

Meeting	CABINET
Time/Day/Date	5.00 pm on Tuesday, 22 September 2015
Location	Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville
Officer to contact	Democratic Services (01530 454512)

All persons present are reminded that the meeting may be recorded and by attending this meeting you are giving your consent to being filmed and your image being used. You are kindly requested to make it known to the Chairman if you intend to film or record this meeting.

The Monitoring Officer would like to remind members that when they are considering whether the following items are exempt information under the relevant paragraph under part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 they must have regard to the public interest test. This means that members must consider, for each item, whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure outweighs the public interest in making the item available to the public.

AGENDA

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
Under the Code of Conduct members are reminded that in declaring disclosable interests you should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is pecuniary or non-pecuniary.	
3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION	
4. MINUTES	
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	Report of the Head of Finance Presented by the Corporate Portfolio Holder	
12.	MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY	87 - 98
	Report of the Director of Services Presented by the Community Services Portfolio Holder	
13.	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	
	The officers consider that the press and public should be excluded during consideration of the following items in accordance with Section 100(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 as publicity would be likely to result in disclosure of exempt or confidential information.	
14.	EMERGING ISSUES AFFECTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY	99 - 108
	Report of the Director of Housing Presented by the Housing Portfolio Holder	
15.	PROPOSAL TO ACQUIRE BROWNFIELD SITE FOR REDEVELOPMENT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING	109 - 118
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**16. APPLEBY MAGNA CARAVAN PARK - APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTOR
TO COMPLETE IMPROVEMENT WORKS**

Report of the Director of Housing
Presented by the Housing Portfolio Holder

119 - 124

Circulation:

R D Bayliss
R Blunt (Chairman)
T Gillard
T J Pendleton
N J Rushton
A V Smith MBE

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MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 21 JULY 2015

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chairman)

Councillors R D Bayliss, T Gillard and T J Pendleton

Officers: Mr R Bowmer, Ms C E Fisher, Mr G Jones, Mr J Newton, Mrs R Wallace and Miss E Warhurst

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N J Rushton and A V Smith.

14. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

15. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no public questions received.

16. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2015.

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Constitution.

17. PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2014/15

The Leader presented the report to Members on behalf of the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

He highlighted that the General Fund was provisionally £1.6million under spent, subject to external audit, mostly as a result of additional income. The additional income included an extra £0.8million from planning fee income, approximately £0.4million from locally retained business rates and £131,000 extra from recycling. Also the £160,000 budget contingencies were not needed and the Council benefited from over £100,000 in reductions in business rates expenditure. He also reported that the under spend would be transferred to the General Fund Reserve, which would then total £3million.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Provisional Financial Outturn Position for 2014/15 be noted.

Reason for decision: Requirement for Financial Procedure Rules.

18. CONTRACT RENEWAL FOR MICROSOFT SOFTWARE

The Leader presented the report to Members on behalf of the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

He reported that it was a straight forward procurement in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules but as the amount exceeded the £100,000 threshold the decision had been referred to Cabinet.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

The award of the contract for Microsoft software be delegated to the Head of Finance in Consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

Reason for decision: To ensure the ICT service is delivered in an effective and efficient manner.

19. HOTEL STREET/HIGH STREET, COALVILLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER

The Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He highlighted that the Order was intended to encourage affected building owners to invest in their properties and was specifically designed to support the Council's Shopfronts Improvement Programme. A public consultation was carried out in accordance with the applicable regulations and two responses were received seeking clarification regarding whether the Order would compel building owners to carry out the work specified by it. Responses were sent confirming that the Order enabled some or all of the specified works to be carried out without the need for planning permission.

It was moved by Councillor T J Pendleton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Hotel Street and High Street, Coalville Local Development Order be adopted without modification.

Reason for decision: The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 provides for the local planning authority to formally adopt the Local Development Order.

20. VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY FOR THE HOUSING SERVICE

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He updated Members on the responses of the Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum, and the Performance and Finance Working Group as referred to within the report. He reported that the only comments from both of the groups was the importance of getting the correct balance of cost and quality, and to take the lifetime costs of the properties into consideration.

He referred Members to the eight pillars of the strategy as detailed in paragraph three of the report and ensured that the working groups would be scrutinising the service, outcomes and the savings made.

Councillor R Blunt commented that the role of the tenant groups was very important and he was very impressed with the work they undertake.

It was moved by Councillor R Bayliss, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Value for Money Strategy for the Housing Service be approved.

Reason for decision: To enable the Housing Service to deliver its proposals in respect of Value for Money.

21. EXEMPTION TO THE COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES - STRATEGIC GROWTH PLANNING CONSULTANT AND RIVER MEASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT

The Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He highlighted that the river restoration project to the south of Measham which formed part of the River Mease SAC Developer Contribution Scheme was being delivered by the Environment Agency as the lead organisation with the Trent Rivers Trust undertaking the works. Due to the technical nature, an exemption to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules was granted by Statutory Officers on 8 April 2015 to allow direct award of the contract to the Trent Rivers Trust.

It was moved by Councillor T J Pendleton, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The grant of exemptions to the Council's Contract Procedure Rule 5.8 be noted as follows:

- (1) The direct award of a contract for specialist consultancy services.
- (2) Trent Rivers Trust to undertake the River Restoration Project.

Reason for decision: The Council Procedure Rules require that the exercise of the Statutory Officers' discretion to grant exemptions is reported to Cabinet.

22. 2014/15 END OF YEAR REPORT

The Leader presented the report to Members.

He reported that it was not a requirement to provide the end of year report but he felt that it was important to do so. He informed Members of the new format of the report which was easier to follow and a good snapshot of how the Council was performing. The Leader then went through the report highlighting the facts and figures of each service.

Councillor R D Bayliss highlighted the Housing Service successes and that 100 percent of Council properties were now Decent Homes. He also informed Members that the average time to re-let empty homes had already improved since the report was drafted.

Councillor T J Pendleton referred Members to the Planning and Development successes within the report, and expressed his delight at the improvements within the department.

Councillor T Gillard asked if the £100,000 investment in superfast broadband was included within the figures detailed within report. The Chief Executive clarified that it was not included as the money had been committed but not yet spent, it was agreed that it would be added before publication.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

The End of Year Report 2014/15 be approved for publication.

Reason for decision: To approve the publication of the end of year summary.

23. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS AND LIGHTBULB PROJECT

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He explained that the Lightbulb project was a major programme across the seven District Councils along with the County Council which would integrate a range of housing support services to include Disabled Facilities Grants. Blaby District Council would be administering the pilot project which would run from 13 July 2015 to 31 March 2016.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The transfer of administration of Disabled Facilities Grants into the Lightbulb Project Pilot with Blaby District Council be noted.

Reason for decision: To ensure Cabinet are aware of service delivery changes for Disabled Facilities Grants.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.30 pm

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Title of report	REVIEW OF THE OLDER PERSONS SUPPORT SERVICE
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Housing 01530 454780 chris.lambert@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To inform members of the review of the older persons support service and seek approval to implement a new service charge.
Reason for Decision	Leicestershire County Council has given notice that it will be terminating its older persons housing related support contract on 30 September 2015, which will end the £306k per year grant funding for the older person support service.
Council Priorities	Homes and Communities Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The proposed changes with the introduction of a new service charge, can be met from within the existing approved Housing Revenue Account budget.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	This report outlines the approach in managing and mitigating against risks.
Human Rights	No implications apparent.

Transformational Government	Approval of this report will support the delivery of more efficient service focusing on providing a visiting support service to our most vulnerable residents in the greatest need.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Service Users; Tenant & Leaseholder Consultation Forum; Older Persons Working Group, Corporate Leadership Team.
Background papers	None
Recommendations	THAT CABINET APPROVES THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW SERVICE CHARGE OF £3.06 PER WEEK FOR ALL TENANTS CONNECTED TO THE CONTROL CENTRE, AND NOTES THE OUTCOME OF THE REVIEW OF THE OLDER PERSONS SUPPORT SERVICE AS DETAILED IN THIS REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Following the decision of Leicestershire County Council (LCC) to decommission the current Older Persons Housing Related Support contract on 30 September 2015 and end the annual grant of £306k we receive for providing this service, a review of the Older Persons Support Service has been undertaken.
- 1.2 This report informs members of the revised approach to the delivery of the Older Persons Support Service and seeks support to introduce a new service charge of £3.06 per week, with effect from November 2015, to cover the staffing costs of the control centre service.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 For many years, Councils and other housing organisations provided a good neighbour service to their older tenants, commonly known as the Warden services. This service fell into two categories, Resident Wardens usually living on site and provided support to older people living in a block with communal facilities, and Mobile Wardens who visited older people in their own homes.
- 2.2 This service is supported by an alarm system that allows two way communications with tenants via a call centre. These systems are either “Hard

- wired”, with emergency pull cords and a 2-way intercom system built into the property, or stand alone units commonly known as “Lifelines” that connect through an individual telephone line to each property.
- 2.3 In 2004/05 the funding for these services changed with the introduction of the Supporting People regime. In two tier authorities, County Councils were the “administering authorities” who received government grant on behalf of all the parties to the Supporting People partnership. Grant was then distributed to service providers through contractual arrangements. This grant has been reduced significantly since the regime was introduced, and in 2015/16, North West Leicestershire was due to receive an annual grant of approximately £306k.
- 2.4 North West Leicestershire District Council, as service provider, received the gross contract value, and LCC collected charges from customers directly. Some customers have to pay for the service and others received financial support from payments through the County Councils Fairer Charging subsidy process. The gross weekly charge made by the County Council is £6.58.
- 2.5 In 2012, following lengthy consultation with service users and providers, LCC undertook a market testing exercise which was abandoned in early 2014, due to insufficient bids being received to cover the whole County adequately..
- 2.6 This was then followed by further budget challenges faced by LCC and a further strategic level review of all support services was completed during 2014. The conclusion of this was a significant reduction in the funding available for Older Persons Housing Related support, with all existing contracts to provide this service to be terminated by September 2015.

3.0 THE REVIEW

- 3.1 A working group, including staff representatives was formed in response to the forthcoming withdrawal of funding, which considered a number of options:
- Option 1 – Self funding model of support using the existing Housing Revenue Account subsidy. To align the Older Persons Support Service with the Housing Management team so that tenants continue to be supported and create opportunities to provide support to older and vulnerable people in general needs housing as well as supported and sheltered housing.
- Option 2 – Do nothing, support services cease and tenants access services via the ‘Light bulb’ project. A county wide project currently being developed and led by Blaby District Council to provide signposting and lower level handy person services.
- Option 3 – Explored shared service opportunities by working in partnership with another council to provide support services to tenants
- 3.2 The working group concluded that option 1 is the preferred option as retaining the service not only safeguards existing customers but also ensures that the council retains its Control Centre infrastructure and is able to continue providing corporate and out of hours services as well as retaining and building upon on our

private lifeline income. Corporate Leadership Team supported this view, and the service is currently being remodelled accordingly.

- 3.3 The staffing structure for the Support Service consists of a Team Manager and Team Leader, whose time and costs were shared 50% with Hinckley & Bosworth BC (HBBC). In addition we currently employ a part time Assistive Technology Officer who is responsible for marketing, installation, testing and replacement of damaged or faulty equipment, and is supported by the Support Officers during her non-working days. The team of seven Support Officers (5 full time and 2 part time) carry out on average 400 welfare/support visits each week to tenants living in over 1000 supported and sheltered housing locations across the district.
- 3.4 The remodelled staffing structure reduces the number of Support Officers from 6 FTE's (7 staff) to 4 FTE's, reducing staffing costs. The Older Persons Service Team Manager post has been deleted and the shared post agreement with Hinckley & Bosworth BC ended on the 26 June 2015. Responsibility for the management of the service transferred to the Housing Management Team Manager on 29 June 2015. The shared Team Leader arrangement will end on 2 October 2015 as the new full time Team Leader starts on 5 October 2015.
- 3.5 It is proposed the Support Officers will be located in two geographical areas and based at sheltered housing schemes, enabling them to respond to local need more easily. This will also focus activities around the sheltered schemes and reduce travel time and cost. Closer working with the voluntary sector will also be undertaken to maximise the opportunities for social activities and to provide assistance for transport etc.
- 3.6 The number of visits undertaken by the Support Officers will need to be reduced, and they will focus on those with the greatest support need. The frequency of visits is to be decided by reviewing the vulnerability of the tenant, their existing support network and the level of other agency involvement they already have.
- 3.7 Historically, tenants have been unable to 'opt out' of the service as access to the support service has been based on tenants being allocated and living in 'supported' or 'sheltered' properties. Many people have been allocated these properties because they are over 60 years of age but without any current support need. As part of the consultation process, some tenants have asked if they could 'opt out' of the service, particularly those who are still working and/or without health issues. It is anticipated that enabling tenants to 'opt out' of the support officer visiting service only will see a further reduction in the number of visits, enabling the officers to focus on those with the greatest support need.
- 3.8 The ending of the Housing Related Support Service Contract on 30 September 2015 will also end the recovery of the weekly charge from LCC. It is not proposed that North West Leicestershire District Council takes over the recovery of the full charge, as this would not be eligible for Housing Benefit. Instead there will be a new weekly service charge, collected with the weekly rent, which will cover the cost of the alarm service staffing costs only as this element will be eligible for Housing Benefit. Based on the current number of tenants linked to the control central, the weekly charge will be £3.06 per week which includes our standard 15% administration fee which is added to all service charges.

3.9 The new service charge will be applied to properties with the hard wired link to the control centre only and as this is integral to the building the tenants occupy, tenants will be unable to ‘opt out’ of this element of the service.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 It is recognised that many of the tenants using the service are vulnerable and it is important they, their family and/or carers are aware of the changes to the service. A letter has been sent to all service users advising of the changes to the service along with a question and answer sheet, a copy is attached as Appendix A.

4.2 In order to give tenants an opportunity to ask questions, six question and answer briefing sessions have been held along with two meetings of the Older Persons Working Group as detailed in the table below:

What	When	Where
Older Persons Working Group	10 August 2015	Council Offices
Question & Answer Briefing Sessions	17 August 2015, 1pm 17 August 2015, 6pm 18 August 2015, 1pm 24 August 2015, 6pm 26 August 2015, 6pm 2 September 2015, 12noon	Wakefield Court, Castle Donington Park View, Whitwick St Mary’s Court, Hugglescote Central Court, Coalville Norman Court, Kegworth Hood Court, Ashby
Older Persons Working Group	15 September 2015	Council Offices

4.3 The sessions have been well attended with over 103 tenants or family members attending. The general feedback has been positive with tenants acknowledging changes need to be made as a result of the loss of funding. Also, as referred to in 3.7 above, some tenants have stated they wish to opt out of the visiting service.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Clearly the loss of £306,000 a year has resulted in us having to review the staffing resource within the Older Persons Team. The key changes are:

- Ending the shared service arrangement with Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for the Team Manager role and the Housing Management Team Manager taking over responsibility for the team as part of the wider Housing Management Service. This change was implemented on 29 June 2015.
- Ending the shared service arrangement with Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for the Team Leader role and for a full time Housing Support Team Leader to be appointed who will report direct to the Housing Management

Team Manager. The shared service arrangement will end on 2 October 2015 with the full time Housing Support Team Leader post holder commencing on 5 October 2015.

- There will be a reduction in the number of Support Officers from six full time equivalent employees (7 staff) to four full time equivalent employees. We are currently undergoing the selection process.
 - The administrative support currently provided by the internal Business Support Team will come to an end on 30 September 2015. Changes to the working practices will significantly reduce the level of administration work.
- 5.2 The introducing of a service charge to cover the staffing costs of the alarm service has been calculated, taking into account the current number of service users, and the new weekly charge will be £3.06 per week.
- 5.3 By making the changes outlined above, the cost of providing the services will be an additional £32,000 which can be met from within the existing approved Housing Revenue Account budget. To reduce the additional cost, we will be exploring the opportunities to increase the income from private lifeline customers by at least 20% or £20,000.

