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Meeting	COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Time/Day/Date	6.30 pm on Wednesday, 29 June 2022
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 interests you should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest, registerable interest or other interest.	
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 6 April 2022	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 - 26
6. THE FUTURE OF HERMITAGE LEISURE CENTRE AND RECREATION GROUND	
Report of the Head of Community Services	27 - 98
7. AIR QUALITY CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING (DEFRA)	
Report of the Head of Community Services	99 - 104

8. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

Report of the Strategic Director **105 - 118**

9. ESTABLISHMENT OF FUEL POVERTY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Report of the Strategic Director **119 - 124**

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The officers consider that the press and public should be excluded during consideration of the following items in accordance with Section 100(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 as publicity would be likely to result in disclosure of exempt or confidential information. Members are reminded that they must have regard to the public interest test and must consider, for each item, whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure outweighs the public interest in making the item available.

11. A CINEMA FOR COALVILLE - UPDATE

Report of the Head of Property and Regeneration **125 - 138**

12. LINDEN WAY, COALVILLE - HIGHWAY EXTENSION

Report of the Head of Property and Regeneration **139 - 148**

Circulation:

Councillor J Hoult (Chairman)
Councillor R L Morris (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor C C Benfield
Councillor A J Bridgen
Councillor T Eynon
Councillor J Geary
Councillor M D Hay
Councillor G Hoult
Councillor J G Simmons
Councillor M B Wyatt

MINUTES of a meeting of the COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 6 APRIL 2022

Present: Councillor J Hout (Chairman)

Councillors T Eynon, J Geary, M D Hay, J G Simmons and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr J Arnold, Mrs C Hammond, Miss E Warhurst, Ms R Haynes and Mr P Wheatley

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors C Benfield, G Hout and R Morris.

35. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Wyatt declared a registerable interest, as owner of two businesses in the town centre.

36. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

No questions were received.

37. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2022.

It was noted that on page 4, Item 29 – Flood Management in North West Leicestershire, a comment had been repeated twice therefore it was clarified that this would be amended for the final minutes.

It was moved by Councillor J Geary, seconded by Councillor Dr T Eynon and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2022 be approved as a correct record.

38. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair referred to the Committee's work programme and invited Members to make requests for any additional items.

Members raised concerns that there had been insufficient time to consider Executive Decisions related to the East Midlands Freeport meaningfully, however Officers advised that this had been why the Dev Co and Freeport Cross Party Working Group had been set up to keep members updated given the timescales required for decision making. Normal scrutiny processes would revert once the permanent structures for both Freeport and Development Corporation were established.

Members enquired whether the minutes of the East Midlands DevCo and Freeport Cross Party Working Group had been circulated and officers confirmed that it would be acceptable to circulate these minutes and information provided at the meeting to all Members.

Councillor Dr T Eynon enquired as to when the scoping programme for Scrutiny would be established. Officers advised that the date of the scoping would be set following the meeting of Annual Council.

Councillor T Eynon also suggested the possibility of officers producing a report focused on the issue of Fuel Poverty, in light of the recent fuel cost increases and the social deprivation within the district.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Committee's future work programme be noted.

39. COALVILLE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

The Head of Economic Regeneration presented the report to Members, pointing out the limitations of the document but also drawing attention to the potential amount of spending which could be secured within the district should more residents be encouraged to visit Coalville.

Members thanked officers for a thorough report and enquired which bodies had looked at Coalville and whether these were local. Officers responded that a number of organisations, including the Prince's Regeneration Foundation had been involved and confirmed that the Heritage Society for Coalville had also been invited to provide input.

Members expressed reservations that the promotion of walking and cycling would increase expenditure within the town and stressed the need for better transport links. Officers responded that whilst ideally it would be preferable to have a range of transport choices available, walking and cycling would be a viable choice. Members attention was also drawn to the fact that a station would be something which the authority hoped to deliver in due course.

Officers were asked how this would be communicated to residents. Officers replied that information had been provided on the Council website, through press activity and mainstream media, via community briefings and also by way of Councillors.

Members requested clarification in what way residents had been listened to and were advised that the authority had a dialogue with Councillors and had also engaged with the public in other ways.

Officers were asked to outline the future that they envisaged for Coalville, and responded that a well balanced economy and a place that gave a sense of wellbeing to its residents would be the desired outcome of regeneration works.

