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Meeting	**CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**
Time/Day/Date	6.30 pm on Wednesday, 8 December 2021
Location	Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville
Officer to contact	Democratic Services 01530 454512

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**	
	To receive questions from members of the public under rule no.10 of the Council Procedure Rules. The procedure rule provides that members of the public may ask any question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties which affect the District, provided that three clear days' notice in writing has been given to the Head of Legal and Support Services.	
4.	**MINUTES**	
	To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on	**3 - 6**
5.	**ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**	
	To consider any items to be included in the work programme. The plan of forthcoming Cabinet decisions and the current work programme are attached for information.	**7 - 22**
6.	**DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS AND COUNCIL TAX 2021/22**	
	Report of the Head of Finance	**23 - 56**
7.	**CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY**	
	Report of the Strategic Director	**57 - 120**

Circulation:

Councillor R Boam (Chairman)
Councillor B Harrison-Rushton (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor E G C Allman
Councillor D Bigby
Councillor A J Bridgen
Councillor G Hoult
Councillor A C Saffell
Councillor S Sheahan
Councillor N Smith
Councillor M B Wyatt

MINUTES of a meeting of the CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2021

Present: Councillor R Boam (Chairman)

Councillors B Harrison-Rushton, D Bigby, A J Bridgen, G Hoult, A C Saffell, S Sheahan, N Smith and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr A Barton, Mr D Bates, M D'Oyly-Watkins, Mr C Elston, Mrs C Hammond, Ms R Haynes, K Hiller, Mr C Lambert, Mr M Murphy, Mr P Sanders, Mrs R Wallace and Mr P Wheatley

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor E Allman.

23. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

24. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

None.

25. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2021.

It was moved by Councillor A C Saffell, seconded by Councillor A Bridgen and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

26. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the inclusion of any items to the work programme. The plan of forthcoming Cabinet decisions and the current work programme were set out in the agenda for information.

Questions were asked in relation to the content of the forthcoming Customer Services Strategy, particularly if it would include a discussion on the new location of the service. It was explained that the strategy would be focused on the policies and procedures required to run the service moving forward rather than the location. Therefore, a request was made by Councillor Wyatt for the addition of an item specifically to discuss the proposed new location of the Customer Services Team, due to the impact it would have on an already established business on the premises. A discussion was had on the process for including an item on the workplan and the scoping work required. The Strategic Director would provide the scoping form to Councillor Wyatt following the meeting.

Following a question in relation to the reporting timescales for the North West Leicestershire Visitor Economy report, it was agreed for further information to be provided to Councillor D Bigby outside of the meeting.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Committee Work Programme be noted.

27. 2021/22 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development introduced his report which provided an update on the Councils key objectives and performance indicators for the period July to September 2021.

During the full discussion, several questions of clarity were sought and answered by officers from the relevant service area.

In relation to the new market, a Member expressed disappointment as he felt it did not live up to expectations made prior to the opening. Comments were also received that this was an opinion supported by local residents on social media. The Head of Community Services explained that the new market formed part of a bigger scheme for Marlborough Square and Members would see further improvements as the project moved forward. Members were assured that dedicated staff were supporting stall holders and dealing with all comments or complaints received.

In response to a question on the context for customer satisfaction figures, the Strategic Director agreed to obtain more detail on the matter and provide it to Councillor Sheahan outside of the meeting.

A question was raised on the unmet target for the time taken to re-let properties. The Head of Housing responded that the unmet target was due to several issues including the greater number of properties in the system, the restrictions in place due to the Covid Pandemic and better partnership working with housing associations which had led to the transferral of tenants. He was confident that targets would get back on track.

A discussion was had on the number of new council homes delivered and reference was made to the recent decision of Cabinet, setting a target for affordable homes over a five-year period. Officers confirmed that they were confident that the affordable homes target could be reached and at the request of a Member, it was agreed to circulate the breakdown of affordable housing numbers across the district outside of the meeting.

A comment was made on the action plan to tackle health inequalities and an enquiry was made into when this would be competed. Members were informed that as the work was being led by Leicestershire County Council officers could not influence the timescales, however more information should be available as part of the next performance report.

As requested during discussion, it was agreed to provide Councillor S Sheahan with further information on the number of customers that had difficulty in the repayment of business rates.

A discussion was held on the green homes grant and interest was shown in the workings of air source pump heating systems. The Head of Housing offered to arrange a viewing of the system in an empty property as soon as practicable, at which all Members of the Committee would be invited.

A concern was raised in relation to the heating of the new leisure centre with gas and the review of the system being undertaken 12 months after the opening of the centre. The Head of Community Services explained that due to the complicated heating management system for the leisure centre, monthly monitoring would be undertaken with a full review at

12 months. Members were assured that work was already underway on a possible retrofittable system for the future. Members would be kept informed of the progress.

Some concerns were raised about the way Coalville pavements were recently deep cleaned due to debris left behind on the shop fronts. Comments were also made about the condition of information points in Coalville that had been vandalised or weather damaged which made the area look untidy, particularly the point installed by the clock tower. Officers acknowledged the issue occurred during the deep cleanse of pavements and confirmed that this was rectified by the company with lessons learnt when cleansing other areas in the district. Members were encouraged to report any untidy information points so that they could be addressed.

Suggestions were made for the use of cameras that detect speed and sound to deter unacceptable driving on the highways around the district. The Head of Community Services acknowledged that cameras were planned in Castle Donnington and would ensure that this would be looked into as the options were developed in partnership with local stakeholders.

It was moved by Councillor B Harrison-Rushton, seconded by Councillor A Bridgen and

RESOLVED THAT:

a) The report be noted.

b) Comments made by the Committee be provided to Cabinet when it considers the report at its meeting on 7 December 2021.

28. REVIEW OF MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The Head of Finance presented the report to Members acknowledging the slightly later reporting timescales due to the still awaited new homes bonus figures, along with the outcome of the spending review. Although this information was still not available officers were confident that financial planning could still progress.

A discussion was had on the relevance of recommendation two within the report to put forward budget proposals, as some Members felt it was difficult to do this without the full budget commentary, which was usually received at this point in the budget process. A suggestion was made to delay this recommendation to the next meeting where more information would be available. The Head of Finance assured Members that when the full budget proposals were considered at the next meeting in December, there would still be an opportunity to put forward suggestions. The recommendation within the report was to allow Members to put forward any initial thoughts if they wished to.

The Head of Finance also offered to meet with any Member to discuss the budget proposals in more detail and to work through any alternative budget proposals.

As a result of discussions about the differing budget scenarios within the report, a comment was made highlighting the additional £0.3million income from the pessimistic projections and it was questioned how this would be possible without a raise in council tax. The Head of Finance agreed to share the budget projection breakdown with all Members of the Committee outside of the meeting to allow further understanding.

In response to a question about the effects of inflation on the general fund, the Head of Finance confirmed that there was a forecast for inflation and allowances would be made for this. As the majority of expenditure was for salaries, provisions would also be made for the ongoing pay negotiations and then savings would be calculated for both long and short term.

A comment was made on the year on year growing gap between the optimistic reserve balance projections in comparison to the other detailed scenarios, and it was questioned if this was an accumulative result of not raising council tax. The Head of Finance reported that it was due to several factors including council tax rates.

Councillor D Bigby asked officers to address the environment and climate change target in the forthcoming budget, as well as the consideration of adequate funds to keep Ashby Tourist Centre open.

It was moved by Councillor B Harrison-Rushton, seconded by Councillor G Hoult and

RESOLVED THAT:

Comments of the Committee be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.40 pm

Corporate Scrutiny Committee – WORK PROGRAMME (as at 30/11/21)

Date of Meeting	Item	Lead Officer	Witnesses	Agenda Item Duration
5 January 2022				
5 January 2022	Draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022/23 - 2026/27	Dan Bates, Head of Finance	-	15 minutes
5 January 2022	Draft Investment Strategy - Service and Commercial 2022/23	Dan Bates, Head of Finance	-	15 minutes
5 January 2022	Draft 2022/23 Capital Strategy	Dan Bates, Head of Finance	-	15 minutes
5 January 2022	Housing Asset Management Plan 2021/2023	Jas Singh, Housing Asset Management Team Manager	-	15 minutes
5 January 2022	North West Leicestershire Visitor Economy Plan	Paul Wheatley, Head of Economic Regeneration	-	20 minutes
5 January 2022	Recommendations of the Scrutiny Cross Party Working Group – Scrutiny Work Programming	Andy Barton, Strategic Director	-	20 minutes
9 March 2022				
9 March 2022	2021/22 Quarter 3 Performance Report	Mike Murphy, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development		15 minutes

Requests for Items – None at present

Date request Received	Requested by	Summary of request	Consideration by scrutiny Y/N	Reasons

Principles and Criteria used for Assessing Items Put Forward

Identify Issues for consideration by Scrutiny

- Consulting with members of Scrutiny Committees, senior officers, Cabinet members – horizon scanning on policy development
- Looking at the corporate priorities, Council Delivery Plan and Cabinet Forward plan – identify key issues/topics for investigation/inquiry
- Considering events and decisions in the Council's calendar which could require an input/consultation via scrutiny – eg budget setting, CDP development
- Considering requests from members – eg via another forum or scoping report submitted
- Evaluating the Council's performance – eg quarterly reports, end of year reports, reviewing success of a particular scheme or initiative
- Reviewing any follow up work required after previous scrutiny work

Prioritise the potential list of scrutiny topics based on factors including

- the resources required to deliver it (from members, offices and financially)
- the value and level of impact which could be achieved
- link to the council's priorities
- whether it is a regular recurring item which requires consideration before Cabinet/Council approval
- consideration of the guidance for selecting scrutiny topics

Topics **are** suitable for Scrutiny when	Topics **are not** suitable for Scrutiny when
Scrutiny could have an impact and add value	The issue is already being addressed elsewhere and change is imminent
The topic is of high local importance and reflects the concerns of local people	The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and will be referred there)
The resources are available that would be required to conduct the review – staff and budget	Scrutiny involvement would have limited or no impact on outcomes
It avoids duplication of work elsewhere	The topic would be sub-judice or prejudicial to the councils interests
The issues is one that the committee can realistically influence	The topic is too broad to make a review realistic
The issue is related to an area where the council or one of its partners is not performing well	New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected in the next year

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DRAFT Notice of Executive Key Decisions

The attached notice lists the matters which are likely to be the subject of a key decision by the Council's executive and executive decision making bodies. This notice is produced in accordance with the Constitution adopted by North West Leicestershire District Council and will be published a minimum of 28 days before the date on which a key decision is to be made on behalf of the Council.

Key Decisions

A key decision means a decision taken by the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet, an area or joint committee or an individual in connection with the discharge of a function which is the responsibility of the executive and which is likely:

(a) to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the Council;

(c) for the purposes of (a) and (b) above £100,000 shall be regarded as significant in terms of expenditure or savings, and any issue which, in the opinion of the Leader is likely to have an impact on people, shall be regarded as significant in terms of impact on communities.

The Council's Executive

The Council's executive committee is the Cabinet. The Cabinet comprises:

Councillor R Blunt	-	Leader	Councillor A Woodman	-	Community Services
Councillor R Ashman	-	Deputy Leader and Infrastructure	Councillor N J Rushton	-	Corporate
Councillor T Gillard	-	Business and Regeneration	Councillor R D Bayliss	-	Housing, Property & Customer Services
Councillor K Merrie MBE	-	Planning			

Confidential Items and Private Meetings of the Executive

Whilst the majority of the Cabinet's business at the meetings listed in this notice will be open to the public and media organisations to attend, there will inevitably be some business to be considered that contains, for example, confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information. This is a formal notice under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that part of the Cabinet meetings listed in this Forward Plan may be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting contain exempt information under Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. Those Items where it is considered that they should be considered in private are identified on the Notice.

Access to Agenda and Related Documents

Documents relating to the matters listed in this notice are available at least 5 clear working days prior to the date of decision as indicated below. Other documents relevant to the matters listed in this notice may be submitted to the decision maker.

If you wish to request or submit a document, or make representation in relation to any issue contained within this notice, please contact Democratic Services on telephone number 01530 454512 or by emailing memberservices@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

Executive Decisions

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private (and reason – where private	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
December 2021							
Local Plan Review - Development Strategy	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 December 2021	Councillor Keith Merrie MBE keith.merrie@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Planning Policy & Land Charges Team Manager Tel: 01530 454677 ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report Local Plan Review - Development Strategy	Issue will have been discussed at Local Plan Committee of 27 October 2021
Housing Strategy	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 December 2021	Councillor Roger Bayliss Tel: 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Housing Tel: 01530 454780 chris.lambert@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Draft Strategy Document Housing Strategy	Community Scrutiny Committee - 29 September 2021
Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 December 2021	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Coalville Special Expenses Working Party - 12 October 2021

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private **(and reason – where private**	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
PSPO - Netherfield Lane	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 December 2021	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	PSPO - Netherfield Lane	This is a review of an existing PSPO which will include a public consultation, we would struggle to take it to scrutiny and meet the legislative deadline.
2021/22 Quarter 2 Performance Report	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 December 2021	Councillor Richard Blunt Tel: 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Tel: 01530 454518 mike.murphy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	2021/22 Quarter 2 Performance Report	Corporate Scrutiny Committee - 10 November 2021
Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 December 2021	Councillor Keith Merrie MBE keith.merrie@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Principal Planning Officer sarah.lee@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report outlining consultation comments and suggested response along with proposed changes as necessary Affordable Housing Supplemnetary Planning Document	Consultation responses to be considered by Local Plan Committee following Cabinet

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private (and reason – where private	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
January 2022							
Draft Budget and Council Tax 2021/22	Cabinet	Key	Public	11 January 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report Draft Budget and Council Tax 2021/22	Corporate Scrutiny - 8 December 2021
Housing Revenue Account Disposal and Acquisition Update	Cabinet	Key	Part Private Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) The report proposes to dispose of properties on the open market and provides independent estimations of the potential value of the property. This information is considered to be commercially sensitive at this stage of the processand is contained in the appendix.	11 January 2022	Councillor Roger Bayliss Tel: 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Housing Asset Management Team Manager jas.singh@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Disposal Policy approved by Cabinet on 21 September 2021 Housing Revenue Account Disposal and Acquisition Update	Decision being sought under approved Disposal Policy

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private (and reason – where private	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
Empty Properties	Cabinet	Key	Private Information relating to any individual. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	11 January 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Empty Properties	Not being considered by Scrutiny as decision being sought under approved Returning Houses to Homes Policy
Zero Litter Campaign	Cabinet	Key	Public	11 January 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Zero Litter Campaign	29/09/21 Dog Fouling, Fly Tipping and Littering Update
Customer Service Strategy	Cabinet	Key	Public	11 January 2022	Councillor Roger Bayliss Tel: 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services Tel: 01530 454819 andy.barton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Customer Service Strategy	Corporate Scrutiny Nov 21

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private (and reason – where private	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
Council Tax Base 2022/23	Cabinet	Key	Public	11 January 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Council Tax Base 2022/23	Not to be considered by a Scrutiny Committee - The calculation of the council tax base is prescribed in statute
Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs	Cabinet	Key	Public	11 January 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs	Not to be considered by a Scrutiny Committee. Under the constitution Cabinet are required to approve write-offs over £10,000.
February 2022							
Budget and Council Tax 2021/22	Cabinet	Key	Public	1 February 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report Budget and Council Tax 2021/22	Will have already been considered by Scrutiny and public consultation carried out

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private (and reason – where private	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
2022 - 2027 Medium Term Financial Plans	Cabinet	Key	Public	1 February 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk		Corporate Scrutiny Committee - 1 September 2021
Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022/23 and Prudential Indicators 2022/23 - 2024/25	Cabinet	Key	Public	1 February 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022/23 and Prudential Indicators 2022/23 - 2024/25	Corporate Scrutiny Committee - 5 January 2022
Investment Strategy - Service and Commercial 2022/23	Cabinet	Key	Public	1 February 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Investment Strategy - Service and Commercial 2022/23	Corporate Scrutiny Committee - 5 January 2022

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private **(and reason – where private**	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
Marlborough Square Public Realm	Cabinet	Key	Public	1 February 2022	Councillor Richard Blunt Tel: 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Economic Regeneration Tel: 01530 454 354 paul.wheatley@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report and appendices Marlborough Square Public Realm	To be considered at Scrutiny on 26th October 2021
Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Cabinet	Key	Public	1 February 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Coalville Special Expenses Working Party - 14 December 2021
North West Leicestershire visitor Economy Plan	Cabinet	Key	Public	1 February 2022	Councillor Tony Gillard Tel: 01530 452930 tony.gillard@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Economic Regeneration Tel: 01530 454 354 paul.wheatley@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	North West Leicestershire visitor Economy Plan	Corporate Scrutiny Committee - 5 January 2022

1 March 2022

There are no items to be considered.

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private (and reason – where private	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
29 March 2022							
2021/22 Quarter 3 Performance Report	Cabinet	Key	Public	29 March 2022	Councillor Richard Blunt Tel: 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Tel: 01530 454518 mike.murphy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	2021/22 Quarter 3 Performance Report	Corporate Scrutiny Committee - 9 March 2022
Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs	Cabinet	Key	Public	29 March 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs	Not to be considered by a Scrutiny Committee. Under the constitution Cabinet are required to approve write-offs over £10,000.

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private (and reason – where private	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
North West Leicestershire Economic Growth Plan 2022	Cabinet	Key	Public	29 March 2022	Councillor Tony Gillard Tel: 01530 452930 tony.gillard@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Economic Regeneration Tel: 01530 454 354 paul.wheatley@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	North West Leicestershire Economic Growth Plan 2022	To be considered by Community Scrutiny Committee 9 February 2022.
April 2022							
There are no items to be considered.							
June 2022							
Treasury Management Stewardship Report 2021/22	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 June 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Treasury Management Stewardship Report 2021/22	Audit and Governance Committee - 20 April 2022

Decision	Decision Maker	Status of Decision	Public or Private (and reason – where private	Date of Decision	Contacts	Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker	Considered by Scrutiny or other Committee
Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 June 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance Tel: 01530 454 707 dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs Former Tenant Rent Arrears, Current Tenant Rent Arrears, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Write Offs	Not to be considered by a Scrutiny Committee. Under the constitution Cabinet are required to approve write-offs over £10,000.
Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Cabinet	Key	Public	7 June 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Coalville Special Expenses Working Party - 27 April 2022

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2021

Title of Report	**DRAFT BUDGETS 2022/23**	
Presented by	Dan Bates Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer	
Background Papers	Budget and Council Tax 2021/22 – Council - 23 February 2021 Review of Medium Term Financial Plan – Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 10 November 2021	**Public Report:** Yes
Financial Implications	This report sets out the draft General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Special Expenses and Capital Programme for 2022/23. It also sets out planned changes to the fees and charges that the Council sets for some services.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	None.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	The report and its appendices set out plans to create new posts and remove vacant posts from the establishment.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Reason Agenda Item Submitted to Scrutiny Committee	For Corporate Scrutiny Committee to provide comments on the 2022/23 budgets, and the proposals within them.	
Recommendations	**THAT THE COMMITTEE PROVIDE COMMENTS ON THE BUDGET PROPOSALS CONTAINED WITHIN THE REPORT AND THE DRAFT BUDGET BEFORE CONSIDERATION BY CABINET ON 11 JANUARY 2022.**	

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 This report seeks Corporate Scrutiny Committee feedback on the proposed changes to the budget for 2022/23, which will be shared with Cabinet on 11 January 2022 when they consider the draft budget for wider consultation. This report presents:

- The draft General Fund budget (Section 2)
- The draft Housing Revenue Account budget (Section 3)
- The Council's draft five-year Capital Programme (Section 4)
- The draft Special Expenses budget (Section 5).

1.2 Members of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee were invited to submit ideas for consideration into the budget at their meeting in November 2021. Section 6 sets out the suggestions received and provides an initial response to those suggestions.

2. GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2022/23

2.1 Funding

2.1.1 The funding position for the general fund remains uncertain at the time of publication. The Local Government Finance Settlement will provide further detail on key funding sources for the General Fund. As this is not anticipated until late in December the draft budgets have been based on the assumptions set out in the medium term financial plan, which this Committee considered in November 2021, and adjusted for new information that has been received through Government's autumn budget. The key funding changes are:

- **Reduction in New Homes Bonus.** Reduction in this grant from two years' reward to one year has resulted in a reduction in funding from £2.452 million in 2021/22 to £0.891 million in 2022/23.

- **Increase in the Lower Tier Service Grants**. This grant was introduced last year to effectively provide transitional support and ensure no authority received a reduction in Spending Power. Although it is not certain that this grant will be retained in 2022/23, our forecast has assumed that the Government will again choose stability and provide for no reduction in Spending Power. This would result in a grant of £1.577 million. There is a high degree of uncertainty with this estimate and this will only be confirmed when the provisional settlement is released.

- **Increase in Business rates**. Growth in the district is expected to result in a significant increase in business rate income, from £5.9 million currently forecast for this year to £8.6 million for 2022/23. As a result of this growth, the use of the business rates reserve is reduced to £0, with a forecast £3.0 million remaining set aside within the reserve to offset future business rate volatility.

- **New Government grant of £65,000.** This is an estimate of how much the Council may receive from the Governments £1.6 billion per annum grant announced in the Autumn budget. The breakdown of this funding has yet to be confirmed and may be subject to change.

- **Council Tax income is assumed to increase by £112,000.** This is caused by growth in the district and is currently an indicative figure until the council tax base has been recalculated.

