

Meeting	CABINET
Time/Day/Date	5.00 pm on Tuesday, 3 May 2016
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	
Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2016	3 - 12
5. BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN COALVILLE - PROJECT UPDATE INCLUDING EXEMPTION TO THE CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES	
Report of the Chief Executive Presented by the Leader	13 - 20



6.	TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL - RESPONSIVE REPAIRS INSPECTION REPORT	
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7.	AUTHORITY TO AWARD HR/PAYROLL SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS CONTRACT	
	Report of the Director of Resources Presented by the Corporate Portfolio Holder	41 - 44
8.	AUTHORITY TO AWARD ENERGY CONTRACT	
	Report of the Director of Resources Presented by the Corporate Portfolio Holder	45 - 46
9.	NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL PLAN - HOUSING REQUIREMENTS UPDATE	
	Report of the Director of Services Presented by the Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder	47 - 54
10.	SYRIAN VULNERABLE PERSONS RESETTLEMENT SCHEME (SVPRS) AND ASYLUM SEEKER DISPERSAL AREA (ASDA)	
	Report of the Director of Housing Presented by the Housing Portfolio Holder	55 - 66
11.	HRA ASSET DISPOSALS	
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Appendix one is exempt under Schedule 12a, paragraph 3

Circulation:

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

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 8 MARCH 2016

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chairman)

Councillors R D Bayliss, T Gillard, T J Pendleton, N J Rushton and A V Smith MBE

In Attendance: Councillors J Clarke, D Everitt, T Eynon, D Harrison, G Hault, R Johnson, J Legrys, S McKendrick and S Sheahan

Officers: Mr S Bambrick, Mrs C Hammond, Mr A Hunkin, Mr G Jones, Mr P Padaniya and Miss E Warhurst

86. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

87. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Members declared the following interests:

Councillor N J Rushton declared a pecuniary and non pecuniary interest in item 15 – Proposal to acquire brownfield site for development of car parking, as an owner of car parking facilities in Ashby de la Zouch and that he would leave the meeting and take no part in the consideration and voting thereon.

88. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

89. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

90. PROPOSED COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2016/17

The Leader presented the report to Members.

He informed Members that Local Authorities were no longer required to have a delivery plan, but the Council had chosen to develop a plan as it would help to focus on the challenges ahead. He advised Members that a 5th priority, Building Confidence in Coalville was to be introduced for 2016/17 and it had been placed at the top as it was the administrations aim to achieve wins for both businesses and people in Coalville. He drew Members' attention to the layout of the plan highlighting that the document outlined each priority and how it would be achieved through outcomes and actions.

Councillor T Gillard stated that it was an excellent report and that the plan set out to residents exactly what the Council intended to do.

Councillor T J Pendleton stated that he was happy to see the inclusion of the wellbeing of the people in the district and the identifying potential locations for Gypsy and Traveller sites, adding that it was a difficult job to find the sites when needed.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The proposed Council Delivery Plan for 2016/17 be received and noted.
2. The Plan's content is endorsed and recommended to Council for approval on 22 March 2016 and
3. The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any final amendments to the plan prior to Council on 22 March 2016.

Reason for decision: To endorse the Council's Delivery Plan for 2016/17 prior to Council's consideration.

91. GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO NEW HOMES BONUS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He advised Members that it was proposed to reduce the number of years for which New Homes Bonus (NHB) payments were made from six to four, along with a phased approach to the proposal and the consideration of reforming the NHB incentive. He informed Members that the planning reforms should be kept separate to the changes to the payments.

Councillor R Blunt stated that this was the right approach and that even if administrations were the same party as the government, each had different agendas and NHB was important for local funding and getting new houses built

Councillor T J Pendleton highlighted that the changes were expected and that previous governments had considered finishing the scheme, adding that local authorities should take the opportunity to input into the consultation exercise.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. That the Council responds to the NHB consultation paper in line with the principles and comments set out in the report (section 5).
2. Authority be delegated to the interim Director of Resources to respond to the consultation paper in line with the principles and comments set out in the report.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Council is able to participate in the NHB consultation exercise – NHB being an important funding stream for the Council.

92. CHANGES TO DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHPS)

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He advised Members that the payments were to provide extra help to tenants who received housing benefits, but needed extra financial help and that the Council decided how long the payment should be made. He informed Members that for the current year the funding that was received from Government was supplemented by the Housing Revenue Account and from the General Fund. Option two in the report was the proposed option to be approved.

Councillor R Adams submitted the following question to the meeting

“Given the fact that proposed changes to Discretionary Housing Payments will affect the most vulnerable and often disabled people in our District would the Portfolio Holder:

1. Agree that Discretionary Housing Payments are an essential lifeline for those desperate enough to claim them and that payment should continue for as long as they are needed to prevent further difficulties.
2. Agree that a drop from 100% of the benefit to 50% in the second 6 months even with notice is still going to give some people difficulties and that a more graduated decrease would give people more time to adjust, plan and manage any unexpected changes that might come their way during the transition.
3. Consider an alternative option based upon a sliding scale of 100% for the first 6 months, 75% for the next 3 months and 50% for the final 3 months in all cases.”

The following response was provided:

“Discretionary Housing Payments are exactly what they say – discretionary. They are used to provide extra help to claimants who are already in receipt of Housing Benefit, who need further assistance with housing costs.

We need to be mindful of the annual funding available and I would draw your attention to the number of claimants increasing as working-age benefits are frozen for four years from April 2016. The Government has recognised this pressure and nationally increased funding from £125m to £160m; and this Council will see its funding increase from £103,700 to £115,000. But even allowing for that and an additional sum from the Housing Revenue Account of £10,500, it is estimated that there will be an overspend in the region of £33,500 if we continue with 100% discretionary payments for the whole year. So we are recommending that we pay 100% for 6 months and then reduce to 50%. This is likely to give a break-even position.

This Council welcomes support mechanisms such as Discretionary Housing Payments that allows us to support the most vulnerable tenants, but we also want tenants to take responsibility for their future by obtaining employment to reduce dependency on benefits, or moving to different accommodation. I would also point out that the proposed option has a safety net for officers to award 100% grant to Council tenants for the full 12 months if that is deemed necessary.

I have considered the alternative option based on the sliding scale of 100%, then 75% and finally 50% - but this is likely to require the Council to meet a shortfall through the General Fund – and I cannot commend that as good practice.

Councillor R Adams stated that he was extremely disappointed with the response and advised that many residents would suffer as an effect

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that option two would allow tenants to make adjustments to their circumstances with a lead in time and highlighted that there were legal cases that had been won at appeal following challenges to payments and that it was proposed that officer discretion be applied to similar cases within the district.

Councillor R Blunt thanked Councillor R Adams for putting forward his question, but felt that it was wrong that the payments were supplemented from the General Fund.

Councillor N J Rushton agreed with Councillor R Blunt adding that it was not fair that an additional £30,000 was paid for by all the tax payers.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The financial implications of the two options in relation to DHP be noted; and
2. Option 2 of delivering DHP to tenants be approved.

Reason for decision: To Allocate DHP to claimants of Housing Benefit who need further financial assistance with Housing costs.

93. CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS: DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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

He informed Members that approval was sought to publish the local heritage assets identification criteria for public consultation which would give local heritage assets similar planning protection to the national list. He advised that it was planned to rollout the programme across the district as follows:

Coalville – to support the Building Confidence in Coalville project – hopefully completed by April 2017.

Northern Parishes – hopefully completed by April 2018.

Ashby, Measham and Moria – hopefully completed by April 2019.

He highlighted that the Council was not asking for assets to be put forward at the present time, those listed would be prepared following the consultation.

Councillor R Blunt stated that he was pleased that the programme was starting in Coalville and that it was interesting how people looked differently at buildings that were on the national list. He informed Members that the authority had a full time officer to work in the programme which many local authorities did not and therefore he felt that the programme would not be delivered if this was the case for North West Leicestershire.

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that although he had slight misgivings on telling people what they could do with their buildings he felt that there were many landmarks in the District that deserved protection.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The draft Identification Criteria, as attached, for public consultation be endorsed; and
2. The adoption of the Identification Criteria be delegated to the Portfolio Holder and Director of Services.

Reason for decision: Adoption of the identification criteria would:

- (a) Support the aims of the Council Delivery Plan relating to sustainable development, a fair and timely planning and development service and people feeling proud of their homes and communities;
- (b) Support the council in fulfilling its duties under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 relating to the designation and review of conservation areas;
- (c) Support the council in fulfilling the advice of the National Planning Policy Framework relating to the compilation of Local Lists.

94. DISABLED FACILITY GRANTS AND LIGHTBULB PROJECT

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

She advised Members that the report was to seek approval for the continuation of the project and to develop and incorporate the remaining authorities in Leicestershire. She stated that she was pleased with the progress and the performance of the project so far.

Councillor T J Pendleton stated that once action had been requested by an occupational therapist the authority had to carry out the work and he was pleased to see that the completion times were reducing.

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that the project ran in parallel to the aids and adaptations service and with lists of requirements getting longer he felt that anything the Council could do to prolong a tenant's time in their own home then so much the better.

Councillor R Blunt stated that the first time he saw the list of adaptations that were required for a tenant it was frightening with no money available. However he felt that the authority was now in a much better position.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The extension of the administration of Disabled Facility Grants in the Lightbulb Project with Blaby District Council be agreed until 31 March 2017
2. Any further changes or extensions to the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants be delegated to the Director of Services in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder.

Reason for decision: To ensure Cabinet are aware of the ongoing service delivery of Disabled Facility Grants through the Lightbulb project

95. CONTRACT FOR DOG WARDEN AND STRAY DOG KENNELING

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

She highlighted to Members that the Council had a statutory function to deal with stray dogs and currently the function was carried out in partnership with a contractor, however the contract would end on 31 March 2016. She advised Members that in 10 months a total of 72 stray dogs had been detained and from that 37 of the dogs had been returned to their owners and 30 had been rehomed or taken in by a charity. She informed Members that 2 tender bids had been received and that the successful bid was received from the current contractor.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The award of the contract for Dog Warden and Stray Dog Kennelling be delegated to the Head of Legal and Support Services in consultation with the Community Services Portfolio Holder.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Council discharges its statutory function under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to appoint a dog warden and deal with stray dogs in its area

96. 2015/16 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Leader presented the report to Members.

He highlighted the following details to Members:-

- The mobile working pilot has been completed and was to be rolled out to other officers of the Housing Management Team, which would hopefully result in a more efficient service for their tenants.
- 138 properties had been let. That was a significant increase compared to the first two quarters.
- Planning fee income received to the end of December was £1,228,616 which was greater than had been projected.
- The Environmental Health Services had once again been highly valued by customers with 16 of 17 businesses describing the relationship as being good and 100% of people surveyed felt confident that they could rely on the advice received from the officers.
- The financial position remained healthy.
- Sickness rates had increased in the quarter with a rise in long term sick, however the HR team had been supporting managers to resolve the issues.
- All Waste Services employees had received manual handling training to help reduce work-related injuries.

Councillor A V Smith advised Members that fitness membership was just under 3,000 putting the service £26,000 ahead of budget and that the development of the new NHS Health and Wellbeing Centre was progressing with a go live date of May 2016. She informed Members that Environmental Health were on track to complete 100% of high and medium risk inspections.

Councillor T J Pendleton highlighted that the Council had a pro-active approach to supporting staff on long term sick and acted quickly to get effective care where needed. He informed Members that he was delighted with the performance of the Planning team as they were achieving targets above national level and turning applications around in 8 weeks.

Councillor R Blunt thanked Councillor T J Pendleton on the work that had been carried out to turn the performance targets around for the service and running at a higher than expected level.

Councillor R D Bayliss highlighted that the average re-let times were not satisfactory however he was able to report that performance was now improving, and he was

monitoring the situation closely. He also informed Members that the status of the percentage rent arrears performance indicator should be green as the actual percentage was below the target, and in this case a lower figure was a better outcome.

