish them to a standard that would allow Council tenants to be rehomed. In response, Officers noted that that course of action could influence the local housing market and that Council new builds adhered to market standards. Also the Council currently had ample housing development land and local skills to undertake such development itself. It was also noted that the Council were looking to increase the number of affordable units by development and that to purchase low cost housing could be argued that this would not assist in achieving that. The Council had a varied approach to affordable housing development by working in partnership with housing associations, participating in Section 106 Agreements with developers, and gap funding.

AGREED that the affordable housing delivery in 2015/16 and future anticipated delivery be noted.

62. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT UPDATE – YEAR END UPDATE 2015/16

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Policy & Performance in relation to a selection of performance information falling under the remit of the Committee.

AGREED: that the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.35pm

Chairman

NEW COUNCIL HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an overview of the responses received from statutory consultation, present the revised Council Housing Allocations Scheme for adoption and timetable for its implementation using online self-service options by April 2017.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 As part of its work programme, this Committee has been overseeing a detailed review of the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme 'Scheme'.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 7 September 2015, the Committee approved a project initiation document which included a set of objectives for the revised Scheme and gave a broad, indicative timetable for progressing the review. On 21 March 2016, the Committee were updated on the review phase of the project, made comments on the proposals for change and approved a draft Scheme, in order for statutory consultation to take place.
- 2.3 At its last meeting on 13 June 2016, the Committee received a detailed options report to facilitate the implementation of the revised Scheme by Newark and Sherwood Homes. Option 1 was approved to implement the Scheme using online self-service options and the resources required (£30,000 from the Housing Options budget or Homelessness Reserve) were approved.

3.0 Statutory Consultation

- 3.1 The statutory consultation period for consulting formally with consultees began on 17 May 2016 and closed on 22 July 2016.
- 3.2 Statutory consultees included all existing applicants for housing and registered providers of social housing in the Newark and Sherwood District. The scheme was also reviewed through Newark and Sherwood Homes tenant involvement mechanisms.
- 3.3 Seven responses were received from existing applicants. No responses were received from registered providers.
- 3.4 Three of the responses from applicants referenced the fact they were unhappy that they may have to sell their home should they require social housing. Two of the seven responses expressed a view that it was not a consultation and one person responded asking to speak to the Tenancy and Estates Manager.
- 3.5 It is the view of the cross Council and Company Officer Project Team that the responses expressing a view on the sale of privately owned properties were personal reflections and would not justify a variation to the approach described in the Scheme. However, the project team did feel that an individual response to the questions raised with an explanation of the process was required.

3.6 The tenant involvement group identified some areas for monitoring once the Scheme is implemented, these were as follows:

(i) Direct Offers to Statutory Homeless Households

It was considered by the group that this could impact on housing management resources, should the household deem the property they have been offered and requested to accept is not suitable for them. The group felt that this could increase costs in management due to any subsequent transfer but acknowledged the drivers for change.

(ii) Amend qualification for an additional room for an unborn child from 26 weeks pregnancy to 36 weeks.

It was considered by the group that this could also increase costs due to potential transfers once the baby is born but the group acknowledged the intention regarding protecting the HRA BP.

(iii) Penalising Refusals

This was considered a positive inclusion into the Scheme but the group agreed that improved advertising of properties is needed, which included enhanced description of the accommodation and the surrounding area and facilities.

(iv) The group were pleased to see the enhanced priority given to Ex-Forces personnel.

3.7 Having reviewed the comments from applicants and existing tenants the project team do not feel that any changes to the Scheme are necessary as a result of the consultation.

4.0 New Scheme

4.1 Comments from Member engagement has been incorporated into the final Scheme, which is attached at **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration and approval.

4.2 It should be noted that the final format of the document may look slightly different as the Council/Company develop and implementation on-line services to customers. The Council's communications team have been asked to format the document in readiness for publication.

5.0 Phase Two – Consultation and Implementation

5.1 Implementation and management of the new Scheme is delegated to the Council's wholly owned management company, Newark and Sherwood Homes (NSH). Attached at **Appendix B** is a detailed implementation plan from NSH, to implement the new Scheme using online self-service options by April 2017.

6.0 Equalities Implications

6.1 A completed Equalities Checklist and Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and presented to this Committee on 21 March 2016 in order to take into account the specific needs of persons with protected characteristics to ensure the Council's responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 will be fully considered and met during the Scheme's implementation.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee approve the new Housing Allocation Scheme and Implementation Plan for its publication and launch in April 2017.

Reason for Recommendation

To progress implementation of a new fit for purpose Housing Allocations Scheme which is a statutory requirement under the Housing Act 1996, through contemporary, cost effective service delivery channels.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Leanne Monger, Business Manager – Housing and Safeguarding on extension 5545 (Council) or Dave Newmarch, Assistant Director – Housing Management and Responsive Repairs on 01636 655455 or dave.newmarch@nshomes.co.uk (Company).

Karen White
Director – Safety

Front Cover Space

NSDC HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION AND LEGAL BACKGROUND

Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) operates an Allocations Scheme ('Scheme') which is implemented and managed by its wholly owned housing management company, Newark and Sherwood Homes (NSH).

Council housing, properties owned by NSH and some Registered Provider (RP) properties (where NSDC has 'Nomination Rights') are let to people in accordance with this Scheme. NSDC has Nomination Rights to most RP properties in the district. This means NSDC nominates applicants on the Housing Register who are successful in 'bidding'. However, RP Allocation Schemes may differ and each will make the final decision as to who properties are offered to. Some RP's keep their own Housing Register and Applicants can apply to join these individually.

Applicants who are not currently NSDC tenants are defined as 'Housing Applicants'. This will include applicants who are current tenants with a RP.

All NSDC tenants who have held their current tenancy for at least one year may apply for a transfer. These are defined as 'Transfer Applicants'. This time period may be relaxed where a move is required to either meet an evidenced medical or social need of a member of a household, address under occupancy or in the interests of effective and efficient use of stock.

Transfer Applicants will be required to give up their existing property as a condition of granting them a tenancy of another property, although their status as a tenant will be unaltered and their rights under the Right to Buy will remain uninterrupted.

Legislative Framework

It is a requirement under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Localism Act 2011 that all Local Housing Authorities must have and publish an Allocation Scheme and ensure that properties are allocated according to that Scheme. This Allocation Scheme has taken into account all of the legal requirements outlined in Part VI and other relevant Acts and statutory guidance.

Reasonable Preference

The legislation requires that an Allocation Scheme must be framed to give Reasonable Preference to certain categories of people as follows:

- 1 people who are homeless (within the meaning of Part VII of the 1996 Act);
2. people who are owed a duty by any Local Authority under section 190(2) 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3);
3. people occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;

4. people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability;
5. people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the Local Authority where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).
6. Applicants from these Reasonable Preference categories are placed within Bands One to Three of the Housing Register (discussed in more detail in Section 6 – Applicant Bandings) in order to give them Reasonable Preference over other applicants.

Please note that those applicants, who would fall within a Reasonable Preference category, will not qualify if they are subject to any of the exclusions set out in Section 3 – Exclusions of this Scheme.

Armed Forces

The Armed Forces England Regulations 2012, provide that Additional Preference must be given to an applicant with urgent housing needs who falls within one of the Reasonable Preference categories referred to above if:-

1. S/he is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributed (wholly or partly) to his/her service; or
2. S/he has formerly served in the regular forces; or
3. S/he has recently ceased or will cease to be entitled to accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of his spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service; or
4. S/he is serving or has served in the reserved forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service

Forces are defined as “regular forces” are the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, The Army and the Royal Air Force. “Reserved forces” are the Royal Fleet Reserve, The Royal Naval Reserve, The Royal Marines Reserve. “The Army Reserve” are the Territorial Army, The Royal Air Force Reserve or Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

NSDC usually define former and serving members of the armed forces as:

1. People who left the regular Armed Forces within the last 10 years, except those dismissed under Section 265 as set out in Schedule 3, Part 2 of the Armed Forces Act 2006.
2. Serving members of either the regular or reserve Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
3. Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner

Additional Preference for Armed Forces

An applicant who has been assessed as having Reasonable Preference and who meets the additional preference criteria will be have their banding increased by a maximum of one band. Those already awarded Band 1 will be given an additional six months waiting time.

Consideration has also been given to the Newark and Sherwood Community Covenant (signed on 16 July 2013) between the Armed Forces community, Armed Forces Charities, Newark and Sherwood District Council and Newark and Sherwood Homes.

Right to Move Regulations

The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria For Right To Move) (England) Regulations 2015 (the 2015 Regulations) provide that local authorities must not disqualify certain applicants on the grounds that they do not have a local connection with the authority's district. Specifically, a local connection may not be applied to existing social tenants seeking to transfer from another local authority district in England who:-

1. Has Reasonable Preference under s.166(3)(e) because of a need to move to the local authority's district to avoid hardship, **and**
2. need to move because the tenant works in the district, **or**
3. need to move to take up an offer of work.

A Relevant Person has a need to move for the purpose of the 2015 Regulations if the Applicant:-

1. Works in the district of the local housing authority, **or**
2. Has been offered work in the district of the local Housing Authority **and**
3. The authority is satisfied that the relevant person has a genuine intention of taking up the offer of work.

The 2015 Regulations does not apply if work is short term or marginal, ancillary to work in another district or voluntary.

NSDC has opted for the minimum quota as allowed from guidance due to the high number of applicants on the Housing Register with identified housing need and low number of allocations that become available each year. The quota is therefore set at 1% of housing allocations forecasted for the coming year, based on the actual number of allocations in the previous year.

This will be reviewed annually and altered if required.

Equal Opportunities

NSDC and its partners are committed to promoting equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practises in the services it provides. It is committed to giving all applicants an

equal opportunity to obtain housing, whatever their age, disability, gender, race and nationality, religion or belief, transgender identity or sexual orientation.

Data Protection

Applicant's details will only be disclosed to a third party with either the Applicant's consent, or lawfully (where one of the exemptions under Data Protection legislation applies) with other relevant agencies including but not limited to the Police, Health Service, Social Services and RPs.

By returning an application to us, applicants are giving their consent for NSDC and NSH to process and hold sensitive data which will be used in the assessment of the application and may be used for the delivery of other services provided.

2. REGISTRATION

Applications for housing are administered and processed by NSH on behalf of NSDC. More information is available from <http://www.nshomes.co.uk/applying-for-a-home> or by telephoning NSH Customer Access Service on 0845 2585550.

Every Applicant must complete an application form together with all relevant and supporting information required and submit this to NSH for registration.

Properties that become available to let will usually be offered to applicants on the Housing Register. Applications for housing will normally be completed online via www.nshomes.co.uk.

Applicants can request advice and assistance in completing their application form from NSH, this may include translation where required.

Once registered Applicants are placed on the Housing Register and provided with a bidding number.

Who can apply

Anyone aged 16 years or over can apply to go on the Housing Register if they have a local connection and is not subject to immigration control as set out in Asylum and Immigration status.

An Applicant cannot usually be offered a tenancy until they are 18 years old. However in certain circumstances a tenancy could be offered and held in trust until the applicant reaches the age of 18. This will be assessed on a case by case basis and subject to NSDC/NSH senior officer approval.

Local Connection

To join the Housing Register, an Applicant must usually have been resident in the District of Newark and Sherwood for the following time periods or qualifying criteria:

1. 2 consecutive years **or**;
2. 3 out of the last 5 years **or**;
3. 5 or more consecutive years in which family members have been resident within the District (family members include parents, those with parental responsibility or guardianship, grandparents and siblings);
4. be in employment for an average of 16 hours per week for the last 6 months or more within the district **or**;
5. Applicants who are statutory homeless **or**;
6. Special conditions might include, but is not limited to, the need for specialist medical or support services which are available only in NSDC, Right to Move Regulations **or**;
7. Former and serving members of the armed forces*.

*Section 315 of the 2008 Act amends s.199 of the 1996 Act so that a person serving in the Armed Forces can establish a local connection with a district through residence or employment there, in the same way as a civilian person.

In exceptional circumstances and to ensure effective use of stock, allocations may be advertised and made available to households who do not have a local connection.

If the Applicant does not meet the above criteria but feel that they have special or unusual circumstances that should be taken into account, the applicant should apply in writing to NSH explaining what these special circumstances are.

Asylum and Immigration status

An Applicant will not be eligible to join the Housing Register if they are subject to immigration controls under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, unless they;

1. Already hold a Secure tenancy
2. Already hold an Assured tenancy
3. Are in a class as may be prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State, which currently include:
 - i. Having Refugee status
 - ii. Having exceptional leave to remain in the UK
 - iii. Having indefinite leave to remain in the UK
 - iv. Persons subject to immigration control who are a National of a country that has ratified the European Convention on Social and Medical Assistance (ECSMA) of the European Social Charter.

Any application identified as falling under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 (which may be amended from time to time) and in accordance with Regulations made by the Secretary of State, will be assessed in accordance with the Act and subsequent guidance.

Applicants who are not eligible at the point of application will not be placed on the Housing Register and will be notified of this in writing stating the reasons their application is not considered eligible and how to re-apply if their circumstances change.

Advocate

If an Applicant feels they cannot manage their own affairs and are unable to bid for properties themselves, they can choose someone to act for them. This person will be called an 'Advocate'. Applicants need to complete and sign the relevant questions on registration and ensure their advocate signs the declaration to act on their behalf.

The Applicant or their advocate is responsible for keeping their application up to date with their current circumstances by advising of any changes that could affect their application.

Information Declarations

If Applicants give false or misleading information or withhold information, which is reasonably required for the Applicants to give, they will be removed from the Housing Register and may be liable to prosecution. If they have been offered a tenancy as a result of this misinformation or the withholding of relevant information, the tenancy will be terminated. If Applicants have deliberately altered their circumstances to increase their banding, the right is reserved to move them into the correct band and may result in suspension of their application entirely.

If you are an employee or a Councillor of NSDC, an employee or Board Member of NSH your application must include a statement of this fact. In addition, a senior officer of NSDC or NSH must approve any offer of a property made to persons in these circumstances.

3. EXCLUSIONS

Some Applicants, although registered may not be eligible for the allocation of a property.

NSDC/NSH reserve the right not to make an offer of accommodation to individual applicants where satisfied that:

1. The applicant, or a member of their household, has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour, which if the applicant was a secure tenant of the Council would entitle the Council to a possession order (Ground 2 of Schedule 2, Housing Act 1985).
2. The unacceptable behaviour is serious enough to make the applicant unsuitable to be a tenant.
3. The applicant or a member of their household is deemed unsuitable at the time of allocation.