  The value of the district's share of council tax remains frozen. Had the council tax been increased by the maximum amount, which is assumed to be £5 on a band D property, then the Council would receive an additional £176,000 in council tax.

2.1.2 The net impact is an increase in anticipated funding of £0.7 million. This may change once the local government finance settlement is confirmed, which is expected to occur in late December 2021. A briefing will be provided to all Members once the settlement is confirmed.

2.2 Budget Proposals

2.2.1 Appendix 1a sets out the most significant planned changes to the general fund budgets for 2022/23. The proposals include:

- **Cost pressures totalling £1.1 million.** The most significant cost pressure relates to our current staffing costs, which are due to increase by £861,000, due to a combination of increases in national insurance and pension contributions, assumed 2% pay award in 2022/23, additional anticipated staff cost increases in the 2021/22 year and the need for market supplements on some posts.

- **Changes to income, which see income increase by £397,000.** The most significant changes include higher income from the sale of recycling materials and the introduction of fees for additional garden waste bin collections.

- **Budget savings totalling £330,000.** This is where the council has identified areas where budgets can be decreased.

- **Service Developments totalling £162,000.** Service developments are where there are planned improvements to a service which bring additional costs. Considering the funding position, these developments have been sought to keep to a minimum.

2.3 Fees and charges

2.3.1 The council provides a large number of services to local residents that incur a fee. Appendix 1b sets out key changes to fees and charges for 2022/23 and whether those fees are expected to generate a surplus or are subsidised by the general fund.

2.3.2 As noted above, there is a new fee for 2022/23, which will see properties with more than one garden waste bin charged £45 for each additional bin they have. This is estimated to increase the net income by £210,700 during the year. Income estimates are based on assessment of the number of people who have a garden waste bin who will elect to have a second bin with the extra charge.

2.4 General Fund Budget Summary

2.4.1 Appendix 1c shows the draft summary general fund budget position for 2021/22 and 2022/23. Table 1 below highlights that the net revenue expenditure has increased by £1.2 million whilst the anticipated funding has increased by £0.7 million. This means the funding received is just covering net revenue expenditure currently. However, anticipated savings made through the Journey to Self Sufficiency Programme over the coming year, totalling £895,000 will see a contribution to reserves of £968,000 by the end of the year if they are achieved.

Table 1: Changes to the General Fund budget from the previous year

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	Movement £'000
Total Funding	(16,039)	(16,766)	(727)
Net Revenue Expenditure	15,506	16,693	1,187
Funding (surplus)/deficit	**(533)**	**(73)**	**460**
Targeted J2SS savings	(570)	(895)	(325)
Contributions to/(from) reserves	1,103	968	(135)

2.4.2 The budget position shows a surplus position of about £1 million in 2022/23 assuming that J2SS savings are made and provided that assumptions in respect of funding prevail. This surplus should be viewed in the context of the medium term which although remaining uncertain in terms of detail is likely to see significant reductions in funding income as and when business rates growth retention is reset. It is for this reason that decisions made in this year's budget process will impact upon the authority's ability to achieve medium term financial sustainability.

2.4.3 Further work is ongoing with CLT and budget holders to challenge the base budget and find additional savings and income prior to the final budget setting in February 2022.

2.5 General Fund Reserves

2.5.1 The General Fund has both the journey to self-sufficiency reserve and business rates reserve to help manage deficits and funding volatility. The combined value of these reserves is forecast to be £9.4 million on 31 March 2022 and will rise to £10.4 million by 31 March 2023 based on the current budget.

2.5.2 As noted in the previous report on the medium-term financial plan, these reserves are anticipated to be used within the medium term when funding falls, predominantly as a result of an anticipated reset in business rates baseline. The revised figures, shown within appendix 1c, indicate that the general fund reserves will be fully used during 2024/25 based on our current plans.

2.5.3 A review of the medium-term financial plans will be undertaken prior to the budget Council in February, focusing on:

- **Updates from the Local Government Finance Settlement**. Our medium term financial position is very sensitive to the Settlement. The latest advice from our specialist advisors suggests a more favourable settlement is anticipated than previously reported. The key areas of interest for North West Leicestershire are: the nature and timing of the business rates reset, with any delay bringing significant benefit to the Council; the future of the New Homes Bonus, as Government is expected to respond to a recent consultation on the future of the New Homes Bonus; and detail on the transitional relief that Government has historically provided to local authorities that are negatively impacted by the changes, in order to ensure a degree of financial stability.

- **The updated budget position**, including any further savings identified as part of the continued budget review set out in paragraph 2.4.3.

- **Enhanced modelling of future business rates.** The current forecasts are based on a 1.5% growth rate per annum. Enhancing modelling will look to better using planning and economic development intelligence to more accurately forecast growth, particularly with respect to new large business developments within the area.

3. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2022/23

3.1 Funding

3.1.1 As a self-financing account, the Housing Revenue Account’s main source of income is the rents tenants pay for their home. The proposed increase in rents for 2022/23 is 4.1%, which is the maximum increase allowed under the current social rent policy, set by Government. It will increase rental income by £437,000 next year, to give a total rental income of £17.9 million.

3.1.2 The council will maintain its policy of capping rents at the level of the relevant Local Housing Allowance. This means all our properties will be covered by relevant benefit payments if the tenant is eligible for them. Officers estimate that around 59% of our current tenants receive either housing benefit or universal credits to support their rent payments.

3.1.3 The average weekly rent will increase from £84.45 to £87.91, an increase of £3.46 per week. Currently 34% of our socially rented properties are below the maximum charge for that property (known as the formula rent), resulting in £175,000 in lost income for 2022/23. Government’s current social rent policy does not allow for supplementary increases to rents to catch-up with formula rent, meaning rents below the formula rent level can only be returned to formula rent when a property is relet.

3.1.4 Rents are now 4.2% higher than they were in 2015/16 in nominal terms, which was the year before the four years of 1% rent reductions. Had rents kept pace with inflation since 2015/16 they would be 7.6% higher than they currently are, and the Housing Revenue Account would benefit from an additional £1.4 million in rental income in 2022/23.

3.2 Budget Proposals

3.2.1 Appendix 2a summarises the proposed changes to the HRA budgets that exceed £15,000. This includes:

- **Changes in income totalling £511,600.** This is largely due to the increased rental income described in paragraph 3.1.1.

- **Cost Pressures of £862,500.** This largely relates to the increase in costs from the in-house repairs team, which is run as an internal trading account. This account is seeing its income fall as a result of a smaller home improvement programme, but it also seeing costs increase due to covid-safe working practices and increasing material prices. The in-house repairs team budgets will be subject to further review prior to the approval of the budget by Council. There are also increasing staffing costs, mirroring the cost pressure on the general fund (see paragraph 2.2.1).

- **Service developments of £321,000.** The majority of this development is to reintroduce the cyclical painting programme, which looks to ensure external areas of properties are painted where required, as part of a preventative maintenance programme. There are also three new positions proposed to support service delivery.

- **Budget savings of £317,500**. This is mainly due to the reduced interest charges following the repaying of £13 million of loans, scheduled for March 2022.

3.3 Fees and charges

3.3.1 As with the general fund, the HRA has a number of fees and charges. Some properties have service charges, on top of the rent, to pay for specific services relevant to their properties. These are listed in appendix 2b, and the key changes to note are:

- **Increase in utility costs of 20%.** This is based on well documented rising energy costs.

- **Grounds maintenance costs increase of 3%.** This charge was reduced by 14.7% in 2021/22 as the pandemic reduced the frequency of the services tenants received in 2020. These services have still not recovered to their previous level, so the service charge has not been increased back to its previous levels, with the estimated income from grounds maintenance costs increasing by £2,800 to £97,000. Had this disruption not occurred, the current income would be around £20,000 higher.

3.3.2 In addition to this, there are a number of fees and charges for additional services we provide. These are subject to inflationary uplifts, except for the central heating charges which are increasing by 20% as per the service charges. A full list of the fees and charges are provided in appendix 2c.

3.4 Housing Revenue Account Summary

3.4.1 Appendix 2d sets out the summary HRA budget for 2022/23. As shown in table 2, the increase in income from additional rents is offset by additional expenditure. This is balanced by a planned increase to the journey to self-sufficiency savings targets and lower revenue contributions to capital outlay, which balances the budget with a £41,000 surplus.

Table 2: Changes to the Housing Revenue Account budget from the previous year

	2021/22 £'000	**2022/23 £'000**	**Movement £'000**
Income	(18,059)	(18,520)	(461)
Operating Expenditure	14,599	15,254	655
Operating (surplus)/deficit	**(3,460)**	**(3,266)**	**194**
Targeted J2SS savings	(225)	(325)	(100)
Revenue contributions to capital outlay	3,650	3,550	(100)
Net (surplus)/deficit	**(35)**	**(41)**	**(6)**

3.4.1 The table above shows that significant revenue contributions to the capital programme remain in place. This is required to fund the Housing Capital Programme, and more detail is provided in section 4.2 and 4.3.

3.5 Housing Revenue Account Reserves

3.5.1 The Housing Revenue Account is forecast to have working balances of £6.0 million at the end of the 2021/22 financial year. In order to fund the HRA Capital Programme, £5.0 million of that working balance will be transferred to fund capital works, with £3.4 million transferred in 2022/23 and the remaining £1.6 million in 2023/24. This approach delays the anticipated borrowing requirement that is set out in paragraph 4.3.2 and minimises the costs to the HRA. A minimum working balance of £1.0 million will be retained to ensure the HRA has reserves for unexpected events.

4. CAPITAL PROGRAMMES 2022/23 TO 2026/27

4.1 General Fund Capital Programme

4.1.1 The proposed General Fund capital programme is outlined in appendix 3a. The five-year programme totals £17.0 million, which is a reduction of £1.9 million from the previous 5-year programme, which is largely a result of the earlier expected completion of the new leisure centre. Key changes include:

- **Introduction of a new £3 million regeneration programme for Coalville.** This multiyear investment will be used for regeneration projects for Coalville. These projects will be subject to the approval of full business cases for the individual projects. This new programme brings the total planned investment in Coalville up to £9.8 million over the next five years.

- **Updates to the investment in our IT and systems.** This updated programme of works brings anticipated capital spend on ICT and systems to £0.7 million over five years.

- **New projects to provide new vehicle weighbridges at our depot, as well as a project to replace CCTV across Ashby and Coalville.** These projects add £99,000 in the capital programme and will introduce latest technology to improve service performance.

4.2 HRA Capital Programme

4.2.1 The proposed HRA capital programme is outlined in appendix 3b. Over the five-year period, the total programme comes to £66.8 million, an increase of £5.5 million over the previous five-year programme.

4.2.2 Key changes include:

- **Allocating £20.5 million over five years to work towards a zero-carbon programme**. Following the completion of a pilot programme of works to reduce carbon emissions on 56 of our properties in the current financial year, this five-year programme is expected to fund works to reduce the carbon emissions from over 2,000 council homes.

- **Reducing the size of the new build and supply programme by £13.6 million**. This helps to release funding for the zero-carbon programme. The remaining £13.0 million programme, when combined with carrying forward any underspends from the current years budget, is estimated to deliver 99 new affordable rented homes over the five-year period.

The new build and supply programme includes provision to begin a regeneration project, which will see 30 existing dwellings demolished and replaced with new dwellings that better serve the needs of tenants with lower carbon emissions. This will be subject to consultation with the affected tenants.

- **Reduction in the estate improvement programme by £932,000 over the five years.** This reduction predominantly comes from the other estates project line, which is used for projects such as largescale fencing replacements, and footpaths and unadopted roads budgets. A programme of £2.2 million remains to complete estate improvement works over five years, and the off-street parking element of the programme has increased by £119,000 in 2022/23.

- **Supporting Housing Improvements works have been brought forward to 2022/23.** This has the effect of increasing the budget for 2022/23 by £630,000, although the five-year programme has reduced by £420,000.

- **Additional spend of £43,000 is planned Fire Risk Assessment Remedial Works in 2022/23.**

4.3 Funding the Capital Programmes

4.3.1 Each capital programme is funded from a variety of sources, including revenue, grants and borrowing. Table 3 below summarises the funding sources for each year of the general fund and housing revenue account capital programme.

4.3.2 The housing revenue account capital programme shows a need to borrow £8.6 million over five years from 2023/24. This is due to the introduction of the £20.5 million zero carbon capital programme, which cannot be fully funded through current reserves or revenue contributions currently. The scale of the borrowing has been minimised and will be delayed for as long as possible, to minimise borrowing costs.

4.3.3 Table 3 does not include potential external funding for the Zero Carbon work in the HRA capital programme. If additional funding is received, for instance from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), the borrowing need will reduce.

Table 3: Sources of funding for the capital programmes

	2021/22 Forecast Carry Forward £'000	2022/23 Budget £'000	2023/24 Indicative £'000	2024/25 Indicative £'000	2025/26 Indicative £'000	2026/27 Indicative £'000
General Fund Capital Programme						
Capital Receipts	30	0	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	0	670	670	670	670	670
Reserves	1,649	36	2	0	0	0
Section 106 contributions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue contributions	5	22	0	0	0	0
Leasing/Unsupported Borrowing	2,766	9,966	2,341	619	592	49
General Fund Total	**4,450**	**10,694**	**3,013**	**1,289**	**1,262**	**719**
Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme						
Capital Receipts	1,303	2,471	2,670	2,257	2,184	2,241
Government Grants	0	208	207	207	180	117
Reserves	1,208	8,481	5,186	3,195	3,258	3,339
Section 106 contributions	268	219	601	12	0	0
Revenue contributions	600	3,550	4,250	4,364	4,390	4,590
External Borrowing	0	0	2,500	2,100	2,100	1,900
Housing Revenue Account Total	**3,379**	**14,929**	**15,414**	**12,135**	**12,112**	**12,187**
Total Capital Programme Funding	**7,829**	**25,623**	**18,428**	**13,424**	**13,374**	**12,906**

5. SPECIAL EXPENSES 2022/23

5.1 The Council operates a number of special expense accounts where it provides additional services specific to some areas. Appendix 4 sets out the five-year budgets for these accounts as they currently stand and show an aggregated net cost of service for special expense areas of £768,000, which will be funded from the precepts, reserves and the Localisation of Council Tax Support Grant.

5.2 Early work has focused on where the special expense precept may need to change in light of cost pressure and the overall funding position of the relevant reserve. Table 4 sets out current Special Expenses council tax increases for a band D property. These are early indicative figures that are subject to change once the council tax base has been reviewed.

Table 4: Changes to Special Expenses Council Tax for a band D property

	21/22	**Increase**	**22/23**
Coalville	£67.72	£6.09	£73.81
Whitwick	£8.87	£0.64	£9.51
Hugglescote	£18.45	-£2.77	£15.68
Coleorton	£9.22	£1.52	£10.74
Lockington & Hemington	£11.92	£1.80	£13.72
Measham	£1.73	£0.15	£1.88
Oakthorpe & Donisthorpe	£5.13	£0.63	£5.76
Ravenstone with Snibston	£1.03	£0.28	£1.31
Stretton-en-le-Field	£67.49	£5.61	£73.10
Appleby Magna	£6.05	£1.06	£7.11

6. RESPONDING TO CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS

6.1 When this Committee reviewed the revised medium term financial plans in November 2021, members were invited to provide suggestions for the 2022/23 budgets. Two comments were made by a member:

- Climate change should be considered in the development of the budget.
- The Ashby Tourist Information Centre should remain open.

6.2 Climate change has been considered in the development of this budget. The capital programme includes £20.5 million of funding for a five-year programme of works to our council houses – which is our greatest source of carbon emissions. The budgets also embed recent changes as part of the new fleet strategy, which will see the council adopt electric vehicles where possible and use Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil where it is not.

6.3 This report does not include budget proposals relating to the closure of the Ashby Tourist Information Centre.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	The budget provides funding for the Council to deliver against all its priorities.
Policy Considerations:	None
Safeguarding:	None
Equalities/Diversity:	The equality impact assessment will be completed for the draft budget to be presented to Cabinet.
Customer Impact:	Customers are likely to be impacted by the changes to fees and charges and special expenses precepts set out in this report.
Economic and Social Impact:	The General Fund capital programme allocates £9.8 million to investing in Coalville Regeneration Projects over five years.
Environment and Climate Change:	The budget sees substantial new investment in reducing our carbon emissions from our council homes, totalling £20.5 million over five years.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Public consultation will begin in January 2022.
Risks:	The budgets will be monitored throughout the year to ensure the Council remains within its funding envelope and planned budget savings are delivered.
Officer Contact	Dan Bates Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer Dan.bates@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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Appendix 1a

General Fund Budget Proposals Over £15,000

Service Developments

	Proposal	**Additional costs**	**One-off/ ongoing**
1	Feasibility study to support regenerating Coalville, including the future of the current waste and parks depots and hermitage leisure centre.	65,000	One-Off
2	Net increase in property service staff totalling 0.9 FTE	25,560	Reoccurring
3	Additional staffing within waste services in response to increasing demand	71,810	Reoccurring
	Total Service Developments	**162,370**	
	Of which are:		
	Reoccurring	*97,370*	
	One-off	*65,000*	

Cost Pressures

	Proposal	**Additional costs**	**One-off/ ongoing**
1	Increased staff costs from pay award and changes to NI and pension costs	746,522	Reoccurring
2	Increase in the Council's insurance costs	19,350	Reoccurring
3	Expected additional licencing costs when new finance system is adopted	15,000	One-off
4	Increase in staff costs due to the need for market supplements within the planning team	114,920	Reoccurring
5	New budgets for Customer Service Centre in Coalville	84,250	Reoccurring
6	Additional fuel costs resulting from price increases and the adoption of Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil as a low carbon alternative to diesel.	81,090	Reoccurring
7	Hiring of heavy good vehicles where required	121,850	One-off
8	Costs associated with decommissioning Hermitage Leisure Centre	130,000	One-off
9	Support and maintenance for the new IT networks resulting from the accommodation project	70,000	Reoccurring
	Total Cost Pressures	**1,116,132**	
	Of which are:		
	Reoccurring	1,116,132	
	One-off	266,850	

Change in income

	Proposal	Reduction in income	Increases in income	One-off/ ongoing
1	Net additional income from purchase Marlborough Centre		-74,132	Reoccurring
2	Net reduction in income from Whitwick Business Centre, following accommodation approval	119,370		Reoccurring
3	Reduced income from various licensing streams, due to lower demand.	35,460		Reoccurring
4	Temporary reduction in Newmarket rental income, due to lower occupancy and introductory discounts for traders and delay to the outdoor market provision	33,600		One-off
5	To introduce a charge of £45 for the collection of garden waste bins for properties with more than one bin.		- 210,700	Reoccurring
6	Reduction in car parking incoming, due to reduced capacity and demand. This reduction has been partially mitigated by increased fees, averaging 5.3% (generating £9,200), and proposing to stop free parking at Christmas from 2022 (generating £4,260).	32,450		Reoccurring
7	Estimated additional income from sale of recycling materials		- 332,720	Reoccurring
	Total changes in income	**220,880**	**-617,552**	
	Of which are:			
	Reoccurring	187,280	-61,552	
	One-off	33,600	0	

Budget Savings

	Proposal	Budget savings	One-off/ ongoing
1	Removal of a vacant post from the democratic services team, following efficiency gains.	-27,270	Reoccurring
2	Reduction in environmental protection budgets that are no longer needed following review.	-30,860	Reoccurring
3	Removal of vacant team manager post, with their duties redistributed and an addition 0.4 FTE post to carry out anti-social behaviour reduction initiatives	-47,520	Reoccurring
4	Removal of two vacant cleaner posts, representing 0.83 FTE	-20,000	Reoccurring
5	Anticipated savings from the council offices as a result of the accommodation project	-51,000	Reoccurring
6	Removal of a vacant administration officer	-16,530	Reoccurring
7	Contractual cost reduction from the Leisure outsourcing contract	-50,290	Reoccurring
8	Reduction in forecast bad debt	-15,000	Reoccurring
9	Removal of the Head of Customer Services post and introduction of a customer services team manager position	-21,433	Reoccurring
10	Reduced budget for consultancy support for High Speed 2 related matters	-50,000	Reoccurring
	Total Budget Savings	**-329,903**	
	Of which are:		
	Reoccurring	-329,903	
	One-off	0	

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Appendix 1b

General Fund Fees and Charges

Service	Charging Policy	2021/22 Fees	2021/22 Income Budget	2022/23 Proposed Fees	2022/23 Proposed Income Budget	Percentage change in fees	Basis for change
Appleby Magna Caravan Site Rent	Service Development	£35.20 per week	£8,630	£36.19 per week	£7,299	3.1%	Inflationary increase based on the Consumer Price Index.
Lifelines for private customers	Service Development	Basic: £4.21 per week Enhanced: £6.34 per week	£129,830	Basic: £4.34 per week Enhanced: £6.54 per week	£133,855	3.1%	Inflationary increase based on the Consumer Price Index.
Environmental Health - Licensing	Subsidised/ Full Cost Recovery	Fees vary between £3 and £64,000	£268,870	Fees vary between £3 and £64,000	£254,790	Between 1% - 3%. With statutory fees not increasing	To cover increase in costs
Environmental Health – Health and Safety	Full Cost Recovery	Fees vary between £4 and £150	£27,860	Fees vary between £4 and £155	£30,210	Between 2% - 3%.	To cover increase in costs
Environmental Health – Border Post Inspection	Full Cost Recovery	Fees vary between £25 and £192	£17,480	Fees vary between £25.50 and £193	£39,890	Between 2% - 3%.	To cover increase in costs
Environmental Health – Pest Control	Subsidised / Full Cost Recovery	Fees vary between £15.50 and £200	£29,400	Fees vary between £16 and £200	£35,580	Between 1% - 3%.	To cover increase in costs
Leisure – Football Pitches	Subsidised	Match prices: £29/£50 Team prices: £278/£502	£9,610	Match prices: £30/£51 Team prices: £284/£512	£9,810	Average of 2%	Annual increase