COPY OF LETTER TO TENANTS ABOUT THE CHANGES TO THE OLDER PERSONS SUPPORT SERVICE



**Housing Directorate
HRA Business Support**

Please ask for: Mr Justin
O'Brien Telephone:
01530 454 605
Fax: 01530 454816
Our Ref: JO'B/ RIT

Date:

Dear

Changes to the Older Persons Support Service

As a result of our grant from Leicestershire County Council coming to an end in September 2015, we are currently reviewing the way we provide the Older Persons Support Service to our tenants who live in supported or sheltered housing. Our dedicated team of Support Officers currently undertake approximately 400 visits per week at over 1000 different locations across the district. The frequency of the Support Officer visits varies depending on individual circumstances and their support needs.

The funding to provide the service is changing as Leicestershire County Council has given us notice that from 30 September 2015, we will no longer be receiving the £306,000 per year grant which helps to fund the 24 hour Control Centre and the Older Persons Support Service.

We want to reassure you that despite this reduction in funding we will continue to provide an Older Persons Support service, although the service will have to change to reflect the reduction in budget we have available.

The main changes will be -

- **Making the service locally based**, working from sheltered schemes in your community
- **Continuing to provide a local emergency response service** through a 24 hour 7 day per week contact centre service
- **Continuing to visit people in their own homes** where there is a need for visiting support.

- **Holding regular social activities at local schemes** to provide social activities and support to those that want to attend.
- **Introducing a small weekly service charge** as part of your rent to cover the costs of alarm service which will be eligible for Housing benefit (the Support People charge currently paid to the County Council will stop at the end of September).

I am sure you will have some questions about the changes and I've put some more information on the attached questions and answer sheet.

We will also be holding six question and answer briefing sessions at venues across the district to give you and your family/carers an opportunity to ask any questions and to discuss how the service may be provided in the future. Details of the dates and venues are shown overleaf.

If you would like to attend one of these sessions please confirm your attendance by contacting the Resident Involvement team on 01530 454605. We may be able to provide assistance with transport.

If you have any queries and are unable to attend one of the briefing sessions, please contact Amanda Harper, Housing Management Team Manager by e-mail amanda.harper@nwleicestershire.gov.uk or telephone 01530 454808.

Yours sincerely

Mr Justin O'Brien
Resident Involvement Team Leader
HRA Business Support

The sessions will be held at the following dates and venues:

Monday August 17, 1pm – 2:30pm

Wakefield Court,
Barroon,
Castle Donington,
DE74 2PE

Monday August 17, 6pm – 7.30pm

Parkview
Church Lane,
Whitwick,
LE67 5DJ

Tuesday August 18, 1pm – 2.30pm

St Mary's Court,
St. Marys Avenue,
Donington Le Heath,
LE67 2HR

Monday August 24, 6pm – 7.30pm

Central Court,
Avenue Road,
Coalville,
LE67 3PY

Wednesday August 26, 6pm – 7:30pm

Norman Court,
Whatton Road,
Kegworth,
DE74 2FE

Wednesday September 2, 12noon – 1:30pm

Hood Court
North Street,
Ashby de la Zouch,
LE65 1HY

Older Persons Support Service

Questions and Answers

1. Why does the service have to change?

The funding to provide the service is changing as Leicestershire County Council has given us notice that from 30 September 2015, we will no longer be receiving the £306,000 per year grant which helps to fund the 24 hour Control Centre and the Older Persons Support Service.

2. Will I still get a visit from the Support Officer?

We will have to reduce the number of people we visit, although we will continue to provide a visiting support service to those with the greatest support need. We will be deciding who we will still be visiting over the coming weeks which will ensure those who need the service will still receive the visits. If your visits are changing we will be contacting you before the end of September to discuss this.

3. Will I keep the pull cords?

Yes, there are no plans to remove the pull cords from supported/sheltered properties. Tenants currently pay for the maintenance of the pull cords through a service charge and we will be exploring the option of introducing a service charge to cover the staffing costs of the Control Centre as part of the review.

4. Will the Control Centre continue to be based in Coalville?

Yes, we plan to keep the Control Centre as a Council run service based in Coalville.

5. Will I still have to pay for the Support Service?

Yes, there will be a new charge as part of your rent, and the payments due to Leicestershire County Council will no longer be payable.

6. Where will the Support Officers be based?

The dedicated team of Support Officers will be based in the District, working from some of our existing sheltered scheme buildings.

7. Will I be able to opt out of receiving the service?

This is something we will be exploring as part of the review currently underway.

8. Will the Council still be able to help with providing monitoring equipment?

Yes. This is known as Assistive Technology and an area which we want to grow in the future.

9. Will the Council be able to provide social activities?

Yes. By focusing on visiting those with the most support need, the Support Officers will be able to provide some support through community social activities at sheltered schemes instead of visiting customers with lower level support needs at home.

10. When will the changes be implemented, and how can I find out more?

The changes will be introduced in early October 2015, and if you want to know more please come along to one of our question and answer sessions advertised in this letter.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Title of report	TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL REPORT – RENT ARREARS & EVICTIONS
Key Decision	a) Community Yes b) Financial No
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Housing 01530 454780 chris.lambert@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To seek approval to implement the action plan developed by the Housing Service in response to the recommendations put forward by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel in respect of rent arrears and evictions.
Reason for Decision	The Tenant Scrutiny Panel has concluded their inspection of rent arrears and evictions.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Homes and Communities
Implications: Financial/Staff Link to relevant CAT Risk Management Equalities Impact Assessment	The recommendations put forward by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel can be met by existing resources within the Housing Revenue Account budget. None. The recommendations and any associated risks will be monitored by the Housing Service and Tenant Scrutiny Panel. No implications apparent.

Human Rights	No implications apparent
Transformational Government	This report reflects the second outcome from the introduction of the new Social Housing Regulatory regime established by the Localism Act 2011.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Tenants & Leaseholders Consultation Forum; Housing Senior Management Team Corporate Management Team
Background papers	Tenant Scrutiny Panel (Cabinet, 13 March 2012).
Recommendations	THAT CABINET APPROVES THE ACTION PLAN PREPARED IN RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL'S INSPECTION OF HOUSING RENT ARREARS AND EVICTIONS.

1.0 CONTEXT

- 1.1 Cabinet approved the establishment of a Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) on 13 March 2012 in response to introduction of the Localism Act 2011. The Act heralded the focus for Housing regulation moving towards a culture of local co-regulation, with greater emphasis on locally determining standards and priorities.
- 1.2 The reforms have also provided social housing tenants with stronger tools to hold their landlords to account through tenant panels, or similar bodies, in order to give tenants the opportunity to carefully examine the services being offered and form judgements about the cost and quality of the services they receive.
- 1.3 The TSP formally recruited members in December 2012 and embarked on their first pilot review of customer satisfaction with the Decent Homes Improvement Programme in May 2013. The Panel issued their findings and recommendations in a report in May 2014 to the Housing Portfolio Holder. Each of the five recommendations were accepted and adopted by the Housing Service.
- 1.4 In July 2014 the Panel sought Cabinet approval of a number of amendments to their Terms of Reference to enable better governance and understanding of the Panel's role and aims. A further review and report on performance monitoring and access to performance information was considered by Cabinet on 3 March 2015.

- 1.5 The latest report issued by the Panel in respect of rent arrears and evictions is a product of the Panel's work which concluded in July 2015.
- 1.6 The Panel are currently inspecting the responsive repairs service, with a report detailing their findings and proposed recommendations due to be considered by Cabinet later in the 2015/16 financial year.

2.0 INSPECTION OF HOUSING RENT ARREARS AND EVICTIONS

- 2.1 The Panel's full report, including thirteen recommendations can be found in Appendix A. All recommendations have been accepted by the Housing Senior Management Team.
- 2.2 It is important to note that the report attached has been produced by the Scrutiny Panel themselves, in their own words.
- 2.3 Recommendations will be implemented through an action plan which includes the Housing Service's response and outlines the agreed actions to address the issues raised. The actions can be implemented within existing resources. The action plan can be found in Appendix B.



Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Rent Arrears and Evictions Rates July 2015

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Appendices (available upon request):	
Appendix 1 – NWLDC Housemark Core Benchmarking Report 2013/14	
Appendix 2 – 2012/13 Housing Annual Report	
Appendix 3 – 2013/14 Housing Annual Report	
Appendix 4 – NWLDC Arrears Arrangement Broken letter	
Appendix 5 – NWLDC Arrears Letter 1	
Appendix 6 – NWLDC Arrears Letter 2	
Appendix 7 – NWLDC Rent Collection Procedure	
Appendix 8 – NWLDC Rent Collection Policy	
Appendix 9 – NWLDC Arrears Performance	

1. Acknowledgements

- 1.1 We would like to thank those members of staff of North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) for assisting us in pulling together the key documents and information required to formulate our strategy, as well as providing work shadowing opportunities and speed briefings. We would also like to thank the wider participants, particularly tenants, for supporting us at this important stage of the development of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.2 In addition we wish to thank those Officers of the Council who played a key role in supporting the Tenant Scrutiny.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Tenant Scrutiny Panel was recruited in December 2012. There are currently six people on the Panel, and we would welcome more members if any tenants are interested in joining the Panel.
- 2.2 The Group came into existence as a result of Government legislation requiring Local Authorities to appoint a group of tenants to scrutinise policies and procedures with a view to improving delivery of services to tenants.
- 2.3 Training and Development of Tenant Scrutiny Panel members is ongoing as every individual has differing skills and knowledge and future projects will doubtless identify other training needs.

3. REPORT

a. CHOICE OF TOPIC

- 3.1 The decision of the TSP to adopt arrears and evictions was made in our 2014 annual meeting. The Group gave much consideration to this subject and did a great deal of fact finding, taking into account the recent Under Occupation Charge and future plans for the introduction Universal Credit.. Initially, the TSP established NWLDC level of rent arrears and eviction rates in recent years gathering an understanding of current rent arrears, eviction policies and procedures, and of where the current level of arrears and evictions was heading.
- 3.3 The TSP was able to gain a unique insight into the rent arrears and eviction processes through comprehensive liaison with staff, officers and senior managers who provided a great deal of detailed background information. Specifically, assurance, facilitation and guidance throughout was provided by all members of the Resident Involvement Team and Cllr Roger Bayliss.
- 3.4 The Group's activities included

- ❖ pre-reading all documents provided in respect of the rent arrears and eviction procedures NWLDC follow.
- ❖ attending presentations outlining Government legislation relating to rent arrears and evictions delivered by Rob Webb of PEP.
- ❖ Fortnightly meetings
- ❖ Extensive training and attendance at relevant seminars
- ❖ Receiving a presentation and documentation of NWLDC's performance and position on Housemark against other similar housing organisations.
- ❖ Receiving data showing NWLDC current and previous years rent arrears figures.
- ❖ Considering NWLDC internal targets against their current achievements.
- ❖ Receiving information on rent payment methods.
- ❖ Presentations and information on NWLDC current methods for supporting tenants, particularly those who are vulnerable.
- ❖ Training on welfare reforms.
- ❖ Attending a question and answer session with Andrew Wallace, Team Leader
- ❖ Shadowing of Housing Officers

3.5 The panel was also provided with the following information, which are included in appendices:

- ❖ Performance Reports
- ❖ Team Structure Charts
- ❖ Income Recovery Procedure
- ❖ Standard arrears letters
- ❖ Benchmarking reports
- ❖ Job description

3.6 Having made their decision the TSP then obtained information from NWLDC in respect of their Policies and Procedures when dealing with tenants in arrears. The TSP received a presentation from Andrew Wallace on the processes and the current and previous years' level of arrears and evictions.

3.7 The TSP discussed the results of the data provided and was initially impressed with the robust and clear procedures followed by NWLDC when recovering rent arrears. The TSP decided from this discovery to limit its scrutiny on this particular area and focus on enhancing a preventative approach to rent arrears, making paying and collecting rent arrears easier and dealing more effectively with tenants in rent arrears.

3.8 The TSP looked at the roles of different staff and organisations involved with tenants to prevent and manage rent arrears. Namely the role of housing officers when preventing and recovering rent arrears and the role of the tenant support officer, which NWLDC had newly appointed during the start of this scrutiny inspection, and how other agencies and organisations support NWLDC tenants. The organisations primarily considered were the Citizen's Advice Bureau, First Contact, Age Concern and Christians Against Poverty.

b. Aims of the Exercise:

3.9 The aims and objectives of the Panel for this particular project included:

- ❖ Review of current tenant services provided and exploration of possible options to improve services in both the short and long term, with the aim of mitigating the effect of the current Under Occupation charge and future introduction of Universal Credit.
- ❖ Suggesting how tenants might be better assisted to avoid falling into arrears and to recover from doing so.
- ❖ To make recommendation to assist NWLDC to stabilise rent arrears during the introduction of Universal Credit, with the long term view of reducing them.
- ❖ To contribute to the NWLDC current robust and effective rent arrears policies and procedures, paying particular attention to how NWLDC communicates with tenants.

c. Findings:

3.10 The panel was impressed with the new structure of the housing management team and the essential role housing officers perform to help tenants who slip into rent arrears.

Reviewing benchmarking and performance reports the panel noted the following:

- ❖ The total rent arrears at the end of March 2014 was £277,521, at the end of March 2015 the figure was 341,215.
- ❖ In 12/13 there were 14 evictions resulting from rent arrears
- ❖ In 13/14 there were 22 evictions resulting from rent arrears
- ❖ In 14/15 there were 13 evictions resulting from rent arrears
- ❖ From April 2015 to May 2015 there have been 4 evictions resulting from rent arrears
- ❖ In 12/13 the number of residents who received notices of possession for rent arrears was 453*
- ❖ In 13/14 the number of residents who received notices of possession for rent arrears was 463*
- ❖ In 14/15 the number of residents who received notices of possession for rent arrears was 387*
- ❖ From April 2015 to May 2015 the number of residents who received notices of possession for rent arrears was 58*
- ❖ From Housemark benchmarking data in relation to rent arrears it is apparent that NWLDC is not over performing or underperforming and is generally ranked somewhere between the middle upper and middle lower quartile.
- ❖ Benchmarking data in relation to eviction rates is similar to that of rent arrears with NWLDC ranking between the middle upper and middle lower quartile. Although it should be noted that NWLDC internal targets were not achieved in 2012/13
- ❖ This data would suggest that while NWLDC is not necessarily underperforming but there is certainly room for improvement.
- ❖ In the opinion of the panel, the impact of welfare reform changes introduced from April 2013 affected the ability of some tenants to pay their rent and consequently increased arrears levels.
- ❖ The panel was impressed by NWLDC's introduction of a Support Worker to help vulnerable tenants and the move of the Citizens' Advice Bureau into council offices.
- ❖ The panel noted NWLDC has positive partnership links with local support organisations such as CAB (working from the Council offices). CAP, NACRO etc.
- ❖ The panel is aware the rent accounting team is increasing the number of days in the month when direct debits can be made with the aim of having at least one day each

week and are looking at the feasibility of increasing this to support tenants with the roll out of universal credit.

- ❖ The panel also noted the introduction of a direct debit prize draw where tenants can win up to £240 reduction on annual rent if they pay by direct debit, this is recognised as a positive incentive to encourage tenants to pay by this method.
- ❖ The TSP did not noticeably recognise any active promotion of support available for tenants struggling to pay the rent or the services available to them. However the panel was made aware of what support is available to tenants when problems are identified or they ask for assistance.

* Please note this data will include instances where notices have been served multiple times over the course of the period to the same tenant.

d. Recommendations:

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel has identified some areas where small changes to procedures could bring significant benefits for both tenants and the NWLDC.