It was queried whether additional housing would make the town thrive, however some Members felt that this would bring extra spending power to the area and that residents from new developments in close proximity to the town centre would find it easily accessible on foot.

Members raised the issue that the authority lacks a business improvement district, and suggested that this would give small businesses an opportunity to collaborate and to speak with one voice. It was also noted that electrical vehicle charging points which had been provided were plentiful, however some of these were situated at Snibston park which was closed overnight and therefore the charging points were not accessible during this period. Officers concurred and agreed to add softer facilities such as charging points and include a more detailed element on the Ivanhoe Line to the report.

Members asserted their hopes that by the year 2035, all of the authority's licenced taxis would be electric in order to comply with Zero Carbon objectives.

Members suggested that it would be beneficial to have Cabinet Members present at meetings of Community Scrutiny when items from their portfolio were on the agenda.

A concern was raised regarding the investment which would be channelled into Coalville and it was suggested that the Northern Parishes had yet to see a comparative level of investment. Officers confirmed they would be happy to discuss planned investment into the Northern Parishes with Councillors in an alternative forum.

Officers reported to the meeting, work which had been carried out in conjunction with Coalville C.A.N and reiterated that the report showed various projects which would put the heart back into Coalville.

At 7.20pm, as Members wished to discuss the confidential appendix, by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

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

A short discussion was had on the details within the confidential appendix.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

Comments and observations on the draft regeneration framework to inform the final version which will be recommended to Cabinet at a future meeting be provided by Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.42 pm

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Community Scrutiny Committee – WORK PROGRAMME (as at 21/06/22)

Date of Meeting	Item	Lead Officer	Witnesses	Agenda Item Duration
21 September 2022				
21 September 2022	Private Sector Housing Policies	Paul Sanders, Head of Community Services		15 minutes
21 September 2022	Planning Enforcement (Effectiveness)	Chris Elston, Head of Planning and Infrastructure		15 minutes
21 September 2022	Disposal of Council Property Assets to Support Regeneration	Paul Wheatley, Head of Property and Regeneration	n/a	15 Minutes
23 November 2022				
8 February 2023				
5 April 2023				
21 June 2023				
28 June 2023	Scrutiny Annual Report	James Arnold, Strategic Director of Place		30 minutes

Requests for Items

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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Forward Plan Scoping Actions – Community Scrutiny Committee (as at 16.06.22)

Item	Date requested	How requested	Who requested	Scoping Form Y/N	Officer responsible	Key Stakeholders	Task & Finish Group Y/N	Chair Agreed Y/N	Meeting scheduled
Environmental Enforcement	23 Oct 19	Committee	Cllr Wyatt	No	Clare Proudfoot/ Paul Sanders	LCC, Environment Agency	No	-	TBC
Status:									
Officers to scope with Councillor Wyatt.									



Items raised at previous meetings:

- Covid-19 and the Impact on the Community
- An anti-social behaviour update
- How the Development Corporation was affecting the Community
- Social Deprivation within the District

NOTE: These items were discussed by the Scrutiny Work Programming Group when it met on 24 May, topic scoping is now underway, and more information will be included on the work programme in due course.

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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.

The date of publication of this notice is Friday, 17 June 2022. The Deadline for making any representations as to why items marked as private should be considered in public by **Cabinet on 19 July 2022 is 5pm Friday, 8 July 2022.**