Councillor T Gillard stated that the business focus team were working well to support the businesses in the district.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Quarter 3 Performance Report (October – December 2015) be welcomed.

Reason for decision: The report is provided for members to effectively monitor the organisation's performance.

97. FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTOR WRITE OFFS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He informed Members that there were two Non Domestic Rate debts that required approval to write off that the Council was unable to reclaim.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The write offs over £10,000 detailed in this report be approved.
2. The amounts written off under delegated powers be noted.

Reason for decision: To comply with proper accounting practices.

98. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED THAT:

In pursuance of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Reason for decision: To enable the consideration of exempt information.

99. HRA SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW - QUEENSWAY HOUSE, WESTGATE AND WOULD'S COURT

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He updated Members on the current status of the already decommissioned sheltered blocks, and advised that Queensway House was now in a state that was beyond economical repair, there was low demand from applicants, and as such approval was

sought to decommission it. He advised Members that the remaining residents had been rehoused within Measham and many had remained neighbours at their new homes.

Councillor A V Smith stated that it was a very good report and that she was pleased that the residents could remain neighbours.

Councillor R Blunt stated that the Council should have buildings that were fit for purpose and it was clear that this was not the case with Queensway House, and there were not enough residents for it to be sustainable. He expressed that he was pleased that many of the residents were able to remain neighbours at their new homes.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The contents of the report be noted; and
2. The formal decommissioning of Queensway House, Measham as a sheltered housing scheme be approved.

Reason for decision: The Queensway House scheme needs to be formally decommissioned to enable the next stage of the review of the future use of the site.

Having declared a pecuniary interest in item 15 Councillor N J Rushton left the meeting and took no part in the consideration and voting thereon.

100. PROPOSAL TO ACQUIRE BROWNFIELD SITE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CAR PARKING

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

She advised Members that the Council had been made aware that the site was to be sold and that with its location it had been decided that it would make an ideal car park. She stated that a quick completion was being sought, that if acquired it would provide 60 extra places and that it was projected to have an 11 – 13 year payback.

Councillor R Blunt stated that it was a windfall site and the owners wanted a quick sale. He advised Members that there were not many well placed sites with the room available and that it was anticipated that the car parking strategy would say that there was not enough parking places in the area.

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that he endorsed the report as the site was well placed for visitors and commercial owners and anticipated the outcome of the survey.

Councillor T J Pendleton stated that it was prudent purchase as the site was price locked.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The contents of the report be noted; and
2. The proposal to acquire the Brownfield site for the development of car parking be approved; and

3. Authority be delegated to the Director of Services in consultation with the Leader, to negotiate and complete the acquisition, subject to a cash ceiling sum as agreed by Members
4. Responsibility be delegated, subject to the acquisition of the Brownfield site, to the Director of Services to develop the site as a car park; and
5. The overall expenditure on the acquisition and development of the site should not exceed the sum as stated in the report be agreed.

Reason for decision: To provide delegated authority to the Director of Services to negotiate the acquisition of the site to develop into a new car park.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.52 pm

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 3 MAY 2016

Title of report	BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN COALVILLE - PROJECT UPDATE INCLUDING EXEMPTION TO THE CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES
Key Decision	<p>a) Financial Yes</p> <p>b) Community Yes</p>
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>Interim Head of Economic Development 01530 454773 kay.greenbank@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>
Purpose of report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide Cabinet with an update on the progress of the Coalville Project. • To advise Cabinet of an exemption to the Contract Procedure Rules relating to procurement of community engagement activities.
Reason for Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide Cabinet with an update on the progress of the Coalville Project. • The Contract Procedure Rules require that the exercise of the Statutory Officer’s discretion to grant exemptions is reported to Cabinet
Council Priorities	<p>Building Confidence in Coalville Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge</p>
<p>Implications:</p> <p>Financial/Staff</p> <p>Link to relevant CAT</p>	<p>Included within the report</p> <p>None</p>

Risk Management	Risks are being managed through the Coalville Project governance process.
Equalities Impact Screening	Not applicable
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	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	None
Background papers	Building Confidence in Coalville report to Cabinet on 22 September 2015 Building Confidence in Coalville report to Cabinet on 12 January 2016 Building Confidence in Coalville report to Cabinet on 9 February 2016
Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NOTES THE PROGRESS MADE BY THE COALVILLE PROJECT. 2. APPROVES THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF WORK FOR THE COALVILLE PROJECT 3. NOTES THE GRANT OF EXEMPTION TO THE COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULE 6.7 TO ALLOW THE DIRECT AWARD OF A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIALIST COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SERVICES. 4. DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LEADER TO COMMIT EXPENDITURE FOR THE REMAINING £450,000 OF THE COALVILLE PROJECT RESERVE.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following the May 2015 election, the Leader set out the regeneration of Coalville as one of the Council's priorities and gave responsibility for delivery to the Chief Executive. "Building confidence in Coalville" has become one of the council's stated priorities in the 2016/17 Council Delivery Plan.
- 1.2 On 22 September 2015 Cabinet agreed to progress with the Building Confidence in Coalville project as outlined in that report (the "Coalville Project") and to access the Scape Major Works framework in order to procure specialist advisors to commence the feasibility stage of potential works on Stenson Square (referred to as Phase 1 of the Coalville Project).
- 1.3 On 12 January 2016, Cabinet received a report on the progress of the Coalville Project which outlined establishment of project governance, progress made by specialist advisors delivering the feasibility stage of Phase 1 of the Coalville Project, noted the procurement of specialist advisors to conduct an options appraisal for the leisure and culture offer of the district and approved creation of a Coalville Project reserve and re-assignment of underspent reserves.
- 1.4 On 9 February 2016, Cabinet approved procurement of further feasibility studies related to phase 1 of the Coalville Project and delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to commit expenditure of part of the Coalville Project Reserve.
- 1.5 This report provides an outline of the progress made on all delivery workstreams within the Coalville Project, including those specifically mentioned above and sets out next steps for the council officers and Cabinet.
- 1.6 An exemption to the Contract Procedure Rules has been granted in relation to the procurement of community engagement activities for the Coalville Project.

2.0 COALVILLE PROJECT WORKSTREAMS

- 2.1 Cabinet will recall that the Coalville Project has been pursuing the following workstreams, all supported by project management, communications and funding / financial modelling expertise:
 - 2.1.1 Strategic design and plan
 - 2.1.2 Property and land regeneration
 - 2.1.3 Service and business integration
 - 2.1.4 Leisure and culture
 - 2.1.5 Affordable housing
 - 2.1.6 Business and retail regeneration
 - 2.1.7 Heritage
 - 2.1.8 Stakeholder engagement and management
- 2.2 Cabinet will recall that, in all instances, officers have been supporting the cost of specific work items within existing budgets wherever possible.

2.3 Officers and Cabinet Members will continue to consider the following matters during summer 2016.

2.4 Taking each workstream in turn, progress is as follows:

3.0 STRATEGIC DESIGN AND PLAN

3.1 Officers have drafted a high level outline of the goals and governance of the Coalville Project, setting out key dates and workstreams for the first phase of the project leading up to Cabinet's consideration of the future shape of the project.

3.2 It is recognised that the basis of the physical design for Coalville sits within the [Regeneration Strategy for Coalville prepared by the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment in 2009](#), and the subsequent [Four Squares and Streets Investment Plan \(2010\)](#).

3.3 Officers and Cabinet have agreed that successful regeneration of Coalville, as well as property- and public realm-related projects, requires investment in business- and people-focussed projects in order to build confidence within the community of people that live in, work in and visit the town.

4.0 PROPERTY AND LAND REGENERATION

4.1 Cabinet is aware that specialist property advice was procured in order to develop an options appraisal for the potential future use of Stenson House, the council offices and the surrounding area (together called Stenson Square, per the Fours Squares plan). The original stimulus for this work was a request to the council from DWP regarding whether they could move their operations into the council building.

4.2 The Council and DWP continue to consider the costs and wider implications of this proposal.

4.3 Work continues on identifying options for potential future use of the whole site. At the present time, it is not expected that options for consideration will include wholesale rehousing of the existing council staff.

4.4 Officers are developing details of the process and supporting considerations regarding potential disposal of land off Cropston Drive.

4.5 Specialist consultants have identified options regarding car parking arrangements across the district, including Coalville. The next phase of this work will establish the practical and financial implications of adopting any of the options or strategies identified.

4.6 Officers have commissioned an external expert to prepare a new strategy for Coalville Market Hall, to improve its viability. The output of the first phase of work is being reviewed.

4.7 The Council and Leicestershire County Council officers have formed the Coalville Growth Strategy (Infrastructure) group: this group is commissioning transport modelling to forecast the impact on Coalville's main roads and junctions of predicted growth of housing and employment sites. Modelling data obtained will support development of business cases for external funding to support the cost of necessary changes.

5.0 SERVICE AND BUSINESS INTEGRATION

- 5.1 Originally intended to explore the potential of integrating council services with those of DWP, this workstream is now looking at the future working arrangements across the whole council. The Corporate Leadership Team will consider options for future working arrangements, including home working and an ICT strategy in the future.

6.0 LEISURE AND CULTURE

- 6.1 Cabinet approved the commissioning of specialist experts to look at the future of leisure and culture provision for the district. Officers are currently reviewing the output of the first phase of this work.

7.0 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 7.1 Cabinet is aware that Royal Oak Court was completed and made available to tenants at the end of March 2016, creating fourteen new affordable homes and a high quality new building on this prominent corner of Memorial Square following the council's £500,000 investment.
- 7.2 Officers are pursuing a series of other housing projects, at a variety of addresses across Coalville (including Ashby Road, Cropston Drive, Greenacres, Highfield Street and North Avenue). Cabinet will be kept informed of significant developments via future reports of this nature.

8.0 BUSINESS AND RETAIL REGENERATION

- 8.1 Cabinet is aware that the Council joined all other Leicestershire districts, Leicestershire County Council and LLEP in funding a research project focussing on the future of the county's market towns. The project aimed to present an economic analysis of Ashby and Coalville (amongst the eleven towns in scope) and set out the details of projects that can be developed in one, more or all towns to improve the attractiveness of the towns centres to residents, workers and visitors. Officers are currently reviewing the initial output of this report, ahead of presentation to LLEP, who provided 50% of the funding.
- 8.2 Council officers have built relationships with many individual businesses that are known to be planning specific developments in order to maximise the confidence building impact of the proposed change.
- 8.3 The Coalville shop front improvement scheme has gathered pace in recent months. The first shop was completed at the end of 2015/16 and there are now several others very close to being offered grants and getting the work done. It is presently estimated that the £225,000 originally allocated to support this work will be committed.
- 8.4 A review of the Enterprising North West Leicestershire business grant scheme was considered by officers during March 2016 (the scheme is district-wide). The review highlighted the outcomes that had been achieved to date (11 grants, creating 26 jobs and £1.13m private sector investment) and those anticipated once all live applications have reached completion (30 grants, creating 152 jobs and £2.47m private sector investment).

8.5 Officers are exploring options for use of shop window ‘decals’ and covers for hoardings in order to improve the look of vacant buildings / sites in Coalville town centres. Ideas for use of heritage-related and active shop images are being tested with local stakeholders before decisions are taken. (‘Decals’ are coverings for shop windows that create the appearance of a lively, active, in-use shop.)

9.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES - EXEMPTION TO THE CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

9.1 Officers have sought external expertise to create and deliver the following: Engagement of young people to shape and contribute to the future of Coalville resulting in them taking action and becoming positive voices; Engagement of schools including links to the heritage of Coalville; Establishment of a volunteering programme which delivers outcomes important to the Council’s Green Footprints activities; Activities that will enhance bids for funding that the Council is developing and may in the future develop e.g. to Heritage Lottery Fund; Development and management of a hub that will host the above and other events and activities that will attract and involve Coalville’s community; A sustainable community engagement programme, beyond the expiry of initial funding.