Recommendation 1: the housing management service devises a plan of action on how it might identify tenants at high risk of falling into, or further into, rent arrears using the following methods:

- Develop a Financial Inclusion strategy prior to the introduction to Universal Credit, to promote access to appropriate, affordable and responsible credit and financial services, face to face debt and income advice, and financial education.
- If necessary and appropriate, employ an officer on a fixed term contract to undertake this work for NWLDC in liaison with suitable relevant organisations.
- NWLDC send out a leaflet bi-annually with rent statements advising what Housing Officers or partner organisations can do to help those experiencing financial difficulties. The panel has noted the a leaflet was sent out with January 2015 rent statements.

Recommendation 2: NWLDC review how it monitors performance against other social landlords on Housemark and the Housing Quality Network and our own benchmarking targets.

Recommendation 3: NWLDC develop a cost effective communications strategy combining film, social media, literature and press to engage with tenants on the subject of rent payment, eviction and general financial and debt information. Also that NWLDC actively participate in national financial inclusion campaigns, such as Debt Awareness Week.

Recommendation 4: That NWLDC actively promotes voluntary token payments of between £1-£10 weekly, regardless of the method of payment for rent, to allow the accumulation of a rent buffer. **Recommendation 5 :** NCWLDC to promote accessible low cost financial services (e.g. Clockwise Credit Union) as other local councils have done. This would mean liaising with Clockwise to identify possible access points within the area. (e.g. local library . The purpose of this would be to enable tenants to seek affordable credit, open basic bank accounts in preparation for Universal Credit implementation, promote savings and other community services.

Recommendation 6: That NWLDC regularly reviews its links with other local support organisations.

Recommendation 7: Where possible the Council will make appropriate technologies available to tenants to facilitate online DWP claims. ; we understand the Residents Involvement Team are already involved in facilitating this.

Recommendation 8: It is recommended that NWLDC regularly updates and reviews its communication methods with tenants to include:

- Use of its website and of social networks
- Council publications, such as InTouch
- Council vehicles
- Monitors used to display relevant information located in the Reception area.

Recommendation 9: That NWLDC looks at direct contact methods, such as texts to mobile, to remind tenants of rent arrears, reducing focus on letters and concentrating more on using texts/emails.

Recommendation 10: That NWLDC create and host regular budgeting workshops for tenants identified as needing assistance and referred by Housing Officers. Furthermore, a budget plan/affordability check should be performed at sign up to encourage early identification of tenants at risk of poor money management or on low incomes.

Recommendation 11: It is recommended that NWLDC performs a detailed analysis of those in arrears to identify any trends in local areas and/or particular tenant groups (e.g. single parent families) facing financial difficulty.

Recommendation 12: That NWLDC send out a leaflet out with the initial Notice of Seeking Possession with a list of local support agencies and their contact details.

Recommendation 13: That NWLDC ban the access to all pay day lender websites on computers made available for use by the public in public areas in order to prevent tenants getting into debt or increasing debt which may prevent payment of rent. It is further recommended that the management of NWLDC write to Leicestershire County Council advising our proposed recommendation and seeking their agreement to assist and participate in this recommendation county-wide.

4. Conclusion

It is clear the council has a good track record of dealing with rent arrears in a prompt and robust fashion. However, the combination of the impact of welfare cuts, Under Occupation charge, reduced funding available to NWLDC, economic pressures on incomes and the impending introduction of Universal Credit means there are increased risks to the council's rent collection rates and consequently the rental income that funds the council's housing service.

Despite these circumstances, the TSP recognise it is still all tenants' obligation to meet their responsibilities in paying their rent but it has been identified that due to benefit changes, unemployment and sickness this may be a struggle for many.

The TSP hopes its recommendations will aid the council in its efforts to enhance its preventative approach to rent arrears, help it maintain its rent collection rates and assist it to deal more effectively with those tenants who do find themselves in arrears.

Janet Higgins, Chair, On behalf of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Appendix B

Action Plan in response to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel report on Rent Arrears & Evictions

Recommendation 1: the housing management service devises a plan of action on how it might identify tenants at high risk of falling into, or further into, rent arrears using the following methods:

- Develop a Financial Inclusion strategy prior to the introduction to Universal Credit, to promote access to appropriate, affordable and responsible credit and financial services, face to face debt and income advice, and financial education.
- If necessary and appropriate, employ an officer on a fixed term contract to undertake this work for NWLDC in liaison with suitable relevant organisations.
- NWLDC send out a leaflet bi-annually with rent statements advising what Housing Officers or partner organisations can do to help those experiencing financial difficulties

Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE1a	Review the need for a fixed term role for the implementation of this action plan	Housing Management Team Manager	December 2015	
TSPRAE1b	Seek Cabinet approval of Financial Inclusion Strategy. Note that this item has been delayed from the introduction of Universal Credit (September 2015) to April 2016 in line with the anticipation that the larger scale impact of Universal Credit will affect tenants of NWLDC on a greater scale from this date.		April 2016	
TSPRAE1c	Increase the frequency of direct debit payment dates available from 2 collections per month to 4 collections per month	Financial Systems Team Leader	September 2015	
TSPRAE1d	Review the appropriateness of increasing direct debit payment dates offered from 4 to daily in line with the larger scale impact of Universal Credit introductions		April 2016	
TSPRAE1e	Send out leaflets with October and January rent statements	Senior Housing officer	October & Jan	

Recommendation 2: NWLDC review how it monitors performance against other social landlords on Housemark and the Housing Quality Network and our own benchmarking targets

Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE2	Undertake review of benchmarking (note that benchmarking services were reviewed during Quarter 1 2015/16, with the outcome being that the services provided by Housemark are fit for purpose. Review to be undertaken in 2016/17).	HRA Business Support Team Manager	June 2016	

Recommendation 3: NWLDC develop a cost effective communications strategy combining film, social media, literature and press to engage with tenants on the subject of rent payment, eviction and general financial and debt information. Also that NWLDC actively participate in national financial inclusion campaigns, such as Debt Awareness Week

Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE3a	Develop communications strategy around rent payments and evictions	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	April 2016	
TSPRAE3b	Undertake annual Christmas rent campaign: 'Don't let your home be the cost of Christmas'		December 2015	
TSPRAE3c	Participate in national financial campaigns		Ongoing	
TSPRAE3d	Publish Housing media (videos including a section on financial inclusion) onto	HRA Business Support	October 2015	

	the Council's website and social media	Team Manager		
Recommendation 4: That NWLDC actively promotes voluntary token payments of between £1-£10 weekly, regardless of the method of payment for rent, to allow the accumulation of a rent buffer				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE4a	Review best practice around voluntary token payments	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	January 2016	
TSPRAE4b	Implement appropriate framework		April 2016	
Recommendation 5: NCWLDC to promote accessible low cost financial services (e.g. Clockwise Credit Union) as other local councils have done. This would mean liaising with Clockwise to identify possible access points within the area. (e.g. local library). The purpose of this would be to enable tenants to seek affordable credit, open basic bank accounts in preparation for Universal Credit implementation, promote savings and other community services				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE5	Refresh of existing partnership arrangements with Clockwise, including staff updates as appropriate for front line staff	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	December 2015	
Recommendation 6: That NWLDC regularly reviews its links with other local support organisations				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE6	Develop index of voluntary and non-voluntary organisations who assist with the provision of financial management advice for individuals, for inclusion within the communications strategy and issuing to customer facing staff	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	April 2016	
Recommendation 7: Where possible the Council will make appropriate technologies available to tenants to facilitate online DWP claims. ; we understand the Residents Involvement Team are already involved in facilitating this				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE7a	Implement remote working for Housing Officers, Tenancy Support Officer & Support Officers who can assist with applications	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	January 2016	
TSPRAE7b	Review provision of technologies made available to TARA's for use out in the community	Resident Involvement Team Leader		
Recommendation 8: It is recommended that NWLDC regularly updates and reviews its communication methods with tenants to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of its website and of social networks • Council publications, such as InTouch • Council vehicles • Monitors used to display relevant information located in the Reception area 				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE8	See action TSPRAE3a	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	April 2016	
Recommendation 9: That NWLDC looks at direct contact methods, such as texts to mobile, to remind tenants of rent arrears, reducing focus on letters and concentrating more on using texts/emails				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status

TSPRAE9a	Roll out use of Text anywhere to allow more communication to be made via text	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	January 2016	
TSPRAE9b	Understand impact of corporate correspondence review and implement recommendations arising from this			
Recommendation 10: That NWLDC create and host regular budgeting workshops for tenants identified as needing assistance and referred by Housing Officers. Furthermore, a budget plan/affordability check should be performed at sign up to encourage early identification of tenants at risk of poor money management or on low incomes				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE10a	Implement 'surgeries' for appropriate Officers working remotely to be able to meet with multiple tenants to provide financial advice, guidance and/or signposting	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	April 2016	
TSPRAE10b	Identify and implement opportunities for Tenancy Support Service to host group sessions on financial advice, guidance and/or signposting	Principal Housing Management Team Leader / Tenancy Support Officer	January 2016	
Recommendation 11: It is recommended that NWLDC performs a detailed analysis of those in arrears to identify any trends in local areas and/or particular tenant groups (e.g. single parent families) facing financial difficulty				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE11	Implement annual detailed analysis of arrears to identify opportunities and trends for action and inclusion in the following years team business plan	Senior Housing Officer	October 2015	
Recommendation 12: That NWLDC send out a leaflet out with the initial Notice of Seeking Possession with a list of local support agencies and their contact details				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE12	Develop leaflet and implement process of inclusion with initial Notice of Seeking Possession	Senior Housing Officer	May 2016	
Recommendation 13: That NWLDC ban the access to all pay day lender websites on computers made available for use by the public in public areas in order to prevent tenants getting into debt or increasing debt which may prevent payment of rent. It is further recommended that the management of NWLDC write to Leicestershire County Council advising our proposed recommendation and seeking their agreement to assist and participate in this recommendation county-wide				
Ref	Task	Lead	Target Date	Status
TSPRAE13a	Discuss feasibility of blocking access to pay day loan lender websites with ICT and block if appropriate	Principal Housing Management Team Leader	January 2016	
TSPRAE13b	Write to Leicestershire County Council to seek that this initiative is taken on board county wide			

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Title of report	HRA SHELTERED HOUSING – DECOMMISSIONING OF WESTGATE, IBSTOCK
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss Tel: 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Housing Tel: 01530 454780 chris.lambert@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to formally decommission the empty sheltered housing scheme at Westgate in Ibstock and provide an update on the review of the Council's provision of sheltered housing that will form part of our revised 2015-2020 HRA Asset Management Strategy that will be submitted to Cabinet in October 2015.
Reason for Decision	The scheme needs to be formally decommissioned to complete the review of the future use of the site.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Homes and Communities
Implications: Financial/Staff Link to relevant CAT Risk Management Equalities Impact Screening	None specific to this decision. None None Although Westgate was originally built to house a client group with high levels of vulnerability, there is now very little demand from older people to live in bedsit accommodation within traditional, corridor based blocks.

Human Rights	No implications
Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	Tenant and Leaseholder Consultation Forum.
Background papers	None
Recommendations	<p>IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CABINET:</p> <p>1) NOTES THE CONTENTS OF THE REPORT; AND</p> <p>2) APPROVES THE FORMAL DECOMMISSIONING OF WESTGATE, IBSTOCK AS A SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEME.</p>

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2011 the Housing Service undertook a review of the traditional corridor style sheltered housing schemes within its HRA asset portfolio to assess the investment needs and levels of demand for this type of accommodation. Three schemes, Heather House in Heather, Greenacre in Coalville, and Woulds Court in Moira, were subsequently identified as being surplus to requirements and were formally decommissioned.
- 1.2 Heather House was disposed of in 2014 and Greenacre and Woulds Court remain empty. An additional scheme, Westgate in Ibstock, has been empty since 2011, but has not been formally decommissioned. This report seeks to formally decommission this scheme.

2.0 FUTURE ACTIVITY

- 2.1 Our current housing stock includes 15 schemes, consisting of 334 properties, that provide sheltered housing accommodation. There are 11 schemes (including Greenacre, Woulds Court and Westgate), consisting of 232 properties, that are traditional corridor based blocks and 4 that are non traditional, in that the properties do not form part of a block based on corridor access.

2.2 The table below provides a summary of the investment needs and the potential disposal value (capital receipt) where known, of each of the 11 corridor schemes:

Sheltered Scheme		Av. Property Net Present Value	A Current Investment Need	B Potential Re-Design Costs	C Potential Total Investment	D Potential Capital Receipt from Disposal	E Investment v Disposal Differential (swing)
1	Greenacre, Coalville	-£33,550	£545,711	£250,000	£795,711	£550,000	£1,345,711
2	Westgate, Ibstock	-£31,904	£283,075	£250,000	£533,075	£600,000	£1,133,075
3	Woulds Court, Moira	-£29,001	£381,385	£300,000	£681,385	£410,000	£1,091,385
4	Queensway, Measham	-£30,180	£373,440	£250,000	£623,440	£595,000	£1,218,440
5	St Mary's Ct. Hugglescote	-£4,377	£508,590	£300,000	£808,590	£820,000	£1,628,590
6	Wakefield Ct. C. Donington	£2,688	£720,735	£150,000	£870,735	£660,000	£1,530,735
7	Norman Court Kegworth	£9,150	£626,430	£100,000	£726,430	£1,450,000	£2,176,430
8	Central Court Coalville	£10,759	£896,680	£300,000	£1,196,680	Not Known	£1,196,680
9	Fairfield Court Hugglescote	£12,411	£907,345	£200,000	£1,107,345	Not Known	£1,107,345
10	Park View Whitwick	£16,232	£855,266	£200,000	£1,055,266	Not Known	£1,055,266
11	Hood Court Ashby	£19,760	£848,050	£200,000	£1,048,050	Not Known	£1,048,050
Totals		N/A	£6,946,707	£2,500,000	£9,446,707	£5,085,000	£14,531,707

Key

Column A: Indicates the known investment need over the next 30 years to achieve and maintain decency to these properties in their current format. These costs are included in the current 30 year HRA Business Plan.

Column B: Indicates the basic potential redesign costs to modernise and improve the layout of the blocks. These costs are not included in the current 30 year HRA Business Plan and this expenditure would only be required if a need was determined to undertake this work to maintain the viability of the schemes and/or blocks.

Column C: Indicates the combined potential investment costs of columns A and B.

Column D: Indicates the potential capital receipt (where known) from disposing of the site for alternative development.

Column E: Indicates the potential financial differential (gain) between retaining each scheme and investing in it, and decommissioning and disposing of the site.

- 2.3 In addition to Greenacre, Westgate and Woulds Court, the future of a further three sites as sheltered housing schemes will be reviewed by 31 December 2015 due to a significant doubt about their viability:

This is primarily based on continuing low demand and the current occupancy levels as outlined below:

- Queensway House in Measham (58% vacancy rate);
- Wakefield Court in Castle Donington (50% vacancy rate);
- St. Mary's Court in Hugglescote (33% vacancy rate).

The future of the remaining five schemes will be reviewed by 31 July 2016.

- 2.4 The options for each decommissioned scheme will be considered as follows:

- Location and potential demand for general needs accommodation;
- Investment need and re-design costs to utilise existing building and site for general needs accommodation;
- Potential to demolish and utilise site for affordable housing, using one of the development models listed below:
 - RSL partner;
 - Development by external partner for NWLDC;
 - Development by NWLDC direct
 - Joint venture model
 - Developer led
 - Design & Build
 - Section 106
- Potential to dispose of the site for alternative private use and/or development.

- 2.5 The finalisation of options for decommissioned schemes will be as follows:

Greenacre

- Consultation is currently taking place with local residents about the potential development of this site to deliver new affordable homes to rent (1 and 2 bedroom properties of general needs accommodation).
- A decision will be sought by 31 October 2015 on proposals for any new development.