Waste – Bulky Collections	Full Cost Recovery	£26	£43,510	£27	£48,000	3.8%	To enable a breakeven position
Waste - Trade Refuse	Full Cost Recovery	240l - £8.00 360l - £9.50 770l - £15.75 1100l - £17.00 per bin per collection	£438,140	240l - £8.50 360l - £10.00 770l - £16.50 1100l - £17.85 per bin per collection	£458,090	Between 4.76% - 6.25%	To cover inflationary increases
Waste – Trade Sacks	Full Cost Recovery	£2.80 per sack (min 50 sacks)	£6,020	£2.90 per sack (min 50 sacks)	£2,030	3.57%	To cover inflationary increases
Waste – Trade Recycling	Full Cost Recovery	240l - £3.50 360l - £3.50 1100l - £5.80 per bin per collection	£74,950	240l - £3.70 360l - £3.70 1100l - £6.20 per bin per collection	£66,340	Between 5.71% - 6.90%	To cover inflationary increases
Electrical Vehicle Charging	Profit Generating	£2 per hr Mon-Sat £3 per hr Sunday	£1,600	£2 per hr Mon-Sat £3 per hr Sunday	£2,500	0%	
Environmental Protection – Burial Fees	Full Cost Recovery	Fees range from £75 to £1,512	£76,970	Fees range from £79 to £1,587	£89,350	5%	To cover increase in costs
Environmental Protection – Car Parking Tariffs	Full Cost Recovery	Fees vary between £0.60 and £36.00	£231,600	Fees vary between £0.65 and £38.00	£188,270	Average of 5.3%	Inflationary increase based on the Consumer Price Index.
Garden waste collection	Cost Recovery	First bin: £0 All subsequent bins: £45 when requested during the year	£0	First bin: £0 Subsequent bins: £45 each per year	£243,000	0%	There is no increase in this fee, but the charge will be rolled out across all existing bins

Appendix 1c

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL GENERAL FUND SUMMARY BUDGET 2022/23

2021/22 Budget £	2021/22 Forecast Outturn @P6 £	Service	2022/23 Budget £	2023/24 Indicative £	2024/25 Indicative £	2025/26 Indicative £	2026/27 Indicative £
273,570	265,550	Chief Executive	282,310	290,150	297,670	305,370	313,590
235,290	656,720	Human Resources	724,900	727,560	742,590	758,000	773,810
1,497,290	1,414,090	Legal & Support Services	1,471,620	1,639,410	1,526,990	1,563,590	1,605,610
2,006,150	**2,336,360**	**Total Chief Executive's Department**	**2,478,830**	**2,657,120**	**2,567,250**	**2,626,960**	**2,693,010**
341,090	334,913	Strategic Director of Place	347,940	357,840	367,360	377,110	387,110
6,830,640	7,455,923	Community Services	6,769,430	7,337,290	7,317,960	7,420,690	7,595,510
713,890	929,190	Planning & Infrastructure	1,030,990	1,217,760	1,015,860	1,061,280	1,188,720
842,550	881,600	Economic Regeneration	893,070	893,920	888,890	906,310	924,170
11,790	11,790	Joint Strategic Planning	12,420	12,680	12,940	13,210	13,480
8,739,960	**9,613,416**	**Total Director of Services**	**9,053,850**	**9,819,490**	**9,603,010**	**9,778,600**	**10,108,990**
534,920	513,890	Strategic Housing	560,010	582,180	594,760	607,420	620,320
1,037,510	1,079,880	ICT	1,199,820	1,235,410	1,261,000	1,286,850	1,314,630
747,480	881,110	Revenues & Benefits	899,870	934,700	964,710	993,030	1,024,320
474,870	581,270	Property Services	213,940	224,770	245,460	263,130	284,750
844,290	772,630	Customer Services	898,040	938,670	964,230	978,980	1,012,500
1,073,690	1,138,560	Finance	1,094,790	1,039,980	1,061,480	1,084,750	1,109,020
4,712,760	**4,967,340**	**Total Director of Housing & Customer Services**	**4,866,470**	**4,955,710**	**5,091,640**	**5,214,160**	**5,365,540**
16,040	16,040	Non Distributed - Revenue Expenditure on Surplus Assets	16,040	4,720	4,840	4,960	5,090
75,490	69,360	Non Distributed - Retirement Benefits	70,690	72,050	73,430	74,850	76,290
38,080	38,080	Corporate & Democratic Core	40,750	37,730	42,230	39,130	43,770
15,588,480	**17,040,596**	**NET COST OF SERVICES**	**16,526,630**	**17,546,820**	**17,382,400**	**17,738,660**	**18,292,690**
(1,582,150)	(1,559,850)	Net Recharges from General Fund	(1,582,150)	(1,616,540)	(1,649,850)	(1,683,800)	(1,718,410)
14,006,330	**15,480,746**	**NET COST OF SERVICES AFTER RECHARGES**	**14,944,480**	**15,930,280**	**15,732,550**	**16,054,860**	**16,574,280**
		CORPORATE ITEMS AND FINANCING					
		Corporate Income and Expenditure					
1,458,432	1,425,813	Net Financing Costs	1,707,143	2,391,081	2,622,728	2,616,727	2,606,554
(5,875)	(9,875)	Investment Income	(4,895)	(3,445)	(2,047)	(2,047)	(2,047)
47,613	47,613	Localisation of Council Tax Support Grant - Parish & Special Expenses	31,741	15,871	0	0	0
0	0	Revenue Contribution to Capital	0	0	0	0	0
15,506,500	**16,944,297**	**NET REVENUE EXPENDITURE**	**16,678,469**	**18,333,787**	**18,353,231**	**18,669,540**	**19,178,787**
(570,000)	(570,000)	Targeted savings in relation to J2SS	(895,000)	(1,120,000)	(1,245,000)	(1,270,000)	(1,270,000)
1,102,407	142,219	Contribution to/(from) Balances/Reserves	982,505	(3,025,092)	(4,264,500)	0	0
16,038,907	**16,516,516**	**MET FROM GOVT GRANT & COUNCIL TAX (Budget Requirement)**	**16,765,974**	**14,188,695**	**12,843,730**	**17,399,540**	**17,908,787**
		ANTICIPATED BASELINE FUNDING GAP	**-**	**-**	**1,499,918**	**6,604,679**	**6,559,077**

2021/22 Budget £	2021/22 Forecast Outturn @P6 £	Service	2022/23 Budget £	2023/24 Indicative £	2024/25 Indicative £	2025/26 Indicative £	2026/27 Indicative £
		Financed By					
2,452,094	2,452,094	New Homes Bonus	891,117	-	-	-	-
(99,418)	(99,418)	Transfer from Collection Fund	(30,341)	(74,676)	-	-	-
5,525,086	5,525,086	Council Tax	5,637,284	5,708,314	5,780,238	5,853,069	5,926,818
3,337,032	5,874,684	National Non-Domestic Rates Baseline	2,403,617	2,630,111	2,681,302	2,734,928	2,754,072
		Business Rates Retained Growth and Renewables Disregard	6,222,377	1,165,597	1,528,956	1,913,521	2,375,478
		Estimated share of additional SFA from £16bn Spending Review	64,920	-	-	-	-
4,273,836	1,736,184	Business Rates Reserve	-	3,064,829	-	-	-
550,277	1,027,886	Lower Tier Services Grant	1,577,000	-	-	-	-
0		Transitional Relief	-	1,694,520	1,353,316	293,342	293,342
16,038,907	**16,516,516**	**TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE**	**16,765,974**	**14,188,695**	**11,343,812**	**10,794,860**	**11,349,711**

Reserves Position

6,164,869	6,164,869	J2SS Starting Balance	6,307,087	7,289,593	4,264,500	-	-
4,801,013	4,801,013	Business Rates Reserves Starting Balance	3,064,829	3,064,829	-	-	-
10,965,881	**10,965,881**	**Total reserves at start of year**	**9,371,916**	**10,354,422**	**4,264,500**	**-**	**-**
1,102,407	142,219	Movement in J2SS Reserve	982,505	(3,025,092)	(4,264,500)	-	-
(4,273,836)	(1,736,184)	Movement in Business Rates Reserve	-	(3,064,829)	-	-	-
(3,171,429)	**(1,593,965)**	**Total in year movement**	**982,505**	**(6,089,921)**	**(4,264,500)**	**-**	**-**
7,267,276	6,307,087	J2SS End Balance	7,289,593	4,264,500	-	-	-
527,177	3,064,829	Business Rates End Position	3,064,829	-	-	-	-
7,794,452	**9,371,916**	**Total reserves at end of year**	**10,354,422**	**4,264,500**	**-**	**-**	**-**

Appendix 2a

Housing Revenue Account Budget Proposals Over £15,000

Service Developments

	Proposal	Amount	One-off/ ongoing
1	Additional officer to provide specialist support to tenants with mental health or drug and alcohol related issues. Zero net cost in year one from NHG Grant funding, (see Change in Income 1. below).	43,000	Ongoing
2	Additional officer to respond to heightened demand for anti-social behaviour, an area of low tenant satisfaction	43,000	Ongoing
3	Additional 0.5FTE to deliver the New Supply Programme	25,000	Ongoing
4	Reintroduction of the cyclical painting programme	210,000	Ongoing
	Total Service Developments *Of which are:* *Reoccurring* *One-off*	**£321,000** *£321,000* *£0*	

Cost Pressures

	Proposal	Amount	One-off/ ongoing
1	Increases in staff costs	239,000	Ongoing
2	Anticipated inflationary costs on repair budgets	82,500	Ongoing
3	Reduction in the inhouse repairs team surplus.	541,000	Ongoing
	Total Cost Pressures *Of which are:* *Reoccurring* *One-off*	**£862,500** *£862,500* *£0*	

Change in income

	Proposal	Amount	One-off/ ongoing
1	Anticipated NHS funding for the specialist support post	-43,000	Ongoing
2	Increased rental income based on a 4.1% rent increase	-437,000	Ongoing
3	Additional income from service charges	-31,600	Ongoing
	Total Change in Income *Of which are:* *Reoccurring* *One-off*	**-£511,600** -£511,600 £0	

Budget Savings

	Proposal	Amount	One-off/ ongoing
1	Budget savings following the procurement of support for the Greenhill youth facility.	-5,500	Ongoing
2	Reduction in interest charges following debt repayment	-312,000	Ongoing
	Total Budget Savings *Of which are:* *Reoccurring* *One-off*	**-£317,500** *-£317,500* *£0*	

Appendix 2b

Housing Revenue Account Service Charges

Service	Charging Policy	2021/22 Income Budget	Percentage change in fees	2022/23 Proposed Income Budget	Basis for change
Cleaning of shared/common parts	Full Cost Recovery	£66,088	3.10%	£68,137	Contractual inflationary increase
New Cleaning Contract Blocks	Full Cost Recovery	£30,431	3.10%	£31,374	Contractual inflationary increase
Repairs to shared/common parts	Full Cost Recovery	£4,755	0.00%	£4,755	Continuation of freeze of these costs since 2018/19.
Grounds maintenance of shared/common parts	Full Cost Recovery	£93,817	3.00%	£96,632	Inflationary increase, with adjustment for reduced service.
Utility costs of shared/common parts (Electricity)	Full Cost Recovery	£66,194	20.00%	£79,433	Increase based on increasing utility costs.
Door entry systems	Full Cost Recovery	£1,560	-36.00%	£1,000	Based on analysis of actual costs, with lower than anticipated costs in 2021/22 being passed onto tenants.
Repairs and replacement of items in laundry room	Full Cost Recovery	£22,904	3.10%	£23,614	Contractual inflationary increase
Repair and replacement of items in common room/kitchen	Full Cost Recovery	£608	0.00%	£608	Based on analysis of actual costs.
Support Officer checks in Schemes including fire Alarms	Full Cost Recovery	£6,559	2.75%	£6,739	Increase based on planned changes to staff costs.
Servicing of fire extinguishers	Full Cost Recovery	£914	5.00%	£960	Based on analysis of actual costs.
Maintenance of Control Centre link equipment	Full Cost Recovery	£34,883	3.10%	£35,964	Contractual inflationary increase
Older Persons Service Charge	Full Cost Recovery	£163,321	4.80%	£171,160	Inflationary increase based on Retail Price Index
Administration fee	Full Cost Recovery	£49,307	6.24%	£52,382	15% of chargeable services

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Appendix 2c

Housing Revenue Account Fees and Charges

Service	Charging Policy	2021/22 Fees	2021/22 Income Budget	2022/23 Proposed Fees	2022/23 Proposed Income Budget	Percentage change in fees	Basis for change
Central Heating	Full Cost Recovery	0 Bed: £5.96pw 1 Bed: £7.19pw 2 Bed: £8.25pw 3 Bed: £9.50pw	£83,313	£99,976	£99,976	20.00%	Market assessment of utility costs
Garage & Garage Site Rent	Profit generating	Garage: £7.13 per week Garage Site: £4.56 per week	£49,350	£50,880	£50,880	3.10%	Inflationary increase
Tenants Contents Insurance	Profit generating	Premiums from £0.28 to £6.23 per week	£7,080	£44,590	£44,590	0.00%	No change pending transfer of administration of the insurance to the insurance broker
Lifelines (East Midlands Housing Association)	Service development	Various depending on scheme but average increase from £1.92 to £3.20 per week	£44,590	£16,785	£16,785	3.10%	Inflationary increase

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APPENDIX 2d

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT SUMMARY	2021/2022 Budget £	2021/2022 Forecast (p6) £	2022/2023 Budget £
1. TOTAL REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	5,524,747	5,524,747	5,790,015
SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT			
2. General	2,212,285	2,216,857	2,349,528
3. Special / Supporting People	619,821	590,632	635,695
4.	2,832,106	2,807,489	2,985,223
5. PROVISION -DOUBTFUL DEBTS	100,000	100,000	100,000
6. CAPITAL FINANCING:-			
7. Depreciation - MRA & other	3,178,525	3,178,525	3,185,399
8. Debt Management Expenses	2,930	2,930	3,140
9. TOTAL CAPITAL FINANCE COSTS	3,181,455	3,181,455	3,188,539
10. IN-HOUSE REPAIRS TEAM NET (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(400,720)	(400,720)	140,390
11. DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION	0	41,637	0
12. TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**11,237,588**	**11,254,608**	**12,204,167**
13. RENT INCOME			
14. Dwellings	(17,445,770)	(17,395,080)	(17,882,910)
15. Service Charges	(541,140)	(495,640)	(572,760)
16. Garages & Sites	(49,350)	(43,310)	(45,220)
17. Other	(23,118)	(23,118)	(19,477)
18. TOTAL INCOME	**(18,059,378)**	**(17,957,148)**	**(18,520,367)**
19. NET COST/(SURPLUS) OF SERVICES	**(6,821,790)**	**(6,702,540)**	**(6,316,200)**
20. J2SS Cost Savings/Income increases	(225,000)	(225,000)	(325,000)
21. CAPITAL FINANCING - HISTORICAL DEBT	108,000	108,000	108,000
22. CAPITAL FINANCING - SELF FINANCING DEBT	3,257,170	3,257,170	2,945,170
23. INVESTMENT INCOME	(3,380)	(3,380)	(3,380)
25. TOTAL DEBT FINANCING COSTS	**3,136,790**	**3,136,790**	**2,724,790**
26. NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE/(SURPLUS)	**(3,685,000)**	**(3,565,750)**	**(3,591,410)**
27. REVENUE CONTRIBUTION TO CAPITAL	3,650,000	3,650,000	3,550,000
28. REPAYMENT OF HRA DEBT	13,000,000	13,000,000	0
29. TRANSFER FROM LOAN REPAYMENT RESERVE	(13,000,000)	(13,000,000)	0
29. NET (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT	**(35,000)**	**84,250**	**(41,410)**
<u>HRA BALANCES</u>			
30. Balance Brought Forward	(6,113,250)	(6,113,250)	(6,029,000)
31. (Surplus)/Deficit for Year	(35,000)	84,250	(41,410)
32. Transfer from/(to) Loan Repayment Reserve	13,000,000	13,000,000	0
33. Transfer to capital programme	0	0	3,400,000
34. HRA General Balance as at year end	(6,148,250)	(6,029,000)	(2,670,410)
35. Loan Repayment Reserve balance	0	0	0

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GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22 TO 2026/27

PROJECT	2021/22 Indicative carry forward	2022/23 For Approval	2023/24 Indicative	2024/25 Indicative	2025/26 Indicative	2026/27 Indicative	Funding Source
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Coalville Regeneration Projects							
Marlborough Square	1,648,905	-	-	-	-	-	Unsupported Borrowing
Marlborough Centre Purchase and Renovation	-	3,667,172	-	-	-	-	
Accommodation Project	164,083	3,142,662	25,000	-	-	-	
New: Coalville Regeneration Framework		1,500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	-	
Total Coalville Regneration Projects	**1,812,988**	**8,309,834**	**525,000**	**500,000**	**500,000**	**-**	
Systems / ICT Schemes							
Finance System review	-	40,000	-	-	-	-	Unsupported Borrowing and Reserves
Updated: Laptop Replacements	-	78,000	69,000	49,000	92,000	49,000	
Updated: Server and storage additional capacity	-	-	70,000	-	-	-	
Updated: WI-FI Replacement	-	48,000	-	-	-	-	
Updated: LAN Switches replacement	-	40,000	-	-	-	-	
Updated: Firewall Security Replacement	-	-	-	70,000	-	-	
Updated: Windows Server Professional services migration	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	
Total Systems / ICT Schemes	**-**	**256,000**	**139,000**	**119,000**	**92,000**	**49,000**	
Fleet Replacement and Infrastructure Programme							
Refuse Vehicles & Refuse Kerbsider	1,840,000	-	840,000	-	-	-	Unsupported Borrowing and Capital Receipts
Large Commercial 4x4	-	41,225	41,225	-	-	-	
Small Vans	24,115	48,230	48,230	-	-	-	
Medium Vans	232,715	964,105	132,980	-	-	-	
Large Vans	-	269,475	269,475	-	-	-	
Cars	94,689	-	-	-	-	-	
Specialist Vehicles	98,001	-	285,000	-	-	-	
Electrical vehicle charging point installations	5,000	36,100	2,000	-	-	-	Grants and Revenue
Total Fleet Replacement and Infrastructure Programme	**2,294,520**	**1,359,135**	**1,618,910**	**-**	**-**	**-**	

Other Capital Schemes

Disabled Facility Grants	-	670,310	670,310	670,310	670,310	670,310	Grants
Coalville - Cemetery (Provision of an inclusive toilet)	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	Special Expenses
Moira Furnace	279,723	-	-	-	-	-	Unsupported Borrowing and Reserves
Council Offices - Roadway adj Stenson House	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	
Car Park - High Street, Ibstock	35,000	-	-	-	-	-	
Council Offices - UPS/Generator	-	-	60,000	-	-	-	
Whitwick Business Centre - CCTV	10,000	-	-	-	-	-	
Market Street Car Park - Resurfacing	12,000	-	-	-	-	-	
New: CCTV Replacement	-	77,000	-	-	-	-	
New: Vehicle Weighbridges	-	22,020	-	-	-	-	
Total Other Capital Schemes	**366,723**	**769,330**	**730,310**	**670,310**	**670,310**	**670,310**	

TOTAL GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME	**4,474,231**	**10,694,299**	**3,013,220**	**1,289,310**	**1,262,310**	**719,310**