9.2 The provider must be able to demonstrate evidence of: Proven success at sourcing external funding and delivering associated outcomes; Achievement of regional and national profile and recognition for successful programmes; Track record of success in prior, similar, delivery projects; Creativity; Passion for and knowledge of Coalville and its local area, its history, current and future socio-economic priorities; Knowledge of and familiarity with Coalville’s community organisations and wider stakeholders; Sustaining projects beyond initial funding agreements

9.3 A unique opportunity has been presented to officers to engage specific external consultants who can deliver their community engagement ideas, passion, creativity and local knowledge, success and influence, as part of the Coalville Project.

9.3.1 Coalville Heroes project: This project involves using the concept of a ‘Coalville hero’ to honour the ‘characters’ and ‘heroes’ that have contributed to Coalville’s past and to inspire people, particularly young people to get involved and recognise current local heroes and the potential that exists in everyone of them to be a Hero. The concept was developed by Deana Wildgoose at Sir John Moore Foundation, and was recently piloted in its Coalville form at Belvoirdale Primary School. The council plans to make the Coalville Heroes activities an integral part of the heritage project that is presently seeking funding from Heritage Lottery Fund, working in partnership with Coalville Heritage Society.

9.3.2 GrowCookShare: Developed by Julia Burkin at Castle Donington Volunteer Centre, this project engages with young people who want to volunteer their time to encourage growing, cooking and sharing produce, meals and skills. The Council’s Green Footprints team wishes to implement this in Coalville and has allocated £5,000 towards consultant costs and an additional £15,000 towards delivery costs.

9.3.3 Voice for young people: Project development, working collaboratively with existing groups in order to create a platform for young people to contribute to the Coalville Project.

9.3.4 Venue and framework for raising community aspirations: Deana Wildgoose and Julia Burkin have presented a unique set of ideas, targeting the creative use of

existing / vacant / redundant premises in the centre of Coalville by the town's residents.

9.3.5 Proven ability to access external funding: Deana Wildgoose and Julia Burkin, together, offer a unique combination of skills, proven delivery success and ability to develop sustained funding streams to support the ongoing costs of projects such as those detailed above.

9.4 The cost of the services to be provided is £70,000, which would otherwise be a Band C (Large) contract under Contract Procedure Rules 6.7. Having regard to the above the Statutory Officers were asked to grant an exemption to the Contract Procedure Rules pursuant to rule 3.1.1 on the basis of the artistic nature of the subject matter, allowing direct award of the contract to Deana Wildgoose and Julia Birkin.

9.5 The exemption was granted on 11 April 2016 and pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 3.1.3, the Chief Executive is required to notify Cabinet of the exercise of the Statutory Officer's discretion in relation to this service area.

10.0 HERITAGE

10.1 Officers have developed an outline of a heritage-focussed project, working in partnership with Coalville Heritage Society. The core of the proposal relates to creation of a sustainable archive of pictures, plans and oral histories of Coalville's past and present. These archives will support development of a community, web-based archive, heritage trails and an education programme. A grant application will be made to Heritage Lottery Fund, for an Our Heritage grant, following agreement of partnership arrangements with Coalville Heritage Society.

10.2 Cabinet are aware of the recent application to host part of the Tower of London Poppies installation during 2017, called Weeping Window. Cabinet and stakeholders will be kept informed of the progress of the Expression of Interest. Officers presently expect a final decision at the end of June 2016.

11.0 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

11.1 Cabinet is aware that extensive engagement activities are underway. The Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive and other officers are meeting with businesses, women in business, Ward members, community and staff on a regular basis (the most recent meetings were during April 2016, and the next planned for July 2016). These sessions are important opportunities for the council to test its ideas for the future of Coalville and listen to the views of local stakeholders.

12.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 As outlined above, Officer and Cabinet Members are continuing to consider a range of options for the future of Coalville, together with the financial implications of each option.

12.2 Cabinet will recall that on 9 February 2016 it was agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to commit expenditure of £150,000 of the Coalville Project Reserve, following a decision on 12 January 2016 to allocate £600,000 of underspent reserves to the Coalville Project.

- 12.3 The Programme Board for the Coalville Project recommends to Cabinet that it should delegate decision-making for the remaining £450,000 of the Coalville Project Reserve to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader. The total amount includes contingency for procurement of specialist advice, communications and engagement activities, and public realm and frontages improvements.
- 12.4 Officers review day to day expenditure within the Coalville project on a weekly basis, and all decisions regarding allocation of Coalville Project Reserve are made in accordance with authority delegated by Cabinet in prior reports.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 3 MAY 2016

Title of report	TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL – RESPONSIVE REPAIRS INSPECTION REPORT
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To advise Cabinet of the outcome of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) inspection of the Repairs Service and seek approval to incorporate their recommendations into the existing Service Improvement Plan.
Reason for Decision	To improve the Housing Repairs service by learning from the outcome of the TSP inspection.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Costs to be met from within existing approved budgets
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	Risks will be managed through the corporate performance management framework
Equalities Impact Screening	N/A
Human Rights	No implications
Transformational Government	N/A

Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Housing Service Management Team, Tenant and Leaseholders Consultation Forum, and Tenants Repairs Working Group.
Background papers	None
Recommendations	<p>IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CABINET</p> <p>A. APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL DETAILED IN APPENDIX B OF THIS REPORT .</p> <p>B. AGREE TO INCORPORATE THEM INTO THE EXISTING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING PURPOSES.</p>

1 BACKGROUND

- 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 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 5 recommendations were accepted and adopted by the Housing Service.
- 1.4 In September 2016 Cabinet approved the Panel's last inspection report on rent arrears and evictions and thirteen recommendations contained within the report. Cabinet also approved an accompanying action plan which is now live and the Panel receive quarterly updates from the Housing Management Team on progress made against the action plan. All actions are currently on target.

- 1.5 The latest report issued by the Panel in respect of responsive repairs and customer services is a product of the Panel's work during the 2015/2016 financial year which concluded in February 2016.
- 1.6 The Panel are now beginning an inspection of the anti-social behaviour (ASB) service offered by the Housing Department with a focus on reviewing the ASB policy. A report detailing their findings and proposed recommendations is due to be considered by Cabinet later in the 2016/2017 financial year.

2 OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION OF REPAIRS

- 2.1 The Panel's full report, including eight recommendations can be found in Appendix A. All recommendations have been accepted by the Housing Senior Management Team and subsequently the Corporate Leadership Team.
- 2.2 It is important to note that the report attached has been produced by the Scrutiny Panel themselves, in their own words, and the Housing SMT may not necessarily agree 100% with each and every finding.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 A service improvement plan has been developed by the Repairs and Investment Team Manager as a result of the recent Housing Quality Network (HQN) value for money review of the repairs service. The service improvement plan can be found in Appendix C.
- 3.2 Many of the actions in this service improvement plan mirror the recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and therefore an additional action plan is not required.
- 3.3 The service improvement plan was reviewed and approved by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel at a meeting with the Repairs and Investment Team Manager on 22 February 2015.
- 3.4 The eight recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel are detailed in Appendix B and cross referenced to their respective Service Improvement Plan action for ease of reference.

4 MONITORING ON IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Implementation of the recommendations will be reported back to the TSP by the Team Manager on a quarterly basis. Cabinet will be kept informed of implementation progress through the standard corporate quarterly performance monitoring reports.



**Tenant Scrutiny Panel
Report on Responsive repairs &
Customer Services**

February 2016

APPENDIX A

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1. Acknowledgements

- 1.1 The Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) gratefully acknowledges the support, guidance and assistance provided by the members of the Customer Services Team headed by Kerry Wright, the Scheduling and Repairs Team (John Coulton and Frances Crossley and Lisa Tabberer), The Resident Involvement team – Justin O'Brien, Susan Ross, Diane Caffrey, Lesley Kelly – as well as Tracy Ashe, David Moxon, Steve Everson, Mark Tuff, Chris Lambert and Roger Bayliss. Thanks also to Glyn Jones for attending the TSP meetings to encourage and support the tenant scrutiny function.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The TSP made the decision to inspect responsive repairs because of the importance of this service to NWLDC tenants. It seemed logical to choose the function performed by front line staff as the topic for this inspection, especially in view of the fact that NWLDC had just introduced a new repairs scheduling system (Oneserve) which had been customised to allow it to also be used by customer services officers.
- 2.2 From the investigations of the TSP it became apparent that the perspective of the customer service officers was that Oneserve was not working particularly well at that level. The reasons for this were identified as the failure of NWLDC to adequately communicate their plans for this change to the people it would most affect. It is the view of the TSP that Oneserve was introduced without adequate consideration to project planning, change management and communication of the introduction of Oneserve and what appears to be insufficient training for customer services staff.
- 2.3 This left officers doing their best to cope with one totally new system whilst also being expected to use OpenHousing, the system previously used. In particular, those officers who were solely engaged in taking responsive repairs calls using OpenHousing found themselves out of their depth and comfort zone. The TSP would suggest that more thought is given to the roll out of any future changes/introductions of IT systems to front line staff. From discussions the TSP had with the scheduling team it was apparent that they were very enthusiastic about Oneserve, and had an in-depth knowledge and had received adequate training. The functionality suited their requirements. However it was also apparent that the customer services officers found that the system lacked the functionality they required for their role, for example the lack of a diagnostic tool or diary functions. The customer services officers are also unable to book appointments for all customers at the initial point of contact. This has an adverse impact on the ability of customer services to effectively carry out their role and also has a negative impact on customers' views of the service they receive.
- 2.4 It is the view of the TSP the relationship between the scheduling team and the customers services team needs to be improved to ensure a quality service is provided to tenants and maintained.
- 2.5 From the observations of the TSP during this inspection it was obvious that NWLDC did not have a consistent interpretation of the term first time fix. The TSP believes this will have skewed reporting of performance indicators.

3. Strengths:

- 3.1 The TSP consists of a group of volunteers who are also tenants of NWLDC, each of whom has different skill sets and seeks to improve their skills and value to the group by identifying development needs and attending relevant training.
- 3.2 Each TSP member knows the importance of adopting a flexible attitude and displays a high level of commitment to their voluntary involvement in working with NWLDC to improve Housing services to tenants and streamline processes.
- 3.3 The TSP mission is to be a “critical friend” to the Council, facilitating service improvements for Council tenants.
- 3.4 The TSP uses differing methodologies to analyse data, collect evidence, report on outcomes and make recommendations to NWLDC to enable changes and improvements to be implemented.

4. Vision and Strategy:

- 4.1 The responsive repairs service area is one of the largest functions within the housing portfolio and is the one area which most tenants are likely to use at some point during their tenancy. This led the TSP to decide on responsive repairs as the over-arching topic. However, knowing that this is also the area which generates most frustration and debate the TSP felt that the first stage of contact in the Call Centre should form the basis of our inspection.
- 4.2 As tenants and TSP members we have heard many reports of poor service with regard to responsive repairs, with stories of poor quality repairs, wrong tradesman attending, multiple visits (maybe because no stock of parts required), failing components etc. This ultimately damages the reputation of NWLDC through the perception of some tenants that the service is unreliable, inept and poor quality.
- 4.3 Our strategy at this point was to meet with the relevant managers within customer services, scheduling and responsive repairs to seek engagement and support in identifying the relevant policies and procedures at the point of first contact and arrange to gather information and ‘shadow’ council officers working in the call centre and scheduling functions.

5. REPORT

- 5.1 The TSP has reported on its findings as factually as possible and without any bias and our inspection has, on occasion, identified that some of our original concerns were already being addressed. However our findings and subsequent recommendations have led us to be constructively critical of the way NWLDC has managed the introduction/implementation of change with regard to Oneserve.