Westgate and Woulds Court

- A review of the preferred options for these sites will be completed by 31 December 2015 and 31 March 2016 respectively. There is potential for the review of Woulds Court to be linked to a broader assessment of surrounding properties, including Cherry Tree Court which was recently re-designated as general needs accommodation due to historic low demand.

Future

- It is recommended that proposals for the future use of decommissioned schemes are undertaken alongside the decommissioning review itself. If this is not feasible, the proposals should be completed no more than four months after the decommissioning decision has been taken, unless there are exceptional circumstances. This is to minimise the period of time buildings and sites remain empty, thus reducing potential blight, and to reduce the associated uncertainty within local communities whilst future determination is outstanding.

2.6 The analysis on a scheme by scheme basis is being undertaken as part of a revised HRA Asset Management Strategy for the five year period 2015-2020. It is intended to submit the proposed Strategy to Cabinet for approval in October 2015.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with the decision to formally decommission Westgate at this stage. Any future proposals for alternative housing use or to dispose of it through the HRA Disposals Policy will be subject of a further report.

3.2 Any business case and costs associated with future recommendations will be met from the 2015 – 2020 HRA Capital Programme. Any income derived from asset sales will be credited to the Housing Capital Programme, in accordance with the provision of the existing Capital Allowance arrangements for the disposal of HRA assets.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Title of report	MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) 2016/17 TO 2019/20
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Nick Rushton 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Chief Executive 01530 454500 christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance 01530 454520 ray.bowmer@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	The purpose of the report is to establish the financial strategy for the Authority for the next four years and to set out a high level timeline for the production of the 2016/17 Revenue Budget.
Reason for Decision	Requirement of the budget setting process.
Council Priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Financial issues are contained within the report.
Link to relevant CAT	Impacts over all Corporate Action Teams (CATS)
Risk Management	Preparation of a Medium Term Financial Strategy reduces the risk of adverse impact on the provision of services in a climate of reducing resources.
Equalities Impact Assessment	No impact at this stage.
Human Rights	No impact at this stage.
Transformational Government	The strategy outlined responds to the requirement to deliver a more efficient authority within reducing and changing resource levels.

Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	As report author the report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team
Background papers	None
Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <p>1 APPROVES THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AS OUTLINED IN THIS REPORT AND NOTES THE OUTLINE TIMETABLE FOR THE 2016/17 BUDGET PROCESS.</p> <p>2 APPROVES THE TRANSFER OF £600K TO A SPECIAL PROJECTS RESERVE TO BE FUNDED FROM THE 2014/15 REVENUE BUDGET UNDERSPENDING.</p>

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This review has been undertaken to update the MTFS and to highlight the financial issues facing the Council. Since the current MTFS was approved in September 2014 the Council has approved a balanced budget for 2015/16 and received the Provisional Financial Outturn for 2014/15. The MTFS below has also been updated to reflect revised interest rates and inflation forecasts as well as estimated changes to government grants.
- 1.2 The review covers the General Fund only but reflects recharges to/from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The latter was subject to a separate business plan case approved in January 2012 reflecting the debt settlement due to the government in 2012 and the other major changes in the operation of the HRA effective from 1 April 2012. Since then the Government has made changes to the rent setting framework for the HRA and there were significant proposals in the Summer Budget which if fully implemented will reduce the level of resource available to the HRA considerably. Further reports outlining the impact of this will be brought to Cabinet during the budget process.
- 1.3 Potential capital expenditure over the next four years will be covered by separate reports to Cabinet running in line with the Revenue Budget process for 2016/17. However, this MTFS assumes that there will no net material revenue impacts from that expenditure.

2. REVISED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

2.1 The MTFs set out in Appendix 1 illustrates the financial and operational challenges facing the Council over the next four years. It is the Council's aim to approve balanced budgets and bridge the funding gap by the end of March 2020. Proposals will be put forward at future Cabinet meetings setting out how this will be achieved.

2.2 As can be seen from Appendix 1 by 2019/20 there is an estimated ongoing budget shortfall of £2.157m per year. This can clearly change as there are many elements of the budget which are fluid e.g. National and local policy changes and more reliance on local income (business rates, service income and fees and charges).

2.3 The 2016/17 – 2019/20 financial plans indicate that ongoing savings will be needed profiled as follows:

2016/17	£260k
2017/18	£552k
2018/19	£561k
2019/20	£784k

As part of continuing sound financial management over the last 10 years, the savings targets will be met through a variety of strategies including additional income generation, continuing efficiencies and better use of our asset portfolio.

2.4 The budget shortfalls will be kept under review during the budget process. Government announcements on New Homes Bonus and Revenue Support Grant are expected in late November or early December. The projected shortfalls could change significantly even in the short term particularly if there are changes to Central Government funding. The projections also do not take into account the impact of budgetary decisions which other partner organisations might take beyond 2016/17.

2.5 In preparing the MTFs the risk of losing income from the County Council currently paid as credits for recycled materials has been identified. The County ceased to pay credits on Green Waste and, not pay the annual increase for inflation from 2015/16 on all recycled materials. The MTFs includes a contingency of £300k for 2016/17 for further losses of income or increases in expenditure but there is no provision for anything above this or for further changes from 2017/18.

2.6 MTFS Assumptions

2.6.1 The main assumptions used in the MTFs are set out in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Assumptions	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Council Tax - % increase	0%	0%	0%	0%
Inflation Rate Applied to Salaries - % increase	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Revenue Support Grant (Reduction)	-25.0%	-33.0%	-50.0%	-100%
Inflation Rate Applied to Non-Pay items	1.00%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
Interest Rates - average for NWL - internal and external investments	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Increase in the Council's Pension contributions	1.00%	0%	0%	0%

2.7 Government Grants

- 2.7.1 Central Government is not expected to provide provisional grant information for 2016/17 until December and projecting levels of funding accurately is not possible using the high level Planning Total in the Government's Summer Budget. As an unprotected department, Local Government is vulnerable and is expected to take a higher proportion of the overall reductions required. Our previous MTFs assumed reductions in Revenue Support Grant of £0.7m by 2019/20 taking it down to around £1m. Given that the Government has signalled to local authorities that they need to become locally funded it is likely that Revenue Support Grant will be phased out over the next four years and this is being assumed in our revised MTFs. Whilst this may be viewed as pessimistic this does need to be seen in the context of increases in the amount raised through locally retained Business Rates making up for at least part of the reduction in funding.
- 2.7.2 Income from business rates is also effectively Central Government funding with the potential to retain a proportion of any increases from growth in the tax base. Under new arrangements which started in 2013/14 the District shares gains and/or losses at a rate of 40%. There is however a 50% levy on any net increase so at best only 20% of additional rates would be retained by the District. As the Council is participating in county-wide pooling arrangements the 50% levy that would normally go to Central Government will instead benefit the countywide Pool. The Council does not however have the security of the national safety net arrangements and risks depending on resources in a local pool to pay any safety net payments required. The Council's aim will be to increase its business rates base and increase the amount of business rates retained locally to assist in bridging the projected budget shortfalls. Unfortunately whilst the business rates base can increase it can also reduce because of a variety of reasons including reductions following appeals, statutory relief payments and provisions for future losses.
- 2.7.3 Our New Homes Bonus (NHB) projections assume increases of £0.3m in 2016/17 when it will reach £2.4m. From 2017/18 the NHB which was paid from the first year of the scheme will drop out and we are likely to see a levelling off in this income under the current rules and assuming similar levels of housing growth. However more general reductions are always possible and beyond 2016/17 the considerable financial pressures of the scheme are quite likely to force the Government to review the mechanism. Each new home brings the District approximately £1000 in New Homes Bonus representing

80% of a national average Band D Council Tax Charge. The County Council benefits from 20%.

- 2.7.4 The MTFS assumes that the New Homes Bonus (NHB) is retained for general use. Alternative uses would include specific capital or revenue items but each pound used for those purposes would increase the General Fund Budget shortfall by a similar amount.

2.8 Council Tax

- 2.8.1 Council Tax freezes each year have been assumed in the financial plans. Growth in the Council Tax base of 1.6% based on the trend over the last three financial years has been assumed although in reality this is subject to considerable variation each year depending how many new properties have been listed for Council Tax in the previous year. The Government has not provided confirmation that Council Tax Freeze grants will continue after the current year. The MTFS presented currently assumes that they will be paid for one year, rather than ongoing, but this will need to be kept under review.

2.9 Revenue Reserves

- 2.9.1 The 2014/15 Provisional Outturn Report approved by Cabinet on 21 July 2015 explained that there was a £1.6m underspending arising from additional income and further efficiencies. In February when the 2015/16 Budget was set an underspending of £1m had been projected taking reserves to a comfortable level of £2.4m. Since there was an increase of £0.6m in the underspending these resources can be considered to be available to be allocated to one-off projects. It is recommended therefore that £600k is transferred to a Special Projects Reserve.

2.10 Future Risks

The MTFS has been compiled without knowledge of the detail of the Government's Autumn Spending Review. Whilst it is generally accepted that the Government will need to continue to reduce public expenditure and Local Government funding will continue to fall, in order to deliver balanced budgets in-year by the end of this parliament, it is unclear what the impact on individual authorities will be. The current emphasis on New Homes Bonus and Business Rate Retention provides opportunities for district councils such as ours to increase revenue whilst Revenue Support Grant is reduced. There is the risk that the Government could change this emphasis and that this Council could be disadvantaged by revised resource allocation policies. Savings projections beyond 2016/17 can only be tentative at this time and we need to be prepared by setting challenging savings targets in response to assumed reductions in grant.

3. **VALUE FOR MONEY**

- 3.1 Securing the best Value For Money for the Council Tax payer is a key objective of the MTFS and has been a major factor in managing the reducing resources available particularly since 2010.
- 3.2 We employ a variety of measures to promote and deliver value for money. These include:

- The identification of service improvement and efficiency savings through the budget process.
- The Planning For the Future mechanism for instigating service reviews as required to make savings.
- Base Budget Reviews in conjunction with Service Managers
- Effective corporate procurement mechanisms. A review of our Procurement Strategy is included on the Cabinet's Forward Plan.
- Performance management. We report to Cabinet quarterly, the report on Quarter 1 is included on this cabinet agenda.
- An efficient organisational structure which is kept under review to ensure it meets the needs of the organisation.
- Scrutiny by the Policy Development Group.
- Internal audit.
- Capturing efficiency gains in-year and meeting savings targets in advance.

4. OUTLINE BUDGET TIMETABLE 2016/17

4.1 The table below sets out the outline budget timetable for 2016/17:

Action	Dates
MTFS agreed by Cabinet	22 September 2015
Cabinet's draft budget proposals agreed	8 December 2015
Consultation undertaken	8 December 2015 to 19 January 2016
Policy Development Group consideration	6 January 2016
Cabinet makes final budget recommendations to Council	9 February 2016
Council agrees 2016/17 Budget	23 February 2016

4.2 The report to Cabinet on 8 December will set out the draft budget proposals for closing the projected budget shortfall in 2016/17.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Title of report	BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN COALVILLE – PROCURING SPECIALIST ADVISORS
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community Yes
Contacts	<p>Councillor Richard Blunt 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Chief Executive 01530 454500 christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Head of Legal and Support Services 01530 454762 elizabeth.warhurst@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>
Purpose of report	To obtain Cabinet’s authority to progress the Coalville project, including as its first stage improvements to the Council Offices, and award contracts for supplying specialist services in support of the Coalville project.
Reason for Decision	To seek Cabinet’s authority to award the professional services contracts to support the Coalville project.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge
<p>Implications:</p> <p>Financial/Staff</p> <p>Link to relevant CAT</p> <p>Risk Management</p> <p>Equalities Impact Screening</p>	<p>Included within the report</p> <p>None</p> <p>A lack of appropriate specialist support will impact on the quality, cost and timescales of the Coalville project</p> <p>Not applicable</p>

Human Rights	None
Transformational Government	Working with other public and private partners to deliver a better deal for Coalville and maximising investment to build confidence in the town and community.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	None
Background papers	Regeneration Strategy for Coalville (Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment) 2010 Four Squares and Four Streets Investment Plan
Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AGREES THE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL FOR THE COALVILLE PROJECT; 2. APPROVES THE AUTHORITY ACCESSING THE SCAPE MAJOR WORKS FRAMEWORK TO COMMENCE THE FEASIBILITY STAGE OF PHASE 1 OF THE BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN COALVILLE PROJECT; 3. DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LEADER TO ENTER INTO ALL NECESSARY AGREEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF RECOMMEDATION 2; 4. DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE TO NEGOTIATE AND AGREE HEADS OF TERMS, LEASE AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS WITH THE DEPARTMENT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS; AND 5. APPROVES THE PROPOSED PROJECT UPDATE STRUCTURE AT PART 6 OF THIS REPORT.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cabinet will recall in 2010 the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment produced a regeneration strategy for Coalville which assisted the Authority in developing the Four Squares and Four Streets investment plan. By way of reminder, the four squares (and their linking streets) are:

- 1.1.1 Stenson Square – being the area in front of Stenson House (including the Council Offices footprint and London Road Car Park);
 - 1.1.2 Memorial Square – being the area around the memorial clock tower;
 - 1.1.3 Marlborough Square – being the area around the former Emporium nightclub; and
 - 1.1.4 Belvoir shopping centre.
- 1.2 Recent successes in terms of the redevelopment of Coalville town centre include:
- 1.2.1 the Authority's collaboration with EMH to redevelop the former Pick and Shovel site in Memorial Square;
 - 1.2.2 the roll out of the Authority's Coalville Shop Fronts Improvement Scheme on Hotel Street and High Street, which is ongoing;
 - 1.2.3 the current works to redevelop the Motors Coalville site opposite the Council Offices and Stenson Square; and
 - 1.2.4 improvements to the market and the car park area which backs onto the Belvoir Centre.
- 1.3 The Authority has a proven track record of working with other public and third sector bodies, particularly in relation to shared accommodation. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in Coalville has expressed a desire to move from their current site on Whitwick Road into the Council Offices.

2.0 BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN COALVILLE

- 2.1 As part of the Leader's commitment following the election in May 2015, the Authority is looking at ways in which it can support the regeneration of Coalville, including developing work already undertaken in relation to the town centre, particularly the Four Squares and Streets investment plan.
- 2.2 The full scope of this work, under the banner "Building Confidence in Coalville" is yet to be fully determined. Some of the potential areas for consideration and development include:
- 2.2.1 improvements to the public realm;
 - 2.2.2 phase 2 of the shop fronts improvement scheme;
 - 2.2.3 opportunities to support business start-ups;
 - 2.2.4 matters arising as part of the car parking strategy;
 - 2.2.5 improvements to public spaces in the Council Offices.

- 2.3 At this stage, it is difficult to assess the willingness of private and public sector parties to participate in whole or part. However, there are elements which can be undertaken by the Authority independently.
- 2.4 It is important to note that the built environment is only one aspect of the Building Confidence in Coalville project. Work is being undertaken to support businesses and access to jobs in the area (for example, the Enterprising North West Leicestershire grants being offered by the Authority), as well as encouraging use of the town centre for leisure and community activities.
- 2.5 In that context it is important for the Authority to be seen to be leading the Building Confidence in Coalville project, to prove what can be achieved and what further redevelopment could mean for the town. The request from the DWP also presents a timely opportunity and accordingly it is proposed to undertake improvement works to the Council Offices to both increase capacity to allow for the DWP and potentially other agencies to work within the building and to demonstrate the Authority's willingness to lead change in Coalville.
- 2.6 The Chief Executive has exercised her delegated authority to create the post of Interim Director of Resources, to create capacity for her to lead on the Building Confidence in Coalville project and ensure that the project can be initiated with sufficient rigour. At the time of writing this report, shortlisting for the post has been completed and interviews are scheduled to take place shortly. It is anticipated that the successful candidate will be in post by November. The appointment is for a fixed term of 18 months.