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
July 2022							
Treasury Management Stewardship Report 2021/22 14	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance & Customer Services and Section 151 Officer mark.walker@nwleicester-shire.gov.uk	Treasury Management Stewardship Report 2021/22	Audit and Governance Committee - 20 April 2022
Housing Revenue Account Disposals and Acquisitions Update	Cabinet	Key	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 process.	19 July 2022	Councillor Roger Bayliss Tel: 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Housing Management Team Manager Tel: 01530 454808 amanda.harper@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report. Housing Revenue Account Disposals and Acquisitions 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
Leicester & Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground on Housing and Employment Needs (April 2022)	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	Councillor Keith Merrie MBE keith.merrie@nwleicester-shire.gov.uk Planning Policy & Land Charges Team Manager Tel: 01530 454677 ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Leicester & Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground on Housing and Employment Needs (April 2022)	Considered by the Local Plan Committee
PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2021/22 15	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Finance Team Manager & Deputy S151 Officer Tel: 01530 454492 anna.crouch@nwleicester-shire.gov.uk	PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2021/22	This report is to present the provisional financial outturn prior to the publication of the draft Statement of Accounts on the 31 July. The final version of the Statement of Accounts will be presented to Audit Committee for approval.
The Future of Hermitage Leisure Centre and Recreation Ground.	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	The Future of Hermitage Leisure Centre and Recreation Ground.	Community Scrutiny June 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
Air Quality Capital Grant Funding (DEFRA)	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	<p>Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicester.gov.uk</p> <p>Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicester.gov.uk</p>	Air Quality Capital Grant Funding (DEFRA)	Community Scrutiny 29 June 2022
Castle Donington conservation area: Adoption of character appraisal and boundary review	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	<p>Councillor Keith Merrie MBE keith.merrie@nwleicester.gov.uk</p> <p>Senior Conservation Officer james.white@nwleicester.gov.uk</p>	Public consultation responses Revised boundary review and map appendix Revised character appraisal and map appendix Castle Donington conservation area: Adoption of character appraisal and boundary review	The matter is not being considered by a scrutiny committee because it has been subject to a separate public consultation involving ward members.
Approach to First Homes	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	<p>Councillor Keith Merrie MBE keith.merrie@nwleicester.gov.uk</p> <p>Planning Policy & Land Charges Team Manager Tel: 01530 454677 ian.nelson@nwleicester.gov.uk</p>	Report Approach to First Homes	To be considered by Local plan Committee as part of Local Plan review

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
Draft Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	Councillor Keith Merrie MBE keith.merrie@nwleicester-shire.gov.uk Planning Policy & Land Charges Team Manager Tel: 01530 454677 ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report and draft SPD Draft Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document	To also be considered by Local Plan Committee
A Cinema for Coalville - Update 17	Cabinet	Key	Private Deals with finances of another person	19 July 2022	Councillor Richard Blunt Tel: 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicester-shire.gov.uk Head of Property and Regeneration Tel: 01530 454 354 paul.wheatley@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report with appendices A Cinema for Coalville - Update	29 June 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
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - NWL Investment Plan 18	Cabinet	Key	Private	19 July 2022	Councillor Tony Gillard Tel: 01530 452930 tony.gillard@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Business Focus Team Manager Tel: 01530 454822 Barrie.Walford@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	UK Shared Prosperity Fund - NWL Investment Plan	There is not sufficient time to present the UKSPF Investment Plan to Scrutiny Committee due to the limited timeframe to prepare and submit the UKSPF Investment Plan to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The final investment plan must be submitted no later than Monday 1 August. Alternatively officers will look to brief all members the through the Members Hub.
Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk claire.hammond@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	minutes of the meeting Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	The group is a sub group of Cabinet and therefore the report does not require scrutiny

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
Housing Asset Management Plan 2022 to 2024	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	<p>Councillor Roger Bayliss Tel: 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Housing Assets Team Manager Tel: 01530 454137 jas.singh@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>	Asset Management Plan Housing Asset Management Plan 2022 to 2024	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 9 March 2022
Quarter 4 Performance Report	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	<p>Councillor Richard Blunt Tel: 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Tel: 01530 454518 mike.murphy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>	Quarter 4 Performance Report	8 June 2022
Award of Housing Contracts	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	<p>Councillor Roger Bayliss Tel: 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Housing Assets Team Manager Tel: 01530 454137 jas.singh@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>	Report Award of Housing Contracts	As this is an award of contract, it falls direct to 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
Linden Way, Coalville - Highway Extension	Cabinet	Key	Private Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Deals with the finances of another person/organisation	19 July 2022	Councillor Richard Blunt Tel: 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services, Head of Property and Regeneration Tel: 01530 454832, Tel: 01530 454 354 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk, paul.wheatley@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report with appended heads of terms for contract Linden Way, Coalville - Highway Extension	29 June 2022
^N The Award of the Three Year Contract for the Supply of Bins and recycling Containers	Cabinet	Key	Private Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Private given the commercial nature	19 July 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Waste Services Development Officer, Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454592, Tel: 01530 454832 JOHN.BRIGHT@NWLEICESTERSHIRE.GOV.UK, paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	There will be a report summarising the tender and recommendations and an annex providing the detail of the tender assessment The Award of the Three Year Contract for the Supply of Bins and recycling Containers	No need to go to Scrutiny as it an operational matter and is a budget that is spent each year