2021/22 - 2026/27 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME

	Current Year Expenditure			Five Year Capital Programme Expenditure						
	2021/22 budget	2021/22 Forecast	Forecast carry forward to 2022/23	2022/23	2023/24 Indicative	2024/25 Indicative	2025/26 Indicative	2026/27 Indicative	5 Year Total	Funding Source
2019 - 2024 Home Improvement Programme:										Revenue and Reserves
Home Improvement Programme	5,315,000	5,315,000	-	4,500,000	4,500,000	4,500,000	4,500,000	4,500,000	22,500,000	
2019 - 2024 Home Improvement Programme Total	**5,315,000**	**5,315,000**	**-**	**4,500,000**	**4,500,000**	**4,500,000**	**4,500,000**	**4,500,000**	**22,500,000**	
New Build and Supply:										Capital Receipts S106 contributions Revenue Borrowing
Phase 3 - Cropston Drive	16,336	16,336	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Phase 4 - Queensway [updated]	902,917	10,000	892,917	67,308	14,775	-	-	-	82,083	
Phase 4 - Howe Road [updated]	1,629,067	137,556	1,491,511	668,058	30,375	-	-	-		
Phase 4 - Cedar Grove [updated]	308,333	77,083	231,250	16,717	4,950	-				
Phase 4 - The Oaks, Whitwick [New]	-	376,500	-	645,082	645,082	17,836	-	-	1,308,000	
Phase 5 - Woulds Court [updated]	1,464,750	10,000	162,685	663,334	1,990,001	40,980	-	-	2,694,315	
Phase 6 - Western Avenue [New]	-	-	-	604,012	2,057,321	36,793	-	-	2,698,126	
Phase 7 - TBC	-	-	-	-	-	1,648,589	22,792	-	1,671,381	
Phase 8 - TBC	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,698,047	23,475	1,721,522	
Phase 9 - TBC								1,773,168		
Acquisition of sites [updated]	1,186,250	92,700	-	300,000	-	-	-	-	300,000	
S106 purchase - Osgathrope [updated]		395,500	-							
S106 purchase - Ravenstone [updated]		1,072,800	-							
S106 purchase - Newbold Colorton [updated]		540,815	-							
New Supply Total	**5,507,653**	**2,729,290**	**2,778,363**	**2,964,511**	**4,742,504**	**1,744,198**	**1,720,838**	**1,796,643**	**12,968,695**	
Estate Improvements:										Revenue and reserves
Mobility Scooter Stores	109,000	109,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Off Street Parking [updated]	313,000	313,000	-	400,000	281,333	-	-	-	681,333	
Footpaths & Unadopted Roads [updated]	50,000	50,000	-	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	250,000	
Garage Demolition & Replacement [updated]	60,000	100,000	-	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	300,000	
Place-shaping pilot	250,000	250,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Estates Projects - Other [updated]	200,000	200,000	-	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	1,000,000	
Estate Improvements Total	**982,000**	**1,022,000**	**-**	**710,000**	**591,333**	**310,000**	**310,000**	**310,000**	**2,231,333**	
Compliance:										
Fire Risk Assessment Remedial Works [updated]	570,000	200,000	370,000	130,000	87,000	87,000	87,000	87,000	478,000	Revenue and reserves
Compliance Total	**570,000**	**200,000**	**370,000**	**130,000**	**87,000**	**87,000**	**87,000**	**87,000**	**478,000**	
Major Aids & Adaptations	**323,000**	**370,000**	**-**	**300,000**	**300,000**	**300,000**	**300,000**	**300,000**	**1,500,000**	Revenue and reserves

	Current Year Expenditure			Five Year Capital Programme Expenditure						Funding Source
	2021/22 budget	2021/22 Forecast	Forecast carry forward to 2022/23	2022/23	2023/24 Indicative	2024/25 Indicative	2025/26 Indicative	2026/27 Indicative	5 Year Total	
Zero Carbon Programme [updated]	**250,000**	**701,000**	**-**	**4,100,000**	**4,100,000**	**4,100,000**	**4,100,000**	**4,100,000**	**20,500,000**	Revenue Reserves Grants Borrowing
Supported Housing Improvements:										
Speech Module [updated]	230,000	-	230,000	30,000	-	-	-	-	30,000	Revenue and reserves
Electrical upgrades [new]				200,000					200,000	
Large Roof Replacement [new]				300,000					300,000	
Sheltered Housing Improvements [updated]	50,000	50,000	-	600,000				-	600,000	
Supported Housing Improvements Total	**280,000**	**50,000**	**230,000**	**1,130,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**1,130,000**	
Active Asset Management:										
Capital Works - Voids	350,000	350,000	-	350,000	350,000	350,000	350,000	350,000	1,750,000	Revenue and reserves
Active Asset Management Total	**350,000**	**350,000**	**-**	**350,000**	**350,000**	**350,000**	**350,000**	**350,000**	**1,750,000**	
Other Capital Spend:										
New Housing Systems	180,000	300,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other Capital Spend Total	**180,000**	**300,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	
Capital Salaries	**678,000**	**705,000**	**-**	**744,000**	**744,000**	**744,000**	**744,000**	**744,000**	**3,720,000**	Revenue and reserves
Total Programme Costs	**14,435,653**	**11,742,290**	**3,378,363**	**14,928,511**	**15,414,837**	**12,135,198**	**12,111,838**	**12,187,643**	**66,778,028**	

SPECIAL EXPENSES BUDGET SUMMARY

SPECIAL EXPENSES	2021/22 Budget	2021/22 Forecast Outturn @ P6	2022/23 Budget	2023/24 Indicative	2024/25 Indicative	2025/26 Indicative	2026/27 Indicative
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
COALVILLE*							
Parks, Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces	332,780	334,214	388,680	386,710	370,850	418,100	521,660
Broomley's Cemetery & Closed Churchyard	26,610	18,687	74,060	23,440	26,060	24,250	24,690
One Off Grants	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Coalville in Bloom (Other Expenses)	8,690	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Coalville Events	79,780	65,700	78,050	94,740	95,410	96,100	96,800
Earmarked Reserves no longer required	0	(5,154)	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	0	25,000	0	0	0	0	0
Coalville Special Expenses - savings target	0	0	0	(105,090)	(105,090)	(105,090)	(105,090)
	449,860	**445,447**	**547,790**	**406,800**	**394,230**	**440,360**	**545,060**
WHITWICK							
Cemetery & Closed Churchyard	23,390	25,970	10,090	9,990	9,880	10,040	10,270
Cademan Wood car park & Open Spaces	4,040	4,032	4,160	3,710	4,350	4,450	3,950
	27,430	**30,002**	**14,250**	**13,700**	**14,230**	**14,490**	**14,220**
HUGGLESCOTE							
Cemetery & Closed Churchyard	25,140	2,647	17,320	16,980	13,810	11,630	15,910
	25,140	**2,647**	**17,320**	**16,980**	**13,810**	**11,630**	**15,910**
PLAY AREAS/CLOSED CHURCHYARDS							
GROUNDS MAITENANCE & PPM:							
COLEORTON	6,300	3,987	8,770	5,400	5,100	5,000	5,100
RAVENSTONE	3,080	913	5,050	2,390	1,590	2,150	1,610
MEASHAM	4,480	945	6,490	3,110	3,180	3,260	3,340
LOCKINGTON-CUM-HEMINGTON	2,760	1,559	2,590	11,390	2,700	2,750	2,820
OAKTHORPE & DONISTHORPE	13,940	13,938	4,590	4,680	4,770	4,860	4,950
STRETTON	1,510	1,510	1,560	1,590	1,620	1,650	1,680
APPLEBY MAGNA	13,810	13,743	2,950	2,910	2,980	2,940	3,010
OTHER SPECIAL EXPENSES	**45,880**	**36,594**	**32,000**	**31,470**	**21,940**	**22,610**	**22,510**
SPECIAL EXPENSES (NET COST OF SERVICE)	**548,310**	**514,690**	**611,360**	**468,950**	**444,210**	**489,090**	**597,700**
Service Management recharges/Admin Buildings	136,420	136,420	157,090	160,230	163,410	166,680	170,020
NET COST OF SERVICES AFTER RECHARGES	**684,730**	**651,110**	**768,450**	**629,180**	**607,620**	**655,770**	**767,720**
Contribution to/(from) Balances/Reserves	(112,528)	(78,908)	(166,972)	6,428	67,415	80,386	35,971
MET FROM GOVT GRANT & COUNCIL TAX (Budget Requirement)	**572,202**	**572,202**	**601,478**	**635,608**	**675,035**	**736,156**	**803,691**
FUNDED BY:							
Precept	524,589	524,589	569,736	619,737	675,035	736,156	803,691
Localisation of Council Tax Support Grant	47,613	47,613	31,742	15,871	0	0	0
	572,202	**572,202**	**601,478**	**635,608**	**675,035**	**736,156**	**803,691**

* Coalville Special Expenses Working Group will be considering the proposed budgets and precept increases for Coalville at its meeting on 14 December.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2021

Title of Report	CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY	
Presented by	Karey Barnshaw Customer Services Lead & Andy Barton Strategic Director	
Background Papers	None	**Public Report:** Yes
Financial Implications	None not already covered in previously agreed budgets.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	None	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	None not already addressed by report The strategy contributes to ensuring that we put the customer at the heart of our work.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Reason Agenda Item Submitted to Scrutiny Committee	To enable Scrutiny to comment on the draft strategy prior to Cabinet consideration at their January 2022 Meeting.	
Recommendations	**THAT SCRUTINY COMMENT ON THE DRAFT CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION BY CABINET AT ITS MEETING IN JANUARY 2022.**	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 North West Leicestershire District Council has made a commitment to prioritising the needs of it is customers. This strategy seeks to build the on the previous Customer Experience Strategy (2018-2021) and reinforces the importance of keeping our customers at the heart of everything we do.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Over the last 3 years the Council, through the Customer Experience Strategy has made significant steps towards improving the outcomes experienced by our customers. Our commitment to keeping our customers at the heart of what we do has meant we have introduced new technology offering greater functionality and resilience, changed and updated processes to make things easier and quicker and invested in our employees to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to maintain our standards of service.

2.2 However, much has changed over the last three years and it is appropriate for us to review the strategy to make sure that it reflects the both the current and future needs of our customers and the organisation.

2.3 The most significant changes have resulted from the impacts of Covid, effecting our businesses, communities, customers, visitors and our way of life. We have seen people changing the way they do things at a pace never experienced before and we have a responsibility to respond to these changes and meet the ongoing needs of our customers.

2.4 Never before have technology and digital channels been more important, we have more people than ever utilising digital channels in their everyday life from social media and online shopping to banking, accessing health and medical care and Council services. At the same time, we recognise that there are people who either choose or do not have the skills required in order to interact in the digital world and so we must remain committed to ensuring we provide easy access to our services for everyone.

2.5 In addition, the difficult financial position caused by ongoing reductions in central government grants and impacts of the pandemic creates its own challenges for the Council, as an organisation we must strive to look for new and efficient ways to do things so we can maintain the services our customers deserve.

2.6 Cabinet and Council have also agreed funding for a new accommodation strategy that moves our front door much closer to our communities in the heart of Coalville. Whilst separate to this strategy work, nevertheless it has a strong bearing on it. Likewise the new way of working model also impacts on the way we will delivery service in the future.

3.0 STRATEGY OVERVIEW

3.1 Keeping customers at the heart of what we do is integral to the way that the Council delivers its services – the Council is after all a primarily service-based provider. The updated strategy (Annex 1 to this report) sets out how the Council intends to develop its customer service offering over the next three years to meet the changing needs of our customers. Delivering a positive customer experience is the responsibility of every officer and stakeholder across the Council, with each interaction providing the opportunity to develop productive relationships with our customers. The Strategy outlines how we will adapt to the changing needs of our customers and reinforces our commitment to providing fair and open access to our services

3.2 The Strategy recognises the challenges the organisation faces particular around our finances, advances in technology, changing customers behaviours and needs and our plans for new ways of working. In considering these challenges and the part they will play in shaping our organisation for the future the strategy reinforces our commitment to our customers and refreshes the six principles that will guide the delivery of the strategy.

3.3 As part of the development of the strategy we sought the views of our customers. Over 2600 customers responded to our survey which was conducted in person, over the phone, via email and through our website. The results have provided a great deal of insight into how our customers want to interact with us and what's important to them when they do and has been weighted to be reflected of the entire district. In headlines - 35% of our customers advised they prefer to contact us on the phone, 32% via our website, 29% by email and only 2% preferring to see to us face to face. Furthermore, people felt that getting through quickly, speaking to someone that could help them and finding what they needed online were the most important things when contacting us. The full results of the survey can be found in Appendix 2 of this report.

3.4 This is the first time where we have undertaken a survey of such size and representative nature of our customers. It has helped us understand the wants and needs of our customers and has changed the shape of some of our developing provision. Of particular importance in this regard is the very low percentage of face to face preference. Whilst it is highly likely that some of our more complex and time-consuming contacts will be in this number and therefore it is right that we are able to provide for them, it is also clear that the vast majority of our customers do not desire face to face contact as their prime means of contact.

3.5 The strategy objectives provide a focus on putting our customers at the heart of what we do, reducing digital exclusion, harnessing the opportunities of digital technology whilst involving the whole organisation. It also sets out actions that will drive the delivery of this strategy. The Strategy also considers how we will work with our partners, in ensuring that they are also able to signpost potential customers to the best and available means of contact for them. In line with the extremely low desire for face to face contact the strategy does not pursue other models of provision such as distributed contact centres or access points as they are not where the demand from our customers sit.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation has been completed both internally and externally through the Senior Leadership Team, Corporate Leadership Team, Extended Leadership Team and wider organisational engagement, as well as through an external survey with our customers. Consultation has provided consistently positive feedback which has been carefully reviewed and where appropriate reflected in the final version of the strategy.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	The strategy impacts on all of the council priorities in some way : - Supporting Coalville to be a more vibrant, family-friendly town - Support for businesses and helping people into local jobs - Developing a clean and green district - Local people live in high quality, affordable homes - Our communities are safe, healthy and connected
Policy Considerations:	Corporate Delivery Plan The People Plan

	ICT Roadmap and Technology Strategy
Safeguarding:	N/A
Equalities/Diversity:	Equalities impact considerations will be made as and when detailed proposals come forward so that implications are addressed at that point.
Customer Impact:	The Strategy ensures equal and fair access to all customers
Economic and Social Impact:	The strategy addresses the developing social impacts of changing nature of service provision across the service sector.
Environment and Climate Change:	In increase in the use of digital channels will reduce the amount of paper and postage and therefore could have a positive impact on reducing our carbon emissions
Consultation/Community Engagement:	A customer survey was undertaken as part of the development of the strategy, over 2600 people responded
Risks:	As part of its Corporate Governance arrangements, the Council must ensure that Risk management is considered and satisfactorily covered in any report put before elected Members for a decision or action.
Officer Contact	Karey Barnshaw Customer Service Lead karey.barnshaw@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

Customer Experience Strategy

North West Leicestershire District Council

2022-2025

Contents

Executive Summary

North West Leicestershire District Council has been transforming the way that it interacts with its customers. This strategy provides the vision and principles to continue this transformation and in doing so, outlines our ambition and appetite to meet our customers' needs.

This strategy sets out how we will achieve the best possible experience for our customers, whoever they are (residents, businesses, visitors, partners, or suppliers) and whenever they deal with us.

Effective management of a customer relationship is not only about how responsive, efficient, and technologically advanced services are, but is also equally about the emotion, feeling and impression that an individual experiences when interacting with an organisation.

This strategy enables the authority to move away from a view that customer service is the responsibility of a team or department, but instead recognises that it is a cross cutting theme that spans the whole organisation and links intrinsically with our wider plans. It enables customer experience to become part of our core vision and values that every officer subscribes to. This strategy raises the profile of the customer ensuring that our plans, decisions, and business actions, are customer centric.

We are aware that both the technology landscape and our customers' preferences are changing at an ever-accelerating pace. This is at a time when the resources available to Local Government are decreasing. We now need to harness digital technology to find new, innovative, and efficient ways of enabling our customers to interact with the Council, whilst at the same time releasing our capacity to support those customers that really need us.

The strategy outlines how we will deliver this change and reinforces our commitment to providing fair and open access to our services. It is published at a significant time of change as we develop our new accommodation plans. This strategy provides the mandate to mobilise an ambitious change programme that will transform the authority's approach to customers being at the very heart of what we do.

Introduction

The way most people do business and communicate is changing rapidly. We use cash less and pay by card more, we go to the shops less and order things online more, we write letters less and use email more. Many of us contact organisations through social media now, rather than give them a call, email or visit in person. And, increasingly, we're doing all these things from just one device, be it a smartphone, laptop, or tablet.

North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC), like other councils, central government, and most other service providers has made more and more of its services available over the internet, and this move to online will continue. Most people find it more convenient to get information or to access services in this way. For those who find this difficult, we will provide help to support the online transition. Where this isn't possible, we will continue to provide support to customers to make all our services inclusive.

NWLDC has been very successful in maintaining front-line services while Government funding has been falling. We need to keep striving to make the most of every pound we get. Every time customers access Council services online they are helping us save the money we need to maintain the public services on which thousands of people rely and enjoy every day.

This Customer Experience Strategy places our customers at the heart of the organisation. It seeks to modernise and improve the authority's approach to customer service, through investing in material, human and technological resources, in response to a rapidly changing customer expectation.

To date the authority has made targeted attempts at improving customer experience through various programmes and initiatives; significant investment has been made in developing digitalisation and the online customer experience. The strategy builds upon this previous work, to deliver the systemic change required to transform customer experience and realise the benefit of previous investment.

This strategy outlines the underlying principles, foundation, design, and recommended approach to transforming the way in which we interact with our customers. Its adoption will enable the systemic change required to transform the organisation's customer service offering over the period 2022 – 2025.

Customer Service – Our journey so far

Over the past three years we have strived to improve the way we work to meet the needs of our customers. We have implemented some key improvements to the way customers interact with us and we communicate with them, this includes:

- Achieved WCAG accessibility status for our website
- Implementation of new telephony system offering greater functionality and reliability
- Accreditation under the Customer Service Excellence scheme
- Introduction of CRM lite solution bringing all online and telephone transactions into a single place

Our telephone service

In the last year we have introduced a new telephony system ensuring our systems are modern, resilient, and reliable. We have introduced new services and updated and improved others to ensure customers receive an efficient, effective, and friendly service when contacting us.

In 2020/21 the contact centre handled over 91,000 telephone calls

Our face-to-face service

Our Customer Service team deal with a wide range of face-to-face enquiries, they provide digital support to customers when required as well as answering enquires of topics ranging from waste services to elections and housing benefits.

In 2020/21 due to the restrictions implemented as a result of Covid-19, 82 customers visited our Customer Service Centre

Our online and digital services

Our website is modern and fully mobile responsive meaning people can access it easily from any digital device and receive the same great experience. Our website is available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year and provides easy access to a wealth of information and nearly 100 different online forms.

In 2020/21 we had over 1.8 million unique pages views on our website and 40,000 online forms were completed

In addition, we also share information through a range of social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter, and more recently Instagram to widen our accessibility. We have nearly 30,000 followers across all platforms and our posts reach on average 60,000 people per week

Our customer care commitments

In 2020, the Customer Service Team achieved the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation. Customer Service Excellence is designed to:

- drive continuous improvement for customer facing services.
- enable individuals and teams to explore and acquire new skills in the area of customer focus and customer engagement.
- offer an independent validation of achievement.

Achievement of this accreditation highlights the commitment of NWLDC to delivering high quality, customer focussed services.

Our customer satisfaction

As a Council, we have consistently maintained high levels of customers satisfaction. In 2020/21 85% of our customers rated us as very good or excellent both on the phones and face to face. However, there is always more we can do to improve and so we will consider how we can make this easier and simper for our customer to give us feedback.

Customer service in numbers

The diagram below shows the number of interactions our customers have had with us in 2020/21:

91,000
Calls to the contact centre

1,800,000
Website page visits

***82**
Visits to Customer Services

40,000
Completed online forms

85%
Rated excellent or good

30,000
Followers on social media

*Customer services were closed from March to July 2020 due to the pandemic restrictions during the year when reopened this was on an appointment only basis, with a triage service

Current challenges and opportunities for change

The Council faces a number of challenges enhanced by the Covid-19 pandemic, whilst they may be a challenge, they also present us with an opportunity to change the way we do things.

Financial

The Council has maintained strong financial health in recent years due in part to healthy growth in business rates, council tax base and New Homes Bonus. However, it is widely expected that future funding will reduce significantly as the Government focusses on redistributing income to authorities with social care pressures. Consequently, North West Leicestershire, like most district councils, will have to plan carefully to address reduced funding over the next few years. The Council will maintain a focus on Value for Money to ensure that it remains financially resilient over the longer term. The Journey to Self Sufficiency Programme will identify and progress opportunities for delivering long term savings through better ways of working.

Technology

As an organisation we must harness the opportunity that digital technology provides us. Technology is advancing at a significant pace, providing exciting opportunities to streamline the ways we work and enabling customers to self-service at a time and place that meets their needs.

The adoption of new technology such as Zoom and online shopping over the course of the pandemic has shown how customers behaviours and attitudes can change significantly in a short space of time. Customers have become used to the benefits and flexibility that 24/7/365 online services provide them, meaning they can access the things they want at a time and place that suits their individual needs.

A report by McKinsey [1] shows that customers appetite and capability for transacting online has jumped 5 years over the period of less than 12

[1] https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Business Functions/McKinsey Digital/Our Insights/The COVID 19 recovery will be digital A plan for the first 90 days/The-COVID-19-recovery-will-be-digital-A-plan-for-the-first-90-days-vF.pdf

months, creating a unique environment to maximise the opportunities created by this speed of change.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly entering people's homes and now provides a new channel to access services. With Voice Recognition technology becoming part of people everyday lives. Robotic Process Automation (RPA) provides additional opportunities to free up our employees from repetitive tasks to focus on customer value adding activities by routing and manage customer requests and transactional services, improving accuracy and reducing costs.

Data and processes

As a Local Authority, we sit in the middle of a web of information. The range and diversity of our services generates a huge quantity of data held about our customers and across a variety of back-office systems. Understanding our data is hugely beneficial in helping us to; make services more targeted and effective, allocate resources to where we can have the biggest impact; save officer time in front and back-office processes, as well as providing insight into the cause of and solutions to costly social problems. We must consider ways to utilise this untapped information source when redesigning and developing our processes to attain the outlined benefits.

Customer needs

Over the past 18 months we have seen a significant change in both customer needs and behaviours. We have been able to identify with greater clarity those customer groups who have more specific support needs compared to other customer groups that are more able and confident to self-serve in a digital way. As a result, we now need to review our current customer service delivery models to reflect change in both customer needs and behaviours and changes to our working methods to maximise these opportunities whilst ensuring that all customers can access our services in a way that meets their needs.