Examples of unsuitability include but are not limited to:

1. Behaviour linked to financial gain such as benefit fraud or any other criminal offence of a similar nature.
2. Non-payment of rent, rechargeable repairs, other housing debt such as garage rent arrears, former rent arrears including NSDC/NSH and other social housing providers, anti-social behaviour, or any behaviour type which would be considered a breach of terms and conditions of NSDC's Tenancy Agreement (including any future variation)
3. Existing tenants wishing to transfer who have breached the terms and conditions set out in their Tenancy Agreement.
4. Behaviour which has resulted in any criminal or civil sanction against that which affects their suitability to be a tenant (including but is not limited to, injunction, possession order, criminal conviction, money judgment or enforcement of the same).
5. If an applicant intentionally gives or has intentionally given in the past, false information on any part of a housing application form or form to claim benefits of any type

The exclusions in this section include past or present behaviour of the individual or any member of the applicant's household.

In some circumstances a limit may also be placed on the type of property and/or area an applicant can apply for in order to manage any wider risks posed.

Financial resources and affordability

An Applicant would not normally be made an offer of accommodation, if they own or have interest in another property in the UK or abroad that is reasonable to occupy. Generally an Applicant in these circumstances will only be considered for supported housing, and/or extra care, set against their housing needs.

All Applicants will be required to complete a financial assessment and will be required to self-certify their financial position, with relevant supporting evidence to confirm their ability to sustain a tenancy in line with NSDC's Tenancy Agreement.

If an applicant fails to provide this information, intentionally gives false information or diverts their interest in property in this respect, they will be excluded from being made an offer of accommodation.

Non bidders

Applicants not bidding for accommodation will be reviewed regularly and those in priority Bands One and Two will be contacted to establish why they are not bidding and to ascertain if any support is required to facilitate future bidding.

In certain circumstances where applicants are not bidding for accommodation, without justification, their application may be removed from the Housing Register.

Exceptions

An exception may be made in making an offer of accommodation in the following (but is not limited to) circumstances:

1. There is no valid court order; or
2. A debt relief order is in place and in payment; or
3. At least 75% of their total housing debts has been paid off; or
4. Evidenced support needs.

All exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis.

If the Applicant does not meet the above criteria but feel that they have special or unusual circumstances that should be taken into account, the applicant should apply in writing to NSH explaining what these special circumstances are.

Statutory Homeless Applicants

If any of the exclusions contained within this Scheme are applicable to an applicant who is deemed to be statutory homeless by NSDC, a case review will be convened and a final decision regarding an offer of accommodation would require NSDC/NSH senior officer approval.

4. REVIEW OF DECISION TO EXCLUDE FROM THE ALLOCATION SCHEME

Applicants can request a review in writing of any decision to exclude them from the Allocation Scheme, or any restrictions placed upon them. A senior officer, of NSH, not previously involved in the case will consider this review.

The Applicant or their Advocate is responsible for keeping their application up to date with their current circumstances. They must advise of any changes that could affect their application and complete a change of circumstances form where appropriate.

Failure to do so may result in an offer of a property not being made.

An annual review will be carried out of applications on the Housing Register at the anniversary of each application. If there is no response to this review the application will usually be cancelled.

5. ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING NEED

Applicants are prioritised according to their housing need and are placed in the relevant 'banding'. This will allow applicants in greatest need to be given priority.

Transfer Applicants will be banded under the same assessment process as housing applicants.

NSH will notify the applicant of their registration date, registration number and priority band awarded. Information will also be provided as to the suitability and size of property applicants are eligible to bid for.

If an applicant's circumstances require a change in banding after registration, a band date will be applied as part of the allocation procedure (see Section 8 – Allocation Procedure). This will be the date an Applicant qualifies for that band and not their original registration date. If an applicant is assessed as Band 4 the original registration date will apply.

6. APPLICANT BANDINGS

BAND ONE

HOMELESSNESS

Homeless households are defined as those who, NSDC has a statutory duty to secure accommodation (within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002), are in priority need and who are not homeless intentionally.

Applications from these households will be awarded Band One and a direct offer of suitable accommodation will be made in order to discharge NSDC's main housing duty. Applicants deemed to be owed a statutory duty will not be offered the opportunity to bid for accommodation, instead this will be managed in liaison with their assigned case officer at NSDC who will place bids on the Applicants behalf.

If this offer of accommodation is refused, and the property is considered reasonable and is suitable for the household's needs, then no further offers of accommodation will be made. NSDC will have discharged its duty under the Provision of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996; however, the homeless applicant has a right to request a review of this decision under Section 202 of the Housing Act 1996 by writing to NSDC within 21 days of the date of refusal, stating the reasons they do not agree with the decision.

MEDICAL GROUNDS

High Priority – A medical condition or disability where current accommodation seriously undermines and affects the Applicant or a member of their household's health and the accommodation is therefore considered unsuitable. Supporting evidence will be required.

LIVING CONDITIONS

Identified Category 1 hazards where the enforcement of Housing Act 2004 (Housing Health and Safety Rating System) is in place and subject to Environmental Health action. This priority is only awarded for the period of time that the work remains outstanding.

STATUTORY OVERCROWDING

Applicants living in statutory overcrowded housing.

The permitted number of people for a property is worked out from the number and sizes of the rooms in the property, as detailed in the Housing Act 1985, shown in the two tables below:

Number of rooms	Permitted number
1	2
2	3
3	5
4	7.5
5	10
6 +	A further 2 persons for every room

Floor area of room	Number of persons
Over 110 sq ft	2
90 to 110 sq ft	1.5
70 to 90 sq ft	1
50 to 70 sq ft	0.5

Both tables are used and the lowest number reached is the permitted number for the property.

All living rooms and sleeping rooms are included in the calculation when the permitted number of persons is worked out. Kitchens, bathrooms and toilets are not included in the calculation.

When working out the number of persons sleeping in the property, occupants are counted as follows:

- Over ten years old - 1 person
- One to nine years - 0.5 person
- Under one year - not counted

A senior officer at NSH will assess and award the correct Banding according to the above assessment tables.

UNDER OCCUPATION – CHANGING PLACES SCHEME (applicable to NSDC tenants only)

The Changing Places Scheme is designed to give priority to Transfer Applicants who occupy a property of two or more bedrooms and want to move to smaller accommodation. Applicants awarded this Band who have not actively bid for accommodation within a twelve month period, will be demoted to the Band that represents their housing needs. Applicants losing this priority due to inactive bidding will only be reassessed following significant changes to their housing needs.

If evidence, such as the District Wide Housing Needs Survey carried out by NSDC, no longer supports the necessity for the Changing Places Scheme to have a priority status, relevant amendments or a revoking the scheme will be considered as part as the wider Scheme review process, as set out in Section 14 – Scheme Review.

BAND TWO

HOMELESSNESS THREATENED WITH / NO STATUTORY DUTY

Applicants threatened with homelessness as assessed by NSDC and/or homeless households to whom NSDC has no statutory duty to secure accommodation (within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002).

APPLICANTS REQUIRING MOVE ON ACCOMMODATION FROM DESIGNATED SUPPORTED HOUSING PROJECTS

This Band is only applicable when the Applicant's support needs have been identified and provision for meeting these needs is in place.

MEDICAL GROUNDS

Medium Priority – A medical condition or disability where current accommodation undermines or moderately affects the Applicant or a member of their household's health and is considered unsuitable and/or where this leads to social isolation. Supporting evidence will be required.

INSECURITY OF TENURE

Applicants who have been served a valid Notice Seeking Possession or court possession proceedings from a landlord or mortgage lender other than NSDC, NSH or RPs. Applicants will be required to provide evidence that the Notice served is not a result of their or a member of the households act(s) or omission(s).

OVERCROWDING

Applicants who are lacking two bedrooms or more in their current home but are not considered to be statutorily overcrowded.

AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Agricultural, horticultural and forestry applications for workers who need their workers to be housed under the Rent (Agricultural) Act 1976. NSH will make a decision to give priority under this band after receiving a full report from the Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committee.

BAND THREE

MEDICAL GROUNDS

Low Priority - Where current accommodation creates some difficulties for an Applicant or a member of their household's health but it is considered manageable in their present accommodation.

HOMELESSNESS INTENTIONALLY

Homeless households to whom NSDC has no statutory duty to secure accommodation (within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002), whether or not they are in priority need, who are intentionally homeless

LIVING CONDITIONS

Identified Category 2 hazards where the enforcement of Housing Act 2004 (Housing Health and Safety Rating System) is in place and subject to Environmental Health action. This priority is only awarded for the period of time that the work remains outstanding.

OVERCROWDING

Applicants who are lacking one bedroom in their current home but are not considered to be statutorily overcrowded.

SHARING

Applicants/households sharing personal facilities, such as kitchens and bathrooms within their current accommodation, with another household. This would exclude gardens and communal areas.

BAND FOUR

Applicants or Transfer Applicants with no identified and evidenced housing need.

Applicants who have deliberately worsened their circumstances to be awarded a priority banding or who have not taken reasonable steps to prevent the worsening of their circumstances.

Applicants should note that if they are awarded Band 4 that this Allocations Scheme is unlikely to secure an offer of social housing and therefore, these applicants are encouraged to consider other housing options and products.

7. ADVERTISING PROPERTIES

Properties available for allocation will be advertised by NSH. Properties advertised will give a description of the property, its location and suitability criteria to help applicants make relevant and informed choices.

Properties will be advertised on the NSH website and on posters in the local offices and at various partner agency premises.

These adverts will include social housing properties and may also include private rented properties available through NSDC's Realhome Scheme. Realhome is a tenant finding service for Private Sector Landlords.

More information on the Realhome Scheme is available on the NSDC website <http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/realhome/>.

In some circumstances, properties may not be advertised as part of the Allocations Scheme. Examples of this can include but are not limited to:

1. Temporary accommodation required because of a flood, fire or other emergency.
2. Properties required for existing tenants when they are faced with home loss
3. Effective and efficient use of the housing stock and duties of NSDC/NSH.

Properties advertised will be available for both Applicants and Transfer Applicants. Applicants or their advocate can request details of available properties by contacting NSH Customer Access Service on 0845 2585550.

Applicants or their Advocate will be able to state their interest in a maximum of two properties per weekly advert cycle and unlimited RP or Realhome properties, giving their order of preference. Interest in a property can be made via telephone, email, online, text or in person. Applicants will not be contacted if their bid is unsuccessful.

Available properties will usually be advertised a maximum of twice. If the property remains vacant NSH will consider alternative ways of letting the available property. This could include allowing Applicants to bid on more than two NSDC properties per cycle and relaxing criteria.

8. ALLOCATION PROCEDURE

For all properties advertised a list will be generated of Applicants who have expressed interest in the property. Applicants who have stated their interest in the property and meet the criteria for that property will be matched by the following procedure:

1. Priority Band; then
2. Local Connection then
3. Banding Date.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to provide information required to carry out the necessary verification checks and references.

Verification checks and financial assessments will be undertaken for the Applicants shortlisted. The applicant will be asked to confirm that the information given on the application form regarding their circumstances has not changed since the application. In some circumstances, the successful applicant may be contacted to assess that they are in an appropriate position to sustain a tenancy in line with NSDC's Tenancy Agreement.

If the Applicant's verification checks are satisfactory, the offer of the tenancy of the property will be made.

In the event of the applicant's verification checks being unsatisfactory they will be advised of the reason for this decision in writing and the property will be offered to the next qualifying applicant.

Withdrawing an offer

NSH reserve the right to withdraw any offer of accommodation. An explanation will be given to the applicant in writing.

Penalties for refusing offers of accommodation

Applicants who refuse two offers of accommodation will have their application suspended for six months and will be unable to bid for properties advertised during this period.

If a further refusal of an offer of accommodation is made, following reinstatement on the Housing Register, a twelve month suspension will be applied.

If an applicant's circumstances significantly change during a suspension then the review process at Section 14 should be followed.

9. SUITABILITY OF PROPERTY TYPES

Applicants should have regard to the criteria stipulated in the advertisement of available properties prior to placing a bid to ensure they meet the required criteria.

Before an offer of accommodation is made, NSH will take into account the suitability and size of the property in relation to the family/number of people seeking accommodation.

Suitability criteria may be adapted from time to time to reflect the supply and demand of properties, management of stock and overall community housing needs.

The following will usually be applied:

1. Single applicants are considered to need bedsits/one bedroom.

2. An adult requesting to share with another adult (who is not a partner) will require one bedroom each.
3. Married couples, same sex partners and persons' living as man and wife are considered to need one bedroom (unless the partner needs a separate bedroom on proven medical grounds).
4. Two dependent children of the same sex and two children under ten of the opposite sex will normally be expected to share a bedroom. Dependent children are defined as children less than 21 years who live with the applicant and where the applicant is the parent or guardian and in receipt of Child Benefit or the child is in higher education.
5. Households who have contact with their children but with whom the children do not reside on a permanent basis must be able to show that they do have established contact. Households who have contact with their children cannot normally be considered for properties larger than two bedrooms irrespective of the number of children they have contact with.
6. Foster carers or those adopting children who require additional bedrooms will be assessed on an individual basis in liaison and as confirmed in writing by relevant social care departments.
7. A woman with a pregnancy confirmed by an appropriate medical practitioner, will be counted as a household with a child after 36 weeks of pregnancy and therefore qualify for a bedroom each. If she already has one child, the unborn baby will be treated as if it were the same sex.

Applicants are suitable for accommodation designated as supported accommodation if:

1. The Applicant or partner are 60 years of age or over
2. The Applicant or a member of the household is aged 60 years over. (Such applicants may be considered for some, but not all, supported accommodation).
3. The Applicant or a member of the household is under 60 years but has a proven mobility, medical or disability need. (Such applicants may be considered for some, but not all, supported accommodation).

In some circumstances medical authorities and/or evidence may be requested in addition to and in support of, a completed medical self-assessment questionnaire.

10. EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF TENANCIES AND HOUSING STOCK

This section of the Allocation Scheme enables priority transfers for existing tenants or applicants who find themselves in exceptional circumstances, which means remaining in their current accommodation is no longer deemed appropriate or safe and/or to enable NSDC and NSH to make best use of its limited available housing stock, prevent homelessness and create sustainable communities.

In such cases, a review of individual circumstances will be carried out between a senior officer of both NSDC and NSH to make a final decision based on the evidence available.

The outcome of this decision may result in a direct allocation of accommodation, for reasons such as (but is not limited to):

1. Severe harassment, threats or actual violence, victims of anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse or where there is personal risk to the household if they remain. Sufficient evidence is required
2. Applicants who have either lost their statutory right to succession or have a succession right to a tenancy and the current accommodation is not suitable, as set out in the Tenancy Agreement.
3. To enable major repairs which require a permanent or temporary move (decant)
4. Where adapted properties are no longer required by a tenant or a member of their household.
5. Applicants or tenants requiring specialist and/or adapted properties.