6. CHOICE OF TOPIC

- 6.1 The TSP recognised that repairs was the overarching topic that affected every tenant at some point during their tenancy, with responsive repairs the one item that was most likely to cause complaints and negative feedback. This was an area that the TSP had always planned to inspect knowing that it is probably the most prominent service provided by the housing department.
- 6.2 Having made the decision to inspect the responsive repairs service the TSP then had to choose one component part of that service for its report and, after consideration, the TSP felt that the direct link to the tenant provided via customer services – where a new Scheduling package called Oneserve had just been introduced – was ideal.

7. METHODOLOGY

- 7.1 Reviewed all relevant NWLDC policy documents provided in respect of repairs, focusing on where responsive repairs fits into the overall process (appendix 1).
- 7.2 Work shadowing with customer services officers, maintenance officers and the scheduling team.
- 7.3 Met with Jon Coulton and Francis Crossley to look at how Oneserve works as a scheduling tool and the existing relationship between customer services and scheduling
- 7.4 Attended repairs working groups to outline the TSP planned inspection and to ask working group members to advise the TSP of anything they felt may be relevant to the inspection.
- 7.5 Attended a TSP workshop to identify and agree priorities for inspection.
- 7.6 Met with customer services team leader Kerry Wright, and agreed a questionnaire (Appendix 2) to be used in customer services staff interviews to gain inside knowledge of the system and the views of the users.
- 7.7 Interviewed customer services staff using agreed questionnaire (Appendix 2) to get their views in relation to Oneserve and their suggestions for improvement.
- 7.8 Met with David Moxon, Process and Systems Enhancement (PASE) project manager.
- 7.9 Attended training specific to the topic.
- 7.10 Scheduled TSP working meetings as required.
- 7.11 Visited another housing provider (One Vision Housing (OVH), Merseyside) who also use Oneserve. During the visit we observed an excellent relationship between their customer services and scheduling teams. OVH has approximately 13k properties.
- 7.12 Attended a workshop with Housing Quality Network (HQN) as part of a value for money review of the repairs service
- 7.13 Reviewed the training delivered as part of the implementation process for Oneserve and the assessment of training to gauge if it met the needs of the recipients.

- 7.14 Reviewed repairs carried out over a six month period to determine how many were 'First Time Fixes' and how many involved more than one call to provide a percentage of each (Appendix 3). NWLDC appears to have more than one definition relating to whether a job was fixed at the first visit, hence the TSP decided to use the HouseMark definition of 'Completed at the first visit' to avoid any confusion.

The HouseMark definition of this is as follows:

Percentage of repairs completed at the first visit

Rationale

This indicator allows landlords to understand how efficiently and effectively they are diagnosing repair problems and planning for their rectification.

Definition

This is the number of repairs completed by the operative without the need to return a second time because the repair was inaccurately diagnosed and / or the operative did not fix the problem, as a percentage of all responsive repairs completed (emergency, urgent and routine combined).

A repair is considered fixed at first visit when the operative has attended the property, identified, diagnosed and remedied the fault (using van stock), and carried out any making good before then leaving the property.

Multiple trades: Where the job requires multiple trades who may follow on from each other, then the work would still be considered completed at first visit so long as each of the trades were completed in one visit.

Replacement parts: If the job required specific replacement parts and the operative needed to return a second time with the correct parts because they were not part of his/her van stock, then this would not count as completed at first visit.

No access: Where the operative is unable to gain access to the property, this will not be counted as a visit and should be excluded from the figures.

Worked example

Where there were 90 repairs completed at first visit out of a total of 100 repairs completed within the period.

*Percentage of repairs completed at first visit = $(90 / 100) * 100 = 90\%$*

8. Aims of the Exercise

- 8.1 To improve knowledge of Oneserve as a customer services tool for the reporting of repairs and to examine the interaction between customer services and scheduling. The primary aim was to identify areas that could be improved and to make recommendations that would benefit both tenants and NWLDC

9. Findings:

A new computer system for scheduling repairs had recently been installed, called Oneserve. After working through the inspection process the TSP identified the following findings:

- 9.1 Oneserve was introduced for scheduling purposes in September 2014 but did not go live with customer services until March 2015.

- 9.2 Scheduling of the implementation of Oneserve to customer services officers did not provide sufficient time and/or training to bring them up to speed on the system prior to going live.
- 9.3 Customer services officers were required to use Oneserve alongside the existing housing management system, OpenHousing
- 9.4 Some customer services officers were finding it difficult to get to grips with Oneserve. This was particularly the case for officers with extensive experience of using OpenHousing, the system previously used to report and schedule responsive repairs.
- 9.5 Some of the options available to Customer services officers on OpenHousing were not available on Oneserve (i.e. diary facility and diagnostic tool) and it was not possible to migrate information from one system to the other.
- 9.6 From shadowing customer services officers the TSP also picked up on the fact that they had difficulty in tracking repairs previously reported, the history of which they were required to access via OpenHousing. This was time consuming and the information was not easy to find and often involved customer services officers emailing schedulers for the information required to progress the tenant enquiry. This in turn meant telling the tenant they would ring back once they had the necessary information. This is frustrating for both parties and makes NWLDC look unprofessional. The TSP also observed there was often a poor record of the history of tenant contact in relation to previous reports.
- 9.7 The TSP observed that the level of cooperation and communication between the scheduling team and the customer services team appears at times to be at a basic level and lacks a degree of understanding of each other's roles and priorities.
- 9.8 From work shadowing the TSP also observed tenants were often quick to complain that they had been waiting for a while for a progress report. They felt it was not good enough that when they rang to chase progress NWLDC couldn't give them a straight answer to their question about a particular outstanding repair. This caused further frustration for both customer and customer services officers.
- 9.9 From the experience of shadowing calls to customer services officers by TSP members, although customers often complained about the service and delays, few instances were reported formally. It seems likely that few tenants realise they have to initiate the NWLDC formal complaints procedure before their adverse feedback becomes a formal, recordable complaint.
- 9.10 Our questioning revealed that training on Oneserve for customer services officers had been very hit and miss, with no formal classroom training by a professional trainer with relevant supporting information.
- 9.11 No training records were kept, either by customer services or by Human Resources in relation to the implementation of Oneserve.
- 9.12 Customer services staff are able to book urgent (7 days) appointments but are unable to book emergency (24 hours) or routine (28 days) appointments.
- 9.13 When visiting another housing provider - One Vision Housing (OVH) in Liverpool – where we shadowed their call centre staff, we found that:

- I. Staff using the system had been trained by an expert presenting the Oneserve system in a suitable training environment using a PowerPoint presentation and screen shots with copies of all handouts provided for reference.
- II. OVH also assessed whether this training had met the needs of each individual staff member and further training arranged where necessary.
- III. In the event that any staff member was seen to be forwarding unnecessary queries to scheduling, this would be reported back the customer services supervisor and again, additional training would be arranged if necessary.
- IV. In the event of any system changes, every user received re-training accordingly.
- V. Comprehensive up to date training records are kept for all employees of the organisation.
- VI. Staff members in the customer services department had the ability to make all repairs appointments at the first point of customer contact.

9.14 NWLDC lacks consistency in its use of the term 'First Time Fix' and it is the panel's view that this may be erroneously enhancing performance indicators that are being reported.

9.15 Consultation with the PASE team confirmed that some of the above points were already on the radar and steps being taken to improve matters.

Recommendations:

1. As a result of the poor scheduling for implementation of Oneserve to customer service operatives the TSP recommends that NWLDC adapt its policies in relation to delivering change and project management to include tailoring delivery of training for staff at all levels.
2. That through the PASE project NWLDC add the appropriate functions to Oneserve to enable the customer services officers to become more efficient, these include the diary function and diagnostic tool M3 Locator Plus.
3. The TSP recommends that NWLDC reviews the process for booking of all responsive repairs appointments with a view to customer services officers being able to book emergency, urgent and routine appointments directly with the customer, providing appointments at the initial point of contact.
4. The TSP recommends that, in order to provide a more efficient and effective front line repairs services to tenants, there needs to be in place a single dedicated team combining both customer services officers who are already well versed in repairs and schedulers; the new team should then be responsible to Housing. This would build a better relationship between those working in the two repairs related functions and, together with the suggested functional enhancements to Oneserve, lead to an improved and more efficient service to NWLDC tenants and lead to a 'no blame' culture.
5. A thorough analysis of current training needs be carried out for all customer services repairs and scheduling officers in the new team and arrangements made for relevant professional training (particularly on Oneserve) to be delivered, possibly with some team building, be delivered as part of that change.

6. The TSP strongly recommends that NWLDC, through Human Resources, ensures that proper training records for every member of staff are raised and updated each time training is attended, using an appropriate 'learning cycle' (Appendix 4) as the basis for delivery of adequate and relevant training. Using this system NWLDC would have a clear vision of the experience, skills and knowledge of every officer in their employment. This would enable a skills matrix to be maintained for each employee to assist with recruitment when looking at internal vacancies and possible management trainees etc. In addition the aspirations, aims and objectives of employees will also be managed to the benefit of the organisation. NWLDC may also want to consider the appointment of a dedicated training officer within the HR department
7. NWLDC should adopt the HouseMark definition of 'Completed at first visit' for the purpose of performance reporting and stop using any other definitions to remove any confusion in respect of performance results. In addition NWLDC should review all repairs KPI's to reflect Housemark definitions and closely monitor how this affects performance results.
8. The complaints process and procedure should be widely promoted to tenants via all appropriate mediums, including details of accountability and NWLDC tenant compensation scheme.

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

NWLDC/TSP/2015 Reports/Repairs – Responsive repairs Report

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL INSPECTION OF REPAIRS

(Reference numbers identify which of the 22 Service Improvement Plan actions each recommendation relates to)

Recommendation 1: As a result of the poor scheduling for implementation of Oneserve to customer service operatives the TSP recommends that NWLDC adapt its policies in relation to delivering change and project management to include tailoring delivery of training for staff at all levels.

SIP Actions:

- 11. *Complete skills audit of all staff appointed to new structure, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and develop comprehensive annual staff training and development programme.*
- 9. *Complete review and implement comprehensive Performance Management Framework across the service.*
- 7. *Review and renegotiate the Modern Working Agreement with a view to modernising working practices to provide a more skilled, flexible and responsive workforce.*

Recommendation 2: That through the PASE project NWLDC add the appropriate functions to Oneserve to enable the customer services officers to become more efficient, these include the diary function and diagnostic tool M3 Locator Plus.

SIP Actions:

- 4. *Realign current repairs team staffing arrangements to create dedicated functionality against key services (responsive repairs, voids, G Purchase contract management and complaints) and remove the client contractor split.*
- 19. *Review of Mobile Working, including implementation of pilot and subsequent role out; robustness of risk assessments and lone worker arrangements; communications processes for remotely based workers; appropriateness of ICT kit.*

Recommendation 3: The TSP recommends that NWLDC reviews the process for booking of all responsive repairs appointments with a view to customer services officers being able to book emergency, urgent and routine appointments directly with the customer, providing appointments at the initial point of contact.

SIP Actions:

- 4. *Realign current repairs team staffing arrangements to create dedicated functionality against key services (responsive repairs, voids, G Purchase contract management and complaints) and remove the client contractor split.*
- 3. *Consolidate existing temporary staffing and secondment arrangements within repairs and planned investment teams to align to restructure.*
- 7. *Review and renegotiate the Modern Working Agreement with a view to modernising working practices to provide a more skilled, flexible and responsive workforce.*
- 12. *Implement dynamic job scheduling across repairs service.*

Recommendation 4: The TSP recommends that, in order to provide a more efficient and effective front line repairs services to tenants, there needs to be in place a single dedicated team combining both customer services officers who are already well versed in repairs and schedulers; the new team should then be responsible to Housing. This would build a better relationship between those working in the two repairs related functions and, together with the suggested functional enhancements to Oneserve, lead to an improved and more efficient service to NWLDC tenants and lead to a 'no blame' culture.