New Ways of Working

In reaction to some of the above changes the council has also changed the way it works. Hybrid working is now the norm, and we have also adopted a new model of accommodation provision. This means more of our staff will be working from other locations, and we will also be moving our Customer Service Centre into the town centre of Coalville.

Corporate Strategies – the golden thread

North West Leicestershire District Council Delivery Plan has been refreshed and updated to respond to the impact of the COVID pandemic which has had a major impact on our Districts economy and communities and will focus activity over the next two years up until May 2023 contributing to our economic and community recovery

Our delivery plan outlines our five priorities that are central to achieving our vision:

1. Supporting Coalville to be a more vibrant family-friendly town
2. Our communities are safe, healthy, and connected
3. Local people live in high quality, affordable homes
4. Support for businesses and helping people into local jobs
5. Developing a clean green district

With a theme of Value for Money thread through the Council Delivery Plan.

In delivering against these priorities the Council recognises the following changes and will consider these in any future service developments:

- A shift in consumer behaviour to maximise digital technology and access our services in a different way, alongside a demand for new services such as those previously provided by thecommunity hub support presents both an opportunity and challenge
- a rapid increase in pace for consumer online retail matched with a recognition of local supply chains have reinforced the importance of our retail centres which will need reimagining and support to grow and regenerate.
- growth of new sectors and markets and need for support to those sectors impacted adversely
- ensuring our District wide workforce has the skills required to support future growth
- increased national and public focus on climate change is providing an opportunity to rethink economic growth and how we can continue to champion a green recovery
- health recovery requires collaborative leadership across multiple partners to ensure health inequalities are tackled

The key performance indicators to accompany the refreshed Council Delivery plan actions have also been refocussed.

Underpinning these priorities are our five values:

Trust – We are honest, fair and transparent and we value trust

Respect – We respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment

Excellence – We will always work to be the best that we can be

Pride – We are proud of the role we play in making North West Leicestershire a happy, healthy and vibrant place to live and work

Growth – We will work together to grow and continue to improve

The development of Customer Experience Strategy will support the Council to achieve its aims under each of these priorities

We recognise there are financial challenges ahead for local government and we will use them as an opportunity to transform into a more efficient, effective, and innovative organisation.

We will use a variety of technology to support current and future collaborations with partners, in both the public and private sector, to bring improvements to our services and the North West Leicestershire.

ICT Roadmap and Technology Strategy (2021 – 2024)

The Information & Communication Technology (ICT) strategy sets out a medium to long term vision of how ICT will develop to support the Council's business requirements, its future vision for its customers and its members.

Setting out the principles and objectives, required to create a modern workplace digital environment, which pulls together integrated data, allowing for automated transactions and a Council which is "open" 2/4/7/365, for self-service. The ICT Roadmap and Strategy is the glue and the enabler between the People Strategy, the Customer Experience Strategy, the future operating model, and the Councils Delivery Plan as well as supporting the upcoming accommodation changes.

NWLDC make full use of technology and data to meet the organisation's needs, creating a more commercial approach and leveraging commercial opportunities where possible. The ICT strategy is purposely designed to be 'built for change' and will be refined, updated and changed as the council's needs develop in the coming years.

COVID has provided the impetus for continuous improvement and to enable an organisation that is agile and flexible in its approach to both its employees and its customers.

The People Plan

The People Plan sets out the Councils ambition to ensure we have a sustainable, ambitious, effective and efficient workforce that reflects the local communities we serve. Building a culture of empowerment that encourages innovation and rewards excellent service will enable the Council to deliver its ambitions as set out within the Delivery Plan.

The plan focusses on five key thematic areas:

- Being and employer of choice
- Developing and supporting staff
- Leadership
- Happy and Healthy workforce
- Communicate and Listen

The People plan is part of a wider Organisation Development approach seeking to effect cultural change and performance improvement across the Council and will impact on other strategies and policy work for example, performance improvement, Customer First and the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Our Customers

North West Leicestershire District Council has over 100,000 residents and over 4000 businesses. Our customers have a wide and varying range of needs with 20% of our residents aged 65+, 58% are of working age (16-64) and 17% being 15 and under.

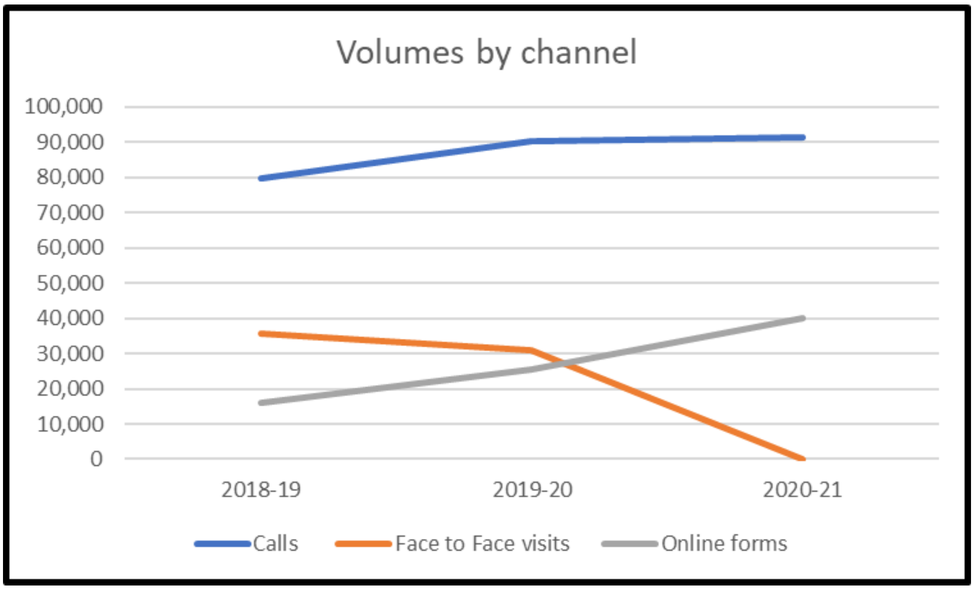
Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we have seen a significant shift in the way customers are now accessing our services. Although we had seen a steady reduction of customers using the more traditional channels such as face to face and telephone, the restrictions implemented as a result of the pandemic have meant customers have had to use alternative methods to access the services they need.

In 2019/20 Customer Services answered 90,000 calls, served 31,000 visitors to our offices and customers completed 25,000 forms online.

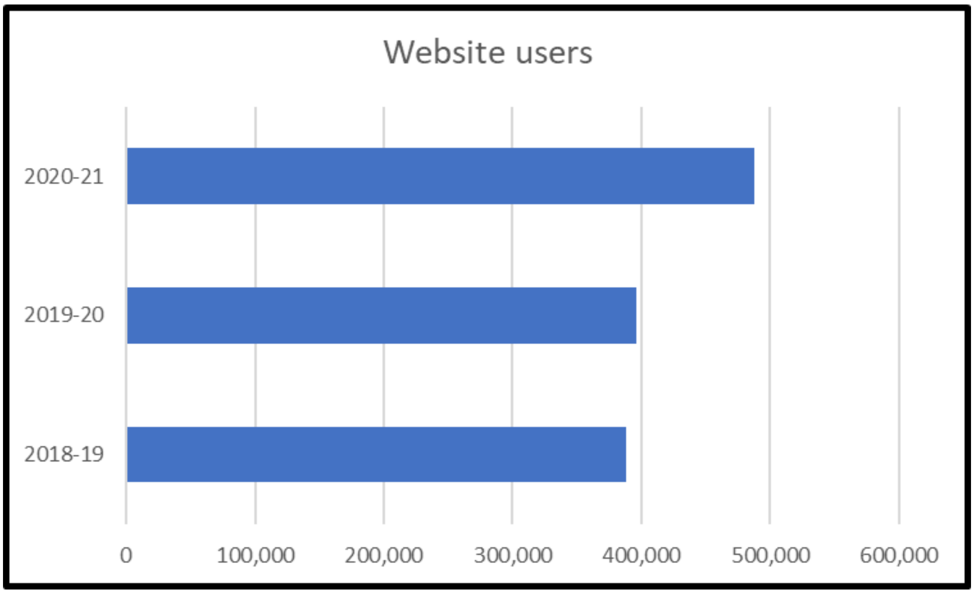
By comparison, in 2020/21, the year of the pandemic, Customer Services answered 91,500 calls (+2%), served only 82 (-99%) visitors to the offices and customers completed 40,000 forms online (+60%). In addition, the number of online accounts increased from 16,000 accounts in 2019/20 to 25,000 in 2020/21

The diagrams below show a visual representation of:

1. The change in numbers of customers using our phone channel, with a significant reduction in customers using our face-to-face service centre (as a result of the pandemic) and a significant increase in the use of our online forms.

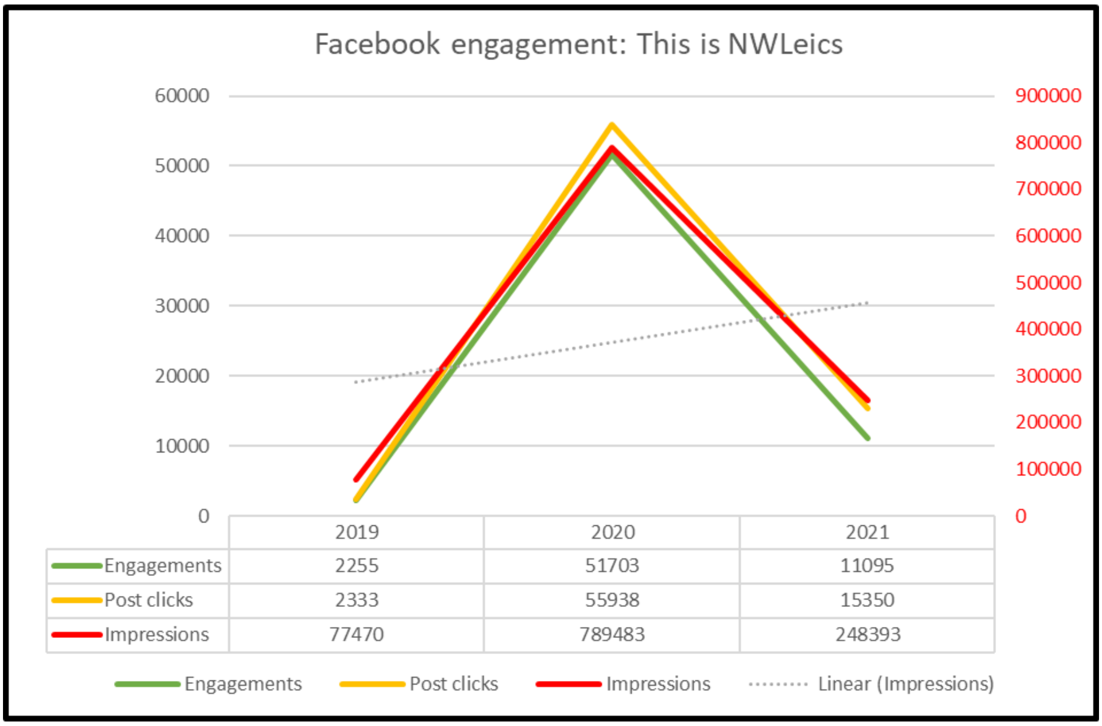


2. A year-on-year increase in the numbers of customers visiting our website



In addition, in 2020/21 52% of visitors to our website were new visitors, with 48% being returning users

3. A dramatic increase in the number of accounts our posts are reaching. Engagement is the number of likes, shares, clicks and comments. Post clicks is the number of clicks anywhere on a post. Impressions is the number of accounts the post has reached



	2019	2020	2021
Engagements	2255	51703	11095
Post clicks	2333	55938	15350
Impressions	77470	789483	248393

The National Position

With the average cost of customer interactions as follows:

- Face to face interactions - £8.62
- Telephone interactions - £2.83
- Digital (online) interactions - £0.15

The migration to more digital and self-service channels present a sizeable opportunity to increase the accessibility of our services whilst creating efficiencies.

With a significant uptake in digital and online services it would be easy to assume that all our residents can access our services in this way.

However, findings from the Lloyds Bank Essential Digital Skills Report 2021 highlight that across the UK:

- 21% of our population, circa 11 million people, are digitally disadvantaged, lacking Essential Digital Skills for Life
- 10 million people are not able to access the Internet themselves and lack the most basic digital tasks
- 6.5 million people cannot connect to Wi-Fi by themselves
- 4.9 million people cannot turn on a device and log into any accounts or profiles they have by themselves

There are however 1.9 million fewer people completely offline than before the pandemic showing the massive impact the pandemic has had on driving people to use digital services. Predictive modelling in 2020 indicated that it would take to 2025 for 58% of the UK to have high digital capability. In 2021, 60% of the UK now have this level of digital capability; we have made five years' worth of progress in one.

There have been remarkable efforts from digital champions, community partners and personal networks. Many rapid response initiatives were able to deploy devices, data and support to people remotely against all the odds during the pandemic, so it is very encouraging to see the digitally excluded groups shrinking in size.

The East Midlands has seen a step change in digital ability significantly improving the number of adults with basic digital ability from 74% in 2020 to 81% in 2021.

The North West Leicestershire Position

To help us understand more about how our customers at a local level are interacting with us and their preferences around accessing our services and other services they use, we undertook a customer survey in October 2021.

A total of 2,663 responses were received, some of the key findings in relation to the use of the internet indicate the following:

- The large majority of respondents said that they use a 'mobile/ smartphone' (85%), while two-thirds (67%) use a 'home computer', over half (56%) use a 'tablet (e.g., iPad)', and 23% use a 'voice activated device, e.g., Alexa'. Overall, only 2%, (rising to 12% of those aged 75 years and over), said that they 'do not have access to the internet or do not use it'.
- Those respondents who indicated not having access to or not using the internet were asked for their reasons why not: 59% of these respondents said that they 'prefer not to use the internet and would rather call the Council or speak to someone face-to-face', and 38% said 'I do not have the skills or confidence to use the internet'.
- Three-quarters of respondents that use the internet said that they are confident when going on-line: 'Yes, I am confident and feel I have all the skills I need' (78%), this figure varied widely with age group, from 93% of those aged 18-34 years and 91% of those aged 35-44 years, down to less than half of those aged 75 years and over (46%).
- A fifth of respondents overall said that they feel 'quite confident when going on-line, but know there is more I could do if I had better skills' (20%; rising to 48% for those aged 75 years and over); while 2% of respondents said 'no – I do not feel confident to do things on-line', with this increasing to 6% for those aged 75 years and over

Whilst there has been a significant increase in the use of digital services, boosted by the pandemic restrictions, the survey supports the national findings indicating that in particular groups there are people who either don't want to, don't have access to or don't have the skills to use digital services.

Motivating digitally excluded customers to engage with the digital world can be difficult. To do this successfully requires compelling ‘hooks’ for each person, and each organisation. Simply ‘selling’ or presenting a new digital service or technology does not create digital journeys.

People and organisations need to understand what is beneficial for them and what an improved life or service might feel like in a digital world. Understanding people’s motivations will be key to encourage more people to utilise digital services.

Furthermore, the survey also gathered general information relating to contacting the Council. The survey found:

- The most preferred means of contacting the Council, each referred to by around a third of respondents, were ‘telephone’ (35%), ‘website’ (32%), and ‘email’ (29%); only small numbers of respondents stated that they most prefer a ‘face-to-face visit’ (2%) or contacting by ‘letter’ (1%).
- Overall, respondents chose to use their favoured contact method because it is the ‘most convenient’ (55%) and ‘easiest’ (50%) method for them
- When asked to name two things that are the most important aspects to them when contacting the Council, over a third of respondents (36% each) said that ‘easy and quick’, and ‘being able to do it at a time that’s suitable for me’ were among their top-three most important aspects.

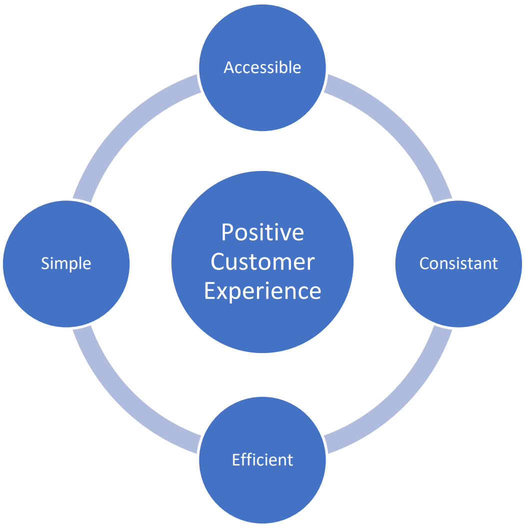
Thinking specifically about the pandemic customers advised:

- 67% of respondents said that the pandemic had changed the way they do things, with 50% advising they do more on-line now and plan to continue
- 54% said that they would be ‘very satisfied’ if ‘in the future, when current restrictions have been lifted’ Council services were ‘largely telephone and internet-based’, while a third (35%) said that they would be ‘partially satisfied’

Our aims, principles, and objectives

Aims

The aim of our strategy is quite simple, we will place our customers at the heart of everything we do, to make every interaction a positive experience: accessible, consistent, efficient, and simple.



Principles

The strategy draws upon the following principles and themes in its design:

Customer First: Placing customers at the heart of the organisation. Empowering our staff to provide their very best customer experience in a way that customers tell us that they want to.

Customer Access: A modern, fresh approach to customer experience and spaces, whether physical or digital. Light, clean and welcoming environments.

Digital by Default: Digital experiences so good that they are the channel of choice.

Inclusion: Recognising our customers' unique circumstances and in doing so ensuring that those that need our services are not excluded.

Customer Insight: Consistently measuring our customer experiences. Knowing our customers and their needs. Understanding why things go wrong and learning from this to improve our services.

Value for Money, Efficiency and Return on Investment: Recognising the financial climate, benefit focused outcomes, business minded decision making.

Objectives

Putting our customers, the heart of what we do

By putting customers at the heart of what we do we will create a consistent positive customer experience delivering services that meet their needs. We will include our customer when redesigning our services, looking through the lens of our customer to ensure the design meets their needs.

To achieve this, we will:

- ❖ Redesign our processes from end to end, reducing the number of times we transfer customers between teams and focussing on resolving issues at first point of contact
- ❖ Identify appropriate channels for service delivery – whilst most customers will be encouraged to access services online, we will provide alternative channels for those who need additional channels and work with partners to increase our access channels where appropriate e.g., face to face appointments
- ❖ Increase self-service and automate first (where appropriate)
- ❖ Ensure customers are involved in the development of our services and the redesign process
- ❖ Use the data we hold about our customers to inform the way we improve processes and deliver our services
- ❖ Improve the efficiency of our services which will ultimately reduce costs and increase quality
- ❖ Ensure services are inclusive and respond to equality needs
- ❖ Enable customers to give feedback on processes and services
- ❖ Eliminate paper where possible responding to our responsibilities under the Green Agenda

Digital Inclusion

As more and more services are made available online, we must ensure that those customers who have limited digital skills and access to technology are supported and encouraged to develop their skills to take advantage of the numerous benefits associated with being online.

We recognise that addressing the digital skills gap is not the responsibility of one organisation, we will look to work will local and national organisations to play our part in improving the lives of our customers.

To do this we will:

- Work with partners to create a Digital Inclusion Network, to identify organisations that offer support, skills training, and equipment
- Introduce Digital Champions concept across the council, providing more opportunities for people to access digital support
- Create and embed a 'Triage and Signposting System' to help identifying customer needs and signpost them to the most appropriate support
- Centralise all information about digital skills in the District in one place, such as NWLDC Website, making it easier for people to find what they need
- Our employees will support our customers to self-service in the first instance to help develop their knowledge, skills and confidence in accessing services in digital ways
- We will offer free access to our Wi-Fi network when on Council premises or in Coalville and Ashby De la Zouch Town centres. We will continue to offer free access to our public access computers in our Customer Service Centre
- We recognise that not all customers will be able to use our digital services and for those customers we will continue to offer telephone and face to face services

Harnessing digital technology

Harnessing the power of digital technology will enable the Council to increase accessibility and flexibility for our customers, delivering efficient and effective low costs services whilst freeing up our resources to support those customers with more specific needs

To do this we will:

- Make online channels convenient and easy to use so that customers choose this as their preferred method of contact with us
- Design all online forms to enable system integration and automation
- Utilise new technology such as artificial intelligence and Robotic Process Automation to deliver services in a more efficient way where appropriate
- Develop and increase the use of social media channels
- Use telephone for supported and complex transactions only, reducing the use for low need and simple transactions
- Investigate the use of voice recognition to help customers find services more quickly
- Investigate the use and possible benefits of a developing a web app to compliment the service provided on our website in an alternative format
- Provide face to face service only where needed to meet complex and specific customer needs & offer appointments as our default approach
- Review the current relationship management system to ensure maximisation of system functionality which supports customers to self-serve and manage their transactions online

Involving the whole organisation

Customer Service goes far beyond the Customer Services Team, as an organisation we recognise that every employee and stakeholder have a part to play in delivering a positive customer experience. Every phone call, email, and face to face interaction provides the ability to shape the perception of the Council and what it is trying to achieve.