This decision may be part of a multi-agency risk assessment where information (including sensitive information) will be lawfully shared.

Local Lettings Schemes

Local Lettings Schemes can also assist in the management of existing housing stock, to help resolve issues such as, areas suffering from a disproportionate amount of anti-social behaviour or to help widen housing choices for local people and provide sustainable communities.

Local Lettings Schemes are an exception. They implement additional specific criteria to be considered in a local area when allocating housing through this Allocation Scheme.

The application of Local Lettings Schemes will be carefully considered by NSDC and NSH based on need and evidence for a limited period of time and reviewed to assess its effectiveness.

Local Lettings Schemes will be published on NSH website, available at www.nshomes.co.uk

11. ANNOUNCEMENT OF LETTINGS / FEEDBACK

Results of every property allocated will be published on a monthly basis on NSH website, available at www.nshomes.co.uk

Feedback information is available to applicants, to understand their housing options, to make informed decisions and choices about their future bidding and to compare their housing need against the available housing.

NSH will continue to produce and publicise facts on the overall allocation of properties within the district on a monthly basis.

12. CUSTOMER COMMENTS PROCEDURE

Applicants who wish to comment or complain about the service are able to contact NSH via housing@nshomes.co.uk or visiting the website at www.nshomes.co.uk in order to obtain the relevant forms for completion to ensure this is dealt with under official procedures.

NSH is committed to delivering excellent housing services to support NSDC deliver its housing vision and priorities.

13. REVIEWS AND APPEALS

If an applicant is dissatisfied with any decision made by NSH, they may request a review of this decision. This will allow an applicant to have their circumstances initially considered and reviewed by a senior officer from NSH, not previously involved in any assessment or decision.

If the applicant is still dissatisfied with the outcome, and feels there are additional special circumstances that should be (or have not been) taken into account, they would then be able to appeal to NSDC and this appeal would be undertaken by a senior officer.

This process will ensure that an applicant's appeal is dealt with fairly, according to the Scheme, relevant legislation and within a time limited framework.

Requests should be made in writing, supported by evidence.

Review requests relating to the offer of accommodation to statutory homeless households in Band 1, is excluded from this review process. Further details can be found in Section 6 - Applicant Bandings.

14. SCHEME REVIEW

Senior officers from NSDC and NSH will regularly review the Allocations Scheme to ensure its requirements are being implemented and that it continues to meet relevant legislation and any new duties placed upon the Council.

Where amendments are necessary these will be implemented in consultation with applicants and stakeholders when and where appropriate.

Column1	Column2	Column3
Allocations Scheme Implementation Plan - 2016 -Newark and Sherwood Hor		
Task	Milestone	Lead
Consultation	Commence external communication with RP's and other agencies	NSH
	Send letters to existing applicants	NSH
	Review consultation returns	NSH
	Report to Homes and Communities	NSH
Design	Agree shortlisting and banding rules	NSH
	Map Capita attribute changes	NSH
	Finalise custom band specification for Capita	NSH
	Capita to complete custom banding	Capita
	Capita to begin on-Line application process design	Capita
	First draft of application process produced	Capita
	Testing of on-line application process	NSH
	Re-work on-line application process	Capita
	On-line process go live for existing applicants	NSH
Implementation	Notify existing applicants of need to apply on-line	NSH
	Existing applicants to re-apply on-line	NSH
	Support mechanisms for those with no IT in place	NSH
	Review data and quality audit	NSH
	Notify existing applicants of changes to banding	NSH
	Apply banding changes to the register	NSH
	Go Live	NSH

Column4	Column5	Column6	Column7	Column8
nes				
Support	Planned Start Date	Actual Date	Working Days Slippage	Status
	17/05/2016	17/05/2016	0	Complete
	17/05/2016	17/05/2016	0	Complete
NSDC	29/07/2016	29/07/2016	0	Complete
NSDC	12/09/2016			
NSDC	05/08/2016	03/08/2016	-2	Complete
	05/08/2016	03/08/2016	-2	Complete
	16/08/2016			
	24/10/2016			
NSH	25/10/2016			
NSH	25/10/2016			
Capita	19/12/2016			
NSH	31/12/2016			
Capita	09/01/2017			
	02/01/2016			
	10/01/2017			
	10/01/2017			
	10/01/2017			
	03/04/2016			
	03/04/2016			
Capita	03/04/2016			

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.

At the Committee's meeting on 30th November 2016 Members approved the Company's Annual Delivery Plan for 2016/17.

- b) Asset Management Programme
Progress and spend is presented to the Policy & Finance Committee under the Capital Programme reports.
- c) Tenant Panel Feedback/Work Programme
At the Committee's meeting on 13th June 2016 a report was presented providing detail on the Panel's Annual report, its work programme for 2015/16 and recently completed scrutiny report covering the area of Property Maintenance.
- d) Assurance Report (covering financial affairs & governance)
- e) Details of formal complaints (outcome)
- f) List of let contracts
- g) Procurement Plan
- h) Management Fee
This matter is reported to the Policy & Finance Committee. In the first year of the Management Agreement (2014/15) a 'base line' Management Fee was set. This is set for 3 years (subject to taking into account external factors including inflation and other aspects which are out of the control of the Company). For years 2 (2015/16) and 3 (2016/17) of the first three year period an efficiency target of 3% has been set for each year. At the end of year 3 there will be a further base line exercise carried out, against the agreed framework which sets out the fee elements. This will determine the Management fee for the next 3 year period, as well as efficiency targets for the second and third years.

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 the 2015/16 financial year 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.

3.2 Repairs and customer satisfaction have been two areas of key focus for NSH during the year. In terms of **customer satisfaction** all of the satisfaction results relating to the core

survey questions have delivered a positive direction of travel when compared to the previous year, with 100% of core satisfaction performance achieving upper quartile status. The overall satisfaction with NSH is 93%; delivering an 8% improvement compared with the previous year and is in the highest performing quartile when compared against its peers.

- 3.3 The **repairs service** has been a focus for continual improvement by NSH, being a priority service for customers. The annual satisfactions results from the STAR survey show that the satisfaction results have improved across all areas, by an average of 7% and all are achieving upper quartile performance.
- 3.4 The repairs satisfaction at a local transactional level as detailed at **Appendix B** (*% of customer satisfaction with responsive repairs - Collated from returned tenant satisfaction surveys on completion of a responsive repair*) has decreased compared with the previous year. NSH has recently changed how it is collating this data moving to an independent phone survey approach. This change has seen an initial decline in satisfaction results, however NSH are now receiving more robust survey data allowing them to complete detailed trend analysis to ensure continued improvement with the repairs service.
- 3.5 The Committee will note at its meeting on the 13th June 2016 representatives from the Tenants Panel presented its' scrutiny report covering the area of Property Maintenance. This included a comprehensive action plan for NSH to deliver.
- 3.6 **Income recovery performance** remains steady and has delivered an increase compared with the previous year. NSH has realigned its resources and changed systems/processes following the implementation of Welfare Reforms to support tenants in sustaining their tenancies whilst maximising income into the Housing Revenue Account. This will be a continued focus for NSH throughout the roll out of the universal credit programme.
- 3.7 When considering **housing assets**, properties continue to be maintained at the Newark and Sherwood standard with the investment programme being delivered on time and within budget. All legislative requirements are achieved including health and safety requirements.

4.0 2016/17 Annual Delivery Plan

- 4.1 Further to the Committee approving the Company's Annual Delivery Plan for the financial year 2016/17, at its meeting on 30th November 2016, **Appendix C** provides an update on current progress with each ongoing activity for Member consideration.

5.0 Housing Revenue Account Performance

- 5.1 The rent debit as at 30th June 2016 is £5,351,174; this rose against a profiled budget of £5,092,385. The debit amount raised takes account of empty properties (voids) but bad debts are dealt with at year end.
- 5.2 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	112,475,000
Housing Revenue Account CFR (capital Financing Requirement) as at 31/03/16	103,913,542
Headroom as at 31/03/16	8,561,458

5.3 In accordance with the Management Agreement, the Council is now formulating the management fee for the financial year 2017/18 in negotiation with the Company for approval by the Policy and Finance Committee.

6.0 Proposals

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

7.0 Equalities Implications

7.1 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.

8.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

8.1 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.

9.0 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
% 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


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.	99.27%	96.25%	98.75%	98.73%
Amount of current arrears as a % of annual rent debit (measure of bad debt).	1.57%	6.50%	1.46%	1.54%
% of rent loss through dwellings being vacant	0.70%	2.00%	0.60%	0.73%
Former tenant arrears as a % of annual rent debit	1.30%	0.50 %	0.98%	0.74%
<i>Increase compared to the previous year partly due to the timing off write offs and recovery resources stretched as a focus on current and former arrears to sustain tenancies where possible.</i>				
% of current leaseholder arrears	0.02%	0.25%	0.01%	New
% of rent arrears written off	0.19%	0.65%	0.28%	0.13%
% of supported housing tenants in support charge arrears	6.64 %	6.50%	17.82%	New
Right to Buy				
Number of RTB sales	22	24	24	27
Average RTB value	£112,136	Not Applicable	£90,781	£109,407
Average RTB discount	£56,099	Not Applicable	£44,758	£55,201
Average Sale Price	£56,036	Not Applicable	£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)	18.53% (R)	29% (R)	26.30% (R)	New
Welfare Reform				
% of general needs tenants under occupying and in rent arrears <i>(2915 General Need Units)</i>	7.54% <i>(220 tenants in total)</i>	9.00%	11.02%	New

Performance Indicators	Performance 2015/2016	Annual Target 2015/2016	Performance 2014/15	Performance 2013/14
% of tenancies paying by Direct Debit	44.66%	70.00%	39.97%	36%
Number of general needs tenants in receipt of housing benefit (Universal Credit)	1,611 HB 20 on UC	Not Applicable	1,609	New
Number of supported housing tenants in receipt of housing benefit.	1,559	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>)	90.40%		84.00%	84.5%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home (<i>Star Survey</i>)	95.30%		91.00%	92.70%
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service (<i>Star Survey</i>)	84.00%		74.00%	76%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the responsive repairs service (<i>Star Survey</i>)	89.00%		87.00%	91%
% of tenants satisfied with supported housing services (<i>Star Survey</i>)	85.90%		89.00%	90%
% of general needs tenants satisfied with landlord/ overall service (<i>Star Survey</i>)	94.80%		83.00%	85%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with landlord/overall service (<i>Star Survey</i>)	90.80%		89.00%	90%
% of general needs tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood (<i>Star Survey</i>)	94.00%		81.00%	80.3%
% of supported housing tenants satisfied with the neighbourhood (<i>Star Survey</i>)	94.50%		91.00%	90.8%
% of customer satisfaction with responsive repairs (<i>Collated from returned tenant satisfaction surveys on</i>)	86.00%	99%	98.00%	New

Performance Indicators	Performance 2015/2016	Annual Target 2015/2016	Performance 2014/15	Performance 2013/14
<i>completion of a responsive repair).</i>				
% of properties in low demand	4.73%	4.00%	4%	New
Complaints received referred to Tenant Panel and/or Housing Ombudsman	2	4	1	New
Sustainability				
NSH - Inward investment achieved	£1.5m	£150,000	£722,350	£413,000
NSH – Management fee efficiency delivery achieved (as specified in the Management Agreement)	3% <i>(Management Fee: £7,674,500)</i>	3%	3% <i>(Management fee: £7,637,600)</i>	No data <i>(Management Fee: £7,893,596)</i>
NSH - Revenue spend for management and maintenance costs against budget	£8,236,224	£8,502,500	£8,765,715	New
Level of HRA reserves	£2,000,000	£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.)	£7,792,202	Not Applicable	£8,350,000	New
Change in Council Housing Stock Size	5,443	Not Applicable	5,439	5,438

Delivery Plan Actions Report – Update June 2016.

KEY  = PI completed  = PI in progress, not completed, but not due  = PI not completed and off target

Title	Stat us	Comment	Lead Officer
Continuation of progression of implementation of electronic governance to be completed by end of 16/17.		Project is progressing with equipment in currently being procured and processes for use being prepared. Will be rolled out through the late summer.	Steve Feast
Liaison with the Council to provide a co-ordinated approach and preparation for the relocation to new offices from Kelham Hall including: Farrar Close Office Works, potential shared service opportunities and procurement sharing opportunities		Work to enable the move is well progressed and aligned with council colleagues. Areas yet to be determined are costs of the new accommodation. Critical stages for the company include the refurbishment of Farrar Close Office which is commencing imminently.	Cara Clarkson
Continuation of the company e project to support agile working.		Project is progressing well. Current phase is the redesign of processes and procedures to fit with agile working approach	Steve Feast
Liaison with the Council to provide a coordinated approach and consider options to support channel shift / access to services, including the progression of a preference for Company service delivery and access to be digital, electronic and self-service.		Regular liaison is held between the Company and the Council through established officer groups and involvement in the Moving head project Group. As reported to Board this project includes the implementation of Kiosks and the development of new website including self-service functionality	Steve Feast
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		The process to develop Board meeting documents has been updated to include a review of the agenda to establish the appropriate access status of each report including the differential between	Suzanne Williamson

Title	Stat us	Comment	Lead Officer
is accessible to share holder.		confidential and accessibility for the shareholder. The Company is now reviewing the electronic filing structures and the rules of for publications broader than the Board agenda.	
Formulate and consult on a monthly or 4 weekly tenancy agreement to align with contemporary income payment frequencies and mechanisms.		Project scope confirmed, Project plan to commence August 2016.	Dave Newmarch
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.		Project plan in place to commence August 2016.	Dave Newmarch
Assess the impact of Heat Metering Regulations 2014. Appraise and align capital/ revenue resources as required.		A management report has been considered informing approach to be taken. Next stages at the planning process.	Andy Dewberry
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.		Task is in line with target milestones. Scheme currently in consultation phase.	Dave Newmarch
Work in partnership with the Council to support delivery of the council's housing growth strategy, set against maintaining a viable HRA BP.		Council 5 year development plan approved and procurement of contracts for the term being progressed. A comprehensive programme of work through SHLP was undertaken to inform the development plans.	Suzanne Williamson
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.		Contract let, rents and service charges being determined. start on site and delivery on target with plan	Dave Newmarch
Undertake detailed analysis of satisfaction results from the STAR		The STAR report is being considered by the Board as part of the July 16 agenda. Upper quartile	Suzanne