SIP Actions:

- *4. Realign current repairs team staffing arrangements to create dedicated functionality against key services (responsive repairs, voids, G Purchase contract management and complaints) and remove the client contractor split.*
- *12. Implement dynamic job scheduling across repairs service.*

Recommendation 5: A thorough analysis of current training needs be carried out for all customer services repairs and scheduling officers in the new team and arrangements made for relevant professional training (particularly on Oneserve) to be delivered, possibly with some team building, be delivered as part of that change.

SIP Actions:

- *11. Complete skills audit of all staff appointed to new structure, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and develop comprehensive annual staff training and development programme.*

Recommendation 6: The TSP strongly recommends that NWLDC, through Human Resources, ensures that proper training records for every member of staff are raised and updated each time training is attended, using an appropriate 'learning cycle' (Appendix 4) as the basis for delivery of adequate and relevant training. Using this system NWLDC would have a clear vision of the experience, skills and knowledge of every officer in their employment. This would enable a skills matrix to be maintained for each employee to assist with recruitment when looking at internal vacancies and possible management trainees etc. In addition the aspirations, aims and objectives of employees will also be managed to the benefit of the organisation. NWLDC may also want to consider the appointment of a dedicated training officer within the HR department

SIP Actions:

- *11. Complete skills audit of all staff appointed to new structure, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and develop comprehensive annual staff training and development programme.*

Recommendation 7: NWLDC should adopt the HouseMark definition of 'Completed at first visit' for the purpose of performance reporting and stop using any other definitions to remove any confusion in respect of performance results. In addition NWLDC should review all repairs KPI's to reflect Housemark definitions and closely monitor how this affects performance results.

SIP Actions:

- *8. Complete review of all performance indicator definitions and methodology of calculation to ensure consistency with sector best practice.*
- *9. Complete review and implement comprehensive Performance Management Framework across the service.*

Recommendation 8: The complaints process and procedure should be widely promoted to tenants via all appropriate mediums, including details of accountability and NWLDC tenant compensation scheme.

SIP Actions:

- 1. *Produce an overarching strategic vision for the repairs service that is effectively communicated to staff.*
- 2. *Complete review of strategic framework and all policies and procedures for repairs and planned investment services*

Appendix C: Asset Management Service Improvement Plan - January 2016 to March 2017

Ref	Strategic and Policy Framework (2015 – 16 Quarter Four)	Lead Officer	January 2016				February 2016					March 2016			
			4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	7	14	21	28
1	Produce an overarching strategic vision for the repairs service that is effectively communicated to staff	CL/NB				31									
2	Complete review of strategic framework and all policies and procedures for repairs and planned investment services	NB													31
	Structure and Staffing Arrangements (2015 -16 Quarter Four)	Lead Officer	January 2016				February 2016					March 2016			
			4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	7	14	21	28
3	Consolidate existing temporary staffing and secondment arrangements within repairs and planned investment teams to align to restructure timetable of 30 June 2016	NB			22										
4	Realign current repairs team staffing arrangements to create dedicated functionality against key services (responsive repairs, voids, G Purchase contract management and complaints) and remove the client contractor split	NB				31									
5	Review trades resources and recruit to vacancies within existing staffing establishment accordingly, subject to approval of CLT on 2 February 2016	NB/JC									29				
6	Implement new staffing structure to create new Asset Management Team (see Appendix One)	NB													
7	Review and renegotiate the Modern Working Agreement with a view to modernising working practices to provide a more skilled, flexible and responsive workforce	CL/NB/M M													
	Structure and Staffing Arrangements (2016-17 Quarter One)	Lead Officer	April 2016				May 2016					June 2016			
			4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27
6	Implement new staffing structure to create new Asset Management Team (see Appendix One)	NB													30
7	Review and renegotiate the Modern Working Agreement with a view to modernising working practices to provide a more skilled, flexible and responsive workforce	CL/NB/M M													30

	Asset Management (2015 -16 Quarter Four)	Lead Officer	January 2016				February 2016					March 2016			
			4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	7	14	21	28
15	Develop and commence implementation of Parking Strategy from 1 April 2016	AH/NB													31
	Asset Management (2016-17 Quarter One)	Lead Officer	April 2016				May 2016					June 2016			
			4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27
16	Complete asset management review of traditional sheltered housing schemes														30
	Asset Management (2016-17 Quarter Two)	Lead Officer	July 2016				August 2016					September 2016			
			4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26
17	Complete annual review of Asset Management Strategy	NB													30
18	Parking Strategy - complete decommissioning of communal garage and hardstanding schemes with less than 50% occupancy	NB													30

	Internal Audit Quality Assurance of Service Improvement Plan (2016-17 Quarter Two)	Lead Officer	July 2016				August 2016					September 2016			
			4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26
19	Review of Mobile Working, including implementation of pilot and subsequent roll out. Robustness of risk assessments and lone worker arrangements. Communications processes for remotely based workers. Appropriateness of ICT kit.	LC/NB													30
	Internal Audit Quality Assurance of Service Improvement Plan (2016-17 Quarter Three)	Lead Officer	October 2016				November 2016					December 2016			
			3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26
20	Review of Asset Performance Tool, including integration with business plan, robustness and accuracy of data. Use of NPV's to inform disposal decisions. (NB: this will be an advisory piece of work rather than a formal audit).	LC/NB													31
	Internal Audit Quality Assurance of Service Improvement Plan (2016-17 Quarter Four)	Lead Officer	January 2017				February 2017					March 2017			
			2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	6	13	20	27
21	Review of repairs service post restructure, including robustness and scope of policies and procedures under new arrangements.	LC/NB													31
22	Review of gas and solid fuel contract management, including 3 star service arrangements as a high value contract with a new method of working. Robustness of cost management processes and data recording/updating. Robustness of contract management processes and documentation	LC/NB													31

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 3 MAY 2016

Title of report	AUTHORITY TO AWARD HR/PAYROLL SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS CONTRACT
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Nick Rushton 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Interim Director of Resources 01530 454833 andrew.hunkin@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance 01530 454520 ray.bowmer@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	The report requests that Cabinet delegates authority to award the HR/Payroll software solutions framework agreement to the Interim Director of Resources in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder.
Reason for Decision	The level of expenditure on this contract exceeds the authority threshold in the Scheme of Delegation. To ensure the continuity of provision of HR and Payroll Services to the Council.
Council Priorities	Value for Money.
Implications: Financial/Staff Link to relevant CAT Risk Management Equalities Impact Screening Human Rights	Financial implications contained within existing budgets, no staffing implications Not applicable Not applicable Not applicable Not applicable

Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	None
Background papers	None
Recommendations	THAT CABINET DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF A HR/PAYROLL SOFTWARE SOLUTION FOR THE PERIOD 1ST AUGUST 2016 TO 31ST JULY 2021 WITH THE OPTION TO EXTEND UNTIL 31ST JULY 2023 TO THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CORPORATE PORTFOLIO HOLDER.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council currently has an integrated HR and Payroll system provided by Selima Limited. Selima also provides a managed payroll service. The contract with Selima expires on 31st March 2017 and cannot be extended further for procurement reasons.
- 1.2 A HR/Payroll Project Board and Project Team have been established to implement a HR/Payroll solution effective from April 2017. The Project Team has created a vision for the HR/Payroll system:

From April 2017, the Council will have an integrated HR and Payroll System. The Self service system will be easily accessible by all employees either through their work or personal pc, mobile or tablet, where they will be able to request annual/flexi leave, submit mileage, overtime and expenses claims (including receipts) and view their e-payslips.

Managers will be able to record sickness, training and appraisals and approve annual/flexi leave, overtime, mileage and expenses claims through the system and enter leaver details. Reporting will be available to managers for items such as sickness, staffing structures, costs and absence calendars.

Our HR/Payroll processes will be online and paper free, with reduced resources required within the HR and Exchequer teams.

It would also be desirable to have an integrated applicant tracking system and a shift scheduling / time recording system capable of managing multiple employments in a 7 day a week Leisure Centre environment.

- 1.3 It was agreed by the Corporate Leadership Team, on the 16th February 2016, following a recommendation from the HR/Payroll Project Team, that the preferred option to meet the desired outcomes in the vision is to procure a HR/Payroll software solution through an existing framework and to bring the provision of a payroll service back in house.

2 PROCUREMENT ROUTE

- 2.1 The contract with Selima Limited for the HR/Payroll software and payroll managed service is due to expire on the 31st March 2017. Written notice to terminate the arrangement will be issued by the Council to Selima in September 2016 to provide them with the 6 months notice required by the contract. It is the intention to purchase the HR/Payroll software through ESPO using their Corporate Software Solutions Framework Agreement from August 2016. The estimated value of the contract is between £200,000 and £250,000.
- 2.2 There will be approximately an eight month overlap period where both contracts will be live to allow for the transfer of data, testing and dual running of the new system. The new system will be live from April 2017. To comply with the requirements of the Framework, a further competition exercise has to be undertaken to select the preferred supplier. This procurement route adheres to the requirements of the Constitution (paragraph 2.6 of the Contract Procedures Rules).
- 2.3 In order to award the contract in relation to the supply of a HR/Payroll Software Solution for the period 1st August 2016 to 31st July 2021, with the possibility of extending to 31st July 2023, - Cabinet is requested to delegate authority to the Interim Director of Resources in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 3 MAY 2016

Title of report	AUTHORITY TO AWARD ENERGY CONTRACT
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Nick Rushton 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Interim Director of Resources 01530 454833 andrew.hunkin@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance 01530 454520 ray.bowmer@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	The report requests that Cabinet delegates authority to award the energy framework agreement to the Interim Director of Resources in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder.
Reason for Decision	The level of expenditure on this contract exceeds the authority threshold in the Scheme of Delegation. To ensure the continuity of provision of energy to the Council.
Council Priorities	Value for Money.
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Financial implications contained within existing budgets, no staffing implications
Link to relevant CAT	Not applicable
Risk Management	Not applicable
Equalities Impact Screening	Not applicable
Human Rights	Not applicable
Transformational Government	Not applicable

Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	None
Background papers	Authority to Award Energy Contracts - Cabinet 9 February 2016
Recommendations	THAT CABINET DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF ELECTRICITY FOR THE PERIOD 1ST OCTOBER 2016 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2020 TO THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CORPORATE PORTFOLIO HOLDER.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As reported to Cabinet in February 2016, since April 2016 the supply of all the council's electricity has been procured via an Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) framework agreement. Prior to April 2016, the energy contracts were split between two framework agreements - ESPO and Crown Commercial Services (CCS).
- 1.2 At the time of the previous report, the contract for electricity could only be awarded to 30th September 2016 as the framework had not been awarded past this date and that authority to award would be requested at the June meeting of Cabinet. ESPO have now awarded the framework to Total Gas and Power for the period 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2020 and therefore the Council is in a position to award the contract.

2 PROCUREMENT ROUTE

- 2.1 The contract with ESPO for the supply of electricity expires on the 30th September 2016. It is the intention to continue to use ESPO for the supply of electricity from 1st October 2016 using the recently awarded Electricity Framework agreement to Total Gas and Power. The estimated value of the contract for the four year period (1st October 2016 to 30th September 2020) is £950,000. This procurement route adheres to the requirements of the Constitution (paragraph 2.6 of the Contract Procedures Rules).
- 2.2 In order to award the above contract in relation to the supply of electricity for the period 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2020, Cabinet is requested to delegate authority to the Interim Director of Resources in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 3 MAY 2016

Title of report	NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – HOUSING REQUIREMENTS UPDATE
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Planning and Regeneration 01530 454782 jim.newton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To outline the current situation in respect of the Council's emerging Local Plan, particularly in respect of the issue of housing requirements
Reason for Decision	To agree how the Council should proceed forward with its Local Plan
Council Priorities	Value for Money Homes and Communities
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The cost of preparing the Local Plan is met from existing budgets.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	A risk assessment of the project has been undertaken. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise these risks, including monthly Project Board meetings where risk is reviewed.
Equalities Impact Screening	This will be undertaken before the plan is considered by Council
Human Rights	Not applicable

Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Consultees	Local Plan Project Board
Background papers	<p>National Planning Policy Framework which can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications?topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building</p> <p>Planning Practice Guidance in respect of Housing and economic development needs assessments which can be found at http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments/</p> <p>Strategic Housing Market Assessment which can be found at http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/leicestershire_shma_report/Leicestershire%20SHMA%20Report%20%20June%20%28Final%29%20reduced.pdf</p> <p>Memorandum of Understanding which can be found at https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/background_paper_2_appendix_a/BackgroundPaper2%20-%20Appendix%20A.pdf</p>
Recommendation	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <p>(I) NOTES THE CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT AND THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH PROGRESSING WITH THE LOCAL PLAN; AND</p> <p>(II) AGREES TO PROCEED WITH THE LOCAL PLAN PROJECT THE NEXT STEP OF WHICH WILL BE A REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL ON 28 JUNE 2016.</p>

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report outlines for Cabinet the current situation in respect of the Council's emerging Local Plan, particularly in respect of the issue of housing requirements.