To do this we will:

- ❖ Use our customer satisfaction results and complaints feedback to develop and improve our services, sharing learning and development with all employees
- ❖ Introduce an organisation wide approach to collecting customer satisfaction using a single satisfaction question
- ❖ Develop and embed a Customer Promise across the organisation to provide a consistent experience for all customers
- ❖ Ensure employees have access to appropriate support and training to provide them with the tools and skills to deliver positive customer experiences

Measuring Success

Adopting this strategy will lead to better outcomes for our customers. We will look to change the way we currently measure our performance; these changes will be considered as part of the development of the next Corporate Delivery Plan. Success measures will consider what our customers have said is important to them and the aims of this Strategy. The measures will focus on:

- Customer satisfaction
- Getting it right first time
- Making things quick and easy
- Increasing and improving our digital services
- Improving digital capability

Our journey

This strategy will be delivered over the next 3 years. The diagrams below sets out an indicative but ambitious approach to delivering the Customer Experience Strategy. Each element of the journey needs to be assessed individually to ensure it is responsive to the fast-changing environment of the digital world and our customer expectations.

Customer Service Survey

Report

September/October 2021

Analysis and report by

NWA Social Research

Contents

Page No.

1 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

<u>Use of the Internet</u>

1.1 When asked what means they use to access the internet, the large majority of respondents said that they use a 'mobile/ smartphone' (85%), while two-thirds (67%) use a 'home computer', over half (56%) use a 'tablet (e.g. iPad)', and 23% use a 'voice activated device, e.g. Alexa'. Overall, 2%, (rising to 12% of those aged 75 years and over), said that they 'do not have access to the internet or do not use it'.

1.2 Those few respondents who indicated not having access to or not using the internet were asked for their reasons why not: 59% of these respondents said that they 'prefer not to use the internet, and would rather call the Council or speak to someone face-to-face', and 38% said 'I do not have the skills or confidence to use the internet'. [Percentages based on 54 respondents.]

1.3 Those respondents that do use the internet were asked what things they mainly use it for, and the large majority reported using it for 'email' (83%), 'shopping' (82%), and 'banking' (78%), while around two-thirds use it for 'social media' (69%; rising to 90% of 18-34 year olds, but reducing to 33% for those aged 75 years and over) and 'news' (66%); 60% use it for 'research', and 59% for 'utility bills'. A smaller minority, 25%, said that they mainly use the internet for 'gaming' (rising from 6% of those aged 75 years and over, to 39% for those aged 18-34 years).

1.4 When internet-users were asked what time of day they mainly go on-line the majority response was that they 'access it throughout the day' (61%), while a quarter (24%) said that they mainly go on-line in the 'evening'; and small minorities said they mainly access the internet in the 'morning' (6%), at 'midday' (1%), in the 'afternoon' (5%) and 'late at night' (2%).

1.5 While overall more than three-quarters of respondents that use the internet said that they are confident when going on-line: 'Yes, I am confident and feel I have all the skills I need' (78%), this figure varied widely with age group, from 93% of those aged 18-34 years and 91% of those aged 35-44 years, down to less than half of those aged 75 years and over (46%).

1.6 A fifth of respondents overall said that they feel 'quite confident when going on-line, but know there is more I could do if I had better skills' (20%; rising to 48% for those aged 75 years and over); while 2% of respondents said 'no – I do not feel confident to do things on-line', with this increasing to 6% for those aged 75 years and over.

Contacting the Council

1.7 The most preferred means of contacting the Council, each referred to by around a third of respondents, were 'telephone' (35%), 'website' (32%), and 'email' (29%); only small numbers of respondents stated that they most prefer a 'face-to-face visit' (2%), or contacting by 'letter' (1%).

1.8 Respondents were then asked why they prefer to use this contact method. Overall, respondents chose to use their favoured contact method because it is the 'most convenient' (55%) and 'easiest' (50%) method for them; and these two reasons were also the principal reasons given for each method when responses were broken down by contact method. Only small minorities overall said it is because they 'have always done it this way' (10%), and because they 'don't have access via other methods' (1%), and 10% gave 'other' reasons.

1.9 When asked to name up to three things that are the most important aspects to them when contacting the Council, respondents were most likely to cite 'getting through quickly' (52%), 'speaking directly to someone who can answer my query' (47%), 'being able to find what I need online' (41%), and 'dealing with someone who is professional, knowledgeable and wanting to help' (40%). Over a third of respondents (36% each) said that 'easy and quick', and 'being able to do it at a time that's suitable for me' were among their top-three most important aspects.

The Pandemic

1.10 Respondents were asked '*Has the pandemic changed the way you do things such as shopping, social media, and contacting businesses/ organisations?*' and two-thirds (67%) of respondents said that it had: half (50%) said 'yes, I do more on-line now and plan to continue', 6% said ' yes, I do more over the phone now and plan to continue', and 15% said 'yes, but only while restrictions were in place - I plan to revert back to my previous preferences'. The remaining third of all respondents (33%) said 'no – nothing has changed for me'.

1.11 Over half of respondents (54%) said that they would be 'very satisfied' if 'in the future, when current restrictions have been lifted' Council services were 'largely telephone and internet-based', while a third (35%) said that they would be 'partially satisfied', 7% would be 'not very satisfied', and 4% would be 'dissatisfied' if this were to be the case.

2. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

2.1 North West Leicestershire District Council, (NWLDC), required market research to obtain feedback from residents to help to shape their Customer Experience Strategy. The key research questions were:

- Current access of residents to the internet and reasons for any non-use
- Purpose of use and confidence in using the internet
- Preferences for contact with NWLDC and most important aspects of contact
- Effects of the Pandemic on contact and acceptability of continued use of remote means of contact.

2.2 The research was to be undertaken, as requested by the client, across multiple channels. Emails with links to an online questionnaire were sent to customers for whom NWLDC had permission for contact; links were also displayed on the Council's website; and telephone surveys and on-street surveys were undertaken with residents. The list of emails and telephone numbers was provided by the client. The Council developed a questionnaire a copy of which is attached at ***Appendix 1***.

2.3 A total of 2,663 responses were received: 2,146 online surveys and 517 from face to face and telephone surveys. The data was not fully representative of the population of NWLDC despite quotas having been set for person to person interviewing, (e.g. 67.2% of responses were from respondents aged 45 years and over), and therefore weighting was applied by ward and by age group; details of the weights used are shown at the end of this section below.

2.4 Weighted data has been used to analyse to the following sub-groups: source of the data, age group, household size and ethnicity; see table overleaf. Where full postcodes were available for respondents (2,466) data can also be analysed by individual wards. Weighted Tables of Results (in Excel format) are attached as ***Appendix 3*** to this report, while ***Appendix 2*** 'Unweighted Frequencies' (again in Excel) are provided to show full details of any 'missing' data.

2.5 Responses to open questions have been coded for emerging themes and are also listed verbatim at ***Appendix 4.***

Sub group analysis

Details of the Sample Sub-Groups (Unweighted Counts and Percentages)

Group	Sub Group	Count	Sample %
Source	Online	2,146	80.6
	Face to face/telephone	517	19.4
Age group	18 to 24	92	3.5
	25 to 34	231	8.7
	35 to 44	314	11.8
	45 to 54	526	19.8
	55 to 64	650	24.4
	65 to 74	612	23.0
	75 and over	231	8.7
	(missing data)	7	0.3
Household size	Single person	471	17.7
	2 people	1,221	45.9
	3 people	413	15.5
	4 or more people	501	18.8
	(missing data)	57	2.1
Ethnicity	White British	2,413	90.6
	Other than White British	183	6.9
	Prefer not to say	42	1.6
	(missing data)	25	0.9
TOTAl		2,663	100.0

NOTE: 'Missing data' refers to where a question has been missed or where information has not been supplied

Weights applied

2.6 The survey data was weighted to be representative of the Council area by ward (as shown in the table overleaf) and then by age group as follows; as can be seen in the table, the age profile of the weighted sample exactly matches that of the population of the Council area:

	18-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65-74 years	75+ years	Total 18+ years
Age Group Population (%) *	23.7	15.2	19.0	16.8	14.3	11.0	100.0
Achieved Age Group (% weighted by ward)	11.8	11.6	20.1	24.9	23.1	8.5	100.0
Age Weight	2.012612	1.301949	0.947561	0.675476	0.617938	1.299128	
Weighted Sample (%)	23.7	15.2	19.0	16.8	14.3	11.0	100.0

(* Source: ONS mid-2020 population statistics for North West Leicestershire)

		Achieved Count	Achieved Percent	Population Percent	Ward Weight
WARD	Appleby	55	2.2	2.4	1.092075
	Ashby Castle	87	3.5	2.4	0.675095
	Ashby Holywell	89	3.6	2.9	0.808790
	Ashby Ivanhoe	86	3.5	3.1	0.883083
	Ashby Money Hill	76	3.1	3.7	1.189173
	Ashby Willesley	56	2.3	2.0	0.886154
	Ashby Wolds	56	2.3	2.9	1.279061
	Bardon	60	2.4	2.7	1.100140
	Blackfordby	64	2.6	2.6	0.985173
	Broom Leys	68	2.8	2.2	0.796749
	Castle Donington Castle	118	4.8	2.6	0.552627
	Castle Donington Central	95	3.9	3.0	0.770160
	Castle Donington Park	47	1.9	1.4	0.751297
	Castle Rock	55	2.2	2.3	1.052285
	Coalville East	60	2.4	2.7	1.101126
	Coalville West	79	3.2	3.0	0.934378
	Daleacre Hill	55	2.2	2.5	1.132402
	Ellistown & Battleflat	51	2.1	2.6	1.261810
	Greenhill	39	1.6	3.2	1.992810
	Hermitage	68	2.8	2.7	0.978105
	Holly Hayes	44	1.8	2.6	1.463896
	Hugglescote St John's	58	2.4	1.8	0.780643
	Hugglescote St Mary's	61	2.5	3.4	1.388023
	Ibstock East	66	2.7	3.0	1.120663
	Ibstock West	57	2.3	2.4	1.051162
	Kegworth	66	2.7	2.5	0.924849
	Long Whatton & Diseworth	67	2.7	2.6	0.938853
	Measham North	71	2.9	2.8	0.988010
	Measham South	67	2.7	2.5	0.901776
	Oakthorpe & Donisthorpe	55	2.2	2.7	1.211983
	Ravenstone & Packington	93	3.8	3.0	0.791175
	Sence Valley	65	2.6	2.7	1.028254
	Snibston North	54	2.2	2.5	1.119418
	Snibston South	60	2.4	2.3	0.938964
	Thornborough	53	2.1	2.1	0.977047
	Thringstone	46	1.9	2.7	1.442680
	Valley	61	2.5	2.9	1.153373
	Worthington & Breedon	58	2.4	2.7	1.154903
	Total*	2,466	100.0	100.0	

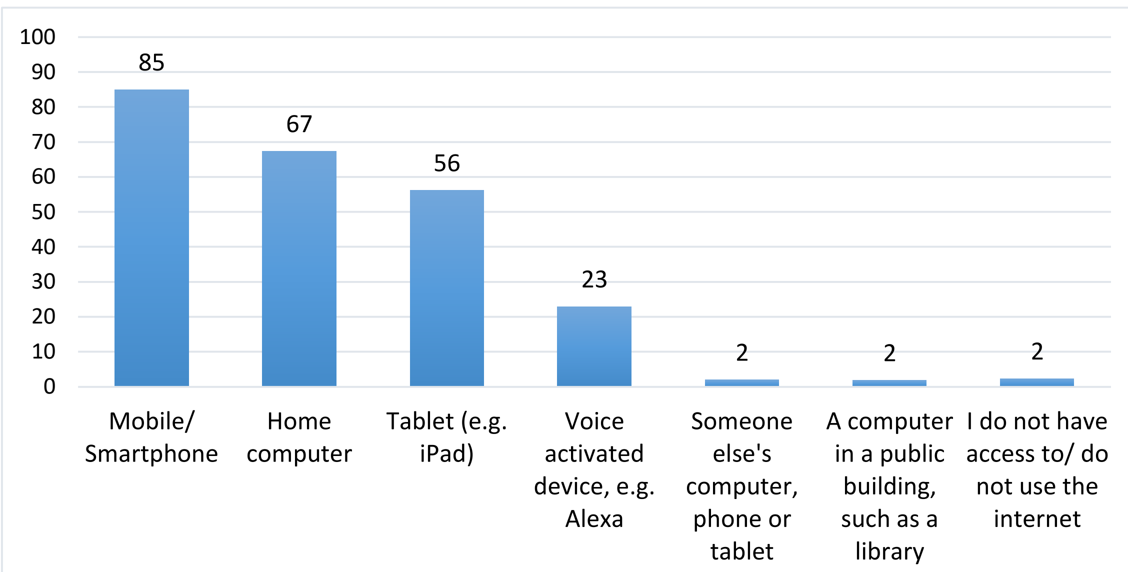
(* Insufficient postcode data was supplied in 197 cases, 7.4% of the total unweighted sample)

3 USE OF THE INTERNET

3.1 When asked what means they use to access the internet the large majority of all respondents said that they use a 'mobile/ smartphone' (85%), while two-thirds (67%) use a 'home computer', over half (56%) use a 'tablet (e.g. iPad)', and just under a quarter (23%) use a 'voice activated device, e.g. Alexa'. Small numbers of respondents said that they use 'someone else's computer, phone or tablet' (2%), and 'a computer in a public building, such as a library' (2%) to access the internet; and 2% (rising to 12% of those aged 75 years and over, and 9% of those respondents in the 'face-to-face/telephone tranche') said that they 'do not have access to the internet or do not use it'.

How do you access the internet?

(Q5: % response – all respondents)



3.2 As might be expected, means of accessing the internet varied significantly by age group:

Use of 'mobile/ smartphone' to access the internet was almost universal at 99% for those aged 18-34 years, reducing to 70% for those aged 65-74 years and to 46% for those aged 75 years and over.

Access using a 'home computer' was lower among those aged 18-34 years (55% compared to 67% overall), but rose to around three-quarters of those aged 45-54 years (73%) and 65-74 years (75%).

Access via a 'tablet' computer was most prevalent among those aged 45-54 years (63%), reducing to 43% for those aged 75 years and over.

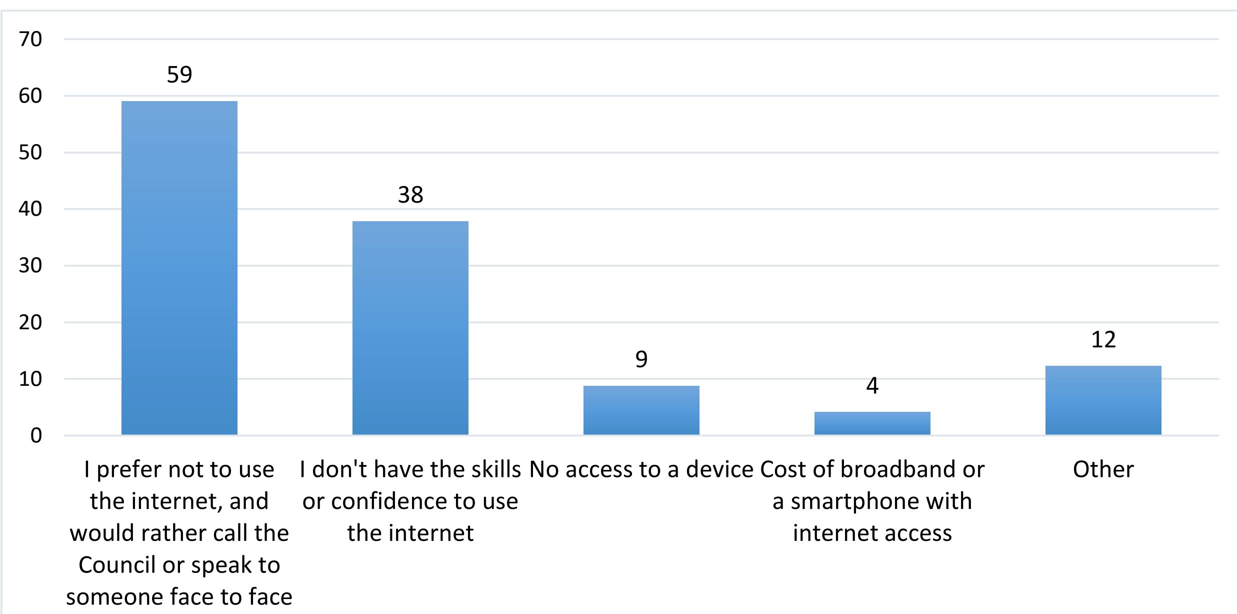
Use of a 'voice activated device' to access the internet increased to 32% of those aged 35-44 years and 45-54 years, but was lower at 13% for those aged 65-74 years and 6% for those aged 75 years and over.

3.3 Differences by ethnic group were that those from ethnic backgrounds 'other than White British' were more likely to access the internet on a 'mobile/ smartphone' (95% compared to 84% for 'White – British' respondents); while they were less likely than 'White – British' respondents to access via a 'home computer' (59% compared to 68%), a 'tablet' (40% compared to 58%), and a 'voice activated device' (17% compared to 24%).

3.4 Those few respondents who indicated not having access to the internet or not using the internet were asked for their reasons why not: over half of these respondents (59%) said that they 'prefer not to use the internet, and would rather call the Council or speak to someone face-to-face', while 38% said 'I do not have the skills or confidence to use the internet', and small numbers said that they have 'no access to a device' (9%; 4 respondents), that it was due to 'the cost of broadband or a smartphone with internet access' (4%; 2), or gave 'other' reasons (12%; 7).

<u>If 'no access'/ 'do not use' – Why not?</u>

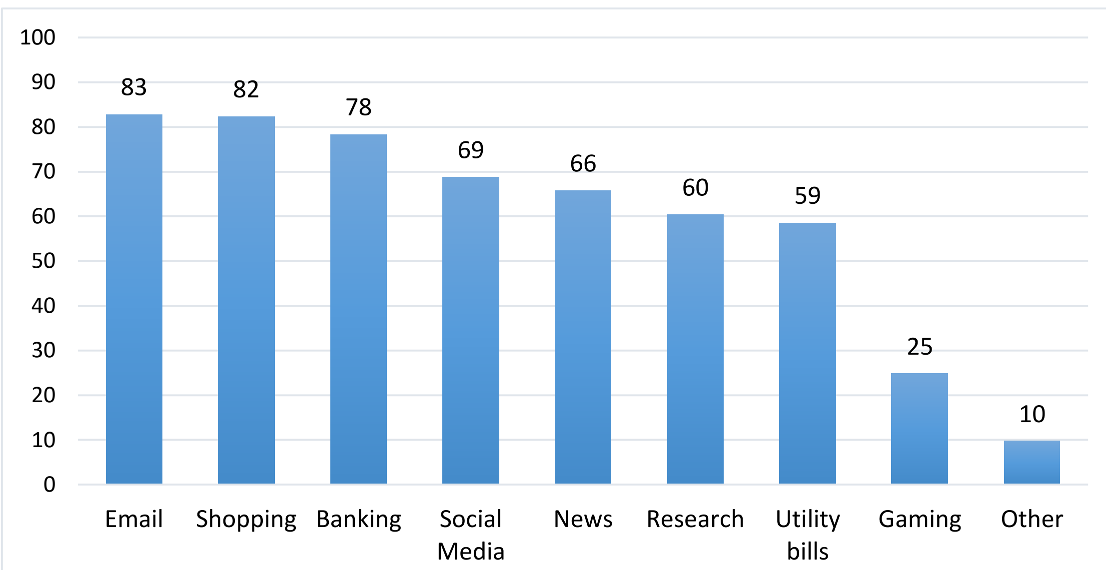
(Q6: % response – those that do not use the internet – 54 respondents)



3.5 Those respondents that do use the internet were asked what things they mainly use it for, and the large majority reported using it for ‘email’ (83%; rising to 90% for 65-74 year olds, but lower at 69% for those aged 18-34 years), ‘shopping’ (82%; rising to 90% for 35-44 year olds), and ‘banking’ (78%; rising to 86% for 35-44 year olds, but lower at 65% for those aged 75 years and over), while around two-thirds use it for ‘social media’ (69%; rising to 90% of 18-34 year olds, but reducing to 33% for those aged 75 years and over) and ‘news’ (66%); 60% use it for ‘research’, and 59% for ‘utility bills’ (varying from 68% for 35-44 year olds down to 50% for those aged 75 years and over). A smaller minority, 25%, said that they mainly use the internet for ‘gaming’ (rising from 6% of those aged 75 years and over, to around a third of more of those respondents aged under 55 years – 39% for those aged 18-34 years); and 10% gave ‘other’ responses, of which 5% referred to using it for ‘work’, (see Appendix 4 for verbatim comments). [See table overleaf for a full breakdown of results by ‘source’, age group and ethnicity.]