Title	Status	Comment	Lead Officer
survey to identify any potential opportunities to improve outturns commensurate to evidenced investment.		performance has been achieved for 100% of the core questions. Further analysis is in progress on the results to establish potential improvement opportunities which forms part of the Improvement Planning Process to inform the Business Plan and Delivery Plan.	Williamson
Assess the impact off the new tenant influence mechanisms and formulate report on the findings.		The new influence mechanisms have yielded a positive impact and we are confident that the projects outcomes will be delivered.	Steve Feast
Support the Council in maintaining the viability of the HRABP.		The Company has progressed work with the Council through SHLP focused on the review and updating of the HRABP in the context of delivering growth plans to support long term viability and deliver new homes within the District.	Suzanne Williamson
Promote awareness with staff of the Newark & Sherwood community (military) covenant.		A communication plan is in the process of being developed which will be rolled out to managers in September 2016 and implemented with staff members in October 2016. Onward promotion opportunities planned through the company communication mechanisms during the remainder of the year.	Suzanne Williamson
Develop 60 new build extra care units for the council at Bowbridge Rd Newark		Contract has been awarded and the specification options are in the process of being finalised.	Andy Dewberry
Develop People Strategy		Strategy approved considered at Human resources Committee and recommended for approval by the Board.	Rebecca Rance
Review Employee Rewards and Benefits		Options to introduce additional rewards and benefits considered and CMT approved for implementation subject to appropriate procurement process being adhered to.	Rebecca Rance
Revise Staff Development Interviews and develop into an Employee Appraisal		All processes considered and options for future use of current Performance 121, Staff development interview to be considered by CMT to determine any changes	Rebecca Rance
Review and Develop Performance		Performance 121 procedure and guidance	Rebecca

Title	Status	Comment	Lead Officer
Management System for Managers		reviewed for consideration at CMT	Rance
Develop Talent Management / Succession Planning Strategy		Dedicated resource is being aligned to internal capacity coordination. To develop Apprentices and deliver succession planning for key skills and roles to support company delivery.	Rebecca Rance

AN UPDATE ON FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEMES IN NEWARK & SHERWOOD

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report updates Members on the current position of proposed flood alleviation schemes within the Newark & Sherwood area. It includes a recommendation for some expenditure from the capital budget for major flood alleviation.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Council has set aside £250k within the capital reserve and £150k in the capital programme to assist with flood defence schemes across the District. Currently there are four schemes within the District which could have the potential to be delivered. They are:

- Girton
- Lowdham
- Gunthorpe
- Southwell

The current position with each of these schemes is summarised in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.18 below.

2.2 **Girton** – This scheme has had an initial assessment completed which generates options for the protection of up to 28 properties from flooding caused by the River Trent. Due to the small number of properties protected by the scheme it would only attract approximately £370,000 in Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) from DEFRA. This is a relatively small amount and leaves an estimated funding shortfall in the range of £2.1 million to £4.4 million dependant on the particular option chosen and detailed costings.

2.3 Meetings have been held between all relevant partners to attempt to find a way forward for the Girton scheme. Any potential scheme is likely to sit outside the established procedure for applying for flood defence funding. With this in mind Nottinghamshire County Council have taken the position that Girton is a special case for the community and have stated a desire to get to a detailed design position which will identify the actual funding required. Once this has been achieved it may be possible to take advantage of any funding opportunities for 'shovel ready' schemes that arise from situations such as underspends in other areas of government. It may also allow for funding to be allocated from other sources including the possibility of resident contributions.

2.4 There are risks associated with taking this course of action as funds may be spent achieving detailed design on a scheme that may never go ahead, however, the option to do nothing could have a serious impact on the future sustainability of the village.

2.5 In order to assist with getting the scheme to a detailed design position a delegated officer decision was made to contribute a sum of £10,000 from the Council's approved capital budget for major flood alleviation.

- 2.6 **Lowdham** – An Initial Assessment has been completed by the Environment Agency which has shown that the costs of a flood alleviation scheme to reduce the risk of flooding in Lowdham are in the region of £4.2m. This cost may reduce as the scheme progresses through the project lifecycle, as risks are mitigated and cost certainty improves.
- 2.7 With the assumptions used within this Initial Assessment it has been highlighted that 224 properties are at risk of a 1 in 200 year (0.5% annual probability) event. The potential damages have been estimated at £12.5m over the 100 year appraisal period. This does not include properties at risk of surface water flooding.
- 2.8 If flooding was prevented to all properties currently at (fluvial) risk up to a 1 in 75 year (1.33% annual probability) event then there would be a possible £1,374,000 worth of Grant in Aid available. These figures are based on a high level appraisal and therefore will need to be reviewed and re-assessed if taken forward to an Outline Business Case. If the schemes costs are above £1,374,000 partnership funding would be required to meet the shortfall.
- 2.9 Some initial discussions have taken place between the Environment Agency and Nottinghamshire County Council. The County Council has stated that they would contribute £500k towards a scheme in Lowdham. The Environment Agency has also been successful in obtaining Local Levy Funds from the Trent Region Flood and Coast Committee (RFCC) of £1.5m. The potential Grant in Aid, Local Levy, and NCC contribution amount to a total of £3,374k leaving a shortfall of around £800k. The Environment Agency advises that Lowdham Parish Council is also considering whether to raise a contribution through the Parish Precept.
- 2.10 The current position is that the Environment Agency intends to produce a detailed Outline Business Case (OBC) over the next six to nine months. This is a significant piece of work that will narrow down a final design and provide more accurate costings. Once these are available and any shortfall in funding can be accurately quantified, then the District Council will be better placed to consider making a financial contribution to the scheme.
- 2.11 **Gunthorpe** – The Environment Agency has completed an Initial Assessment for Gunthorpe which has shown that the costs to reduce the risk of flooding are in the region of £5.7m. This cost may reduce as the scheme progresses through the project lifecycle, as risks are mitigated and cost certainty improves.
- 2.12 With the assumptions used within this Initial Assessment it has been highlighted that 116 properties are at risk from flooding with potential damages estimated at around £9.3m over the 100 year appraisal period. This does not include properties at risk of surface water flooding.
- 2.13 There would be around £1m worth of Grant in Aid available. These figures are based on high level appraisal and therefore will need to be reviewed and re-assessed if taken forward to Outline Business Case.
- 2.14 Some initial discussions have taken place between the Environment Agency and Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC), with a proposed NCC contribution of around £300k towards a scheme in Gunthorpe. The Environment Agency is currently seeking

contributions to fund an Outline Business Case (OBC), which is a significant piece of work that will narrow down a final design and provide more assured costs.

- 2.15 **Southwell** – Post the surface water flood event in 2013, the community at Southwell has been very proactive in strengthening resilience within the community through establishing the Southwell Flood Forum. This is fundamentally a partnership based group that explores and delivers various work streams. An example is the work delivered by the Nottingham Trent University (NTU) in partnership with the Environment Agency to develop natural flood defences, whereas a package of more traditional flood defence and alleviation measures are being developed by Nottinghamshire County Council in conjunction with engineering company Jeremy Benn Associates (JBA).
- 2.16 Southwell faces multiple sources of surface water flooding and no single scheme in isolation will be capable of reducing the impact to all the properties at risk. Therefore it is proposed that a number of options will be presented and selected from to improve the situation. We are currently waiting for these options to be presented and once they are available a further decision around funding contributions may be required.
- 2.17 In the meantime the Southwell Flood Forum continues to work towards delivery of innovative solutions such as the installation of early warning bollards that have the capability to link to the network of electronic road warning signs around the town. These bollards give early warning of surface water flooding and then automatically send a message to the road signs changing them to display 'road closed'. This option is currently being explored alongside other less traditional measures which are more suited to Southwell's situation i.e. surface water flooding as opposed to fluvial flood water.
- 2.18 The community fund for Southwell that is currently held by DEFRA needs to be clarified and officers are currently making enquiries with the department. A verbal update will be provided on this issue at the meeting.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 The Council has put aside in its capital reserves a sum of £150,000 in 2016/17 to help and support communities that are affected or have the potential to be affected by flooding. As mentioned earlier in the report, a delegated decision has been made to allocate £10,000 of this money to support the community at Girton to get their scheme to the detailed design stage.
- 3.2 In the case of Lowdham it is proposed to wait for the completion of the outline business case before making a decision about whether or not the Council would wish to contribute towards any funding gap to assist in delivery of the scheme.
- 3.3 For Gunthorpe, Members are requested to consider whether it would be appropriate to support the funding of an outline business case in a similar manner to that for Girton. It is therefore proposed that a suitable contribution towards assisting with this be made.
- 3.4 For Southwell it is proposed to continue to work with the Flood Forum in partnership to support a range of potential improvements. This may require using a variety of funding to support relatively low cost works but also working alongside DEFRA as set out at 2.18

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 See Appendix One

5.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

5.1 As stated within the body of the report, there is an allocation of £150k for 'Major Flood Alleviation' sat within the capital programme. There is also an additional £250k sat within the capital reserves which as yet has not been allocated.

The £150k is grant funded and the work as described above regarding the allocation of £10k meets the terms for the grant.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (a) that an appropriate level of capital funding, (to be determined by the Director of Safety following discussion with the Environment Agency and along the lines offered towards the preparation of the detailed design work for Girton), be offered as a contribution towards the preparation of an outline business case for a flood alleviation scheme for Gunthorpe; and**
- (b) the current situation at Lowdham and Southwell be noted and financial contributions for these schemes be brought back to the Committee when detailed costings have been confirmed.**

Reason for Recommendation(s)

To provide an update for members on the various flood alleviation schemes across the district

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Ben Adams on Ext: 5232

Karen White
Director - Safety



**NEWARK &
SHERWOOD**
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity Strategy 2016 - 2020

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME FUNDING

This document should be completed only after the Equalities Checklist has been completed and it has been determined that a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Service Area:

Major Flood Alleviation Funding.

Section/service delivery/policy covered by the assessment

Community Safety Business Unit and Capital Expenditure

Stage 1 - what is being assessed?

The Major Flood Alleviation budget 2016/17.

Stage 2 - who is carrying out the assessment?

Ben Adams

Stage 3 - aims of the policy

The Council has a capital expenditure budget of £150,000 allocated in 2016/17 for assisting major flood alleviation schemes across the district. Although this amount of money on its own can't fund major schemes in their entirety, it is possible to support certain elements of proposed schemes to help them progress or remove certain blockages in the process.

Stage 4 - knowing our customers, communities and employees

List the main groups affected by, this policy:

Residents, businesses, and visitors to the areas which are potentially affected by flooding.

Stage 5 - background information

We currently have four main areas that are being considered for flood alleviation works, namely;

- Girton
- Lowdham
- Gunthorpe

- Southwell

Getting agreement and funding for appropriate schemes is a long term process and it is therefore possible to go for a number of years without any expenditure, however when requested it is necessary to be able to release funding fairly quickly to enable the works to progress. The four areas are each in a different position due to a variety of factors that affect funding and the viability of alleviation schemes e.g. number of affected properties, nature of the flooding.

Stage 6 - this stage considers what groups the proposals may impact

Equality Area								
Age	Race	Gender	Disability	Sexual Orientation	Gender re-assignment	Marriage/ Civic partnership	Pregnancy/ Maternity	Religion or belief equality
✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	✓	x

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Measures to mitigate Comments
Age	Potentially	Potentially	Flooding can have a disproportionate effect on those who are particularly vulnerable because of their age. Allocation of appropriately agreed funding to enable the delivery of schemes would have a positive impact whereas failure to deliver schemes because of funding gaps has the potential to adversely affect this group of society.
Disability	Potentially	Potentially	Flooding can have a disproportionate effect on those who are particularly vulnerable because of a disability. Allocation of appropriately agreed funding to enable the delivery of schemes would have a positive impact whereas failure to deliver schemes because of funding gaps has the potential to adversely affect this group of society.
Pregnancy/ Maternity	Potentially	Potentially	Flooding can have a disproportionate effect on those who are particularly vulnerable because of pregnancy/maternity. Allocation of appropriately agreed funding to enable the delivery of

			schemes would have a positive impact whereas failure to deliver schemes because of funding gaps has the potential to adversely affect this group of society.
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Stage 7 - Action plan and Policy Review

From the previous section list the specific actions required to address any problems you have identified:

Action	Service Plan / Delivery Plan	Officers responsible	Timescale	Resources	Milestones, monitoring and review details
To monitor expenditure and allocations of funding through the capital budget monitoring process and reports to committee when necessary.	Capital budget monitoring programme	Business Manager – Community Safety and Finance Officer with responsibility for capital budget monitoring	A rolling financial programme	Staff time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The schemes are dealt with as and when they develop and progress over time. Some of the schemes may take a number of years to be delivered and some of them may never be delivered. They will be monitored through the budget monitoring process and also alongside delivery partners e.g. Environment Agency.

Date of next review – to be reviewed as schemes progress

Stage 8 – Outcome(s) of equality impact assessment:

No major changes to the current approach are required	Adjust the policy/proposal	Adverse impact but continue	Stop and remove the policy and proposal
Yes	- N/A at this stage.	N/A.	N/A.

Stage 9 – Confirmation and publish the results

I confirm that the actions set out above will be progressed and where appropriate adopted as everyday practice and if necessary incorporated into the Service Plan or Delivery Plan.

Signed by Lead officer : 

Ben Adams - Community Safety Business Manager

Date: 31.08.2016

AN UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF CCTV

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report is an update on the agreed actions from the CCTV review report presented at the previous meeting of the 13 June 2016.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 At the previous meeting of the Homes and Communities Committee the following actions were agreed, namely;

- (a) the report be noted;
- (b) the project to relocate the CCTV Control Room to the Police HQ be approved in principle and that Policy & Finance Committee be recommended to approve that provision be made within the capital programme to fund the CCTV Control Room Relocation Project;
- (c) a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee detailing:
 - (i) the heads of terms to be agreed with the Police for the lease of accommodation at their HQ;
 - (ii) progress on the relocation project;
 - (iii) responses from the letter to be sent to all Town and Parish Councils in relation to the continuation of CCTV provision; and
 - (iv) further information as to the actual savings of changing to a wireless data transmission.

2.2 Heads of Terms with Nottinghamshire Police

Proposed Heads of Terms have now been received from the Police and are contained in full at Appendix One. Points considered worthy of note are;

- the lease would be between the Police and this Council (on behalf of the four local authorities who are part of the CCTV shared service)
- Staff and visitors to the CCTV Control Room will be allowed reasonable use of car parking spaces on the site. This is considered a positive term for the morale of the Control Room staff.
- The arrangement will be rent free to NSDC for a period of 10 years, or until either party exercises the termination clause. This term demonstrates the Police's commitment to the Community Safety Partnership.
- Under the lease, NSDC will be responsible for a proportion of the running costs of the Sherwood Lodge site on a pro-rata basis. The running costs for 2014/15 were £125.63 per square metre meaning that 108 square metres equates to £13,568.04. (Please note that the service charge will be based upon 2015/16 costs which will be available shortly. It is anticipated that this figure will be available prior to completion of the Lease and the figure quoted should be treated as a guide only at this stage). Therefore based on this guide price and a four way split between the partners then the cost per annum to this Council would be £3392.01.