2.0 CONTEXT

- 2.1 Members will recall that the draft Local Plan was approved for consultation purposes by Council at its meeting on 15 September 2015.
- 2.2 The draft Local Plan was published for consultation on 29 September 2015 up until 30 November 2015.
- 2.3 In total 326 individuals and organisations made 1,935 detailed comments. In addition, a further 424 standard letters were received, principally in relation to the proposed development north of Ashby de la Zouch (Money Hill) and concerns regarding possible development south of the A453 near East Midlands Airport.
- 2.4 The Local Plan Advisory Committee has subsequently considered two reports in respect of the comments made to draft Local Plan and officers suggested response to these comments.
- 2.5 A revised draft Local Plan has now been drafted and is going through a number of external validation checks. It is currently proposed that the revised draft Local Plan will be considered at a meeting of Council on 28 June 2016.

3.0 THE TIMETABLE

- 3.1 At the 28 June Council meeting Members will be asked to agree a 'publication' version of the Local Plan. This will represent the Local Plan which the Council proposes should be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. The Local Plan will then be published for a period of 6 weeks during which people will be invited to make formal representations.
- 3.2 Following receipt of representations it is intended that the Local Plan will then be submitted for examination during September.
- 3.3 At this point the Council will no longer be in control of the timetable as this will initially be determined by the Planning Inspectorate, and then by the Planning Inspector appointed to hold the examination. Based on experience elsewhere it is likely that examination Hearings would take place in late 2016 / early 2017.

4.0 THE HOUSING REQUIREMENT IN THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

- 4.1 The draft Local Plan identifies a housing requirement of 535 dwellings each year for the period 2011-2031 (10,700 dwellings in total). This figure is higher than the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (June 2014) which is 350 dwellings each year (7,000 dwellings in total). This is also the figure included in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed by all the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities.
- 4.2 The housing requirement was set at a higher level to take account of the potential impact of the then proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (Roxhill) on the number of jobs in the district compared to those assumed in the SHMA. This has since been approved by the Secretary of State on 12 January 2016. There is an important difference between the housing requirement and the housing need figures (i.e. the OAN). The housing need was

set out in the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Leicester & Leicestershire, and is used as the basis for calculating a five year supply and as the starting point for determining the housing requirement. The requirement takes that need 'baseline' figure, and applies specific local circumstances, in this case the Roxhill scheme, to adjust the need figure. The need figures for the rest of Leicester & Leicestershire are not affected by the uplift that North West Leicestershire has applied to its own need figure.

5.0 WHAT RESPONSES WERE RECEIVED TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN?

- 5.1 In response to the consultation on the draft Local Plan a relatively large number of residents, the vast majority of who live in Ashby and oppose the Money Hill site allocation in particular, considered that the housing requirement was too high, with particular concerns expressed regarding the impact upon existing infrastructure. As we would expect, some housebuilders considered that the requirement was too low, with one representation in particular from Gladman suggesting the requirement should be 637 dwellings each year (12,740 in total).
- 5.2 Concerns were expressed by Charnwood Borough Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council regarding the level of housing requirement. In particular concern has been expressed that:
- The proposed housing requirement has been put forward without agreement across the Housing Market Area;
 - The methodology used to identify the housing requirement could be used by developers to undermine their five year supply position;
 - Alternatively, an increased provision of housing in North West Leicestershire could impact upon the delivery of housing sites elsewhere, specifically the Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension;
 - Any (as yet unquantified) impact upon the OAN for the other HMA authorities as set out in the SHMA and MOU need to be understood and agreed across the HMA; and
 - No consideration has been given as to the possible impact upon affordable housing resulting from a higher housing requirement.

6.0 WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE END OF THE CONSULTATION?

- 6.1 It is important to understand, as recognised by the Government in the Planning Practice Guidance that identifying a housing requirement as part of a Local Plan is not an exact science.
- 6.2 In view of the comments received and to seek to ensure that the Council's housing requirement is as robust as possible, however, additional work, from an independent consultant (who also worked on the 2014 SHMA) has been commissioned to provide more evidence regarding the likely impact of the Roxhill development on the housing figures, particularly now that this has been approved by the Secretary of State. The work is not yet completed. However, initial findings suggest that the Council should indeed make higher provision than that identified in the SHMA and MOU.
- 6.3 Members will be aware that the HMA partners have agreed to prepare a Strategic Growth Plan. This plan will be informed by a range of evidence including that relating to future

housing and economic needs across the HMA. To this end a HMA wide Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) has been commissioned which will identify the current OAN for the HMA and individual districts/boroughs (it should be noted one of the consultants working on this was also the consultant engaged by the Council to provide the additional advice referred to above). Once the technical assessment has been concluded, currently scheduled for September 2016, the intention is to agree a new MOU (or equivalent agreement). This element, however, is unlikely to be concluded until late in 2016 at the very earliest.

- 6.4 One of the reasons for commissioning the HEDNA is that the current SHMA is not based on the most up-to-date national household projections (2012) and so could not be relied upon to support the Strategic Growth Plan. The creditability of the current SHMA as a true reflection of the current Full Objectively Assessed Need for housing across the HMA and thus in the District is, therefore, at significant risk of challenge. Indeed the recent appeal decision at Greenhill Road, Coalville is one such illustration of this point as are a number of other appeal decisions across Leicestershire.
- 6.5 As noted, some of the HMA authorities have raised concerns about the proposed housing requirement being above the OAN figure that is set out in the SHMA and MOU. There is an important difference between the need and the requirement figures: the need is the baseline minimum number of homes that must be provided, and the requirement is the result of an adjustment to take account of local circumstances. Such local circumstances, in the case of North West Leicestershire, concern the East Midlands Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, which is expected to generate in excess of 7,000 new jobs within the next six years, and now benefits from planning permission. Discussions are ongoing in respect of this matter with representatives of all of the HMA authorities under the auspices of the Duty to Co-operate. These discussions have yet to be concluded, but it is apparent that the principal concern that has been raised relates to the perceived risk to the other authorities as a result of our housing requirement being set higher than the OAN in the SHMA. It is the view of some of the HMA authorities that the only appropriate mechanism for identifying the basis for the objectively assessed need is within a strategic housing evidence base (i.e. a SHMA or HEDNA) and that this should be done collaboratively.
- 6.6 There is some suggestion that the Council should continue to seek to rely upon the figure of 350 dwellings per annum. In view of the appeal decision at Greenhill Road referred to above this is not considered to be appropriate or realistic.
- 6.7 It has also been suggested by some that the next stage of our Local Plan should be delayed to await the outcome of the recently commissioned HEDNA.
- 6.8 The Government has recently confirmed that it wants to see up-to-date Local Plans in place across the whole country as soon as possible. To this end Government has made clear its intention to intervene in the preparation of Local Plans where one is not in place by early 2017. Based on an interview given by the Minister for Planning and Housing (Brandon Lewis MP) to Planning Resource it appears that the Government considers "that authorities must have submitted a plan for examination in order to hit the deadline". Delaying the progress of the Plan to await the publication of the HEDNA may, therefore, put the Council at significant risk of not being able to meet the early 2017 deadline for submitting the Plan for examination.

7.0 WHAT SHOULD THE COUNCIL DO?

- 7.1 Essentially, the Council is faced with a choice: carry on with the Local Plan as currently planned; or delay making a decision on the Local Plan until such time as the new HEDNA and MOU are in place.
- 7.2 It should be appreciated that neither course of action is absolutely risk free in terms of the Council being able secure an up-to-date Local Plan as soon as possible.
- 7.3 It is necessary to consider what the potential merits and risk of each approach might be. The table below summarises these.

	For	Against
Carry On	<p>Would enable an up-to-date Local Plan to be in place sooner rather than later. This would strengthen the Council's position in terms of determining planning applications and defending appeals</p> <p>Would meet the Government's deadline for having a Local Plan in place and so avoid the threat of intervention.</p>	<p>Risk that an Inspector would not support the housing requirement because not part of HMA wide agreement.</p> <p>Risk that an Inspector would consider that the Local Plan was not sound and/or not satisfy the Duty to Cooperate</p> <p>No agreed HMA wide position.</p>
Slow Down	<p>Agreed position across the Housing Market Area.</p> <p>Likely that the housing requirement in the Local Plan would be considered acceptable at examination.</p>	<p>Delaying the Local Plan would make its submission for examination prior to the Government's deadline very difficult to achieve and so could leave the Council open to the risk of the Government intervening in the preparation of the Local Plan.</p> <p>Government would withhold New Homes Bonus (in the order of £600,000 to NWLDC, and £200,000 to LCC) and so significantly adversely impact upon the Council's financial position.</p> <p>Delay would mean longer without having an up-to-date Local plan in place leading to increased risk that</p>

		appeals against the refusal of planning permission would be successful
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7.4 In terms of carrying on, the Government's deadline is set and is a clear and present risk. In contrast the likelihood that the plan would not be found sound is a potential risk, the magnitude of which is difficult to predict but will partly depend on the Council's ability to assure an Inspector that it has a positive strategy for growth and is committed to an early review of the plan should that be necessary

7.5 It should be noted that even if an Inspector did not support the housing requirement proposed in the Local Plan it would be open to him/her to suspend the examination whilst any additional work was carried out. This might be for example, to enable agreement to be reached on any MOU or similar following the completion of the HEDNA. Whilst this would be a disappointing outcome it would not mean the end of the Local Plan. There are numerous examples of where Local Plan examinations have been suspended and the Local Plan in question has gone on to be found sound. Indeed this happened in respect of the recent Charnwood Core Strategy.

7.6 In terms of the issue of the Duty to Cooperate(DtC), and based on experience elsewhere, the Council would need to show what steps it has taken to ensure that the other HMA authorities are aware of what was being proposed and why. In this respect officers briefed all of the HMA authorities on the likely approach to housing requirements prior to Council agreeing the draft Local Plan in September 2015. Since then officers have kept the HMA authorities informed of progress and is involved in ongoing discussions. It is considered that the risk of being found not to have complied with the DtC has been minimised as far as possible and practicable. It should also be remembered that it is a Duty to Cooperate and not a requirement to agree.

7.7 In terms of the slowing down option, it is almost certain that an Inspector would support the Local Plan, at least in terms of housing requirements, in the event of there being a HMA wide agreement in respect of the amount and distribution of housing. However, there remains significant doubt about how realistic it is to expect that both the technical work of doing a HEDNA, and a subsequent MOU to be in place in time to enable submission of the Local Plan by early 2017.

7.8 The technical work of producing a HEDNA is scheduled to be completed by September 2016. How long an MOU will take to agree will be substantially dependent upon the results of the HEDNA itself. Based on the current MOU which was agreed in the context of each authority being able to accommodate its own identified growth, it is possible that an MOU could be agreed by the very end of 2016 in similar circumstances (although this is by no means guaranteed).