3.0 PHASE 1 STENSON SQUARE

- 3.1 The area of Stenson Square was identified in the Four Squares and Four Streets investment plan and includes the footprint of the Council Offices and London Road car park. This will form the focus of phase 1 of the Building Confidence in Coalville project.
- 3.2 The area of Stenson Square offers a potential development site for residential and/or retail use. Development could enhance the area, particularly in the context of the architecture of Stenson House itself. However, in light of the opportunities to work with the DWP, the first part of phase 1 will focus on improvements to the Council Offices. In parallel with this phase, further development to Stenson Square will be explored.

PHASE 1, PART 1 - IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COUNCIL OFFICES

- 3.3 Over the past 3 years, the Council Offices and Stenson House have accommodated Leicestershire County Council's Registrars Service, other County employees who work with families in our district, the Police and the Citizens Advice Bureau. These arrangements have worked well for landlord, tenants and the public and have provided additional streams of income for the Authority.
- 3.4 The DWP has informed the Authority that they will need to vacate their current accommodation on Whitwick Road between summer 2016 and November 2017 and have expressed a strong interest in moving into the Council Offices. Cabinet will note the short timescales associated with this.

- 3.5 Sharing the Council Offices with the DWP will further enhance the community hub approach providing services to our customers. This also provides the Authority with an opportunity to address the environmental profile of the Council Offices and introduce improvements, such as green technologies and energy saving measures. As with other agencies occupying elements of the Council Offices, the DWP will be required to enter into a lease prior to occupation of any part of the Council Offices.
- 3.6 The DWP has indicated that they are willing to make a contribution to the works necessary to accommodate their staff in the Council Offices. This is currently being negotiated along with rental and service charges and will be influenced by the final scheme design.
- 3.7 To create sufficient space for the DWP, a redesign of the current reception area will need to be undertaken. To determine what is possible, both structurally and within budgets, it is necessary to engage professional services to assess the feasibility of the proposal.

PHASE1, PART 2 – POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF STENSON SQUARE

- 3.8 To date, no further work has been undertaken at this stage in relation to the potential for development of the wider Stenson Square area and what benefits this could realise as part of the Building Confidence in Coalville project. However, as part of engaging with professional services for Phase 1, Part 1, the feasibility assessments will also address the options for the rest of Stenson Square.

4.0 PROCUREMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The scope and total value of the Building Confidence in Coalville project is as yet unknown. It is also unclear at this early stage of the value of the works and services contracts which would support the first stage of improvements to the Council Offices. The DWP's timeline creates a pressing need to progress the feasibility assessment of this first stage as soon as possible.
- 4.2 In this context, the most quick and efficient route to engage the appropriate professional services is through an established framework agreement. This would also be compliant with the Authority's Contract Procedure Rules and its obligations under the Public Contract Regulations. The Authority is already a member of Scape, a local authority owned procurement framework specialising in public sector construction projects. Officers have discussed the project with representatives from Scape who have identified that a suitable procurement route is through their Major Works Framework agreement.
- 4.3 Scape operates two appropriate frameworks: Minor Works, where the value is below £4 million and Major Works, where the value is over £2 million. As the scope of the works required is currently unclear, Scape has recommended that the Authority access the Major Works Framework for conducting the feasibility stage. Should this conclude that the total value of the works will be below £2 million, Scape has advised that the Minor Works Framework contractor can pick up the work undertaken at feasibility stage and deliver this, notwithstanding they have not been previously involved.
- 4.4 The frameworks allow for the appointment of one contractor for all necessary works and services, save for Quantity Surveyors and project managers (who need to be appointed

independently of the lead contractor to avoid any risk of conflict of interest). Scape operates other frameworks under which these two services can be provided or the Authority can explore other procurement options, including using in house resources where at all possible. However, in the context of the need to progress quickly with this, it is proposed to utilise existing in house Quantity Surveyors and engage a specialist project manager directly, who will work with the Authority's Project and Performance Team, initially through the feasibility stage.

- 4.5 The structure of the frameworks means that the Authority only has to manage one contract, while receiving assurance that it is getting value for money throughout the process. This means significantly less staff resource is expended in engaging other contractors and the delay associated is mitigated. The Authority, through its relationship with the lead contractor, is able to exercise some control over the sub-contractors engaged. Furthermore, after the feasibility stage, if the Authority wishes to proceed, the existing contractual arrangements allow for the framework provider to immediately progress to the next stage of development. This also means that as the broader Building Confidence in Coalville project develops, the Authority can enjoy consistency in terms of design and build quality throughout the town.
- 4.6 The lead contractor on the Major Works Framework is Wilmott Dixon, who has recent experience in delivering similar projects for Melton Borough Council, in rebuilding their offices which are shared with other agencies, as well as leading on the redesign of County Hall at Glenfield.
- 4.7 Should Cabinet agree to proceed via the Major Works Framework, contract documentation could be agreed early in October 2015 with feasibility and masterplanning commencing immediately thereafter. The design and masterplanning work would be undertaken by a sub-contractor and early discussions with Scape and Wilmott Dixon indicate that this would be undertaken by Leicester firm RG&P. RG&P have a thorough knowledge of Coalville, having been involved in the designs for the former Minnesotas site and the Pick and Shovel redevelopment.
- 4.8 Cabinet should note that entering into the framework agreement and progression to the feasibility stage does not commit the Authority to any further expenditure or work. The framework is established in such a way as to be clear to all parties the uncertain scope and value of the works and the Authority would not be bound to proceed with any future stage of the project.
- 4.9 The lead contractor will ensure value for money for the Authority throughout the process by market testing prices for materials, sub-contractors and consultants. Some services in the feasibility stage are provided by Scape at little to no cost to the Authority.
- 4.10 A further advantage of the framework arrangement is that it provides enhanced opportunities to secure consistency in design and vision throughout the stages of the Building Confidence in Coalville project and may enable development opportunities in other areas of the town.
- 4.11 Should Cabinet agree to proceed on the basis recommended in this report, an initial kickstart meeting will be held in early October, with officers, the Leader and representatives from the appointed contractors and their consultants. Such meetings are

very common in this kind of project and the costs are likely to be very low for the Authority, if not zero.

- 4.12 In order to ensure the success of the physical elements of the Building Confidence in Coalville project officers are also implementing a comprehensive programme of business and community engagement. This will start with an invitation for the public to express their hopes for the future of Coalville. We are identifying influential business owners in the town that can act as ambassadors for the wider project and establishing a stakeholder group which will include representatives of all sections of the community.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As indicated above, the full scope of the Building Confidence in Coalville project cannot be comprehensively assessed at this stage. Similarly, until the feasibility stage for improvements to the Council Offices has been completed, the full value of the works cannot be assessed.
- 5.2 Early indications from informal discussions with Wilmott Dixon suggest that the costs of consultants associated with the feasibility stage of improvements to the Council Offices will be in the region of £10-20,000. For this feasibility stage Wilmott Dixon have indicated that they would not charge for their services.
- 5.3 In addition to the contribution from the DWP, the project will be funded from a variety of sources, including existing premises revenue budgets, revenue underspends from previous years and capital receipts. It will also be possible to “internally borrow” against the Council’s reserves on a temporary basis pending the sale of assets.

6.0 PROJECT UPDATES

- 6.1 As the proposed improvements to the Council Offices and the wider Building Confidence in Coalville project progress, it is proposed to bring quarterly reports to Cabinet seeking appropriate authority to progress to the next stage. Conversely, where matters progress significantly and further decisions are required within quarterly intervals, it is recommended that Cabinet accept additional reports.
- 6.2 Should Cabinet approve the recommendations in this report, it is anticipated that the next update to Cabinet will be on completion of the feasibility stage of the improvements to the Council Offices in January 2016.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Report Title	2015/16 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT
Key Decision	a) Financial - No b) Community - No
Contacts	Councillor Richard Blunt 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Chief Executive 01530 454500 christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	The report provides members of the Cabinet with information on the performance and progress made against the Council Delivery Plan actions and performance indicators for quarter 1 (Q1) (April - June).
Reason for Decision	The report is provided for members to effectively monitor the organisation's performance.
Council Priorities	The report addresses performance against each of the Council's four priorities for 2015/16
Implications	
Financial/Staff	The report contains summary performance data on staff management & financial information.
Link to relevant CAT	The report links to the work of all Corporate Action Teams.
Risk Management	Risk management is applicable to all areas of the Council's statutory duties and service provision. Any relevant risks relating to actions set out in the Council Delivery Plan are managed through the Corporate Risk Register.
Human Rights	No direct implications.

Transformational Government	No direct implications
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team
Background papers	(1) Council Delivery Plan 2015/16 - http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/council_delivery_plan_2015_16/CDP%202015_16.pdf
Recommendations	THAT CABINET RECEIVES AND COMMENTS ON THE QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT (APRIL – JUNE 2015).

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY FOR QUARTER 1

1 Introduction

This report sets out the performance of the Council's key frontline services, progress against Council Delivery Plan priority actions, performance indicators, finance and sickness absence management.

2 Performance summary of key frontline services

The Council's key frontline services are linked to the Council's four priorities

Front line Service	Value for Money	Business & Jobs	Homes & Communities	Green Footprints Challenge
Leisure	✓		✓	✓
Housing	✓	✓	✓	✓
Revenues and Benefits	✓			
Refuse and Recycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Development Control	✓	✓	✓	✓
Environmental Health	✓	✓	✓	

The detailed evidence and statistics of the Council's performance for Quarter 1 is included in Appendix 1

2.1 Leisure Centres

The QUEST Award maintenance visit to Hood Park Leisure Centre took place on 22 May 2015 and the banding of the facility was confirmed as good with the direction of travel moving towards excellent. Specific points made within the report include;

- The Centre is well run and the Team has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.
- A Business Plan is in place for the Service and an Improvement Plan has been introduced to develop and implement the principles of Quest.
- Planning to improve, and outcomes and impact measurement are strong areas of operation.
- Budgets are well controlled and monitored.
- The Centre is generally very clean.
- Marketing is clearly planned.

A business case is being developed to consider the feasibility of converting the current dryside changing rooms at Hood Park Leisure Centre into a Wellbeing Centre using Section 106 financial contributions that the Council already have. The area, whilst supporting the existing fitness room at peak times, will be used to accommodate targeted groups such as the elderly, children and young people, GP referrals, people with mental health issues, cancer rehabilitation, and any other commissioning opportunity working with a specific group that presents itself. The NHS have also enquired about relocating some services from the closing Ashby Hospital as part of the centre, including their physiotherapy service.

The Council has also supported Coalville Town Football Club with a successful £150,000 application to the Football Stadia Improvement Fund for a new changing pavilion, Thringstone Bowls Club with their funding for a new toilet block, and Thringstone Miners Welfare Social Centre in their funding attempts for the development of a new training pitch.

2.2 Housing Services

An initial draft District Lettings Plan for 2015-16 has been considered by the Director of Housing and some modelling is now being undertaken to provide a summary prediction of lettings for 2015-16. Work is being carried out to ensure that all relevant lettings data is accurately submitted through the national lettings database so that future district lettings plans are based on full and complete datasets.

Consultation events are being developed for internal stakeholders, external partners, tenants and residents, Members and the general public regarding the publication of a new 5 year Housing Strategy. Consultation will take place during Q2 and Q3.

The initial round of Universal Credit implementation for the North West Leicestershire area will commence in September 2015 and is anticipated to affect no more than twelve people and no equality issues have been identified at this stage.

Business process re-engineering was undertaken in May 2015 and a new process for managing empty homes is being finalised. Improvements include the timing of the offers to prospective tenants and a dedicated empty homes team in the Repairs section.

We hosted a successful visit from the Homes and Communities Agency in May as they had requested to learn more about our Green and Decent Pilot Programme, through which four different types of cutting edge, renewable technologies have been installed across 12 properties to provide low cost, energy efficient ways of heating tenants' homes. The HCA officers visited several tenants homes to view the technology in action, and were impressed with the positive feedback given by tenants.

Valuations of some key sites have also been undertaken that will feed into the new build pilot, and a feasibility study was concluded regarding potential infill development on a council owned sites on Willesley estate, Ashby. Pre-planning advice has been provided by planning colleagues.

The first draft of the 2016-20 Asset Management Strategy has been produced and is currently subject to a consultation and refinement process prior to submission to Cabinet for approval in Autumn of 2015. The capital investment programme 2016-20 is being finalised as part of the Asset Management Strategy.

A VFM Strategy for the Housing Service was also approved in June, and will now be implemented from the second quarter onwards

2.3 Revenues & Benefits

The Partnership has implemented a new staffing structure which came into effect on Monday 27th April. The outcome of this is that there are now 3 core focus areas, Revenues, Benefits and Business Development & Support and this has realised cashable savings for Partners.

The split of functions is set out below:

- **Revenues** which encompasses Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates administration and enforcement for housing benefit overpayments. This has meant the enforcement and billing teams have been combined which enables the council to deal with processes and customer enquiries in a more efficient way.
- **Benefits** - this has brought together both claims administration, fraud and support areas.
- **Business Development and Support** has 2 teams, one covering business development / IT /Projects and the other visiting/training/post.

The Partnership is currently finalising a project list which will incorporate both major and changes to business processes. One key area will be 'Channel Shift' which is to enable residents, business ratepayers and landlords to interact with the council and make their enquiries through the website. Work on this will commence this year linking directly into the Councils 'ICE' project and allowing customers to choose their preferred method of accessing services, which in turn will likely reduce the number of avoidable contacts.

Projects have been fully scoped to ensure no slippage and that delivery will be on time and to budget to ensure the project objectives and benefits are realised.

Performance is being maintained through the initial period of transition and staff training has been commenced.

2.4 Refuse & Recycling

Quarter 1 has seen the installation of the materials separation technology at the depot. Refinements have been completed and agreement has been reached with Unions regarding safe bag splitting procedures which are to be introduced from 1 August 2015 to reduce waste contamination. The installation of the technology enables the Council to process recycled material more effectively leading to increased productivity and less contamination within the material which in turn leads to increased income from the sell on of the material.

The team carried out the 'Compost Show' where over 300 residents were contacted and 80 recycling containers were ordered. The 'Recycle Week' road shows completed with over 350 residents contacted over 3 days. Picnic in the Park festival was also attended by the team in addition to Heart of the Forest Festival. These community events are important to increasing residents' awareness and further events are planned for the rest of the year.

Silver Street car park in Whitwick has been redesigned producing over 20 additional car parking spaces. The final specification has been delayed slightly due to the knock-on effect of South Street car park resurfacing works being delayed however the improvements will be in place before the end of the year.

2.5 Development Control

Performance on processing and determining planning applications was well above target in all areas. Major applications being determined in 13 weeks is slightly below target at 83% however this achievement is still well above the national target of 60%. Performance shows significant improvement in comparison to quarter 1 2014/15. In quarter 1 a focus has been given to reports. Changes made have been successful in freeing up officer time, improving efficiency and performance. Detailed figures are available in the dashboard at appendix 1.

The Planning and Building Control Agents Forum was successfully held early in quarter 2. Further improvements were discussed, including streamlining the number and length of conditions. This work is on-going. Agents had noticed the improvements that had already been made, particularly with respect to shortening the time taken to validate planning applications.

A design guide for use when submitting planning applications has been developed and is due to be issued for consultation in September. It is expected that the guide will come into force in December 2015.

2.6 Environmental Health

To aid in supporting businesses, a policy of only inspecting food businesses with a hygiene rating of 3 or less and those without a rating was adopted for the Download festival in June. Approximately 25 food establishments were scheduled for inspection.

As part of achieving the outcome that businesses view the environmental health service as an effective and efficient service that supports business growth, an assessment of officers knowledge has been carried out using the regulator developmental needs analysis (RDNA) tool. Some knowledge gaps were identified and solutions will be managed through staff training.