- Should the Police terminate the Agreement, compensation will be payable to NSDC, as follows:-
 - Year 1 – 100% of original capital contribution**
 - Year 2 – 80% of original capital contribution
 - Year 3 – 60% of original capital contribution
 - Year 4 – 40% of original capital contribution
 - Year 5 – 20% of original capital contribution
 - Years 6-10 – 0% of original capital contribution

**The original capital contribution for the purpose of compensation payable up to the end of Year 5 relates to building alteration and improvement works only. It does not include IT-related equipment or fixtures and fittings. These figures are to be determined upon tender acceptance. These figures will not include any additional expenditure incurred during the 10 years whether through the service charge or other means. Again this is considered to be a very reasonable offer and in line with the rent free offer. Both of these indicate a commitment from the Police towards more collaborative working.

2.3 **Progress on the Relocation Project**

The relocation project continues to maintain momentum with the tender process ending on the 30 August. The tender process was extended by three weeks to allow for alterations to the tender's content and for answering some questions that have been raised by potential contractors during the accompanied site visits. On balance this was considered the most appropriate course of action to take to ensure that we do not compromise the quality of the tenders being submitted. Evaluation of the tenders received began on 1 September – and details of this will be presented verbally at the meeting.

2.4 **Consultation letter to Town and Parish Council's**

A letter was sent to, Clipstone, Newark, Ollerton and Southwell Town Councils on 30th June 2016 seeking their views about the CCTV installations in their areas. A response was requested by the 15th August 2016 so that these could be reported back to this committee. However, given that this has been a holiday period, it has proved difficult to get responses in time for reporting back to committee. The responses that have been received are contained in **Appendix Two**. As detailed in paragraph 2.9 below, the responses received have identified a need for more engagement with these parishes over the use and benefits of the CCTV system.

- 2.5 Currently Newark Town Council, Clipstone Parish Council, and Southwell Town Council all make voluntary contributions towards the cost of the CCTV system.
- 2.6 The voluntary contributions were agreed a number of years ago and rise only at the rate of inflation.
- 2.7 Ollerton & Boughton Town Council last made a voluntary contribution in 2011 before they withdrew the following year. There are four cameras located in their area with data transmitted via fibre optic cable.

2.8 The voluntary contributions go some way to offset the costs of the CCTV system incurred by the Council and without them we would be likely to reach an eventual financial ‘tipping point’ that will require decisions to be made about the viability and value of certain parts of the CCTV system.

2.9 Initial responses to the consultation letter have revealed that some confusion exists over the role that the CCTV cameras play in the community and has identified a need to visit and update those parish councils on the role and capabilities of the system. Officers have made a commitment to engage with these parishes on a more proactive basis to ensure that they are better informed about the system and its benefits.

2.10 **Actual Savings of Switching to Wireless Transmission of Data**

The potential to save money by installing wireless data transmission across the network where possible and consequently reducing the fibre optic line costs has been a consideration for some time. We currently budget £53,310 for the cabled transmission of data in 2016/17.

2.11 As a trial we have commissioned work to take place on all of the cameras in Southwell so that they are able to transmit data wirelessly. This work has been funded through the careful use of revenue budgets and we are currently waiting for works to be completed by Virgin Media and British Telecom before a ‘go live’ date can be confirmed. Once live, this has the potential to make an annual saving to the revenue budget of up to £12,000 by removing the need for our current annual cost of fibre data transmission from Southwell.

2.12 In order to calculate an accurate savings figure for the whole network it will be necessary to have the detailed technical submissions from the tender process which closed on 30 August. This will be given by way of a verbal update at the meeting once there has been an opportunity to assess the tenders submitted as detailed in paragraph 2.3 above.

3.0 **Proposals**

3.1 It is proposed that the heads of terms from the Police are accepted following agreement with our partners under the shared CCTV service.

3.2 With regard to the voluntary contributions made by the parish and town councils it is considered to be of value to work more closely with them in order to keep them informed about the system and its capabilities. Improved reporting on activity in their areas that involve the CCTV system should be provided to support and compliment a review of the methodology of voluntary contribution calculation.

4.0 **Equalities Implications**

4.1 No further implications have been identified other than those outlined in the original Equalities Impact Assessment.

5.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

- 5.1 The move of the CCTV service has both revenue and capital implications. In respect of revenue the service will bear additional running costs for the accommodation currently estimated at £3,392 per annum, the building will be rent free for the first 10 years.
- 5.2 The current internal recharge for occupancy at Kelham Hall does not involve a direct cash payment, so this will be an additional cost of £3,392 to be found from within existing budgets. Reductions in internal recharges have already been captured in NSDC savings for the move to new offices, so there will be a slight reduction in these overall savings.
- 5.3 Given the level of overall savings identified within the CCTV budget from the switch to wireless, close budget management, developing partnership arrangements and future rationalisation of the network, this additional cost can be managed within the service.
- 5.4 Whilst the rent free offer from the Police for 10 years is welcomed it is to be noted that it for a fixed period and would have a detrimental impact on budgets if this were to be terminated during the 10 years or charged for in future.
- 5.5 The capital bid for £325k was approved at Policy and Finance on the 30th June 16 and is now included within the capital programme. The compensation agreement as outlined within the body of the report is welcomed and does provide a level of assurance in respect of the Police commitment and also some financial security.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (a) the report be noted;**
- (b) the heads of terms for the lease of accommodation for the new CCTV control room at Police Head Quarters as set out in appendix 1 to the report be accepted, and delegated authority be given to the Director – Safety to enter into a lease with the Police based upon those terms; and**
- (c) subject to Policy and Finance Committee approving provision within the capital programme, that delegated authority be given to the Director – Safety to accept the most suitable tender received for the relocation of the CCTV control room.**

Reason for Recommendation

To update Members on the responses received from those Parish Councils which benefit from the CCTV system, report on the tenders received for the CCTV control room relocation, and approve the heads of terms for the lease of accommodation at Police HQ for the CCTV control room.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Ben Adams on extension 5232

Karen White
Director - Safety

APPENDIX ONE

HEADS OF TERMS FROM NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE

1	Premises	Part of the former Stores Building, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, extending to approximately 108 square metres and as shown edged in red on the attached plan. Staff and visitors to the CCTV Control Room will also be allowed reasonable use of car parking spaces on the site, although no specific spaces will be allocated and the Landlord reserves the right to restrict car parking or allocate specific spaces should the need arise.
2	Parties	Landlord – Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (NOPCC) Tenant – Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC)
3	Purpose	NSDC will create a CCTV Control Room at the Sherwood Lodge site to be used in partnership with Nottinghamshire Police and on behalf of Newark & Sherwood, Gedling, Broxtowe and Ashfield Councils.
4	Project	NSDC to take the lead in respect of the building works and will project manage and deliver the works to provide a shared CCTV Control Room and associated works. All building alteration works will require the prior agreement of NOPCC and NSDC will be required to prepare and submit full specifications and plans for the consideration of NOPCC prior to the commencement of any works. Works will include the creation of appropriate toilet and kitchen facilities within the leased area. NSDC will be responsible for obtaining planning, building regulation and any other necessary statutory consents in respect of all works and any other matters in relation to this project.
5	Capital Costs	NSDC to fund the capital costs of all works required to set up the CCTV Control Room.
6	Rent	NSDC has the right to occupy the part of the building as shown edged red on the attached plan. This arrangement will be rent free to NSDC for a period of 10 years, or until either party exercises the Termination clause, as below.

7	Service Charge	<p>NSDC will be responsible for a proportion of the running costs of the Sherwood Lodge site on a pro-rata basis. The running costs for 2014/15 were £125.63 per square metre. For 108 square metres this equates to £13,568.04. (Please note that the service charge will be based upon 2015/16 costs which will be available shortly. It is anticipated that this figure will be available prior to completion of the Lease and the figure quoted should be treated as a guide only at this stage).</p> <p>The service charge will be payable half-yearly in advance on 1 April and 1 October each year and will be subject to annual increase in accordance with the latest Retail Prices Index on 1 April each year.</p> <p>The service charge will cover the following items:</p> <p>Exterior repair and maintenance to Landlord's standard Window Cleaning to Landlord's standard Refuse Collection to Landlord's standard Planned maintenance to Landlord's standard Building insurance Heating Electricity Business rates Provision of hot and cold running water to the Premises</p> <p>To exclude:</p> <p>Internal repairs and decoration (to be undertaken by the Tenant) Cleaning (to be undertaken by the Tenant) Telephone, IT and internet usage (To be commissioned and paid for directly by the Tenant)</p>
8	Insurance	The Tenant will take out its own insurance for contents, public liability, employer's liability etc. (Building Insurance – see Service Charge).
9	Term	NSDC to have occupation for 10 years.
10	User	NSDC to use the premises as a CCTV Control Room only.
11	Assign/Sub-let	Assignment and sub-letting of all or part of NSDC's interest shall be permitted. The NOPCC's consent would be required. This clause does not permit NSDC providing CCTV services for other local authorities within Nottinghamshire.

12	Termination	<p>Either party may terminate the Agreement on 12 months' notice to expire at any time</p> <p>Should the NOPCC terminate the Agreement, compensation will be payable to NSDC, as follows:-</p> <p>Year 1 – 100% of original capital contribution** Year 2 – 80% of original capital contribution Year 3 – 60% of original capital contribution Year 4 – 40% of original capital contribution Year 5 – 20% of original capital contribution Years 6-10 – 0% of original capital contribution</p> <p>**The original capital contribution for the purpose of compensation payable up to the end of Year 5 relates to building alteration and improvement works only. It does not include IT-related equipment or fixtures and fittings. These figures are to be determined upon tender acceptance. These figures will not include any additional expenditure incurred during the 10 years whether through the service charge or other means.</p> <p>Should NSDC seek to terminate the Agreement in accordance with the provisions above or at the end of the term, NSDC shall be responsible for reinstating the demised area to the satisfaction of the NOPCC.</p>
13	Site Rules	NSDC and visitors/staff will obey the Sherwood Lodge site rules that may be determined from time to time by NOPCC.
14	Police Vetting	All staff working within the CCTV Control Room will be subject to Police Vetting and will not be allowed on site until or unless such vetting clearance is received. Any visitors to the site who are not vetted must report to Reception and be escorted at all times whilst on site.
15	Security of Tenure	The Tenant will have no automatic right to renew the lease at the end of the term.
16	Nuisance	NSDC agree not to cause a nuisance to NOPCC or any occupier of the Sherwood Lodge site.
17	Legal Costs	Each Party to bear their own legal costs.

RESPONSES TO LETTER OF CONSULTATION

Newark Town Council

At the time of writing no response has been received. If a response is received prior to the meeting this will be circulated at the meeting.

Ollerton Town Council

The item of correspondence was taken to the Full Council on the 27th July where it was suggested that a sub-committee were to meet with the District Council and the Police to discuss the current CCTV provision. An offer has been made to the Town Council to come and visit Kelham Hall for the meeting and an accompanied viewing of the Control Room can be included in that visit. The matter is due to go back to the Full Council on the 7th September and a verbal update will be provided.

Clipstone Parish Council

Attempts have been made by the clerk to arrange a meeting but this was not possible due to holidays. A meeting is due to be held in September/October to discuss with an officer from Newark and Sherwood DC.

Southwell Town Council

The matter is due to be taken to a Town Council meeting on the 5th September 2016 after which an update will be sought and reported verbally to the committee.

THE BETTER CARE FUND –PROPOSED SCHEMES FOR 2016-17

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the schemes that have been identified for potential funding from the district's allocation of the Better Care Fund budget.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Care Act 2014 amended the NHS Act 2006 to provide the legislative basis for the Better Care Fund (BCF). It allows for the mandate to NHS England to include specific requirements relating to the establishment and use of an integration fund. It creates a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together around people, placing their wellbeing as the focus of health and care services, and shifting resources into social care and community services for the benefit of the people, communities and health and care.
- 2.2 NHS England and the Government allocate the Better Care Fund to local areas based on a framework agreed with Ministers. For 2016-17, the allocation is based on a mixture of the existing Clinical Commissioning Group allocations formula, the social care formula, and a specific distribution formula for the Disabled Facilities Grant element of the Better Care Fund.
- 2.3 The BCF schemes continue to prioritise short- to medium-term actions to build capacity in the health and social care system, and respond to patient and carer feedback to improve the quality and effectiveness of services. By focusing on supporting patients' post-acute illness (reablement, maintenance, and independence), mental health services, care home and specialist accommodation for older people, care for the elderly in the community and the urgent care system, we aim to re-design intermediate care offered in the patient's own home to be more flexible and consequently reduce the number of acute and mental health patient beds. Our BCF schemes are designed around the person, not the condition and aim to address the multiple needs of individuals through better joined up work, communication and integration. In this way, the BCF is a key component to delivering not just the health commissioners' integration plans, but also the overall Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The County have accordingly structured all BCF schemes into six overarching themes:
1. 7 Day Service Provision and Access
 2. Supporting Integration
 3. Transforming Patient Satisfaction
 4. Protecting Social Care Services
 5. Accelerating Discharge
 6. Infrastructure, Enablers, and Other Developments
- 2.4 The Better Care Fund Programme Board is a cross county Group that reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board. It has been established to oversee the implementation of schemes and plans funded by the Better Care Fund budget.