<u>What do you mainly use the internet for?</u>

(Q7: % response – internet users – 2,586 respondents)



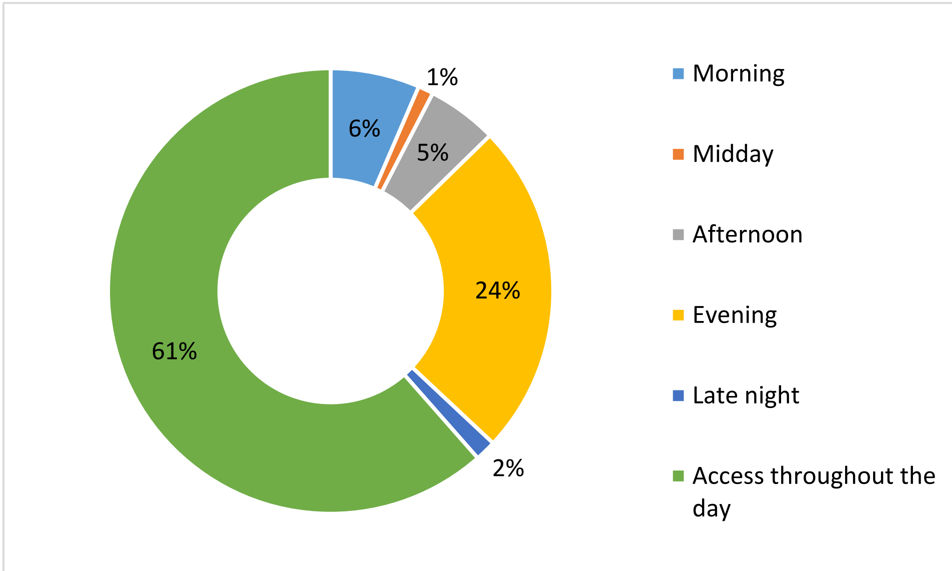
3.6 The largest differences by ethnic group were that ‘White – British’ respondents were more likely than those from other ethnic backgrounds to use the internet for ‘email’ (84% compared to 70%), but less likely to use it for ‘social media’ (68% compared to 79%).

		Q7) What do you mainly use the internet for? (% response – internet users)									
		Email	**Shopping**	**Banking**	**Social Media**	**News**	**Research**	**Utility bills**	**Gaming**	**Other**	Unweighted Count
Source	On-line (Email tranche)	89	84	82	67	67	60	61	22	8	2132
	Face to face/ telephone	61	76	65	77	60	62	50	34	16	454
Age group	18-34 years	69	81	76	90	62	60	60	39	12	321
	35-44 years	87	90	86	83	71	60	68	32	9	313
	45-54 years	86	86	81	70	68	61	56	30	13	522
	55-64 years	88	80	79	61	67	57	57	15	7	635
	65-74 years	90	82	79	48	70	63	58	9	6	588
	75 years and over	84	71	65	33	55	61	50	6	7	203
Ethnicity	White - British	84	83	79	68	65	60	59	24	9	2344
	Other than White British	70	82	74	79	71	64	60	31	11	180
Total	**Overall**	**83**	**82**	**78**	**69**	**66**	**60**	**59**	**25**	**10**	2586

3.7 When internet-users were asked what time of day they mainly go on-line the majority response was that they 'access it throughout the day' (61%; rising to 73% for 'face-to-face/telephone' respondents), while a quarter (24%; rising to 30% for those aged 35-44 years, and 31% for those aged 55-64 years) said that they mainly go on-line in the 'evening'; and small minorities said they mainly access the internet in the 'morning' (6%; rising to 14% of 65-74 year olds, and 20% of those aged 75 years and over), at 'midday' (1%), in the 'afternoon' (5%; rising to 11% of those aged 75 years and over) and 'late at night' (2%).

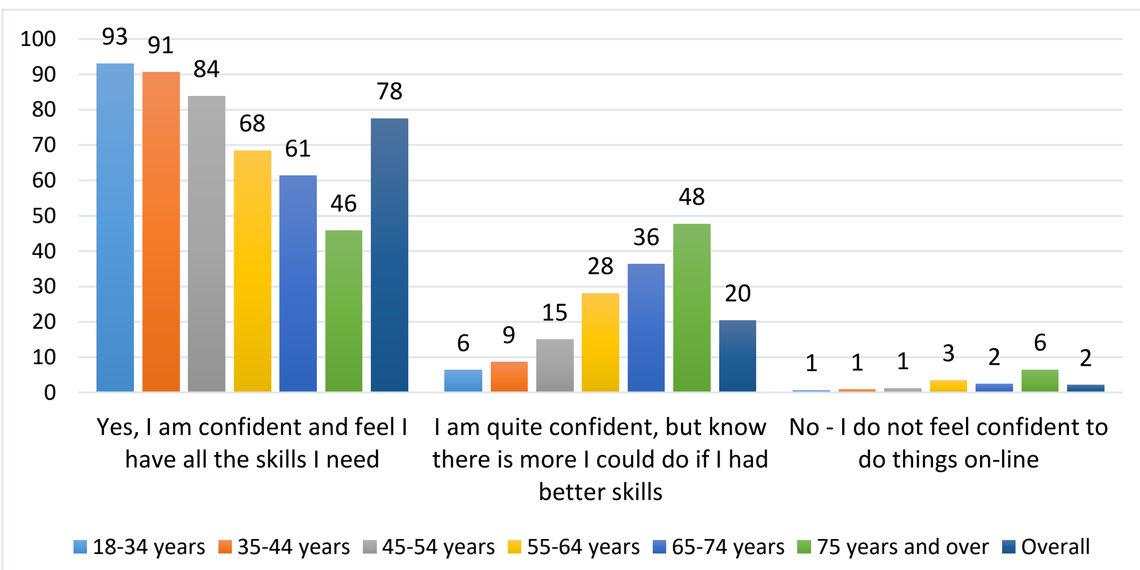
What time of day do you mainly go on-line?

(Q8: % response – internet users – 2,576 respondents)



Are you confident when going on-line?

(Q9: % response – internet users; by age group and overall, 2,584 respondents)

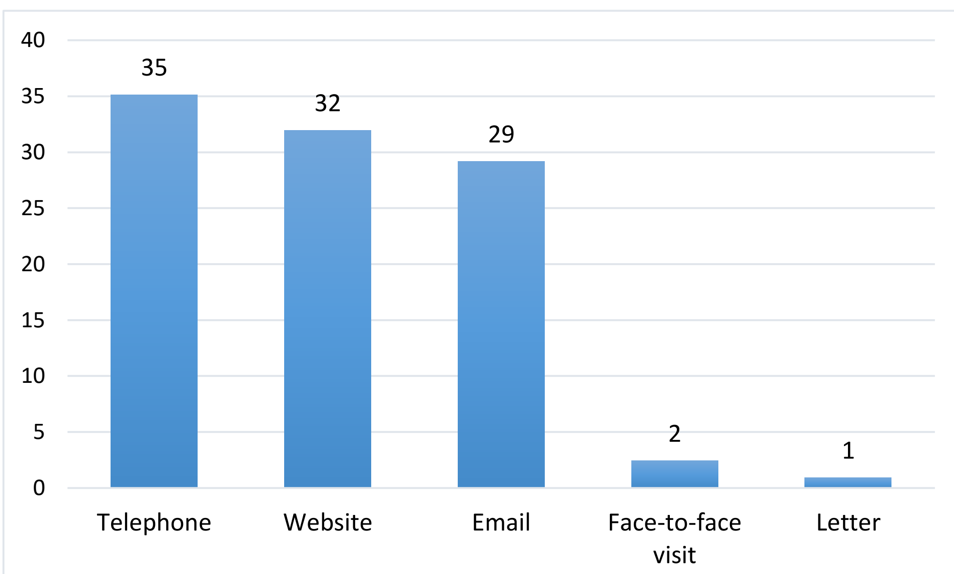


3.8 While overall more than three-quarters of respondents that use the internet said that they are confident when going on-line: 'Yes, I am confident and feel I have all the skills I need' (78%), this figure varied widely with age group, from 93% of those aged 18-34 years and 91% of those aged 35-44 years, down to less than half of those aged 75 years and over (46%). A fifth of respondents overall said that they feel 'quite confident when going on-line, but know there is more I could do if I had better skills' (20%; rising to 36% for those aged 65-74 years, and 48% for those aged 75 years and over); while 2% of respondents said 'no – I do not feel confident to do things on-line', with this increasing to 6% for those aged 75 years and over, and also being slightly higher at 4% among 'face-to-face/ telephone' respondents, and those whose ethnic group is 'other than White – British'. However, note that those from ethnic groups 'other than White – British' were also more likely to say that 'I am confident when going on-line and feel I have all the skills I need': 86% compared to 78% overall for internet-users.

4. CONTACTING NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

4.1 The most preferred means of contacting the Council, each referred to by around a third of all respondents, were 'telephone' (35%), 'website' (32%), and 'email' (29%); only small numbers of respondents stated that they most prefer a 'face-to-face visit' (2%), contacting by 'letter' (1%; 23 respondents), and 0% (12 respondents) gave some 'other' response.

How do you most prefer to contact the Council?
(Q10: % response – all respondents, 2,655 respondents)



4.2 Preference for 'telephone' contact was significantly higher among those respondents aged 75 years and over (49% compared to 35% overall), and those in the 'face-to-face/ telephone' tranche (again 49%); while preference for making contact via the 'website' rose to 38% for those aged 35-44 years, and 37% for those aged 45-54 years, and also 37% among those in the 'on-line' tranche, but reduced to 24% for those in ethnic groups ‘other than White – British’, (compared to 32% for the overall sample). Making contact via ‘email’ was most popular for those respondents aged 18-34 years (37% compared to 29% overall), and those from ethnic groups ‘other than White – British’ (38%).

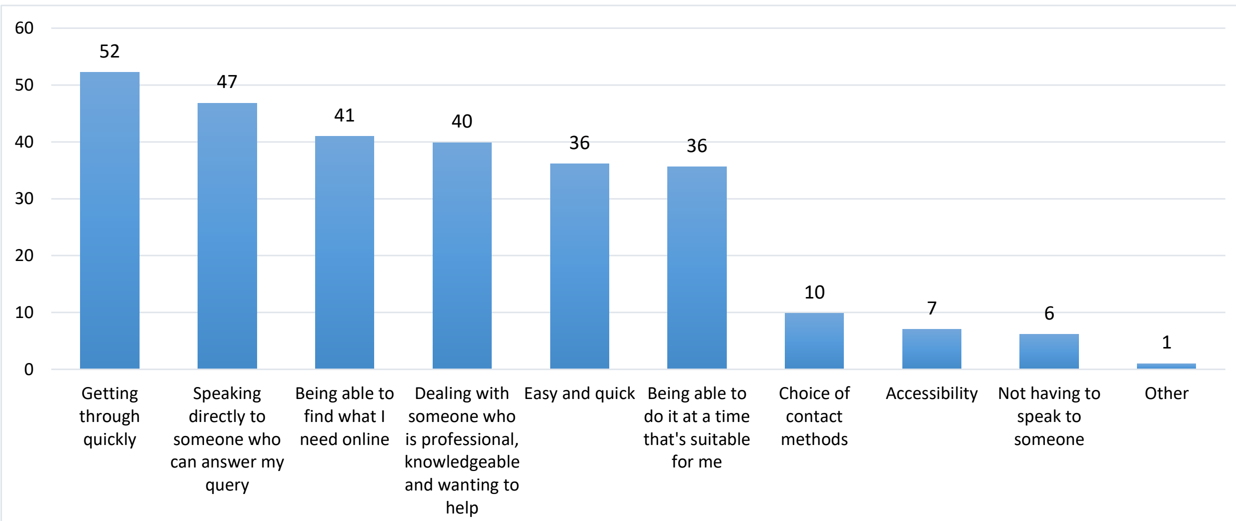
4.3 Respondents were then asked why they prefer to use this contact method (as indicated at Question 10). Results are detailed in the table below, broken down by the most favoured contact method (Question 10). Overall, respondents chose to use their favoured contact method because it is the ‘most convenient’ (55%) and ‘easiest’ (50%) method for them, while small minorities said it is because they ‘have always done it this way’ (10%), and because they ‘don’t have access via other methods’ (1%), and 10% gave some ‘other’ reason.

Q10 by Q11: Weighted % and Unweighted Counts			**Q11) Why do you prefer to use this contact method?**					
			Easiest	**Most convenient**	**Don't have access via other methods**	**Have always done it this way**	**Other**	**Count**
Q10) How do you most prefer to contact the Council?	**Website**	Row %	56	69		5	2	872
	Email	Row %	51	62	1	5	7	736
	Telephone	Row %	45	40	1	16	18	935
	Letter	Row %	28	53		25	19	23
	Face-to-face visit	Row %	42	27	1	22	24	67
Total	**Overall**	Row %	50	55	1	10	10	100
		Count	1,263	1,501	14	263	270	2,646

4.4 Considering the main means of contact: of those respondents that most prefer to contact the Council by ‘telephone’, 45% do so because it is the ‘easiest’ method, 40% because it is the ‘most convenient’, and 16% ‘have always done it this way’; of those that most prefer to make contact via the ‘website’, 69% do so because it is the ‘most convenient’, and 56% because it is the ‘easiest’ method; and of those that most prefer to contact by ‘email’, 62% do so because it is the ‘most convenient’, and 51% because it is the ‘easiest’ method.

4.5 Overall, when asked to name up to three things that are the most important aspects to them when contacting the Council, respondents were most likely to cite 'getting through quickly' (52%), 'speaking directly to someone who can answer my query' (47%), 'being able to find what I need online' (41%), and 'dealing with someone who is professional, knowledgeable and wanting to help' (40%). Over a third of all respondents (36% each) said that 'easy and quick', and 'being able to do it at a time that's suitable for me' were among their top-three most important aspects, while smaller minorities of respondents referred to 'choice of contact methods' (10%), 'accessibility' (7%), and 'not having to speak to someone' (6%), and 1% mentioned some 'other' aspect.

<u>What three things are most important to you when contacting the Council?</u>
(Q12: % response – all respondents 2,651; up to three responses permitted)



4.6 The top-three aspects chosen by respondents varied by age group, with younger respondents tending to favour ease and speed and being able to find what they need on-line (e.g. 18-34 year olds, 58% 'getting through quickly' and 49% 'easy and quick'; and 35-44 year olds, 49% 'getting through quickly' and 46% 'being able to find what I need on-line'); while respondents in older age groups tended to favour speaking directly to someone professional and knowledgeable, (e.g. 75+ year olds, 65% 'speaking directly to someone who can answer my query' and 52% 'dealing with someone who is professional, knowledgeable and wanting to help'). (See table overleaf.)

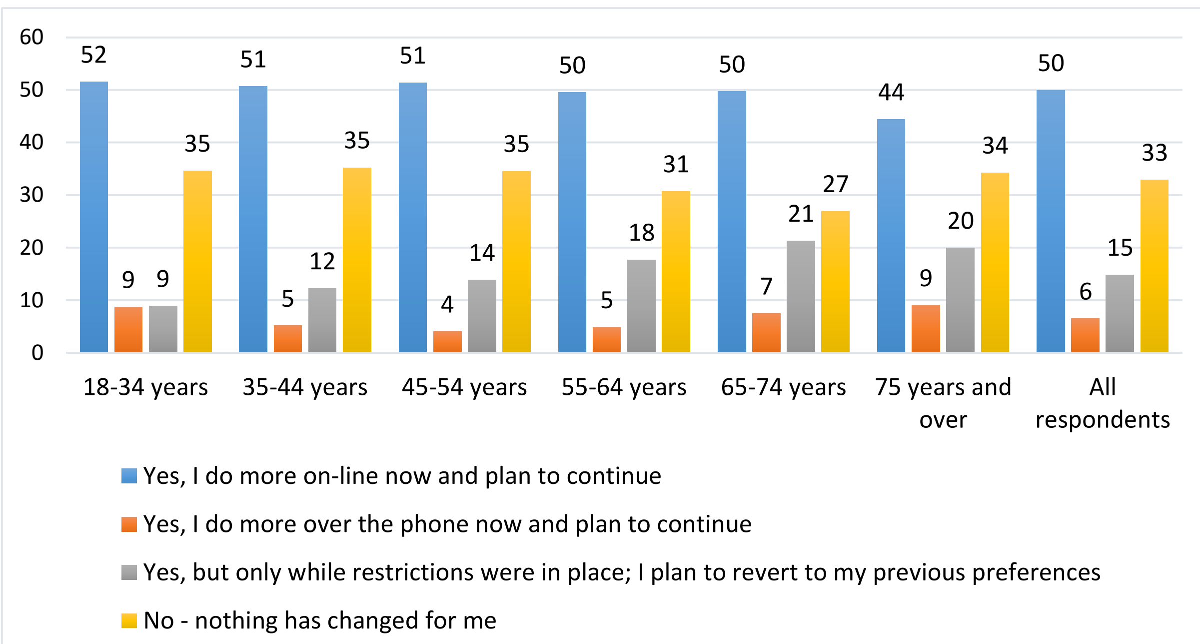
		Q12) What three things are most important to you when contacting the Council? (% response – by age group and overall) Top-three responses by age group highlighted in blue					
		Getting through quickly	Speaking directly to someone who can answer my query	Being able to find what I need online	Dealing with someone who is professional, knowledgeable and wanting to help	Easy and quick	Being able to do it at a time that's suitable for me
Age group	**18-34 years**	58	44	36	31	49	34
	35-44 years	49	37	46	35	43	40
	45-54 years	50	42	47	40	35	40
	55-64 years	55	49	43	41	33	37
	65-74 years	52	53	41	49	27	33
	75 years and over	45	65	28	52	19	27
Total	**Overall**	**52**	**47**	**41**	**40**	**36**	**36**

5. THE PANDEMIC

5.1 Respondents were asked '*Has the pandemic changed the way you do things such as shopping, social media, and contacting businesses/ organisations?*' and two-thirds (67%) of all respondents said that it had: half (50%) said 'yes, I do more on-line now and plan to continue', 6% said ' yes, I do more over the phone now and plan to continue', and 15% said 'yes, but only while restrictions were in place - I plan to revert back to my previous preferences'. The remaining third of all respondents (33%) said 'no – nothing has changed for me', with this figure being higher at 40% for 'face-to-face/ telephone' respondents', and lower at 27% for 65-74 year old respondents and at 26% for those belonging to ethnic groups 'other than White – British'.

Has the pandemic changed the way you do things such as shopping, social media, and contacting businesses/ organisations?

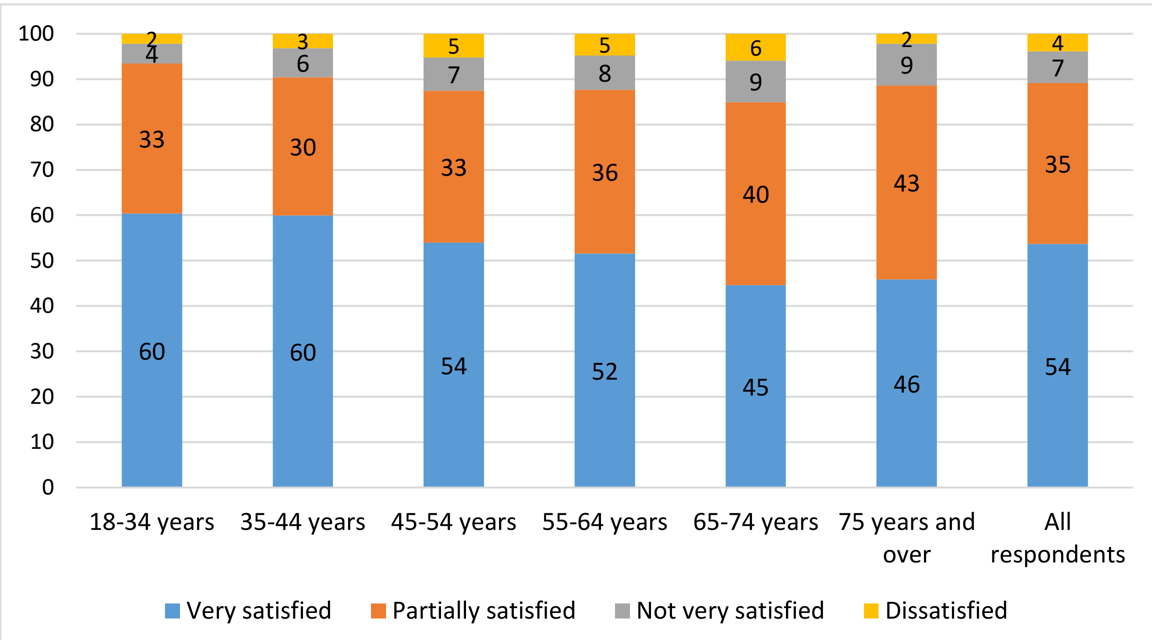
(Q13: % response – by age group and overall, 2,646 respondents)



5.2 Respondents in older age groups were more likely to say that they plan to revert to their previous preferences – the percentage giving this response increasing from 9% for those aged 18-34 years, to 18% for 55-64 year olds, 21% for 65-74 year olds, and 20% for those aged 75 years and over. The numbers who stated that they 'do more over the phone now and plan to continue' were higher at 15% for those respondents whose ethnic group is 'other than White – British', and at 12% for 'face-to-face/ telephone' respondents, when compared to the overall sample response of 6%.

5.3 Over half of all respondents (54%) said that they would be 'very satisfied' if 'in the future, when current restrictions have been lifted' Council services were 'largely telephone and internet-based', while a third (35%) said that they would be 'partially satisfied', 7% would be 'not very satisfied', and 4% would be 'dissatisfied' if this were to be the case.

Over the course of the pandemic the Council have had to move their services to be much more telephone-based and on-line. In the future, when current restrictions have been lifted, how satisfied or dissatisfied would you be if services were largely telephone and internet-based?
(Q14: % response – by age group and overall, 2,651 respondents)



5.4 Satisfaction levels varied significantly by age group here, with 60% of those aged under 45 years saying that they would be 'very satisfied' if services in the future were to be largely telephone and internet-based, reducing to 45% for those aged 65-74 years, and 46% for those aged 75 years and over. Dissatisfaction rose slightly to 6% for respondents aged 65-74 years, (compared to 4% overall), and a further 9% of respondents in this age group said that they would be 'not very satisfied'.