A list of target businesses requiring support has been devised. Visits to the target businesses by the Business Champion have commenced and some establishments

are showing improvements. The businesses already visited have been supportive of the initiative.

2.7 Supporting evidence and statistics - Appendix 1

Appendix 1 sets out the following items:

- Progress against Council key front line services
- Progress against Business & Jobs priority
- Progress against remaining priorities
- Finance
- Management of Absence

Status definitions used in Appendix 1



Performance on track (milestones) or performance on or above target (PI's)



Performance under control (milestones)



Performance failing (milestones) or performance below target (PIs)

3 Council Delivery Plan

Appendix 2 sets out a high level exception report for the remainder of the Council Delivery Plan and further information on key front line services. This provides commentary against actions and performance indicators that were not on target during Q1.

3.1 Business & Jobs Priority

Enterprising North West Leicestershire 18 Expressions of Interest received of which 16 have been approved and are awaiting full applications. One full application received to date. Potential grant of £255,000 which could lever in £2.7million of investment and create 96 jobs

74 business enquiries were received and dealt with by the Business Focus team in Q1. Gateway Hub referrals were made for 30 of those businesses.

The footfall figures at the Coalville Market Hall have seen a significant increase of 31% in Quarter 1 this year when compared with Quarter 1 in 2014/15.

3.2 Progress against remaining CDP priorities.

The timetable for consideration of the Draft Local Plan has been revised and the Plan will be considered by Council in September. A full public consultation will follow, subject to Council approval of the draft Plan.

The Business and People Group, comprising key businesses, business representative bodies, LLEP, education, VCSE sector, district council and other public sector partners, continues to drive delivery and development of the North West Leicestershire Local Growth Plan. All partners are currently preparing for a review of the action plan in August 2015. Progress during Q1 includes: development of proposals for support to get women into work or start new businesses; the Coalville project taking shape; more clarity of demands into LLEP for support for delivering key infrastructure projects; engagement with Talent Match, funders and wider stakeholders to ensure it continues to deliver in North West Leicestershire;

allocation of £15k of the Local Growth Plan fund to enable a strategic study of the case for reopening the Burton to Leicester train line.

Domestic abuse outreach work to continue under current arrangements until 30 Nov 15. Domestic Abuse Freedom Programme funded Jun-Sept 15. Horizon Challenge programme planned to commence Sept '15. Chelsea's Choice CSE awareness production planned in NWL high schools Sept-Nov 15

Work on the Early Help model under the supporting Leicestershire families programme commenced on 1 April 2015. New staff have been co-located with existing Supporting Leicestershire Families staff and Community Safety within the district council offices.

Village and Town profiling work has commenced to further develop effective and efficient working practices between parishes and the district council which will lead to improved service delivery in localities.

Monthly performance reporting is now carried out on work with parish councils and evaluation of the Parish Liaison meetings has been completed.

Dog fouling hotspots have been reviewed ready for targeted environmental improvement campaigns. An action plan has also been co-designed with parish councils to reduce dog fouling on sports pitches. A number of parishes have signed up for the 'Dog Watch' scheme. Eleven schools have also been contacted and provided with stencil packs. The 'Stop Foul Play' campaign has been put back to the end of August but monitoring of areas is ongoing.

The launch date of the 'Roadside Litter Campaign' has been delayed because of an inability to secure businesses agreement to the associated charter. Officers will arrange to visit business and continue to promote the scheme. However, the enforcement action plan has been completed and will be commenced in September.

Flytipping hotspots have been set up with cctv cameras and signage in four areas across the district.

An environmental educational programme for schools focussing on litter, dog fouling and fly tipping has been refreshed and local schools contacted. This programme will start to be rolled out from September.

Improving the Customer Experience (ICE) Programme

The second phase of the Improving Customer Experience programme started April 2015. A total of nineteen projects were identified and five work streams created to deliver these projects. The work streams and key responsibilities include:

- **Web and Self Service Improvements:** Create corporate standards for mobile working, replace existing Intranet site to improve communication across the Council and develop more interactive and self serve options to the website.
- **Finance Systems and Processes:** Perform a comprehensive review of existing financial processes, consolidate card payment systems and improve direct debit facilities.
- **Communications Technology:** Upgrade Internet connections and replace the existing telephony system to ensure customers receive a consistently high quality service.

- Line of Business Systems Improvements: Perform a comprehensive review of IDOX suite to ensure the system offers best value for services and determine whether IDOX will meet future operational requirements.
- Business Excellence: Review and amend correspondence sent by NWL, assist work streams in requirements gathering and monitor business benefits once projects are delivered.

Work streams have assigned a lead to each project under their remit. Projects are progressing with Project Initiation Documents (PIDS) and Business Cases being prepared. It is anticipated these documents will be presented to the ICE Board in September 2015. The Business Development Team has re-aligned all work stream meetings to improve reporting circles to the ICE Board. The team are also in the process of creating an Intranet page so work streams and ICE Board has visibility of all meeting documents. The Business Development Team will also identify and map dependencies across projects.

4 Financial management update

At the end of the first quarter of the financial year the General Fund and Special Expenses budgets are being managed effectively and there are early projections of additional income. It is too early in the financial year to assume for definite that there will be significantly more resources at the end of the year because of the volatility of local income streams, particularly Planning Fees.

An additional £220k in Planning Fee Income is projected by the year end. An increasing risk of incurring costs from Planning Appeals has been identified and there is already £250k in the revenue budget to mitigate this risk. It is proposed we continue to monitor this risk and consider providing further resources from the additional income to cover any costs, if considered necessary.

The Housing Revenue Account is showing £71k less rental income for the year because of higher numbers of void dwellings than assumed in the budget. Additional resources have been deployed to turn around the voids and it is expected the projected rent losses will reduce in future quarters.

At this early point in the financial year spending on both the General Fund and Housing Capital Programmes is expected to be on budget at the year end.

5 Sickness absence management update

Absence was marginally off target for quarter one. The average no. of days lost per FTE was 1.98 days against a target of 1.85 days.

Community Services, Housing Services and Legal & Support Services, are the three departments with the highest population of employees, and have failed to meet the quarterly target. The Chief Executive & HR, Finance and Planning & Regeneration departments are significantly within the 1.85 (days) target.

In comparison to quarter 1 2014-15, there was a marginal increase of 0.26 days lost per FTE, however there are no noticeable trends to report.

Back and Chest/Respiratory problems are two of the main causes of absence in this quarter. CLT are monitoring the position carefully to ensure overall compliance.

6 Corporate Risk Register

The updated Corporate Risk Register is attached at Appendix 2. The Council's Risk Management Scrutiny Group reviewed the register and recommended the following changes to the RAG ratings of the risks via Corporate Leadership Team which are now incorporated in the register.

Resource Capacity and Capability

This has changed from Green to Amber. This is in recognition of the Council's ambitious work programme, in particular the Coalville Project. Additional interim capacity at Corporate Management Team level and above is currently being recruited.

Information Governance & Data Protection

This has changed from Green to Amber. This is in recognition of self-reported data protection issues. An external audit of the Council's Data Protection processes has been requested by the Council and is about to be undertaken.

Project & Programme Management

This has changed from Amber to Red. This is also in recognition of the Council's ambitious work programme, in particular the Coalville Project. As outlined above the necessary increase in capacity and capability is being addressed through recruitment to interim positions.

2 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD – LEISURE CENTRES

Progress against milestones			Progress against Performance Indicators		
2 Green	1 Amber	0 Red	0 Green	0 Amber	0 Red

Budgeted Cost to provide service	£769,250	Total FTE's	87.58	Complaints received	9
Forecasted cost to provide service	£776,600	Total days lost to sickness	52.82(52.82)*	Compliments received	13

*cumulative number of FTE days lost







- Swim academy income is above target at a total of £110,639

The number of children enrolled on the NWL Swim Academy has increased from 1,789 at its launch in October to 1,968 at the end of Q1 - an increase of 10% in 9 months. Consequently Q1 income has significantly exceeded target and has increased by over 16% in 12 months from £95,070 in Q1 2014/15 to £110,639. The success of the scheme can be attributed to an effective targeted marketing campaign, effective delivery of the new scheme by the teachers, and the introduction of technology that allows instructors to update the progress of children on poolside using iPods, whilst parents can monitor their child's progress online.

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Performance Indicators	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Status
Leisure Centre Membership income	£233,441	£231,717	
Leisure Facility Usage Levels (cumulative)	230,000	235,610	






2 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD – HOUSING

Progress against milestones			Progress against Performance Indicators		
9  Green	4  Amber	0  Red	2  Green	1  Amber	0  Red

Budgeted Cost to provide service	£-182,730	Total FTE's	102.49	Complaints received	42
Forecasted cost to provide service	£-99,860	Total days lost to sickness	211.83 (211.83)*	Compliments received	11

*cumulative number of FTE days lost

- Housing repairs service received 767 customer satisfaction surveys of which 727 customers said they were satisfied or very satisfied for June. For Q1, overall satisfaction was 95.43% (1881 satisfied from 1971 surveyed)
- Customer satisfaction with planned investment service cumulatively for the first quarter is 96% which is marginally below target. Performance in June alone produced a satisfaction level of 100%, so a continuation of this trend should lead to the quarter 2 target being met.
- The amount of rent arrears in monetary terms is £398,134.19 which is 2.23% of the total amount of rent due, and is above the target of 2.04% by 0.19% or £33,792. An analysis of the rent arrears outstanding is underway and will highlight any areas for improvement and/or prioritisation.
- Relet times for empty properties are behind target, mainly due to the reletting of some long term empty properties which had a negative impact on the figures. Performance should now improve going forward, but with a continuing high number of properties becoming vacant, this remains a challenging target.






Performance Indicators	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Status
% rent arrears of current tenants	2.04%	2.23%	
Total arrears for current tenants £	£364,342	£398,134	
% tenants satisfied with the allocation and lettings process	90%		
Average re-let times (days)	55	74	
Percentage of customers satisfied with adaptations	90%	95%	
Percentage of customers satisfied with responsive repairs	95%	95%	

Performance Indicators	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Status
Percentage of customers satisfied with DHIP programme	98%	96%	😊
Number of affordable homes delivered	36	36	😊






2 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD – REVENUES & BENEFITS

Progress against milestones			Progress against Performance Indicators		
3  Green	0  Amber	0  Red	4  Green	2  Red	

Budgeted Cost to provide service	£227,410	Total FTE's	24.04	Complaints received	5
Forecasted cost to provide service	£257,330	Total days lost to sickness	37.55 (37.55)*	Compliments received	0

Performance Indicators	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Status
Benefits New Claims	22.3 days	22.1 days	
Benefits Change Events	13.7 days	10.7 days	
Council Tax in year collection rate	29%	29%	
Non-domestic rates in year collection rate	30.9	29.5	
HB overpayments recovered	11.0	11.0	



2 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD – REFUSE & RECYCLING

Progress against milestones			Progress against Performance Indicators		
3  Green	0  Amber	0  Red	2  Green	1  Red	


Budgeted Cost to provide service	£1,836,210	Total FTE's	74.77	Complaints received	9
Forecasted cost to provide service	£1,788,337	Total days lost to sickness	268.02 (268.02)*	Compliments received	3

*cumulative number of FTE days lost

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Performance Indicators	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Status
Income from sale of recyclables (annual)	£865,000	N/A	N/A
% of waste recycled (annual)	46%	46.3%	
Kgs of waste sent to landfill per household per year	519	512	






2 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD - DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Progress against milestones			Progress against Performance Indicators		
0  Green	2  Amber	0  Red	3  Green	1  Red	

Budgeted Cost to provide service	£-93,170	Total FTE's	13.19	Complaints received	5
Forecasted cost to provide service	£-336,440	Total days lost to sickness	7.3 (7.3)*	Compliments received	1

*cumulative number of FTE days lost

- Performance on major applications in Quarter 1 was 82.61% with nineteen majors out of twenty three either determined within 13 weeks or with extension of time agreements. This is well above the national target of 60%

Performance Indicators	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Status
Percentage of customers very satisfied or satisfied with the Planning Service	90%	91%	
Percentage of major planning applications processed within 13 weeks or a period agreed with applicant	85%	83%	
Percentage of planning applications determined within 8 weeks for minor applications	65%	74%	
Percentage of planning applications determined within 8 weeks for other applications	80%	90%	
Percentage of major development schemes performing positively against the Building for Life 'good' standard	80%	100%	

2 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Progress against milestones			Progress against Performance Indicators		
6  Green	0  Amber	0  Red	0  Green	0  Red	

Budgeted Cost to provide service	£351,360	Total FTE's	13.79	Complaints received	1
Forecasted cost to provide service	£335,500	Total days lost to sickness	3.25 (3.25)*	Compliments received	1


*cumulative number of FTE days lost

- 20 vehicles have been checked with 18 found to be at a satisfactory standard.
- A programme of intensive support has commenced with a group of 20 food establishments. Some establishments are evidencing improvements in standards

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Performance Indicators	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Status
Proportion of businesses that described their relationship with Environmental Health as being 'good'	96%	Annual target	N/A
Proportion of businesses that said the regulatory officer had an understanding of the challenges faced by running a business	60%	Annual target	N/A
Proportion of businesses that said they felt confident that they could rely on the advice received from the regulatory officer	90%	Annual target	N/A
Number of food establishments rated as 0,1 and 2 (non compliant) using the national food hygiene rating scheme	96%	Annual target	N/A

3 COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN - BUSINESS & JOBS PRIORITY

Progress against milestones			Progress against Performance Indicators											
3		Green	0		Amber	0		Red	0		Green	0		Red

No applicable performance indicators for Q1 (reported annually)

3 PROGRESS AGAINST REMAINING CDP PRIORITIES

Progress against milestones			Progress against Performance Indicators		
4  Green	2  Amber	0  Red	0  Green	0  Red	

74 No Performance Indicators Applicable for this priority

4 FINANCE UPDATE

This section sets out the projected financial position of the Council for the year ending 31 March 2016. The Council set its Revenue Budget at £10.610m on 24 February 2015.

General Fund – Summary of Net Expenditure	ORIGINAL BUDGET NET £000	FORECAST OUTTURN NET £000	FORECAST VARIANCE NET £000
AMOUNT TO BE MET FROM GOVERNMENT GRANT AND COUNCIL TAX (Budget Requirement).	10,610	10,220	(390)

Special Expenses – Summary of Net Expenditure	ORIGINAL BUDGET NET £000	FORECAST OUTTURN NET £000	FORECAST VARIANCE NET £000
AMOUNT TO BE MET FROM GOVERNMENT GRANT AND COUNCIL TAX (Budget Requirement).	485	503	18

HRA SUMMARY – Summary of Net Expenditure	ORIGINAL BUDGET NET £000	FORECAST OUTTURN NET £000	FORECAST VARIANCE NET £000
Net cost of service (Total rent income less total expenditure)	(183)	(100)	83

Capital Expenditure	General Fund £ 000	Special Expenses £000	HRA £000	Total £000
Approved Budget for the Year	2,130	0	9,105	11,235
C/F from 2014/15	760	169	800	1,729
Approved projects in year	361	0	0	361
Slippage Identified in Year				
Total budget for 2015/16	3,251	169	9,905	13,325
Likely outturn for 2015/16 (provisional)	3,251	169	9,905	13,325

Comments on General Fund Variances

- Planning Income is forecast to be £220k over budget mainly due to the receipt of three large applications in the first few weeks of the financial year.
- Business Rates on the Council offices are forecast to be £117k less than budget. This is due to refunds in relation to successful appeal in reduction of the Council Offices Rateable value.
- Recycling Income is forecast to be £48k over budget.

Comments on Special Expenses Variances

- Burial Fee Income is forecast to be £9k less than Budget

Comments on Housing Revenue Account Variances

Rent income is forecast to be £71k less than budget due to increased void levels

Comments on Capital Budget

At this early point in the financial year spending on both the General Fund and Housing Capital Programmes is expected to be on budget at the year end.