3.0 Disabled Facilities Grants

- 3.1 The legislative framework governing DFGs is provided by the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. Since 1990, local housing authorities (the district or borough authorities in two-tier counties) have been under a statutory duty to provide grant aid to disabled people for a range of adaptations to their homes.
- 3.2 In 2008-09 the scope for use of DFG funding was widened to support any local authority expenditure incurred under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. The aim was to enable authorities to use specific DFG funding for wider purposes, which may be more appropriate for individuals than existing DFG arrangements allowed. Creating greater flexibility allowed the DFG to be used for associated purposes, such as moving home, where this was seen as a more appropriate solution, or funding could be pooled to purchase portable extensions which are suitable for re-use, through improved procurement models.
- 3.3 Since 2010-11, the DFG has been paid to local authorities as an un-ring fenced payment, through a determination under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. This means that DFG funding can be pooled with resources from a number of other programmes. It is for local authorities to determine, against local priorities, how they best use these funds.
- 3.4 The DFG allocation for 2015-16, formed part of the BCF allocation to upper tier authorities. In Nottinghamshire, a total of £3.204m was ring-fenced in the BCF allocation for DFGs with amounts, specified by central government, allocated to each district council. The money was given to the district councils at the start of the financial year and did not form part of the BCF “pooled budget”.
- 3.5 The DFG element of the BCF in Nottinghamshire for 2016-17 has increased considerably from that in 2014-15. The amounts for each year are as follows:

BCF Allocation for DFGs to each local authority in Nottinghamshire (£)			
Authority	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Ashfield	374,001	482,000	743,713
Bassetlaw	430,172	532,000	917,848
Broxtowe	303,141	377,000	676,273
Gedling	370,964	464,000	820,019
Mansfield	483,194	592,000	993,620
Newark And Sherwood	369,307	465,000	803,085
Rushcliffe	233,054	292,000	520,855
Total	2,563,833	3,204,000	5,475,413

- 3.6 However, the allocation for 2016-17 contains what was the Social Care Capital Grant in 2015-16. This was a sum of £1.9 million and was allocated to the County Council. For 2016-17, it has been divided up between the district councils and forms part of the DFG allocation.

3.7 Department of Health guidance issued at the end of February 2016 states:

The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is for the provision of adaptations to disabled people's homes to help them to live independently for longer. Following the approach taken in 2015-16, the DFG will again be included within the Better Care Fund (BCF). This is to encourage areas to think strategically about the use of home aids/adaptations, use of technologies to support people in their own homes, and to take a joined-up approach to improving outcomes across health, social care and housing. For 2016/17, the funding will be £394m in total, a substantial increase from £220m in 2015/16.

The DFG will be paid to upper-tier authorities in 2016/17. However, the statutory duty on local housing authorities to provide aids and adaptations under the DFG to those who qualify will remain. Therefore, each area will have to allocate this funding to its respective housing authorities (district councils in two-tier areas) from the pooled budget to enable them to continue to meet their statutory duty to provide adaptations to the homes of disabled people, including in relation to young people aged 17 and under.

All funding pooled through the Better Care Fund – including DFG funding – will need to be allocated on the basis of plans that are jointly developed and agreed with relevant local authorities. In the case of the DFG this refers to local housing authorities. Through this local planning process, some areas may agree to invest some of this funding in broader strategic capital projects. However, this is a local decision, to be considered as part of the BCF planning process.

3.8 The guidance also contained the following note with reference to the Social Care Capital Grant:

Social Care (Capital) Grant

To note, the social care capital grant will be discontinued from 2016/17. In order to maximise value for money of central funding the Department of Health has concentrated its social care capital grant funding into the Disabled Facilities Grant, as research suggests it can support people to remain independent in their own homes – reducing or delaying the need for care and support, and improving the quality of life of residents.

The increase in the DFG of £174m outstrips the removal of the Social Care (Capital) Grant, which came to £134m in 2015/16.

3.9 The allocation for DFGs is virtually double the spend that was achieved during 2015/16. The limiting factor for spend any given year is the numbers of referrals received from the County Council. There is currently no waiting list within the district council for applicants for DFGs.

4.0 Use of the DFG and Social Care allocation of the Better Care Fund

4.1 Since the allocation was announced at the start of the financial year there has been much debate across the county as to what type of schemes the DFG/social care funding could and should be used for over the coming year. District and Boroughs authorities have been requested by the County Council to identify potential schemes across their areas that could be funded from the fund. As the allocation now includes an element of social care grant officers from Environmental Health, Strategic Housing and Housing & Safeguarding Business Units have considered a wide range of potential options and have developed the proposals set out below.

- 4.2 The allocation for 2016/17 for Newark and Sherwood is **£803,085** and there was a carry-over from 2015-16 of £55,000 giving a total budget of **£858,085**
- 4.3 Due to the delay in confirming the allocation and uncertainty around the type of schemes that could benefit from the funding it has been necessary for officers to put together some thoughts on the schemes that could be allocated funding from the BCF in order to meet the timescales required by the county council. In essence existing schemes have expanded their remit or have had additional elements added to them. Set out below are the schemes that are suggested as being appropriate for this funding.
- 4.4 The proposed schemes were considered by the Councils Corporate Management Team and it was agreed that these should be submitted for additional scrutiny by the County Chief Executives group so as to try and provide some consistency of approach across the county.
- 4.5 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants**
The authority has a duty to deliver the mandatory grants relating to applications for DFGs. The spend on DFGs for in 205/16 was £409,574. It is estimated that on the current level of referral from the county council a budget of around £450,000 to £500,000 will be required to meet the mandatory provision of DFGs.
- 4.6 Discretionary DFGs – Exceedance of Maximum Grant**
Currently the maximum grant payable as a mandatory DFG is £30,000. A small number of schemes each year require funding above this amount. These are normally large schemes for severely disabled clients that require extensive structural work to the property consisting for example of extensions to the accommodation or the installation of an internal vertical lift. The shortfall is met from the County Council Hardship Fund, additional contribution from the client and then if there remains a shortfall, additional discretionary grant from NSDC. This does result in grants taking far longer to process and in a small number of cases the grant not being progressed.
- 4.7 It is considered appropriate that the DFG policy is amended to allow for a discretionary element of a maximum of £10,000 to be awarded for all grants exceeding the statutory maximum of £30,000. It is anticipated that this would require additional expenditure of around £50,000 per year. This would provide top-up assistance to mandatory DFG where the local authority takes the view that the amount of assistance available under DFG is insufficient to meet the needs of the disabled person and their family.
- 4.8 Essential Works to Support of DFG Clients**
The mandatory DFG regime only allows work that is reasonable and appropriate to meet the client's needs to be grant funded. This can often result in adaptations being carried out to a property that is defective in other areas, such as poor insulation or in serious disrepair. This can result in a client having the adaptation completed to allow them to stay in their own home but in a home that in other ways does not meet their needs. Many DFG clients have limited mobility and therefore a cold damp house has a proportionally adverse impact on their health and wellbeing than a more able bodied mobile occupant.

- 4.9 Essential works grants or Minor Works grants as they were previously known were [part of the local housing grant regime during the 1990s and were still being offered up to about 7 years ago. These were low level simple grants designed to address a small number of issues to make a property 'wind and weather tight, safe and warm'. The types of work that would be grant funded were replacement windows, leaking rooves, rewiring and energy efficiency measures, including replacement boilers. These grants were only available to vulnerable households and a maximum of £6,000 was available per property.
- 4.10 An Essential Works Grant in support of DFG clients could be used to ensure that where a DFG is awarded the overall condition of the property is suitable for occupation by that client. The following criteria would apply:
- Maximum grant of £5,000
 Only apply to clients approved for a DFG
 Works to make the property wind and weather proof safe and warm.
 No cosmetic work
- 4.11 **Warm Homes on Prescription**
 Local authorities in Nottinghamshire, led by Newark & Sherwood District Council who host the Programme Manager, are working together with health partners, to pilot an innovative way for the health service to 'prescribe' warm and healthy housing across the area.
- 4.12 GP Practices and Integrated Care Teams have been identified in each district/borough council and are contacting 'high risk' patients with long term conditions made worse by cold living conditions, particularly COPD and other respiratory diseases and those at risk of heart attack, stroke and falls.
- 4.13 Home visits are being undertaken to assess the energy efficiency of the home and whether the patient can afford to keep the house at a healthy temperature. A range of actions are then taken to achieve affordable warmth on behalf of the householder, including commissioning heating and insulation works and income maximisation (benefits checks and fuel switching) which will allow the resident to remain independent in their own homes.
- 4.14 Positive impacts on patients' health and wellbeing are anticipated, leading to cost savings to the NHS particularly around anticipated reductions in emergency admissions, readmissions and visits to A&E for these patients.
- 4.15 Despite the successful bid to the National Energy Action Warm and Healthy Homes Fund in October 2015 and funding carried over from a previous Department of Energy and Climate Change funded project, demand currently out strips the funding available for 2016-17.
- 4.16 The proportion of capital funding currently available for Newark and Sherwood is £43,600. Based on our current capacity to deliver, it is proposed an additional £58,000 BCF funding is used to support and expand the scope of the project in Newark and Sherwood (and possibly across Nottinghamshire, if other district/boroughs propose to contribute an element of their BCF funding to the project). Public Health has also recently announced a £60,000 revenue contribution to help perpetuate the service.

4.17 Housing Support (older People) – providing moving assistance and supporting Hospital Discharge

The service currently provided by the Housing Support Worker (Older People) encourages older people to think ahead about their longer term housing needs and aims to empower them to make informed decisions by providing advice, support and practical help with moving home.

4.18 The service promotes independence, improves access to a range of health, social care and voluntary services improving the health and wellbeing of residents, reducing social isolation and helping to maximise income and social capital.

4.19 During 2015/16, 72 referrals were received and 90% had health conditions that were impacting on their housing needs and was the main reason for seeking support. The majority of cases are given advice and support that result in them being able to remain independently in their own homes. 21 households were successfully moved to accommodation more appropriate to their present and future needs (across all housing tenures).

4.20 Whilst not part of the initial Better Together Programme and work being piloted by Mansfield District Council on Hospital Discharge, the service is now taking referrals from the housing team working alongside health and social care staff at Kings Mill Hospital, as part of the discharge service. The aim is to help find solutions to issues such as inappropriate housing and homelessness to expedite safe discharge and prevent re-admissions. During the last nine months 29 complex cases have required intervention and support for bed blocking at Kings Mill and safe discharge in Newark and Sherwood.

4.21 The post which delivers the service is part time and temporary. £15,000 would fund the post for one year and enable further work to be undertaken and business case developed, which considers learning from Mansfield's pilot evaluation (due June 2016), for a local integrated model.

4.22 Assisted Technology

There is an existing budget for lifelines in the private sector with 838 units being installed and NSH report that expected demand for additional units in 2016/17 is 300 units. The Council hold the budget for this activity under 'Private Sector Speech Call, A10212' and NSH manage the procurement of new units, installation and monitoring of these.

4.23 The current charge for a private sector Lifeline unit is £3.60, (£1.25 rental & £2.35 monitoring). In 2014/15 £62,000 was collected in monitoring and this is allocated to the HRA, minus costs associated with the invoice process. In terms of rental income for the same period £52k was collected which went to the general fund. Anything above the expected annual income is now allocated into an 'R&R' budget to invest in new stock and replace old stock; this presently stands at just under £10k.

4.24 The typical cost of a lifeline unit is £99 and additional costs relate to the purchase of adaptors and pendants, along with there being a range of bolts on to the lifeline system, e.g. fall & smoke detectors.

4.25 At present NSH do not actively market the lifeline service in the private sector, though there continues to be a rising demand set against the districts ageing population. Initial discussions have been held with NSH and through the Strategic Housing Liaison Panel in terms of expanding this service as an area of revenue growth

4.26 As the BCF gives the opportunity to invest in this area it is estimated that £50,000 could be spent in 2016/17.

4.27 During 2016/17 it is proposed that further work is undertaken with NSH to plan for future growth, fully appraise the associated risks and enhance links with health/social care agenda so to inform a programme of capital funding over the short to medium term.

4.28 Handy Person Adaptations Schemes

The Handy Person Adaptation Service (HPAS) aims to provide the help and support people need to keep safe and secure in their home with low cost but high quality essential adaptations and small practical jobs.

4.29 The Service is available to Nottinghamshire residents aged 60 or over, or with a disability, and all work is carried out by professional traders who have been approved by NCC's Trading Standards officers. The jobs undertaken reduce the risk of falls or help vulnerable residents remain living independently and range from fitting hand rails and half steps to changing light bulbs, fitting door locks and putting up shelves and can include key safes if referred by a health professional. Often very small jobs such as fixing loose carpets or installing a hand rail can prevent a fall and avoid a lot of unnecessary distress as well as high costs to health and social care services.

4.30 Currently, Newark and Sherwood District Council contributes circa £12K per annum to the HPAS scheme which, in 2015/16, resulted in 376 HPAS installations; 1/3rd of which were hospital discharge referrals. Utilising the current budget reserve, and assuming NCC's contribution (and demand for this service) remain static, there is sufficient funding to continue to fund the current service up to quarter 4 of 2018/19.

4.31 There is potential for the scheme to be expanded to include a wider range of services with the allocation of BCF funding. However, this would require a feasibility study either across Notts, mid-Notts or locally to inform any potential allocation for 2016/17.

4.32 Lifetime Homes

The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes, which reduces the need for a family to move due to poor health, e.g. mobility problems and make it easier/cheaper to install future adaptations.

4.33 Studies have been undertaken to estimate the additional costs of building a home to the lifetime home standard as seen in the table below, though this is still dependent on a number of variables including the scale of the development.

House Type	4 person, 2 bed	4 person, 3 bed	5 person, 3 bed
Base build area	72.5m ²	78.9m ²	85.00m ²
Extra-over area	4.47m ²	3.78m ²	3.00m ²
Extra cost (£)	£1615	£1570	£1435

4.34 There is an opportunity to provide ‘top up’ funding to both the Council and private developers to build units to the lifetime home standard, further work would be required here to assess the resources required, the approach, risks and number of units that could be delivered.

4.35 Social Care: Extra Care – Older Adults/Young Adults with Learning and Physical Disability

The Council continues to work in partnership with the County Council to deliver new extra care schemes as seen at Bilsthorpe and the pending development on Bowbridge Road. Initial discussions have also commenced with the County to look at the feasibility of a new extra care scheme in Ollerton, though on a smaller scale to that at Bowbridge Road.

4.36 In terms of younger adults work was undertaken to look at a scheme on Bowbridge Road, the County withdrew from this due to the financial model they operate with other Registered Providers. The proposed changes to cap social rent at local housing allowance may give the opportunity to look at the proposals again.

4.37 Current schemes are financed through the County’s existing extra care capital programme (R2 £12) and the younger adults team also have a smaller capital programme. In terms district Council finance this is through the HRA, NSH and HCA grant (where successful).

4.38 In this respect there is the potential for the District Council to utilise capital through the BCF as part of its overall contribution towards such schemes or, alternatively this capital could be allocated to the development of bespoke, one off units meeting an evidenced resident need (such information is held through the housing register and Environmental Health & Licencing BU).

4.39 No capital spend could be made in this financial year due to the work required to draw up these proposals and the approval process that would need to be followed, though an allocation could be set aside to contribute to the finance of such a proposal once the appropriate approvals have been given.