APPENDIX 1 – COPY QUESTIONNAIRE

Customer Service Survey 2021

Good morning/afternoon. My name is … (show ID card)
This survey is being undertaken on behalf of North West Leicestershire District Council to seek the opinion of residents on a range of customer service issues. Everything you say in this interview is confidential and will be treated in the strictest confidence. By choosing to be interviewed you agree that we can use the responses that you provide to produce an analysis of residents views
.
During the survey we will ask for your postcode and some information about you – so we can be sure that we have interviewed a representative sample of residents. If you would prefer not to give this information please let us know when we get to that part of the survey.

The data controller for this survey is North West Leicestershire District Council and is being carried out by NWA Research on their behalf. You can read their privacy notice on their website.
(If you would like to know more about this research, or you require assistance, please contact NWA Research on free-phone 0800 316 3630).
CONTACT details of NWLDC

Is it OK to continue?
Yes (continue)
No (if no thank and close)

Can I just check – do you live in North West Leicestershire?
Yes (continue)
No (if no thank and close)

IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU PREFER NOT TO ANSWER PLEASE SAY AND WE CAN MOVE ON TO THE NEXT QUESTION

1. Please can I ask what is your home postcode: (1st five digits of)

____

In general

2. And which of the following age groups do you fall in to: *(Please select one option)*

1	❑	18-24 years	5	❑	55-64 years
2	❑	25-34 years	6	❑	65-74 years
3	❑	35-44 years	7	❑	75 years and over
4	❑	45-54 years			

3. **How many people are in your household, (including yourself)? Please enter the total number of adults (18+ years) and children (under 18 years):** *(Please write in)*

____

4. **To which of these groups do you consider you belong to?** *(Please select one option)*

1	❑	White - British/ English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	5	❑	Black/ Black - British
2	❑	White - Irish	6	❑	Asian/ Asian - British
3	❑	White - Other	7	❑	Other (Please write in below)
4	❑	Mixed ethnic background	8	❑	Prefer not to say

Use of the Internet

5. **May I ask how do you access the internet? Read out and tick those that apply**

1	❑	Home computer	5	❑	A computer in a public building, such as a library
2	❑	Mobile/ Smartphone	6	❑	Someone else's computer, phone, or tablet
3	❑	Tablet (e.g. iPad)	7	❑	I do not have access to/ do not use the internet
4	❑	Voice activated device, e.g. Alexa			

6. **If you do not have access to/ do not use the internet, why is that?** *(Read out - select all that apply)*

1	❑	Cost of broadband or a smartphone with internet access	4	❑	I prefer not to use the internet, and would rather call the Council or speak to someone face-to-face
2	❑	No access to a device	5	❑	Other (Please write in below)
3	❑	I don't have the skills or confidence to use the internet			

NON USERS OF THE INTERNET SKIP TO Q10

7. **What do you mainly use the internet for?** *(Please select all that apply)*

1	❑	Shopping	6	❑	Banking
2	❑	Social Media	7	❑	Utility bills
3	❑	Gaming	8	❑	Email
4	❑	News	9	❑	Other (Please write in below)
5	❑	Research			

8. **What time of day do you go on-line most often?** *(Please select one option)*

1	❑	Morning	4	❑	Evening
2	❑	Midday	5	❑	Late night
3	❑	Afternoon	6	❑	Access throughout the day

9. **Are you confident when going on-line?** *(Please select one option)*

1	❑	Yes, I am confident and feel I have all the skills I need	3	❑	No - I do not feel confident to do things on-line
2	❑	I am quite confident, but know there is more I could do if I had better skills			

Contacting North West Leicestershire District Council

10. **How do you most prefer to contact the Council?** *(Please select one option)*

1	❑	Website	4	❑	Letter
2	❑	Email	5	❑	Face-to-face visit
3	❑	Telephone	6	❑	Other (Please write in below)

11. **Why do you prefer to use this contact method?** *(Please select all that apply)*

1	❑	Easiest	4	❑	Have always done it this way
2	❑	Most convenient	5	❑	Other (Please write in below)
3	❑	Don't have access via other methods			

12. **What <u>three things</u> are most important to you when contacting the Council?** *(Please select up to three options only)*

1	❑	Getting through quickly	6	❑	Easy and quick
2	❑	Being able to find what I need online	7	❑	Dealing with someone who is professional, knowledgeable and wanting to help
3	❑	Speaking directly to someone who can answer my query	8	❑	Choice of contact methods
4	❑	Not having to speak to someone	9	❑	Accessibility
5	❑	Being able to do it at a time that's suitable for me	10	❑	Other (Please write in below)

The Pandemic

13. **Has the pandemic changed the way you do things such as shopping, social media, contacting businesses/ organisations?** *(Please select all that apply)*

1	❑	Yes, I do more on-line now and plan to continue	3	❑	Yes, but only while restrictions were in place - I plan to revert back to my previous preferences
2	❑	Yes, I do more over the phone now and plan to continue	4	❑	No - nothing has changed for me

14. **Over the course of the pandemic the Council have had to move their services to be much more telephone-based and on-line. In the future, when current restrictions have been lifted, how satisfied or dissatisfied would you be if services were largely telephone and internet-based?** *(Please select one option)*

Very satisfied	Partially satisfied	Not very satisfied	Dissatisfied
1	2	3	4
❑	❑	❑	❑

Thank you for helping us to improve your services by taking the time to complete this survey. My supervisor will be calling back one in 10 of the people we have interviewed. Please could you give me a mobile telephone number or email address to enable this to happen? This information will only be used for this purpose. This research is carried out in accordance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.

As I said my name is……. And NWA can be contacted on freephone 0800 3163630 OR email norma.wilburn@nwaresearch.co.uk

Write in:

Thank and close

www.mrs.org.uk

www.nwaresearch.co.uk

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION I have completed the above questionnaire in accordance with the instructions given and the MRS Code of Conduct for interviewers.

Signature………………………………………………………………….

Name………………………………………………………………….

Date………………………………………………………………….

Location………………………………………………………………….

APPENDIX 2 – UNWEIGHTED FREQUENCIES

Ward

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Appleby	55	2.1	2.2	2.2
	Ashby Castle	87	3.3	3.5	5.8
	Ashby Holywell	89	3.3	3.6	9.4
	Ashby Ivanhoe	86	3.2	3.5	12.9
	Ashby Money Hill	76	2.9	3.1	15.9
	Ashby Willesley	56	2.1	2.3	18.2
	Ashby Woulds	56	2.1	2.3	20.5
	Bardon	60	2.3	2.4	22.9
	Blackfordby	64	2.4	2.6	25.5
	Broom Leys	68	2.6	2.8	28.3
	Castle Donington Castle	118	4.4	4.8	33.0
	Castle Donington Central	95	3.6	3.9	36.9
	Castle Donington Park	47	1.8	1.9	38.8
	Castle Rock	55	2.1	2.2	41.0
	Coalville East	60	2.3	2.4	43.5
	Coalville West	79	3.0	3.2	46.7
	Daleacre Hill	55	2.1	2.2	48.9
	Ellistown & Battleflat	51	1.9	2.1	51.0
	Greenhill	39	1.5	1.6	52.6
	Hermitage	68	2.6	2.8	55.3
	Holly Hayes	44	1.7	1.8	57.1
	Hugglescote St John's	58	2.2	2.4	59.4
	Hugglescote St Mary's	61	2.3	2.5	61.9
	Ibstock East	66	2.5	2.7	64.6
	Ibstock West	57	2.1	2.3	66.9
	Kegworth	66	2.5	2.7	69.6
	Long Whatton & Diseworth	67	2.5	2.7	72.3
	Measham North	71	2.7	2.9	75.2
	Measham South	67	2.5	2.7	77.9
	Oakthorpe & Donisthorpe	55	2.1	2.2	80.1
	Ravenstone & Packington	93	3.5	3.8	83.9
	Sence Valley	65	2.4	2.6	86.5
	Snibston North	54	2.0	2.2	88.7
	Snibston South	60	2.3	2.4	91.2
	Thornborough	53	2.0	2.1	93.3
	Thringstone	46	1.7	1.9	95.2
	Valley	61	2.3	2.5	97.6
	Worthington & Breedon	58	2.2	2.4	100.0

	Total	2466	92.6	100.0	
Missing	System	197	7.4		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q2) Please provide your age group:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-24 years	92	3.5	3.5	3.5
	25-34 years	231	8.7	8.7	12.2
	35-44 years	314	11.8	11.8	24.0
	45-54 years	526	19.8	19.8	43.8
	55-64 years	650	24.4	24.5	68.3
	65-74 years	612	23.0	23.0	91.3
	75 years and over	231	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	2656	99.7	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	7	.3		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q3ALL

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	471	17.7	18.1	18.1
	2	1221	45.9	46.9	64.9
	3	413	15.5	15.8	80.8
	4	369	13.9	14.2	94.9
	5	97	3.6	3.7	98.7
	6	26	1.0	1.0	99.7
	7	9	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	2606	97.9	100.0	
Missing	System	57	2.1		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q4) To which of these groups do you consider you belong to?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	White - British/ English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	2413	90.6	93.0	93.0
	White - Irish	11	.4	.4	93.4
	White - Other	80	3.0	3.1	96.5
	Mixed ethnic background	18	.7	.7	97.1
	Black/ Black - British	23	.9	.9	98.0
	Asian/ Asian - British	48	1.8	1.8	99.9
	Other	3	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	2596	97.5	100.0	
Missing	Prefer not to say	42	1.6		
	(missing)	25	.9		
	Total	67	2.5		
Total		2663	100.0		

		Count	Col %
Q5) How do you access the internet?	Home computer	1855	69.7%
	Mobile/ Smartphone	2195	82.4%
	Tablet (e.g. iPad)	1527	57.3%
	Voice activated device, e.g. Alexa	581	21.8%
	A computer in a public building, such as a library	42	1.6%
	Someone else's computer, phone or tablet	47	1.8%
	I do not have access to/ do not use the internet	67	2.5%
	(missing)	8	.3%
	Total	2663	100.0%
Q6) No access/ do not use - why not?	Cost of broadband or a smartphone with internet access	2	3.0%
	No access to a device	4	6.0%
	I don't have the skills or confidence to use the internet	20	29.9%
	I prefer not to use the internet, and would rather call the Council or speak to someone face to face	33	49.3%
	Other	7	10.4%
	(missing)	13	19.4%
	Total	67	100.0%

		Count	Col %
Q7) What do you mainly use the internet for?	Shopping	2124	82.1%
	Social Media	1648	63.7%
	Gaming	548	21.2%
	News	1727	66.7%
	Research	1564	60.4%
	Banking	2039	78.8%
	Utility bills	1502	58.0%
	Email	2202	85.1%
	Other	238	9.2%
	(missing)	2	.1%
	Total	2588	100.0%

Q8) What time of day do you mainly go online?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Morning	194	7.3	7.5	7.5
	Midday	31	1.2	1.2	8.7
	Afternoon	128	4.8	5.0	13.7
	Evening	616	23.1	23.9	37.6
	Late night	34	1.3	1.3	38.9
	Access throughout the day	1573	59.1	61.1	100.0
	Total	2576	96.7	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	12	.5		
	System	75	2.8		
	Total	87	3.3		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q9) Are you confident when going on-line?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes, I am confident and feel I have all the skills I need	1913	71.8	74.0	74.0
	I am quite confident, but know there is more I could do if I had better skills	612	23.0	23.7	97.7
	No - I do not feel confident to do things on-line	59	2.2	2.3	100.0
	Total	2584	97.0	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	4	.2		
	System	75	2.8		
	Total	79	3.0		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q10) How do you most prefer to contact the Council?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Website	872	32.7	32.8	32.8
	Email	741	27.8	27.9	60.8
	Telephone	938	35.2	35.3	96.1
	Letter	23	.9	.9	96.9
	Face-to-face visit	69	2.6	2.6	99.5
	Other	12	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	2655	99.7	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	8	.3		
Total		2663	100.0		

		Count	Col %
Q11) Why do you prefer to use this contact method?	Easiest	1263	47.4%
	Most convenient	1501	56.4%
	Don't have access via other methods	14	.5%
	Have always done it this way	263	9.9%
	Other	270	10.1%
	(missing)	17	.6%
	Total	2663	100.0%
Q12) What three things are most important to you when contacting the Council?	Getting through quickly	1370	51.4%
	Being able to find what I need online	1124	42.2%
	Speaking directly to someone who can answer my query	1257	47.2%
	Not having to speak to someone	138	5.2%
	Being able to do it at a time that's suitable for me	958	36.0%
	Easy and quick	909	34.1%
	Dealing with someone who is professional, knowledgeable and wanting to help	1101	41.3%
	Choice of contact methods	277	10.4%
	Accessibility	188	7.1%
	Other	28	1.1%
	(missing)	12	.5%
	Total	2663	100.0%
Q13) Has the pandemic changed the way you do things ....?	Yes, I do more on-line now and plan to continue	1326	49.8%
	Yes, I do more over the phone now and plan to continue	169	6.3%
	Yes, but only while restrictions were in place; I plan to revert to my previous preferences	424	15.9%
	No - nothing has changed for me	836	31.4%
	(missing)	17	.6%
	Total	2663	100.0%

Q14) During the pandemic the Council moved their services to be more telephone-based and online. In the future, when current restrictions have been lifted, how satisfied or dissatisfied would you be if services were largely telephone and internet based?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very satisfied	1393	52.3	52.5	52.5
	Partially satisfied	959	36.0	36.2	88.7
	Not very satisfied	190	7.1	7.2	95.9
	Dissatisfied	109	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	2651	99.5	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	12	.5		
Total		2663	100.0		

Ward

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Appleby	55	2.1	2.2	2.2
	Ashby Castle	87	3.3	3.5	5.8
	Ashby Holywell	89	3.3	3.6	9.4
	Ashby Ivanhoe	86	3.2	3.5	12.9
	Ashby Money Hill	76	2.9	3.1	15.9
	Ashby Willesley	56	2.1	2.3	18.2
	Ashby Woulds	56	2.1	2.3	20.5
	Bardon	60	2.3	2.4	22.9
	Blackfordby	64	2.4	2.6	25.5
	Broom Leys	68	2.6	2.8	28.3
	Castle Donington Castle	118	4.4	4.8	33.0
	Castle Donington Central	95	3.6	3.9	36.9
	Castle Donington Park	47	1.8	1.9	38.8
	Castle Rock	55	2.1	2.2	41.0
	Coalville East	60	2.3	2.4	43.5
	Coalville West	79	3.0	3.2	46.7
	Daleacre Hill	55	2.1	2.2	48.9
	Ellistown & Battleflat	51	1.9	2.1	51.0
	Greenhill	39	1.5	1.6	52.6
	Hermitage	68	2.6	2.8	55.3
	Holly Hayes	44	1.7	1.8	57.1
	Hugglescote St John's	58	2.2	2.4	59.4
	Hugglescote St Mary's	61	2.3	2.5	61.9
	Ibstock East	66	2.5	2.7	64.6
	Ibstock West	57	2.1	2.3	66.9
	Kegworth	66	2.5	2.7	69.6

	Long Whatton & Diseworth	67	2.5	2.7	72.3
	Measham North	71	2.7	2.9	75.2
	Measham South	67	2.5	2.7	77.9
	Oakthorpe & Donisthorpe	55	2.1	2.2	80.1
	Ravenstone & Packington	93	3.5	3.8	83.9
	Sence Valley	65	2.4	2.6	86.5
	Snibston North	54	2.0	2.2	88.7
	Snibston South	60	2.3	2.4	91.2
	Thornborough	53	2.0	2.1	93.3
	Thringstone	46	1.7	1.9	95.2
	Valley	61	2.3	2.5	97.6
	Worthington & Breedon	58	2.2	2.4	100.0
	Total	2466	92.6	100.0	
Missing	System	197	7.4		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q2) Please provide your age group:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-24 years	92	3.5	3.5	3.5
	25-34 years	231	8.7	8.7	12.2
	35-44 years	314	11.8	11.8	24.0
	45-54 years	526	19.8	19.8	43.8
	55-64 years	650	24.4	24.5	68.3
	65-74 years	612	23.0	23.0	91.3
	75 years and over	231	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	2656	99.7	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	7	.3		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q3ALL

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	471	17.7	18.1	18.1
	2	1221	45.9	46.9	64.9
	3	413	15.5	15.8	80.8
	4	369	13.9	14.2	94.9
	5	97	3.6	3.7	98.7
	6	26	1.0	1.0	99.7
	7	9	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	2606	97.9	100.0	
Missing	System	57	2.1		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q4) To which of these groups do you consider you belong to?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	White - British/ English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	2413	90.6	93.0	93.0
	White - Irish	11	.4	.4	93.4
	White - Other	80	3.0	3.1	96.5
	Mixed ethnic background	18	.7	.7	97.1
	Black/ Black - British	23	.9	.9	98.0
	Asian/ Asian - British	48	1.8	1.8	99.9
	Other	3	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	2596	97.5	100.0	
Missing	Prefer not to say	42	1.6		
	(missing)	25	.9		
	Total	67	2.5		
Total		2663	100.0		

		Count	Col %
Q5) How do you access the internet?	Home computer	1855	69.7%
	Mobile/ Smartphone	2195	82.4%
	Tablet (e.g. iPad)	1527	57.3%
	Voice activated device, e.g. Alexa	581	21.8%
	A computer in a public building, such as a library	42	1.6%
	Someone else's computer, phone or tablet	47	1.8%
	I do not have access to/ do not use the internet	67	2.5%
	(missing)	8	.3%
	Total	2663	100.0%

Q6) No access/ do not use - why not?	Cost of broadband or a smartphone with internet access	2	3.0%
	No access to a device	4	6.0%
	I don't have the skills or confidence to use the internet	20	29.9%
	I prefer not to use the internet, and would rather call the Council or speak to someone face to face	33	49.3%
	Other	7	10.4%
	(missing)	13	19.4%
	Total	67	100.0%

		Count	Col %
Q7) What do you mainly use the internet for?	Shopping	2124	82.1%
	Social Media	1648	63.7%
	Gaming	548	21.2%
	News	1727	66.7%
	Research	1564	60.4%
	Banking	2039	78.8%
	Utility bills	1502	58.0%
	Email	2202	85.1%
	Other	238	9.2%
	(missing)	2	.1%
	Total	2588	100.0%

Q8) What time of day do you mainly go online?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Morning	194	7.3	7.5	7.5
	Midday	31	1.2	1.2	8.7
	Afternoon	128	4.8	5.0	13.7
	Evening	616	23.1	23.9	37.6
	Late night	34	1.3	1.3	38.9
	Access throughout the day	1573	59.1	61.1	100.0
	Total	2576	96.7	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	12	.5		
	System	75	2.8		
	Total	87	3.3		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q9) Are you confident when going on-line?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes, I am confident and feel I have all the skills I need	1913	71.8	74.0	74.0
	I am quite confident, but know there is more I could do if I had better skills	612	23.0	23.7	97.7
	No - I do not feel confident to do things on-line	59	2.2	2.3	100.0
	Total	2584	97.0	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	4	.2		
	System	75	2.8		
	Total	79	3.0		
Total		2663	100.0		

Q10) How do you most prefer to contact the Council?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Website	872	32.7	32.8	32.8
	Email	741	27.8	27.9	60.8
	Telephone	938	35.2	35.3	96.1
	Letter	23	.9	.9	96.9
	Face-to-face visit	69	2.6	2.6	99.5
	Other	12	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	2655	99.7	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	8	.3		
Total		2663	100.0		

		Count	Col %
Q11) Why do you prefer to use this contact method?	Easiest	1263	47.4%
	Most convenient	1501	56.4%
	Don't have access via other methods	14	.5%
	Have always done it this way	263	9.9%
	Other	270	10.1%
	(missing)	17	.6%
	Total	2663	100.0%
Q12) What three things are most important to you when contacting the Council?	Getting through quickly	1370	51.4%
	Being able to find what I need online	1124	42.2%
	Speaking directly to someone who can answer my query	1257	47.2%

	Not having to speak to someone	138	5.2%
	Being able to do it at a time that's suitable for me	958	36.0%
	Easy and quick	909	34.1%
	Dealing with someone who is professional, knowledgeable and wanting to help	1101	41.3%
	Choice of contact methods	277	10.4%
	Accessibility	188	7.1%
	Other	28	1.1%
	(missing)	12	.5%
	Total	2663	100.0%
Q13) Has the pandemic changed the way you do things ....?	Yes, I do more on-line now and plan to continue	1326	49.8%
	Yes, I do more over the phone now and plan to continue	169	6.3%
	Yes, but only while restrictions were in place; I plan to revert to my previous preferences	424	15.9%
	No - nothing has changed for me	836	31.4%
	(missing)	17	.6%
	Total	2663	100.0%

Q14) During the pandemic the Council moved their services to be more telephone-based and online. In the future, when current restrictions have been lifted, how satisfied or dissatisfied would you be if services were largely telephone and internet based?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very satisfied	1393	52.3	52.5	52.5
	Partially satisfied	959	36.0	36.2	88.7
	Not very satisfied	190	7.1	7.2	95.9
	Dissatisfied	109	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	2651	99.5	100.0	
Missing	(missing)	12	.5		
Total		2663	100.0		