7.9 However, if it becomes apparent that one or more authority is unable to accommodate its own housing requirement in full, this will result in the need to reach a formal and binding agreement about how to redistribute development among the other HMA authorities. Reaching such an agreement on an MOU in these circumstances will inevitably be much more problematic and is likely to require a significant period of protracted negotiations to conclude. It should be noted that, once agreement has been reached, each individual

Council would need to formally endorse the MOU, which itself is likely to take at least two months. As such it is inconceivable that the Council would be able to meet the Government's deadline. Therefore, the risks of intervention and the loss of new Homes Bonus would be very high.

- 7.10 In view of the risk profile of the situation, and in addition to the ongoing discussions with the HMA authorities, officers have taken advice from our external advisers (Malcolm Sharp MBE of Sharp Planning Plus, and Simon Stanion of Marrons Shakespeares) on this matter. Their view is that at this stage the Council should continue in accordance with the programme outlined in section 3 of this report.
- 7.11 Discussions have also been held with a senior official from the Department for Local Government and Communities, and a former senior Planning Inspector, as well as taking Counsel's advice. A copy of Counsel's advice is available to members as a confidential background paper. The overwhelming message to come out of the advice is that the Council should continue to progress the local plan, in accordance with the programme outlined in section 3 of this report.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Having regard to these considerations and the clear and consistent external advice which has been received, it is considered that at this time the preferable and lower risk course of action is for the Council to continue with the current planned programme.
- 8.2 As already outlined it should be appreciated that this course is not risk free, but it is considered to represent the least risky option at this stage.
- 8.3 A Core Principle of the National Planning Policy Framework is that Local Plans should be kept up-to-date. It should, therefore, be appreciated that even if the Local Plan proceeds along its current course and is found to be sound, it is likely that it will need to be reviewed almost immediately upon adoption. This would certainly be the case if the new MOU required a higher provision than that currently envisaged or if other new evidence was to be forthcoming. A clear and unequivocal commitment to such a review should therefore, be included in the Local Plan.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 3 MAY 2016

Title of report	SYRIAN VULNERABLE PERSONS RESETTLEMENT SCHEME (SVPRS) AND ASYLUM SEEKER DISPERSAL AREA (ASDA)
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To seek Cabinet approval to host 2 Syrian refugee families per year for the remaining duration of the current Syrian refugee resettlement programme (4 years), to be rehoused in the first instance if possible, in private rented sector accommodation in the district. Also to endorse the Countywide position of Districts and Rutland regarding the Asylum Seeker Dispersal Area, not to make an offer to support the re-settlement of any asylum seekers at this point in time.
Reason for Decision	To contribute to the national response to the Government's decision to provide rehousing for 20,000 Syrian refugees over the 5 years of the current parliament.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Costs to be met from within existing approved budgets and grant funding from the Home Office as detailed in Appendix 1.
Link to relevant CAT	Welfare Reform CAT is coordinating our response to the refugee/asylum resettlement situation and linking to the Leicestershire Resilience Forum (LRF).
Risk Management	Risks will be managed through the corporate performance management framework

Equalities Impact Screening	The refugees being re-settled are likely to be a vulnerable client group, and will require support, especially in terms of learning English and matching their skills to employment opportunities. The Council will have a key role to play in supporting the integration of refugees into local communities and promoting positive community relations.
Human Rights	No implications
Transformational Government	N/A
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team; Housing Senior Management Team.
Background papers	None
Recommendations	<p>IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CABINET</p> <p>A. APPROVE THE PROPOSAL THAT WE AGREE TO HOST 2 FAMILIES PER YEAR FOR 4 YEARS UNDER THE SYRIAN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME AS PART OF A WIDER RESPONSE FROM LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICTS</p> <p>B. AGREE TO SUPPORT THE PROPOSED POSITION OF ALL DISTRICTS (BAR ONE) NOT TO OFFER TO BECOME AN ASYLUM DISPERSAL AREA.</p>

1 CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Local Authorities across the County have been encouraged by the Home Office to consider taking part in two separate schemes to resettle Asylum Seekers and/or Syrian Refugees into their communities.
- 1.2 The two schemes are distinctly different in terms of the role the Local Authority has to play, and the financial support available. In summary the key aspects of the two schemes are -

Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS)

- Local Authorities are to coordinate support for family/individuals – can be directly provided or contracted from voluntary sector.
- Local Authorities are required to source accommodation which is normally private rented.
- Government funding is available over the 5 year period to fund support provision with separate funding for Education and Health also paid directly to providing agencies as detailed in Appendix 1.
- The scheme is targeting the re-housing of 20,000 refugees over 5 years. 1000 have so far been rehoused in Phase 1, and Phase 2 is to commence post April 2016.
- Working age Refugees have a work visa and can claim benefits.
- “Statement of Requirements” from the Home Office for participation in the scheme is attached as Appendix 2.
- An action plan developed by a neighbouring local authority involved in Phase 1 will be used as a template to coordinate the delivery of the scheme at a local level.
- Several detailed layers of screening of the refugees being considered for the scheme takes place in the camps before families are accepted onto the scheme.
- Phase 1 of the scheme was completed over Christmas 2015, and the learning from those Councils taking part is summarised in Appendix 3.

Asylum Seeker Dispersal Area (ASDA).

- The Local Authority expresses an interest in becoming an Asylum Seeker Dispersal Area.
- Local Police/Education/Health involvement is critical to successful project.
- Government have appointed a number of agencies across the Country to provide accommodation and support, with G4S covering the East Midlands. There is no direct Local Authority involvement in this process.
- In districts offering to take part in the scheme, G4S identify areas where they can obtain sufficient private rented accommodation at appropriate rent levels to make a location viable to them.
- Locations and individual properties are then proposed, to be approved by Local Authority/Police prior to commissioning.
- Asylum Seekers cannot claim benefits or work until their applications are determined.

- Asylum applications typically take up to 6 months to be processed, but can be much quicker depending on the individuals circumstances.
 - Typically far more individuals than families are rehoused through this scheme.
 - No Government funding is available for support services, other than that provided by G4S as part of their housing and support contract.
- 1.3 Participation in both schemes is currently on a voluntary basis, although there have been suggestions that unless sufficient Councils come forward to take part, the Home Office may consider compulsion for the Asylum Seeker programme. Government officials have confirmed that the two schemes are not linked, in terms of agreeing to be part of one scheme reducing the need to contribute to the other.
- 1.4 Discussions have been underway at several levels between officers from District Councils across Leicestershire with a view to establishing a political and officer level consensus to a shared way forward. This has involved meetings at a strategic level under the umbrella of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) attended by the Director of Housing, and tactical level discussions in a sub Group of County Chief Housing Officers (CHOG) attended by the Head of Housing.
- 1.5 The outcome from these meetings has been that most Districts are proposing to take a number of Syrian Refugees per annum. As a County (bar one authority), we are not currently proposing to offer to support the Asylum Seeker Dispersal Area programme. The reason for not offering to take part in the ASDA scheme is that a significant number of asylum seekers have already been rehoused in the East Midlands, and there are other sub regions that have not yet taken any substantive numbers.
- 1.6 Having carefully considered the implications of rehousing Syrian Refugees, it is recommended that we offer to accept 2 family units per year. The size of these families will clearly be a matter for the Government agencies to determine, and we will need to source appropriate accommodation once we are made aware of this.

2 DELIVERY OF THE PROJECT

- 2.1 If our proposal is accepted we will deliver the SVPRS requirements through a project management process and structure. Utilising the existing Welfare Reform Corporate Action Team as the Project Board, a sub group will be formed with key internal and external partner agencies to establish the required contacts and protocols at a local level.
- 2.2 As it is likely that a number of Councils in Leicestershire will be taking part in this scheme it is proposed that a joint approach be taken to the procurement of support and welfare services, utilising contacts within the Leicester City Council area, where there is more experience of rehousing asylum seekers and refugees over an extended time period. Buying in this capacity and skills is considered to be far more cost effective than establishing our own skills base given the proposed numbers of people to be rehoused. At a Countywide level the sub group of Chief Housing Officers Group formed to oversee this process will meet to coordinate any procurement/support related activities, and share

learning. Discussions are ongoing about the possibility of appointing a Support Coordinator to work across the participating districts.

- 2.3 The Council will liaise with partner agencies in identifying suitable areas where the refugees may be resettled, and will have a key role to play in supporting the integration of refugees into local communities and promoting positive community relations. Existing support groups for refugees in Leicester have indicated they will be able to work on a county wide basis, and the Council will coordinate other support activities to harness input from local people who wish to support the new arrivals.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There will inevitably be some indirect cost implication for the Council in supporting the SVPRS, but a majority of the costs are envisaged as being funded from the Government Grant identified in Appendix 1. In practical terms, one of the District Councils, most likely Charnwood, will be required to act as the “administering authority” for Government grant purposes, and will then distribute funding to the participating Councils.
- 3.2 As there is no proposal to become an ASDA there are no cost implications.

Breakdown of local authority funding for Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme

Year 1 funding

Year 1 funding is available from the Overseas Development Aid budget to fund costs of Syrian refugees on a per person tariff basis. **The year 1 tariff is £8,520 for direct local authority costs.**

There is also additional support for educational and medical needs. In addition, the refugee will be able to access welfare benefit payments (subject to the statutory limit) and other public services.

Year 2-5 funding

Year 2-5 funding for costs borne by a local authority are also calculated on a per person tariff. It will be paid to local authorities as an un-ring fenced grant to assist with costs incurred supporting refugees. It will be for the local authority to determine the best use of the funds to support the placements in their area. The type of services it will fund can include for example, integration support such as additional English language training and social care.

Existing funding mechanism will be used to providing funding for schools and health services required by placements.

Funding is broken down as follows:

Year 2 tariff is £5,000

Year 3 tariff is £3,700

Year 4 tariff is £2,300

Year 5 tariff is £1,000

The extreme cases fund is worth 15% of the overall tariff costs each year. Across 2016/17 to 2019/20 we estimate that the extreme cases fund will be worth £16.5m

Payment mechanism

We will work with local authorities to agree payment mechanisms as well as details on how the extreme cases fund will be determined.

SYRIAN VULNERABLE PERSONS RELOCATION SCHEME

STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

1. Section 1 – Delivery Requirements

- 1.1 The Syrian VPR scheme is made up of two elements.
 - 1.1.1 **Pre arrival** – Provision of medical and travel services enabling the migration of accepted Beneficiaries to the UK;
 - 1.1.2 **Post arrival** – Housing provision, initial reception arrangements, casework and orientation support including English language provision.
- 1.2 The Authority requires the following deliverables:

2. Post Arrival services

Provision of accommodation:

- 2.1 The Recipient will meet and greet arriving Beneficiaries from the relevant airport and escort them to their properties briefing them on how to use the amenities
- 2.2 The Recipient will arrange accommodation for the arriving Beneficiaries which meets local authority standards and which will be available on their arrival and is affordable and sustainable
- 2.3 The Recipient will ensure that the accommodation is furnished appropriately. The furniture package should not include luxury items. This means that food storage, cooking and washing facilities can be provided but the facilities should not include the provision of other white goods or brown goods, i.e. TV's, DVD players or any other electrical entertainment appliances.
 - 2.3.1 The Recipient will ensure that the Beneficiaries are registered with utility companies and ensure that arrangements for payments are put in place (no pre pay/card accounts)
 - 2.3.2 The Recipient will provide briefings on the accommodation and health and safety issues for all new arrivals including the provision of an emergency contact point

Casework support service:

- 2.4 The Recipient will ensure that Beneficiaries are provided with a welcome pack of groceries on their arrival
- 2.5 The Recipient will provide a cash/ clothing allowances for each Beneficiary of £200 – this is to ensure they have sufficient funds to live on while their claim for benefits is being processed.
- 2.6 The Recipient will provide advice and assistance with registering for mainstream benefits and services and signposting to other advice and information giving agencies – this support includes:
 - 2.6.1 Assisting with registration for and collection of Biometric Residence Permits following arrival
 - 2.6.2 Registering with local schools, English language and literacy classes

- 2.6.3 Attending local Job Centre Plus appointments for benefit assessments
- 2.6.4 Registering with a local GP
- 2.6.5 Advice around and referral to appropriate mental health services and to specialist services for victims of torture as appropriate
- 2.6.6 Providing assistance with access to employment
- 2.7 The Recipient shall put in place a support plan for each family or individual for the 12 month period of their support to facilitate their orientation into their new home/area.
- 2.8 The Recipient shall put in place arrangements for the provision of English language classes which Beneficiaries should be able to access within one month of arrival. This should be provided following an assessment to determine the appropriate level of provision. This provision should be delivered by an accredited English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provider. This ESOL provision should be made available until such time as suitable mainstream provision becomes available or until 12 months after arrival (whichever is sooner). The purpose of the language tuition is to ensure that Beneficiaries are able to carry out basic transactions within the communities in which they have been placed.
- 2.9 Throughout the period of resettlement support the Recipient will ensure interpreting services are available.
- 2.10 The above services will be provided through a combination of office based appointments, drop in sessions, outreach surgeries and home visits.