4.40 Private Sector Stock Condition Survey

Local Housing Authorities are required to consider the condition of their housing stock (all tenures) and to develop strategies/approaches to address issues of concern. The Housing Act 2004 states that: ‘A Local Authority must keep the housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken by them’. The Government has historically recommended that this requirement should be satisfied by undertaking house condition surveys at least every 5 years*. Generally Local Authorities have an accurate understanding of the public sector housing stock (Council owned or managed and Registered Social Landlords) but have a less detailed picture of the private sector. Physical stock condition surveys have historically provided this knowledge of the private sector.

- 4.41 The last NSDC House Condition Survey was completed in 2006 as part of an East Midlands consortium approach and the data provided by this physical survey is now recognised as outdated. The private housing sector has changed significantly over the last 10 years and the survey results can no longer be relied upon to provide an accurate reflection of the sector and its condition. The project involved a survey of approximately 1200 properties within the district at a cost of approximately £55,000.
- 4.42 The tried and tested methodology for ascertaining stock condition has been to select a statistically accurate sample of property for a given area and to physically visit and survey each and every dwelling. This approach is time consuming, labour intensive and consequently expensive. Given the financial pressures that all Councils now find themselves under it can be difficult to justify tens of thousands of pounds on this type of project. Stock modelling offers a far more economically viable solution whilst providing data of comparable statistical accuracy. The BRE model uses information from a number of recognised high quality national surveys and data sources, including the English House Condition Survey and extrapolates them down to the local area level by establishing relationships between the national survey data and local area data such as the Census and credit rating data. Data in the BRE report provides statistical information about housing conditions and the occupants of those houses which can then be used to inform local housing strategies and programmes.
- 4.43 The stock model is able to provide estimates for private sector housing at dwelling level, Output area, ward and local authority area level and include information about the following:
- Dwellings with a Category 1 Rating System Hazard
 - Dwellings with a Category 1 Excess Cold Hazard
 - Dwellings with a Category 1 Falls Hazard
 - Dwellings in disrepair
 - Vulnerable households
 - Households in fuel poverty (EHS definition)
 - Dwellings with an inefficient heating system.
- 4.44 The Building Research Establishment (BRE) are in a unique position, as a former Government department and have overseen the methodology, delivery, analysis and reporting on the English House Condition Survey (now the English Housing Survey) since its inception over 40 years ago. The BRE are also responsible for the Government Guidance for local authorities on undertaking Local House Condition Surveys. Using this knowledge, the BRE have developed an alternative to the traditional House Condition Survey, known as the Housing Stock Modelling Service.
- 4.45 The issue of private stock condition data has been discussed for some time across a number of service areas and the need for accurate data has been flagged by the housing chapter of the recent JSNA. A number of Nottinghamshire Councils have already or are proposing to implement additional or selective private sector licensing regimes and the type of data provided by the BRE model has been identified as an essential element of applying for Government consent. Whilst this does not apply to NSDC, the level of growth in the private rented sector including houses in multiple occupations does mean that the current level of knowledge of the housing stock and housing tenures is out of date. An updated condition survey would assist future strategies and policy development and inform capital spend going forward to meet BCF themes with a sound evidence base.

4.46 Although the BRE package can be tailored for a specific Authority depending on the information required by that organisation a basic model package is also offered. This made up of Housing Standards Variables, Experian dwelling tenure data licence, MS Access database of all data, and a detailed summary report.

4.47 The total cost of this package is likely to be around £25,000 - £30,000.

4.48 Pre-DFG Adaptations

In the majority of applications for mandatory DFG the enquiry is initiated by the receipt of a formal referral from the Occupational Therapy service of Nottinghamshire County Council. Access to this assessment process is made by contacting the County Council and clients are sign posted to an appropriate assessment team based on the perceived level of need. As DFG is aimed at those in greatest need and with the highest risk to their independence it is inevitable that a significant proportion of enquiries do not result in a DFG referral. Of those that are not referred for mandatory grant their circumstances are often likely to deteriorate and it is accepted that future referral is possible. Existing processes would require the client to re-apply at a later date to be further assessed.

4.49 Typical examples of such circumstances are those clients whose medical condition prevents them from safely accessing a bath but is not so severe that they cannot satisfactorily strip wash. Generally such clients would not be referred for DFG although clearly their circumstances are difficult, undignified and often likely to deteriorate further over time.

4.50 The adoption of a discretionary pre-DFG scheme would allow such clients to be assisted at the point of initial assessment by pre-empting their deteriorating circumstances. Assistance at this stage can often prevent damaging and costly trips and falls and provides an effective use of discretionary assistance in keeping with the goal of the BCF.

4.51 It is proposed that any scheme be limited to those clients that have been assessed by NCC OT services as not yet DFG eligible but due to deteriorating health would benefit from the installation of level access shower facilities and would likely qualify at a later date. The application process would mirror DFG in every other way including the use of test of resources and grant conditions and would utilise the same application paperwork. This model of discretionary assistance has been trialled by Mansfield DC and has proved an effective method for ensuring disabled clients are assisted at the earliest possible opportunity and reduces the likelihood of damaging trips and falls. The process is inherently more efficient as it negates the requirement to re-assess applicants as their circumstances change over time.

4.52 Using data from Mansfield's trial it is predicted that approximately 15 clients could be helped in this way at an average level access shower installation cost of £3500. Such a scheme would require an annual budget of approximately £50,000.

4.53 There is some significant work required in order for an appropriate referral pathway to be established. It is estimated that this could take a period of a few months to put in place and therefore it is not likely that the annual budget of £50,000 would be required during the first year.

5.0 **Financial Implications**

5.1 Set out below is a summary of the above proposals.

Scheme	Cost of Scheme	Running Total
Mandatory DFGs	£500K	£500K -
Discretionary DFGs – maximum grant	£50K	£550K
Essential works to support DFG clients	£75	£625
Warm Homes on Prescription	£70K	£695
Housing Support (older People) – providing moving assistance and supporting Hospital Discharge	£15k	£710
Assisted technology	£50k	£760
HPAS	Feasibility study required	-
Lifetime Homes		-
Social Care: Extra Care – Older Adults/Young adults with learning and physical disability		-
Private sector Stock Condition survey	£30K	£790
Pre-DFG Adaptations	£50K	£840

6.0 **Recommendations of the Better Care Fund Programme Board**

6.1 The proposals set out above were submitted to the Better Care Fund Programme Board in July and having discussed and considered the proposed schemes from all authorities across the county the following was agreed.

1. Recommend to the Health and Wellbeing Board that the budgets proposed by the seven district councils for mandatory and discretionary disabled facilities grants be approved.
2. Recommend to the Health and Wellbeing Board that the schemes proposed by Newark and Sherwood District Council to fund a Housing Support Worker and to undertake a private sector stock condition survey are refused on the basis that they are not capital schemes and therefore do not meet the conditions of the fund.
3. Recommend to the Health and Wellbeing Board that the funding for the county Handyperson Adaptation Service (HPAS) be fully met from the County Better Care Fund Disabled Facilities Grant allocation. The amount of each district's contribution to be based on their percentage of the overall fund.
4. More comprehensive detail in the form of a Business Plan must be provided in respect of any schemes which are proposed to be financed from the remaining funding.

6.2 Recommendation one above results in £675K being allocated to mandatory and Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant Schemes. This leaves £183K to allocate to other schemes.

- 6.3 The results of recommendation two would be to increase Newark and Sherwood's allocation to the Handy Person Scheme from £14,000 to £50,000. This would leave £123K remaining in the fund.
- 6.4 The Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey and the Housing Support Worker were not supported and alternative funding streams will need to be identified if these projects are to be progressed.
- 6.5 The remaining schemes of those proposed by Newark and Sherwood will need to be supported by a business plan to be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board. Officers are working to produce the business plans, however, these have been subject to tight timescales in order to meet the programme of meetings for the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 6.6 The schemes with their business plans are being considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 7th September. The report prepared for the Health and Wellbeing Board Meeting does indicate that the two Newark and Sherwood schemes are recommended to be supported. A verbal update on the outcomes will be provided at the committee meeting.
- 6.7 Members may wish to note that it is not clear from the BCF guidance how underspends or carry-over of budget are to be managed. This may be relevant as the agreement on the schemes is only now being addressed and 6 months of the financial year had passed.
- 6.8 The Private Sector Stock Condition Survey is considered an important element of the overall housing strategy for the district. Understanding the condition and make-up of the housing stock can help inform future decisions and private sector strategy. In view of this if it is proposed the private sector grants budget is used to fund the survey. The current estimate for the work is £25,000 and this can be funded from monies returned to the council through the repayment of Decent Home Grants and thus avoid using the Better Care Fund budget.
- 6.9 It is considered that the development of a local hospital discharge scheme covering the residents of Newark and Sherwood is an important element in ensuring that a joined up service covering all aspects of prevention, enabling, facilitating and funding to allow people to remain or return to their home.
- 6.10 It is proposed that the pilot scheme for Newark and Sherwood is funded by the homelessness prevention reserve. Delivery of the scheme would allow the outcomes from the scheme to be fed into a review of a number of pilot schemes which may then allow additional sources of funding to be identified for a more sustainable future for the scheme.
- 6.11 The Funding required for the scheme is £15,000
- 6.12 Members may wish to consider whether the two schemes outlined above fall within the strategic priorities of the Committee and therefore should be funded from the corporate budget that has been set aside for Committees to support the strategic priorities. The total funding required would be £40,000

7.0 Schemes for Future Years

- 7.1 The allocation for 2017-18 is not yet known although it is anticipated to be similar to the current years funding. There are some schemes within the current year that are time limited and will not continue into the new financial year and therefore there will be opportunities to develop new schemes.
- 7.2 It is proposed to bring update reports to the Committee to identify progress and to monitor spend against each of the schemes.
- 7.3 It is further proposed that potential new schemes are 2017-18 financial year are brought to the Committee for consideration during their development and once the budget for 2017-18 is known.
- 7.4 As stated above the monitoring of the Better Care Fund across the county falls within the remit of the Health and Wellbeing Board and it is the Leisure and Environment Committee which has a representative on this Board. However, within the Council many of the functions covered by the fund are within the remit of the Homes and Communities Committee. In view of this it seems appropriate to present a similar report to the one currently being considered to the Council's Leisure and Environment Committee so that the representative from that Committee that sits on the Health and Wellbeing Board is aware of the Newark and Sherwood approach to the Better Care Fund.

8.0 Financial Comments

- 8.1 It is not yet known what would happen to the Council's allocation of funding if schemes are not identified and money is not spent. In order to avoid the risk of losing this funding, suitable schemes should be approved and started as soon as possible.
- 8.2 The Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey is effectively a feasibility study and as such can be funded from capital. There is already money set aside in the capital programme for private sector grants, some of which can be used to fund this work.
- 8.2 The funding available in the Homelessness reserve is non-ring-fenced and as such could be used to provide funding for the Hospital Discharge Scheme.
- 8.3 Alternatively there is £300k of funding set aside in reserves to support the Council's strategic priorities (approved by Policy & Finance Committee on 30th June 2016), some of which could be used for both the Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey and the Hospital Discharge Scheme.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- a) Members are asked to note the range of funding options proposed for the use of the Better Care Fund DFG/Social Care fund allocation and indicate their support for the proposed schemes;**
- b) further reports on spend against the schemes and future options for the Better Care Fund be presented to future meetings; and**

- c) **the Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey is carried out and funding from monies returned from Decent Homes Grants is used for this purpose.**
- d) **The hospital discharge scheme be implemented and funding from the homelessness reserve be used for this purpose**
- e) **As an alternative to the funding as proposed in recommendations c) and d) Members consider whether the Private sector stock condition survey and the hospital discharge scheme are funded form the budget available to support the Council’s strategic priorities.**

Reasons for Recommendations

To ensure that appropriate schemes to deliver disabled facilities grants and other schemes supporting social care are in place.

Background Papers

Better Care Fund Guidance – Department of Health

For further information please contact Alan Batty (Business Manager – Environmental Health) on 655467, Rob Main (Business Manager - Strategic Housing) on 655930 or Leanne Monger (Business Manager - Housing and Safeguarding) on 655545

Karen White
Director – Safety

CESSATION OF THE FIRST CONTACT SIGNPOSTING SCHEME

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report seeks to inform the Committee of the decision taken by Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) to cease the First Contact Signposting Scheme from 30 September 2016.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Nottinghamshire First Contact Scheme was launched in 2005 and offers an established multi-agency checklist enabling staff, volunteers and older people to access a range of preventative services through a single contact point.

2.2 The scheme is aimed at people aged over 60 years and is operated by a number of participating agencies whose staff complete and submit the checklist upon encountering a service user who would benefit from the scheme.

2.3 The First Contact checklist asks questions about the need for services and support, including falls, affordable warmth, home repairs, fire safety and home security. Upon receiving referrals through the First Contact process, 'pathway agencies' deliver specific services in response to the identified needs.

2.4 The Scheme is commissioned by NCC and currently costs around £150K per year to operate and these costs are met from partner contributions, including £9,270 from NSDC. Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) is also the delivery partner for the Newark & Sherwood area.

3.0 The Need for Change

3.1 Since April 2015, the Care Act has given more responsibilities to NCC. In order to implement the Act, whilst experiencing significant financial challenges and rising demand, NCC initially proposed to change the scheme to make it more efficient and recognise that different people need different levels of support to live at home independently and safely.

3.2 A report was presented to this Committee on 7 September 2015 and the recommendation to note and support NCC's proposed changes to the First Contact Scheme, which appeared to be a logical and resource conscious shift, was approved.

3.3 However, subsequent consultation with service users, partner organisations, voluntary and community sector organisations identified a number of issues, including:

- Some of the information and sources were out of date and some services were no longer offered or available, or only available in some parts of the County, with variations in services offered by districts such as for warmth and falls prevention;
- The current referral and signposting arrangements delivered by the Co-ordinators is available through NCC's Customer Service Centre (CSC);

- The scheme is labour-intensive, with a large number of referrals made by paper and some referrals still received by fax;
- The monitoring information collated by the Co-ordinators is not used effectively to inform service delivery, to update existing services and identify new services and partners.

3.4 Therefore, following the Adult Social Care Committee on the 11 July 2016, a decision has been made by NCC to cease the First Contact scheme when current Service Level Agreements with delivery partners end on 30 September 2016. Any reference to First Contact will be removed from our website and publicity materials.

Connect Service

3.5 Concurrent with the First Contact review process, NCC invested over £1 million per annum in new early intervention services to promote independence and support/maintain self-management. These services, known as Connect services, are targeting older people and people at risk of deteriorating health and independence as a result of age, mobility, long-term health condition or bereavement. Their aim is to identify people who have lived independently but are now at risk of escalating need and to provide information, advice, signposting or short-term help to support people to identify solutions for continued self-management.