5 MANAGEMENT OF ABSENCE

Quarter 1	Chief Exec & HR	Community Services	Finance	Housing Services	Legal & Sup Services	Planning & Regeneration	All Directorates
Sickness days lost	0 days long 4.90 days short	337.10 days long 149.16 days short	0 days long 49.62 days short	155.29 days long 56.54 days short	86.33 days long 49.95 days short	5.30 days long 2.00 days short	584.02 long 312.17 short
Total days lost in qtr	4.90 days	486.26 days	49.62 days	211.83 days	136.28 days	7.3 days	896.19 days
Number of FTE's	14.68	194.16	52.70	102.49	58.15	29.62	451.8 days
Average Cumulative no of days lost per FTE	0.33 days	2.5 days	0.94 days	2.06 days	2.06 days	0.24 days	1.98 days

Appendix 2

Corporate Risk Register							
Risk Area	Inherent Risk			Control Measures	Residual Risk		
	Impact	Likelihood	Rating		Impact	Likelihood	Rating
Finance & Budget	4	4	16	Monthly management reviews are performed of actual against budgets and forecast to the end of the year. Monthly reporting and challenging at CLT, and reported to Cabinet quarterly Sound policies and procedures are in place. Planning for the Future has been documented and is reviewed regularly. Internal and External audit of systems and accounts.	4	1	4
Resource Capacity & Capability	4	4	16	Advance planning will mitigate this risk; however should it occur diverting resources from other services, bringing in additional resources from other sources (e.g. Agencies, Consultants, Voluntary/Community sector etc.) would be activated. Market conditions are tested through recruitment processes. The Council offers a package of additional benefits to enhance the recruitment offer. Linked to the above, the Council has developed innovative partnering relationships with other sectors including the private sector to make posts uniquely attractive. Best Employee Experience is a programme to attract and develop the right skills. It is a programme developing the talent within the staff resource through secondments and tailored development programmes.	3	2	6
Contract Management & Procurement	4	4	16	Corporate procurement staff and legal team to support where necessary on contract management. Policies and procedures are in place. Procurement Gateway Board oversees a procurement planning process. Training programme in place for staff.	3	2	6
Information Governance & Data Protection	4	4	16	Policies and procedures are in place. Corporate Governance training is undertaken annually and includes information governance as appropriate to reflect changes in legislation. The Council has a dedicated SIRO. Corporate Governance Groups are in place to scrutinise impacts/issues arising.	4	2	8

Emergency Planning & Business Continuity arrangements	4	4	16	Business continuity plans have been documented, policies and procedures are in place, initial continuity plans are in place to allow access to the service through alternative mechanisms (Hermitage Leisure Centre)	4	1	4
Effective IT Systems & Procedures	4	4	16	Fully resilient environment in place with no single points of failure for core systems, other critical systems use cold standby equipment. New business services are being run in remote fully resilient data centres and existing systems are being progressively migrated to these cloud computing centres. Data is backed up to a second disk unit offsite at Hermitage Leisure Centre. Improved business recovery arrangements have been implemented to minimise recovery time.	3	2	6
Project & Programme Management	4	4	16	Progress is shared regularly with CLT, experienced PRINCE 2 staff, transformation programme is continually reassessing its objectives	4	3	12
Governance, Policies & Procedures	4	4	16	Policies & procedures in place, governance processes are documented and in operation, ongoing assessments and reviews are performed.	4	1	4

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Assessing the likelihood of a risk:

1 Low	Likely to occur once in every ten years or more
2 Medium	Likely to occur once in every two to three years
3 High	Likely to occur once a year
4 Very high	Likely to occur at least twice in a year

Assessing the impact of a risk:

1 Low	Loss of a service for up to one day, Objectives of individuals are not met No injuries Financial loss below £10,000 No media attention No breaches in council working practices No complaints/litigation
2 Medium	Loss of a service for up to one week Service objectives of a service unit are not met

	<p>Injury to an employee or member of the public requiring medical treatment Financial loss over £10,000 Adverse regional or local media attention – televised or news paper report High potential for a complaint litigation possible Breaches of regulations/standards</p>
3 High	<p>Loss of a service for one week or more Service objectives of the directorate are not met Non- statutory duties are not achieved Permanent injury to an employee or member of the public Financial loss over £100,000 Adverse national or regional media attention – national news paper report Litigation to be expected Breaches of law punishable by fine</p>
4 Very high	<p>An incident so severe in its effects that a service or project will be unavailable permanently Strategic priorities are not met Statutory duties are not achieved Death of an employee or member of the public Financial loss over £1m. Adverse national media attention – national televised news report Litigation almost certain and difficult to defend Breaches of law punishable by imprisonment</p>

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Title of report	FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTOR WRITE-OFFS
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Nick Rushton 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Chief Executive 01530 454500 christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance 01530 454520 ray.bowmer@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To agree write-offs over £10,000 and receive details of debts written off under delegated powers.
Reason for Decision	To comply with proper accounting practices.
Council Priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	There is no additional financial effect as all the debts are met from the Authority's bad debt provision.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	Regular reviews of debts for write off mitigates the risk that the Council's accounts do not reflect the true level of recoverable income. It is also part of an effective arrears management strategy.
Equalities Impact Screening	Not applicable.
Human Rights	None discernible.
Transformational Government	Not applicable.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory

Comments of Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	None.
Background papers	All papers used in compiling the report contain exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part 1 to Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972
Recommendations	<p>1. THAT CABINET APPROVES THE WRITE OFFS OVER £10,000 DETAILED IN THIS REPORT.</p> <p>2. THAT CABINET NOTES THE AMOUNTS WRITTEN OFF UNDER DELEGATED POWERS.</p>

1.0 DOUBTFUL DEBT PROVISIONS

1.1 Provision is made in the accounts as follows:

	As at 1 April 2015	Write offs to date (under delegated powers)	Amounts written off over £10,000 approved by Members	Balance Available
Council Tax	£1,576,011.00	£50,687.35	£0.00	£1,525,323.65
Non Domestic Rates	£602,296.00	£25,505.38	£44,423.77	£532,366.85
Housing Rents	£170,790.00	£5,640.45	£0.00	£165,149.55
Sundry Debtors/Housing Benefit Overpayments	£1,230,487.16	£211,836.01	£0.00	£1,018,651.15

2.0 FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS

2.1 The amounts written off under delegated powers, in accordance with the thresholds outlined in the write off policy are as follows: 31 cases under £1,000 which amount to £2,759.53. Of these, nine are uneconomical to pursue (£156.62), four where the former tenant cannot be located (£1399.73) and two have been barred by statute (£1203.18). There were 16 cases put through for a bereavement allowance this period amounting to £3,873.21

2.2 There are eight Former Tenancy Arrears over £1,000, amounting to £16,654.56. Five of these cases are where the former tenant cannot be located (£10,395.39), two are statute barred (£4,539.17) and one is due to a debt relief order (£1,720) Attached to this report you will find a summary table of these arrears.

2.3 There are no Former Tenancy Arrears over £10,000 for which we seek approval.

2.4 The Bad debt provision for 2015/16 is £170,790

3.0 CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS

3.1 There are currently no current tenant rent arrears for which we seek approval for write-off. There were no current rent arrears written off under delegated powers.

4.0 COUNCIL TAX

4.1 There are currently no council tax debts over £10,000 for which Cabinet's approval for write off is sought.

4.2 The amounts written off under delegated powers, in accordance with the thresholds outlined in the write off policy, are as follows: One case under £100 which amounts to £20.71 that is uneconomical to collect. There are 12 cases between £100 and £1,000, which amount to £5,526.84. Of these, one is deceased with no assets (£739.46), 10 have absconded (£4,641.36) and one is insolvent (£146.02). There are four cases between £1,000 and £10,000 which amount to £5,270.70. Of these, two Debt Relief Orders (£2,130.06), one has absconded (£1,232.11) and one is insolvent (£1,908.53).

4.3 The full list of reasons for writing off debt includes:

- Bankruptcy or a Debt Relief Order is in place
- Deceased – No assets in the estate.
- Debtor Absconded / No Trace
- Company in liquidation/dissolved or ceased trading with no assets
- Severe Hardship and/or Serious health Issues
- Statute barred i.e. we cannot legally pursue the debt as there has been six years since the debt fell due and no action has been taken to collect the debt.
- Uneconomical to collect i.e. it is not financially viable to take further action for e.g. due to the low level of the debt, they have gone abroad etc.

4.4 Writing off debts is only considered where all appropriate recovery and enforcement measures have been taken, or, where the council are legally prohibited from pursuing the debt.

4.5 Each year the council produces a recovery timetable which details the dates on which the statutory Reminders, Final Notices and Summonses are to be despatched. The letters issued are designed to maximise collection by prompting tax payers to pay their missed instalments in a timely manner, thereby avoiding further enforcement action taking place. A leaflet is included with the reminders to explain what happens next should payment not be made.

4.6 For all outstanding debt, the council takes the recovery action outlined in the bullet points below:

- If payment is not received by the instalment due date shown on the bill, a reminder notice is issued.
- If payment is received within seven days the tax payer may continue with their original instalment plan. If they default again within the year, then one further reminder notice is issued. If they do not pay, the following steps are taken.
- If payment is not received by the date on the reminder notice, a court Summons is issued. The Summons advises them of the date and time that the Council will attend a Magistrates Court hearing to apply for the award of a Liability Order against them.

- Once a Liability Order is obtained, the Council has a number of enforcement options open to them in order to secure payment of the debt.

4.7 Liability Order Action

Once a Liability Order has been obtained each debt is looked at and a decision is made as to the most appropriate course of action to take from the list of available options below. It is only after all of these have been considered and/or pursued that the debt is put forward for write off.

1. Apply to the debtor's employer for an Attachment of Earnings.
2. Apply to the DWP for a deduction from the debtor's benefits
3. Instruct an external enforcement company (bailiffs) to collect the debt on the council's behalf.
4. If the bailiff company are unsuccessful, the Council could commence committal proceedings against the debtor.
5. If the debtor owns their own home a Charging Order could be made against the property.
6. If the debt is over £750, bankruptcy proceedings could be commenced against the debtor.

When considering the final three options on the above list, the Council must always be mindful of the individual circumstances of the debtor and the financial impact on the Council of pursuing each option. Additional costs will be incurred when utilising any of these options.

5.0 NON DOMESTIC RATES (NNDR)

5.1 There are currently two Non Domestic Rate debts over £10,000 which amount to £248,218.95 for which Cabinet's approval for write off is sought. In both of the cases the debtors have gone into liquidation (£248,218.95), therefore we cannot legally take any further recovery action against these debts.

5.2 The amounts written off under delegated powers in accordance with the policy thresholds are as follows: There is one case between £100 and £1,000 which amounts to £116.14 where the debtor has absconded. There are five cases between £1,000 and £10,000 which amount to £19,846.90. Of these, two cases have absconded (£5,462.07), one case is deceased with no assets (£6,293.26), one case is uneconomical to collect (£4,060.15) and one case is insolvent (£4,031.42).

5.3 As with the recovery of Council Tax, for Business Rates, writing off debt is only ever considered as a last resort. Often companies, sole traders or partnerships become insolvent and the Council is prohibited from taking any further action as all of their outstanding debts are included within the Administration, Liquidation or personal bankruptcy.

5.4 The Council follows the same recovery process for Business Rates as for Council Tax. However, once the Council has obtained a Liability Order there are only a limited number of enforcement actions that can legally be pursued. In most cases, where a payment arrangement or contact cannot be made, the Council refers the case to external bailiffs. If they are unsuccessful, the Council then has three further options to consider before putting the debt for write off. These options are:

- Committal (For sole traders and partnerships only)

- Security for Unpaid Rate (this is the equivalent of a Charging Order on a property but this can only be done with the ratepayers agreement)
- Insolvency Proceedings

6.0 SUNDRY DEBTORS (INCLUDES NON CURRENT HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS PRE 2011)

6.1 There are currently no sundry debtor cases over £10,000 for which Cabinet's approval for write off is sought

6.2 There are 293 cases totalling £206,563.56 that have been written off under the Head of Finance's delegated powers most of which are old cases where recovery action can no longer take place. These consist of:

£204,562.83	Overpaid Housing Benefit that is statute barred (270 cases)
£729.08	Piper Lifelines where the person is deceased (3 cases)
£16.90	Bed and Breakfast Charge due to bankruptcy (1 case)
-£9.61	Credits that are uneconomical to pursue (17 cases)
£1,264.36	Piper Lifelines where there is either no trace or where the person is now in a nursing home (2 cases)

6.3 The recovery process varies dependant on the type of debt. Generally the debtor will receive a minimum of two reminder letters the final stating that recovery through the county court will take place in the event of non payment. Once judgement is obtained the normal recovery methods are available such as attachment of earnings/ benefit etc

7.0 CURRENT HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS

7.1 There are currently no sundry debtor cases over £10,000 for which Cabinet's approval for write off is sought.

7.2 The housing benefit overpayment debt under £100 written off under delegated power in accordance with the policy thresholds are as follows: Five cases under £100 which amount to £102.41. Of these, four have absconded (£85.87) and three are uneconomical to collect (£16.54). There are two cases between £100 and £1,000 which amount to £309.82. Of these, one has absconded (£180.00) and one is deceased with no assets (£129.82).

7.3 For all outstanding benefit overpayment debt, the council takes the recovery action outlined in the bullet points below:

- An invoice is issued giving 14 days to make payment, or to contact the council.
- If payment is not received a first Reminder is issued, followed by a second reminder two to three weeks later.
- If payment is not received a 'CIS' (DWP database) check is carried out to assess if an attachment of benefit is appropriate. If benefit cannot be attached the account is sent to an external bailiffs collection team with no cost to the Council. However, they have no powers to enforce the debt at this stage only to collect it.
- If the cases are returned, each case is checked and a decision is made as to whether it is appropriate to start legal proceedings in the County Court.
- If judgement is obtained in the County Court, the following enforcement options are available to consider:-

1. Attachments of Earnings (deduction of customer's wages, at source by employer)
2. Warrants Control (the use of County Court Bailiff, or High Court Sheriff)
3. Third Party Debt Orders (Utilises the customer's bank account to extract payment)
4. Charging Order (the debt is secured on the customer's house)
5. Insolvency (petition for bankruptcy)

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Title of report	MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Alison Smith MBE 01530 835668 alison.smith@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services 01530 454832 john.richardson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To consider the recommendations made by the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party.
Reason for Decision	To progress Coalville Special Expenses projects and programmes.
Council Priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	As set out within the budget.
Link to relevant CAT	None.
Risk Management	N/A
Equalities Impact Screening	None discernible.
Human Rights	None.
Transformational Government	None.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory

Comments of Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Members of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party
Background papers	Agenda and associated documents of the meeting held on 9 July 2015
Recommendations	TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE WORKING PARTY MEETING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Coalville Special Expenses Working Party meets quarterly to consider financial issues which affect the special expenses area. As the group reports directly to Cabinet, all recommendations made will be sent to the first available Cabinet meeting after the group have met for final approval.

2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 2.1 To consider budget and financial issues which either solely or predominantly affect the special expenses area alone and to make recommendations back to Cabinet.
- 2.2 To consider possible project options regarding the allocation of surplus reserves which have been examined by the relevant budget officers and to make recommendations to Cabinet.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MEETING ON 9 JULY 2015

- 3.1 There are no recommendations made from the meeting for Cabinet consideration, however a number of sub groups were proposed and officers will consider how best to co-ordinate and manage the issues raised in an efficient manner.

APPENDIX 1

MINUTES of a meeting of the COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on THURSDAY, 9 JULY 2015

Present: Councillors R Adams, N Clarke, J Cotterill, D Everitt, J Geary, J Legrys, P Purver, M Specht and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr L Brewster, Mr J Knight and Mr G Lewis

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR ENSUING YEAR

It was moved by Councillor M Specht, seconded by Councillor J Legrys and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor J Geary be elected Chairman of the Working Party for the ensuing municipal year.