Requirements for Beneficiaries with special needs/assessed community care needs

- 2.11 Where Beneficiaries are identified as potentially having special needs/community care needs the Authority will ensure, as far as possible that these needs are clearly identified and communicated to the Recipient 6 weeks prior to the arrival of the Beneficiaries.
- 2.12 Where special needs/community care needs are identified only after arrival in the UK, the Recipient will use its best endeavours to ensure that care is provided by the appropriate mainstream services as quickly as possible

3. General Requirements

Hours of operation:

- 3.1 The Recipient shall note that the Authority's offices perform normal business during the hours times of 09.00 to 17.00 on Working Days
- 3.2 The Programme as defined in the Statement of Requirements (SoR) shall be provided on each Working Day. The Authority recognises that in the interests of efficiency the exact availability and timings of the various service elements will vary. It is envisaged that some Out of Hours provision will be required from the Recipient
- 3.3 All premises used to deliver the Programme elements should meet all regulatory requirements and be suitable for the purpose.
- 3.4 The Recipient and/or its Delivery Partners shall develop, maintain and implement the following procedures:
 - 3.4.1 A procedure for Beneficiaries to complain about the service provided by the Recipient.
 - 3.4.2 A procedure for managing and reporting critical incidents. The Authority must be advised of such incidents as soon as reasonably possible, but in any event by the end of the next Working Day

Personnel standards:

- 3.5 The Recipient shall ensure that the recruitment, selection and training of its Staff, including persons employed by or as agents or sub-contractors to the Recipient, are consistent with the standards of service required for the performance of the service. The Recipient will fully equip and train staff to ensure they are able to fulfil their roles and ensure that appropriate and sufficient security provisions are made for all staff undertaking face-to-face activities. Also, the Recipient shall ensure that staffing levels are appropriate at all times for the purposes of the service and ensure the security and well-being of all Beneficiaries, dependent children and its staff.
- 3.6 The Recipient shall ensure that all applicants for employment in connection with the Requirement are obligated to declare on their application forms any previous criminal convictions subject always to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 3.7 In addition, the Recipient shall ensure that all Staff (including volunteers and sub-contractors):
 - 3.7.1 employed or engaged have the right to work in the United Kingdom under applicable immigration Law
 - 3.7.2 Disclosure and Barring Service checks are undertaken on any potential Staff member. The results of such checks must be known before any employee undertakes duties requiring contact. Where such checks reveal prior criminal convictions that might reasonably be regarded as relevant to the appropriateness of the individual to have unsupervised access, particularly to children under the age of 18, or where such checks are not possible because of identification issues, the Recipient shall follow its internal policy and carry out an appropriate risk assessment before an offer of employment is made.
 - 3.7.3 who are likely to have unsupervised access to children under the age of 18 have been instructed in accordance with National Child Protection Guidelines and Area Child Protection Committee guidance and procedures.
 - 3.7.4 Providing immigration advice should be known to the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) in accordance with the regulatory scheme specified under Part 5 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999. The Recipient shall use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that Staff do not provide immigration advice or immigration services unless they are "qualified" or "exempt" as determined and certified by OISC.
- 3.8 The Recipient shall, on request, provide the Authority with details of all staff (and volunteers and sub-contractor agents) delivering the service in this schedule.
- 3.9 The Recipient shall, on request, provide the Authority with CVs and/or job descriptions for all members of staff selected to work on the project.
- 3.10 The Recipient shall use all reasonable endeavours to comply with the requirements of the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- 3.11 The Recipient shall implement the Programme in compliance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Information sharing:

- 3.12 The Authority expects the Recipient to share relevant information on the delivery of the Programme and on Beneficiaries by signing a Sharing of Information Protocol with relevant deliverers of the Programme.

- 3.13 Beneficiaries will be expected to sign a consent form to confirm their willingness to share personal data with executive bodies and relevant deliverers of the programme. The Recipient will retain these forms and will allow inspection by the Authority as requested.

Lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme

- Manage expectations – early contact with refugees (whilst still in camps if possible) allows expectation to be managed and avoid disappointment on arrival and allocation of property.
- Don't assume information is accurate – some information from camps proved to be incomplete or inaccurate regarding medical issues in particular, requiring last minute alterations to properties.
- Can be last minute changes of plan/family make up – at any time up to the boarding of the plane the refugees can decide not to come.
- Language skills are critical – whilst some children have an understanding of English, many adults do not, so establishing this is critical to supporting self sufficiency.
- Initial support very resource intensive – due to documentation and language issues, simple claim processes for registering at Doctors, or claiming benefits can take much longer than a normal application, and this needs to be factored into support costs.
- Strong work ethic in most Refugees – no welfare system in Syria, and many of those relocating have professions/skills which they can call upon once their accreditation is converted to something recognised in the UK.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 3 MAY 2016

Title of report	HRA ASSET DISPOSALS
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To update Cabinet regarding the proposed disposal and redevelopment of decommissioned sheltered schemes and communal garage sites.
Reason for Decision	This is an update report rather than a report seeking a decision
Council Priorities	Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Costs to be met from within existing approved budgets
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	Risks will be managed through the corporate performance management framework
Equalities Impact Screening	N/A
Human Rights	No implications
Transformational Government	N/A
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory

Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	None
Background papers	Report to Cabinet - 8 March 2016 – HRA Sheltered Housing and Garage Site Review.
Recommendations	IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CABINET NOTE THE CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In March 2016 Cabinet approved the decommissioning of Queensway House and was advised that initial market testing would commence in respect of the disposal of this site along with the already decommissioned sites at Westgate and Woulds Court. This market testing would include the future potential use of various communal garage sites as described in the 2015-2020 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Management Strategy.
- 1.2 In line with the HRA Asset Management Strategy, the options for each decommissioned site will be developed using the criteria below, and all other potential uses for these schemes will be considered:
- 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 the 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.
- 1.3 Any proposal to dispose will fall under the Housing Revenue Account Disposal Policy approved by Cabinet on 3 March 2015, which states that any assets with a value of £50,001 and over will be referred to Cabinet for decision prior to disposal.

- 1.4 The report to Cabinet in March 2016 indicated that a further report would be taken back to Cabinet in May 2016, regarding the recommended future use of the remaining decommissioned sheltered schemes and the future potential use of various communal garage sites.

2.0 POTENTIAL FOR COUNCIL NEW BUILD

- 2.1 Consideration has been given to the Council building new affordable homes on each of the three decommissioned sheltered scheme sites and financial modelling has been undertaken to assess feasibility of providing the following units:

Scheme	Units	Assumed Cost	Unit Weekly Rent
Westgate	4 x 1 bed flats	£1,545,000	£83.94
	3 x 2 bed bungalows		£90.23
	5 x 2 bed houses		£90.23
	1 x 3 bed house		£104.41
Queensway	6 x 2 bed houses	£760,000	£90.23
Woulds Court	8 x 2 bed houses	£1,014,000	£90.23

- 2.2 Financial outcomes have been modelled over a 30 year period for each scheme individually. HRA resources are very limited and the modelling is based on utilising £72,600 of s.106 receipts that are currently available to be called upon, and then borrowing using the existing headroom within the HRA.

- 2.3 The table below shows the results of that modelling over the 30 year period.

Scheme	Cashflow, before interest £'000	30 year interest cost £'000	Total Cashflow £'000
Westgate	37	-1,400	-1,363
Queensway	18	-626	-608
Woulds Court	0	-893	-893

- 2.4 The modelling clearly demonstrates that there is a significant overall negative cashflow and that the HRA could not currently support the development, without significant subsidy.

3 TESTING THE MARKET

- 3.1 Given the modelling results above, officers have undertaken market testing to gauge the level of interest in these sites, and in communal garage sites.
- 3.2 Officers prioritised eighteen of the Council's communal garage sites as having the best potential for housing redevelopment along with the three decommissioned sheltered schemes.
- 3.3 These twenty one sites were geographically grouped and six registered providers (RPs), with a track record of operating in the local area, and eight local building developers were approached to gauge the level of market interest prior to seeking formal approval from Cabinet to proceed with more specific proposals for each of the sites.
- 3.4 Those approached were asked to provide:
- An indication whether they would be potentially interested in purchasing any, some, or all of the sites highlighted, or any combination of the sites;
 - A broad indication of the price they might be willing to offer for any site(s) in which they might be interested in purchasing;
 - An indication of what type / tenure mix of accommodation they might be looking to develop on any site(s) in which they were interested.
- 3.5 Potential purchasers were also advised of the factors that the council would consider, including:-
- Offer price;
 - Willingness to take on less attractive sites;
 - Type and tenure of the housing being proposed;
 - Ability to lever in any external grant / funding;
 - Any other 'added value' they could offer.

4 EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

- 4.1 None of the local building developers expressed an interest in purchasing any of the twenty one sites. Two did however respond indicating that the sites were too small for their respective business models.
- 4.2 Two RPs have responded positively, RP1 and RP2, and a third, RP3 has indicated that they would like the chance to discuss the individual sites moving forwards with a view to putting a viability package together for our consideration. A summary of the RP1 and RP2 responses is attached as Appendix One to this report. This appendix is confidential.
- 4.3 As a very indicative expression of interest at this stage, RP1 have advised that they would prioritise Westgate and Queensway House and would be willing to look at a package of garage sites for redevelopment, if they were able to take forward either Westgate or Queensway House.

- 4.4 RP2 have also expressed a strong indicative preference for Westgate and for two communal garage sites at North/South Close Blackfordby. Similarly they have also indicated a willingness to look at a package of garage sites for redevelopment, if they were able to take forward one or both of their preferred sites for development.
- 4.5 Garage sites values are deemed to be negligible, and additional options including self build and providing hard standings for parking will be explored, especially where there is no market interest.

5 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 In light of the lack of initial interest from commercial property developers, and subsequent discussions with the valuer, further market testing is being undertaken in relation to the three decommissioned sheltered schemes and specific garage sites at Blackfordby, Curzon Street, Ibstock, Ellistown and Newton Burgoland.
- 5.2 The valuer has provided the names of smaller developers he considers might be interested in developing one or more of the above sites and details have been forwarded with a view to the Council receiving additional expressions of interest for consideration.
- 5.3 In the meantime, further work will be undertaken in relation to the sites which generated little or no interest from RPs or developers, in order to establish any potential site constraints and if some or all could be packaged together for disposal.
- 5.4 A further report will be brought to Cabinet on 14 June 2016 to seek delegated powers for the Director of Housing, with support from s151 Officer, and in consultation with the Housing Portfolioholder to negotiate on behalf of the Council with all interested parties regarding the disposal and redevelopment of these sites.

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Likely to contain exempt information under paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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