3.6 The contract for the Connect service in Mid-Notts. (which includes the N&S) has been awarded to Age UK Nottinghamshire. (Metropolitan Housing Trust is delivering the service for South Notts. and Nottingham Community Housing Association for Bassetlaw.) These new services commenced in January 2016 and, county-wide, a circa 850 referrals have been made by a variety of organisations (including NSDC) in the first four months of operation, with referral rates increasing over this period.

Notts. Help Yourself

3.7 NCC has also invested in their Notts. Help Yourself on-line directory which provides access and signposting to a range of resources to enable self-service and supported self-service through voluntary sector organisations, libraries and other community provision. People contacting NCC's CSC are also offered information and advice about services in their area and this includes information about services covered through the First Contact checklist. In addition and where appropriate, CSC staff will make a referral to one of the Connect services.

3.8 NSDC will continue to work with NCC and providers of the above early intervention services to promote the support available, so that older people at risk of deteriorating health and losing independence are able to access these services and receive a tailored response specific to their needs.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 Given the limitations of the First Contact scheme and given the new Connect services and Notts. Help Yourself directory that are now available, the customer experience should improve; ensuring that a wider range of vulnerable people benefit from a broader range of interventions.

5.0 Impact on Budget

- 5.1 The decision to cease the Scheme removes the need for NSDC's annual contribution of £9,270.
- 5.2 As a delivery partner, NSDC has received funding to cover a proportion of two roles within the Energy and Home team and corporate administration. Funding has been provided for the period April – September 2016 (£14,931) through a Grant Aid Service Level Agreement. However, the Council has received formal notice that this arrangement will not be renewed.
- 5.3 As reported to this Committee in September 2016, the impact will fall on the energy reserve which can sustain its contribution towards Energy and Home Support staffing costs until 2021. The Business Unit has been preparing for these changes and re-invested officer resource into seeking new income streams to help address fuel poverty and health inequalities and other project development work.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee note NCC's decision to cease the First Contact Signposting scheme when the current Service Level Agreement ends on 30 September 2016.

Background Papers

Please see letter attached from Nottinghamshire County Council.

For further information please contact Leanne Monger, Business Manager – Housing & Safeguarding on extension 5545.

Karen White
Director – Safety

This matter is being dealt with by:
Josephine Yousaf
Reference: Strategic Commissioning
T 0115 9932610
E Josephine.Yousaf@nottscc.gov.uk
W nottinghamshire.gov.uk



Leanne Monger
Newark & Sherwood District Council
Business Manager
Kelham Hall
Kelham
Newark
Nottinghamshire
NG23 5GX

Dear Leanne,

15th July 2016

RE: First Contact Signposting Scheme.

I am writing to formally notify you that following the Adult Social Care Committee (ASCH) on the 11th July 2016, a decision has been made not to continue with the First Contact Signposting Scheme from the 30th September 2016. I know that you will continue to ensure that older persons and people at risk of losing their independence are able to access a range of quality services in a timely way and we welcome your continued support on advising people how they can do this.

People can also find out about a range of services and support available at www.nottshelphyourself.org.uk including social care support, voluntary agencies, befriending groups and activities. Our Customer Service Centre, libraries and contact points also support people to find information.

The Connect services provides information, advice and short term support to people who might be struggling with keeping active or managing personal affairs, or who might be feeling lonely. For details about Connect visit www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/adult-social-care/care-and-support-in-nottinghamshire and click on 'care and support.'

Please can you ensure that any reference to First Contact is removed from your website or any publicity materials from 30 September. Any referrals received after this date should be sent to the Customer Service Centre at enquiries@nottscc.gov.uk telephone 0300 500 80 80.

Thank you for your support in ensuring that the First Contact Signposting Scheme has provided countywide access to a range of preventative and support services for older people in Nottinghamshire.

Yours sincerely,

Lyn Farrow
Commissioning Manager, Adult Social Care, Health & Public Protection
Nottinghamshire County Council

EMPTY HOMES

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with information on the current position with empty homes in the district.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 At the Committee's meeting held on 13th June 2016 Members raised *'the issue of existing homes across the district that had not been occupied for a long period of time needed to be addressed, adding that these could assist in housing those waiting for properties'*.

- 2.2 In addition to this statement under the Council's strategic priority of 'Homes' empty homes features within one of the strategic objectives:

*'Develop more affordable housing by making maximum use of Section 106 contributions, by acquiring or developing new homes, **by reducing the number of empty homes**, by bringing forward brownfield land and by recognising that different models and definitions of 'affordable housing' could increase the scope and choice in housing'*

Why do homes become empty?

- 2.3 Homes become empty for a number of reasons and usually this is a short term situation pending sale or re-let. As a result, such properties are exempt from certain statutory actions.

- 2.4 Many remain empty while they are undergoing renovation or improvement prior to occupation, which accounts for a significant number of empty homes. It can be said that these empty properties are a consequence of the housing market. This period may be prolonged during times of low economic growth and such dwellings should be allowed to be brought back into use through the market without significant intervention.

- 2.5 There are numerous contributory factors to why homes become and/or remain empty, these include:

- Lack of funds for refurbishment.
- Reluctance to rent out.
- Abandonment.
- Employment linked homes.
- Capital investment properties.
- Probate, estate or legal ownership issues.
- Lack of awareness of options.
- Inaction of owners unable to sell or let.

- 2.6 It is also acknowledged that a long term empty derelict property can have a negative impact on the quality of the local environment, which in turn can create further problems

in the local area that may lead to increased fear of crime, attract anti-social behaviour and make a place less attractive for local people to live in.

- 2.7 The main actions to bring empty homes back into use are done through agreement with the owners, compulsory purchase orders and grant funded schemes operated by a local authority.

3.0 The Local Picture

- 3.1 In Newark and Sherwood empty homes are pepper potted across the district and unlike authorities such as Ashfield and Mansfield the locality does not have large swathes of empty homes owned by portfolio holders.

- 3.2 The number of empty homes in the district can also be closely linked to activity in the housing market, which is currently fairly buoyant and from a strategic perspective it is positive to note that the upturn in the housing market is to a degree redressing the issue of empty homes across the district.

- 3.3 In this respect the table below shows a pattern of decline in the number of long term (6 months+) empty homes across the district over the last 6 years:

Year	Number
2010	915
2011	839
2012	813
2013	679
2014	682
2015	694

Council Tax Records

- 3.4 Currently 211 properties in the district have been empty for more than 2 years.

Revenues & Benefits

- 3.5 As Members will note since 2010 the number of long term empty homes has reduced by over 200 units. This has coincided with both the upturn in the housing market and work undertaken by the Revenues & Benefits Business Unit during 2012/13 in partnership with Liberata.

- 3.6 Liberata made contact with all owners of long term empty properties to identify if they were still empty and to encourage owners to bring properties back into use.

- 3.7 In addition, in 2013 the Council reduced council tax discounts to zero for long term empty properties and introduced a 50% council tax premium for properties that have been empty for two years or more. Bringing empty homes back into use also attracts New Homes Bonus.

- 3.8 The Revenues & Benefits Business Unit have recently engaged with Liberata to complete the same exercise carried out in 2012/13.

Environmental Health - Enforcement Approach

- 3.9 As empty homes are often adjoined to or adjacent to occupied property complaints are inevitable. Empty homes can relatively quickly become problematic to the occupiers of neighbouring homes and complaints are generally referred to Environmental Health for action. Given the nature of complaint recording it is not possible to accurately identify how many specific empty homes complaints are received but this issue clearly generates a degree of work for the Business Unit.
- 3.10 In all initial cases efforts are made to open an informal dialogue with the property owner and identify viable options for returning the property back into use. This might include referring to other agencies, including ***RealHome**, advice of renovation works, VAT exemption, how to become a landlord and let the property or simply how to go about selling the house.
- 3.11 The Council recently facilitated an Empty Homes Fayre in partnership with a number of local companies and neighbouring Local Authorities. The event was well attended, received positive feedback and raised the profile of empty homes via press coverage.
- 3.12 In cases where property owners refuse to co-operate the Council has and will continue to use, in a proportionate manner, a number of enforcement tools under various statutes (Housing, Environmental Protection, Planning, etc.) to encourage an owner to bring a property back into use. This can vary between relatively simple works such as boarding up and clearance of overgrown gardens to more radical measures of enforced sale and prosecution for non-compliance of enforcement notices. Additional powers including Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) and Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO) powers are also available but are recognised as complex and consequently cumbersome and expensive to administer. Upcoming legislative change may see these powers simplified and become more useable.

*(*The Council's **RealHome** initiative, improves access to the private rented sector for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to support delivery of the District Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2013-2018. A dedicated Landlord Liaison Officer sources accommodation from various types of investors including portfolio, buy to let and 'accidental' landlords and works with them to provide a suitable tenant for their property. Identified Empty Homes can be considered for this scheme.)*

Homes & Communities Agency: Empty Homes Programme

- 3.13 In terms of other inventions the Council successfully bid for grant funding from the Homes & Communities Agency in 2013 to bring 8 empty homes back into use through a 'lease and repair' scheme.
- 3.14 Significant officer resource was then put into establishing and promoting the scheme to all owners of long term empty homes across the district.
- 3.15 Through the above process 12 owners contacted the Council registering an interest in the scheme, further to then assessing the suitability of the properties 8 were initially identified as potentials with contact being maintained with the owners.

- 3.16 However, due to the following matters at the time, a resolution was made by the Policy & Finance Committee at its meeting on 3rd July 2014 to withdraw from the scheme:
- a) Complexities and risks associated with the lease agreement necessitated under the scheme, (primarily due to the type of tenancy the Council is restricted to offering and the potential issues this then causes for the owners' mortgage companies.)
 - b) Upturn in the housing market, interest in the Council's scheme by owners has significantly reduced and as a result of this owners are now able to sell their properties on the open market. *(Further to canvassing local estate agents and monitoring the local housing market, 2/3 bed units in need of repair, across the district, are now moving quickly once on the market, properties which the Council had been targeting).*
 - c) The number of recorded empty homes (6 months+) in the district has decreased by 127 since May 13.
- 3.17 The Committee should note that the situation was not unique to Newark & Sherwood as a number of other east midland local authorities had to withdraw from their empty homes schemes primarily due to the lack of demand.

Housing & Planning Act 2016

- 3.18 The recently introduced Housing & Planning Act has provisions within it to that may assist the process of tackling empty homes and rogue private sector landlords, the two main provisions cover:
- a) Improving the Compulsory Purchase order process
 - b) Tackling rogue landlords
 - Banning orders
 - Database of rogue landlords and letting agents
 - Recovering abandoned premises
- 3.19 Further regulation to support the above has yet to be introduced and will be assessed by officers once published to identify what impact it will have locally.
- 3.20 Officers will also be monitoring the potential impact the recent changes to stamp duty charges for second homes and mortgage interest relief for buy to let properties, along with the financial market following the Brexit decision, could have on empty home numbers in the district.

4.0 Neighbouring Authorities

- 4.1 The issue of empty homes in Mansfield and Ashfield has historically been more significant than experienced in the district primarily due to these localities having portfolio holders owning a number of private properties, in 2008 Ashfield District Council reported that there were 1879 long term empty homes.
- 4.2 Both authorities have introduced an 'Empty Homes Strategy', which is supported by revenue and capital resources through a dedicated officer and previous grant schemes to bring empty homes back into use.

- 4.3 The approach taken by the neighbouring authorities of Gedling and Rushcliffe is very similar to that of this Council; neither Gedling nor Rushcliffe Borough Councils employ dedicated Empty Homes Officers and currently work primarily on a reactive basis.
- 4.4 The number of empty homes and the problems associated with them is not sufficient to warrant the significant resources required for a dedicated post or grant scheme although their shared Housing Strategy Officer post does include a proactive element. This officer worked closely with the Council during the recent Empty Homes Fayre and was active in promoting the event.
- 4.5 Mansfield District Council employs a dedicated Empty Homes Officer and has indicated that they may have capacity to offer a shared service for this resource. Negotiations on the viability of this option between Mansfield and a number of Nottinghamshire Authorities are at an early stage but Members may wish to consider whether the use of such a shared service would benefit the Council.

5.0 Proposals

- 5.1 That the Committee note the contents of the report and set against the Council's strategic priorities and current number of long term empty homes it considers the following proposals:
- a. Officers further explore the feasibility of sharing an empty homes officer resource with neighbouring local authorities.
 - b. Under the Council's Housing Growth agenda and utilisation of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan financial modelling is undertaken to appraise whether the HRA can sustain a targeted programme of empty homes acquisition (*looking at the requirement for both revenue & capital resources*), along with consideration of the legal implications, enforcement activity, options for intervention, evidence of need and time frames for delivery.
- 5.2 The findings of the above activities would then be reported back to a future Committee meeting.

6.0 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 At this point a detailed appraisal on the equalities implications of long term empty homes has not been undertaken.

7.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

- 7.1 Within the contents of the report the initial budgetary and policy framework requirements have been considered.

8.0 Comments: Business Manager & Chief Financial Officer – Financial Services

- 8.1 Members have recently agreed a 5 year programme of housing development within the HRA. There is a limited amount of capital finance available within the HRA, and Members have asked that some flexibility be retained between the actual HRA borrowing and the

borrowing cap, should any unforeseen need arise. The merits of acquiring empty homes within the HRA should be considered against the other options, ensuring that the viability of the HRA business plan is maintained at all times.

- 8.2 The acquisition of empty homes, without HCA funding may allow the use of 1-4-1 Right to Buy Receipts. This funding could be used to cover 30% of the costs of acquiring a new home.
- 8.3 Dependent on the outcome of the feasibility work a proportion of the costs relating to a shared empty homes officer resource could fall to the General Fund, therefore it will be necessary to look for savings elsewhere to maintain a balanced budget.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION that:

- a) **the Committee note the contents of the report; and**
- b) **consider the proposals set out below for approval:**
- i. **Officers further explore the feasibility of sharing an empty homes officer resource with neighbouring local authorities.**
 - ii. **Under the Council's Housing Growth agenda and utilisation of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan financial modelling is undertaken to appraise whether the HRA can sustain a targeted programme of empty homes acquisition (*looking at the requirement for both revenue & capital resources*), along with consideration of the legal implications, enforcement activity, options for intervention, evidence of need and time frames for delivery.**
 - iii. **The findings of the above activities to be reported back to a future Committee meeting.**

Reason for Recommendation

To update the Committee on the current position of empty homes in the District and proposals on how the Council can respond to this.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Rob Main (Business Manager - Strategic Housing) on 655930 or Alan Batty (Business Manager – Environmental Health).

Karen White
Director – Safety