Councillor J Geary then took the chair.

2. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN FOR ENSUING YEAR

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor M Specht and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor R Adams be elected Deputy Chairman of the Working Party for the ensuing municipal year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Legrys declared a disclosable non pecuniary interest in Item 7 – 2015/16 Events Update due to his involvement with Hermitage FM.

Councillor M B Wyatt declared a disclosable non pecuniary interest in any reference to Coalville, as a business owner in the Town Centre.

Councillor J Geary declared a disclosable non pecuniary interest in Item 6 – Capital Projects Update as a regular supporter of Coalville Town FC.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2015.

Councillor J Geary reiterated his disappointment that a visit to Broom Leys Allotments had still not been arranged. He referred to correspondence that had been

circulated to Members suggesting that an open day was to be held in September and suggested that the Members' visit should coincide with this.

Councillor N Clarke referred to the discussion that had been held at the last meeting in respect of cemetery charges. He stated that it had been agreed that further information would be brought to this meeting but that this did not appear to have happened.

Councillor J Geary stated that he had spoken to the Head of Community Services regarding this matter and he had advised that it may be worthwhile to establish a sub group to discuss this in advance of the next meeting of the Working Party.

Councillor J Legrys stated that he agreed with this approach but it was important that Officers provided the relevant financial figures to Members.

Councillor M Specht referred to Councillor J Geary's suggestion at the previous meeting that the issue be considered instead by the Policy Development Group.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that it was important to identify whether this issue solely affected the Coalville Special Expenses area or not. If it did, he suggested that the issue should be looked at by the Working Party rather than the Policy Development Group.

The consensus of Members was to arrange for a sub group to be established to deal with this issue in advance of the next full meeting of the Working Party. It was agreed that Councillors R Adams, J Cotterill, J Legrys and M Specht would sit on the sub group.

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor N Clarke and

RESOLVED THAT:

the minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2015 be approved.

6. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

The Leisure Services Team Manager presented the report to Members.

He provided the Working Party with an update on each of the ongoing projects.

Coalville Park Improvements

It was confirmed that orders had now been placed for the mosaics, decorative metal panels and plants to be installed in the Peace Garden. It was anticipated that installation of these items would be completed by the end of August and that further work would then be undertaken in September so that the project was completed well in advance of Remembrance Day.

Councillor J Legrys enquired whether it could be arranged for the Chairman of the District to formally open the Peace Garden once it had been completed. The Leisure Services Team Manager confirmed that this would be arranged.

Owen Street Recreation Ground

Electricity Upgrade

It was confirmed that Homebrook had now visited the site and had provided costed proposals to upgrade the floodlighting lux levels to satisfy the Football Association's (FA) Ground Grading Requirements. It was noted that the club currently play at Step 4 of the non-league pyramid and that the existing lux levels would be satisfactory for the club to play at Step 3 but no higher.

It was stated that Homebrook had presented three different options for the club to consider. The first option was costed at approximately £17,000 and would see all existing fittings replaced with alternatives that omitted lux levels suitable for Step 2 football. The second option was costed at approximately £22,500 and would see all existing fittings replaced as well as an additional fitting being added to each lighting column. This option would be suitable for Step 1 football. The final option was to initially complete Option 1 and then progress with Option 2 at a later date if it became necessary. This option was costed at approximately £25,000.

It was noted that there were no allocated resources to undertake these works at present and that, whilst the Football Stadia Improvement Fund (FSIF) did offer match funding capped at £150,000 to Step 4 clubs for such projects, the club had already accessed this amount in order to develop their changing rooms. Consequently, the club would not be able access any further funding from the FSIF for five years or until they were promoted to Step 2 where the cap was increased to £250,000.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that he firmly believed that the project should not be solely funded by the tax payer and that it should be established how much money the club was intending to contribute to the project itself. He stated that he believed a decision as to how to proceed with the project should be deferred until the club earned promotion.

Councillor P Purver enquired whether the costs for Option 3 would increase should the second stage of the project not be needed for a significant amount of time. The Leisure Services Team Manager responded that Options 1 and 2 were firm quotes but that Option 3 was not.

Councillor N Clarke stated that it would be a shame to dismiss the project at this point. He stated that the management board at the club had shown ambition and that the Working Party therefore should as well.

Councillor D Everitt enquired whether postponing the project would have an impact upon the club. The Leisure Services Team Manager responded that the club had anticipated being promoted for the last two seasons but that it had not materialised. As such, it was difficult to predict at what point the poor lux levels would become relevant.

Councillor J Geary stated that the poor floodlights were already a pertinent issue for the club. He explained that the club had already had to abandon one game as a consequence of the floodlights and that doing so had led to a fine from the FA. He stated that his view was that the Council had originally installed the floodlights and that it was therefore their responsibility to maintain them. He continued to say that if the floodlights needed improvement as a consequence of the club being successful on the pitch that the club should then contribute.

The consensus of Members was to approach the club to establish if they would be contributing any finance to the project.

Changing Room Development

It was confirmed that the funding application that had been made to the FSIF had been successful on the condition that the club satisfied the FA with regards to their transfer to a club limited by shares.

It was stated that the long term lease and funding agreement had been signed by both the Council and the football club and that as soon as approval had been received from the FA, the building of the pavilion could commence. It was anticipated that this would be in August.

Following on from the Working Party's recommendation at its last meeting, Cabinet had now agreed to fund the reduction in size of the trees that lined the entrance to the recreation ground.

Thringstone Miners Social Centre

It was confirmed that the centre's trustees, alongside the Council, were still identifying potential sources of funding in order to convert the former Clover Place play area into a training pitch. The project had been split into three phases with the remaining balance being directed towards the first phase, namely obtaining planning permission and diverting the footpath.

Councillor D Everitt stated that this project would be welcomed by the community once it had been completed. He stated that the area had previously become neglected and that he hoped progress on the project would be swift as it would tidy up the area.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated the County Council would be running a grants scheme specifically for children's facilities in the next financial year running from April 2016. He stated that it may be worth establishing whether this could be a possible source of funding for the project.

Cropston Drive BMX Track and Wheeled Sports Facility

It was confirmed that the BMX track had now been completed and that more regular patrols were now being conducted by the Parks Warden to ensure standards were maintained. A fire retardant bin had now been installed at the site and grass seeding was being undertaken. Consultation with key stakeholders was continuing and it was anticipated that further improvements would be undertaken in the autumn.

Councillor M B Wyatt asked Officers to consider tidying the area around the entrance by the bookmaker on Cropston Drive. The Leisure Services Team Manager confirmed that this would be looked at.

Urban Forest Park

It was stated that work had commenced at the site with the installation of the boardwalk. A third quote was currently being obtained for the drainage and pathway works and it was anticipated that this work would be completed during the summer.

Scotland Playing Fields

It was confirmed that a location had been identified for the relocation of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) that was currently situated on Lillehammer Drive and that local

residents had been consulted on the recommendation. Planning consent had been given for the change of use in the area where the MUGA was currently located and the Council's Legal Services team were currently finalising the Deed of Variation to the Section 106 agreement with Barratts.

Councillor J Legrys stated that he was aware of the legal issues involved but that he was nonetheless disappointed that the local children would have nowhere suitable to play in the school holidays. He implored Officers to find a solution to the impasse that was currently in place, even if it cost money to do so.

Highway Verge Improvements

It was stated that the one off improvement works at Phoenix Green, Bardon Road and Ashby Road had been completed. The recommendation from the Working Party at its last meeting to fund the works had now been approved by Cabinet. Consequently, an application to the Council's Environmental Improvement Grant scheme would now be submitted and, if successful, works would be undertaken this summer.

Councillor N Clarke enquired whether Officers could investigate expanding the number of cuts funded by the Working Party. He stated that a couple of extra cuts a year would significantly improve the look of the area.

Councillor J Geary asked whether, if the Working Party agreed to fund extra cuts, they would be forced to use the County Council's contractors. He stated that firm costs would need to be established before a decision was made.

Councillor J Legrys stated that the County Council had made it clear that they were keen for Parish Councils to help and that, as such, costings should be established. He stated that the Working Party should be provided with costings for all possible options before a decision was made.

Councillor M B Wyatt reiterated that the Council should investigate whether it would be plausible for flowerbeds to be sponsored in order to cover the costs of the extra work. He stated that the Working Party should only take on extra work if it was cost neutral to do so. The Leisure Services Team Manager stated that sponsorship could be considered but that there may be insufficient resources to manage the sponsorship process. He stated that the Grounds Maintenance Team would be more than able to undertake the work but that there were question marks as to who would manage the sales process.

Councillor P Purver stated that her understanding was that some areas were maintained by the District Council and some by the County Council. She asked whether it would be possible for Officers to provide a map showing which authority was responsible for each area. The Leisure Services Team Manager confirmed that he would do this.

The consensus of Members was for Officers to establish costings for the Working Party to permanently fund extra grass cuts throughout the Special Expenses area before a decision was made at a future meeting as to how to progress.

Warden Presence

It was confirmed that a new Parks Warden had now been appointed for 16 hours per week until October. The role predominantly covers the after school period from

Monday to Friday and focuses on the areas around Cropston Drive Recreation Ground, Scotlands Recreation Ground and Staples Drive Play Area. The position would also cover Lillehammer Drive and Adam Morris Way once the MUGA transfer had taken place.

Councillor R Adams asked whether the warden's working pattern would differ during the school holidays given that they currently focus on the after school period. The Leisure Services Team Manager commented that reviewing the warden's working hours would take considerable time and that the school holidays would be over in all likelihood before any changes could come into effect.

Thringstone Bowls Club Toilet Block

It was confirmed that the Working Party's recommendation to fund this work had now been approved by Cabinet. Officers would now liaise with the bowls club to support their funding application.

Memorial Trees

It was stated that Members had asked Officers to consider planting trees in various locations throughout the Special Expenses area in the run up to the one hundredth anniversary of the end of the First World War in 2018. This would be funded by a combination of both the Working Party and external funding and would be marked by a ceremony to commemorate the occasion. It was understood that a number of poplar trees had been planted in the past to commemorate the war and that efforts would be made to obtain further information regarding where these trees were initially planted.

Councillor J Legrys stated that he had had several conversations with the Royal British Legion regarding this project. He stated that they were keen to be involved and suggested that all stakeholders arrange a meeting in the imminent future to finalise plans.

Councillor M B Wyatt enquired whether the National Forest would be involved given the proposed location of the trees within the area covered by the forest.

Councillor J Legrys confirmed that the National Forest had been approached. He stated that the project should create a new plantation rather than attempt a like for like replacement of historical locations.

RESOLVED THAT:

the Working Party notes the progress update on 2015/16 capital projects.

7. 2015/16 EVENTS UPDATE

The Cultural Services Team Manager presented the report to Members.

He provided Members with an update on each event.

Picnic and Proms in the Park

It was confirmed that the Picnic in the Park event had been very well supported with an estimated 7,000 attendees. The feedback that had been received had been very positive with the High Sheriff of Leicestershire being particularly complimentary. As

well as several live music acts, the First World War themed area had proved to be particularly popular.

It was stated that the Proms in the Park event had also been a success in its first year. It was estimated that 1,700 people attended and that the mix of entertainment had been well received.

The Cultural Services Team Manager thanked the Cultural Services Team for all their hard work in planning and delivering the events. He also thanked Members for their attendance and support.

Councillor M B Wyatt thanked Officers for the work that had been put in to both the events. He stated that the feedback that he had received was particularly appreciative of the Proms in the Park event as it catered for a different age group. He stated that it was good to see that this event was now established given the uncertainty that had recently surrounded its future.

Councillor M Specht offered his congratulations to Officers for running the event. He stated that he thought the number attending the Proms in the Park event would considerably increase if it was held again next year as word of mouth would spread and raise numbers accordingly.

Councillor J Cotterill stated that he had been particularly impressed with the First World War themed area. He went on to say that the event had been beautifully organised.

Councillor R Adams stated that he had particularly enjoyed the circus tent. He stated that he was disappointed with the lack of public transport on Sundays from the Greenhill area of the town and suggested that this might have meant some people could not have attended. He suggested that this may be an area that could be looked at in future years.

Councillor J Legrys stated that this year's event was one of the strongest yet and that everyone involved should be thanked.

Councillor N Clarke reiterated that the event was brilliant and suggested that it offered fantastic value for money given the relatively small budget involved.

Councillor J Geary stated that he was very impressed with the quality of the Ockbrook Big Band.

Coalville Town Team Summerfest

It was confirmed that this event had been successfully held on the same weekend as the Proms and Picnic in the Park events. Activities had included dancing, singing, musical theatre, stalls and food demonstrations.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that the area used for the Summerfest had been restricted to the precinct and that he had received feedback from other business owners who had been disappointed by this.

Councillor J Legrys pointed out that the event had been organised by an independent body and that it was therefore not within the Working Party's control. He stated that the Town Team should be made aware of such feedback instead.

Coalville by the Sea

It was confirmed that, following the success of last year's event, a similar one was to be held again this August which would include games, arts and crafts, puppet shows, music and sandpits.

Christmas Lights Switch On Event

It was confirmed that it was again intended to combine this event with the Coalville Town Team's Food and Drink Event on 21 November. It was stated that it had been proposed to make the annual free weekend car parking run for five weekends from this date until 19 December.

Coalville Christmas Decorations

It was confirmed that a tender process had now been completed and that a five year contract had been awarded to a new supplier but within the existing budget.

Councillor P Purver stated that several of the brackets used to hold the lights were now not fit for purpose. She suggested that the Working Party should look at what could be done to rectify this.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that the cost of providing the electricity for the lights fell to the trader and that this discouraged some from taking part. He suggested that the Working Party consider contributing to these costs to encourage more traders to take part.

Councillor J Legrys stated that parished areas, such as Ashby Town Council, used Section 106 money to fund their Christmas Lights and that this option was not available to the Working Party as they did not receive these funds.

Councillor M Specht stated that it was important for the Working Party to spend money in this area so as to encourage people to come to shop in Coalville rather than other local towns.

The consensus of Members was to ask Officers to provide costings for the replacement of the brackets, the trees and the lights and to then discuss further at the meeting of the sub group.

St George's Day Flags

Councillor N Clarke stated that, unlike in previous years, no flags were erected to commemorate St George's Day this year. He suggested that this be reconsidered for next year.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that in previous years the flags had been in place for too long and had deteriorated in quality as a result. He suggested that a one day event should be held to celebrate St George's Day instead.

Members agreed to form a sub group consisting of all Members of the Working Party in order to discuss this further.

RESOLVED THAT:

the Working Party notes the progress update on 2015/16 events.

8. COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES 14/15 OUT TURN

The Leisure Services Team Manager presented the report to Members.

It was stated that there was an under spending of £17,600 with a contribution to balances of £15,824 leading to an end of year balance of £96,895 in reserves. It was confirmed that the under spend was primarily due to an increase in burial and monument income of £13,000 and a backdated NNDR refund for Thringstone Bowls Club of £6,700.

Councillor D Everitt referred to the outstanding reserves and stated that he would favour seeing some allocated toward installing gym equipment at a park in Thringstone.

Councillor J Legrys stated that it might be beneficial for all Members of the Working Party to submit to Officers any projects that they had in mind which could then be considered at the next meeting.

Councillor P Purver stated that she believed that the funding given towards Christmas lighting in Coalville was fairly modest and asked whether the Working Party might consider putting more of their budget towards this.

The consensus of Members was to convene a sub group consisting of all Members of the Working Party to discuss future projects in advance of the next meeting.

RESOLVED THAT:

the Working Party notes the report.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the dates of the future meetings.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, 13 October 2015 at 6.30pm in the Board Room.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55 pm

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Agenda Item 14.

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Agenda Item 15.

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Agenda Item 16.

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