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
MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN OUTLOOK	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicester.gov.uk Head of Finance & Customer Services and Section 151 Officer mark.walker@nwleicester.gov.uk	MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN OUTLOOK	Budget timeline agreed by CLT
Zero Carbon Roadmap Update	Cabinet	Key	Public	19 July 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicester.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicester.gov.uk	Zero Carbon Roadmap Update	Corporate Scrutiny 8/6/22
<p>September 2022</p> <p>There are no items for consideration.</p>							

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
Annual Review of Corporate Governance Policies	Cabinet	Non-Key	Public	20 September 2022	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Tel: 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicester.gov.uk Solicitor - Contracts and Commercial Tel: 01530 454772 rebecca.elliott@nwleicester.gov.uk	Annual Review of Corporate Governance Policies	To be considered at Audit & Governance Committee on 27 July
Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party 22	Cabinet	Key	Public	20 September 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicester.gov.uk claire.hammond@nwleicester.gov.uk	Minutes from the August meeting Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	The group is a sub group of Cabinet and therefore the report does not require scrutiny.
Quarter 1 Performance Report	Cabinet	Key	Public	20 September 2022	Councillor Richard Blunt Tel: 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicester.gov.uk Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Tel: 01530 454518 mike.murphy@nwleicester.gov.uk	Quarter 1 Performance Report	31 August 2022

October 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
There are no items for consideration.							
November 2022							
Private Sector Housing Policies	Cabinet	Key	Public	8 November 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicester.gov.uk Head of Community Services Tel: 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Private Sector Housing Policies	Community Scrutiny 21 September 2022
Empty Homes Compulsory Purchase Orders	Cabinet	Key	Private Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	8 November 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicester.gov.uk Environmental Protection Team Manager Tel: 01530 454564 clare.proudfoot@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Empty Homes Compulsory Purchase Orders	Not being considered by Scrutiny as decision being sought under approved Empty Homes Policy
December 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
Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Cabinet	Key	Public	6 December 2022	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicester.gov.uk claire.hammond@nwleicester.gov.uk	Minutes of the meeting Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	The group is a sub group of Cabinet and therefore the report does not require scrutiny
10 January 2023							
Quarter 2 Performance Report 24	Cabinet	Key	Public	10 January 2023	Councillor Richard Blunt Tel: 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicester.gov.uk Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Tel: 01530 454518 mike.murphy@nwleicester.gov.uk	Quarter 2 Performance Report	7 December 2022
31 January 2023							
Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	Cabinet	Key	Public	31 January 2023	Councillor Andrew Woodman Tel: 07970 520357 andrew.woodman@nwleicester.gov.uk claire.hammond@nwleicester.gov.uk	Minutes of the meeting Minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party	The group is a sub group of Cabinet and therefore the report does not require scrutiny

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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
The Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee - Appointment of Members	Cabinet	Key	Public	6 June 2023	claire.hammond@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	Report The Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee - Appointment of Members	As the report is requiring Cabinet to appoint to executive members to the Joint Committee it does not require scrutiny consideration.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 29
JUNE 2022

Title of Report	THE FUTURE OF HERMITAGE LEISURE CENTRE AND RECREATION GROUND	
Presented by	Paul Sanders Head of Community Services	
Background Papers	Attached as appendices	Public Report: Yes apart from Appendix 2
Financial Implications	Whilst some options can be delivered within existing budgets, funding will be required to deliver elements of the Future Vision. This funding could be released through savings to the general fund through the appropriation of the HLC site to the Housing Revenue Account. The amount of savings generated would be dependant on the timing of the transfer.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The council has secured planning consent on Waterworks Road and a requirement of that development is the need to re-provide certain ecological features in an off-site location. The value of these enhancements is estimated at £250,000 and it is anticipated they could be provided as part of the Ecological Park Zone at HRG. In addition, legal support may be required to help facilitate alternative management arrangements in the Active Community Zone.	
	Signed off by the Deputy Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	None.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Reason Agenda Item Submitted to Scrutiny Committee	Community Scrutiny views are invited on the proposals and next steps highlighted within this report in advance of Cabinet's consideration at its meeting on 19 July.	
Recommendations	COMMUNITY SCRUTINY IS ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE USE OF THE HERMITAGE LEISURE CENTRE AND RECREATION GROUND SITE THAT ARE BEING CONSIDERED BY CABINET AT ITS MEETING ON 19 JULY 2022 AND AS HIGHLIGHTED IN SECTION 12 OF THE REPORT	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2019, the council entered into a formal partnership with its leisure partner, Everyone Active (EA), for the management of Hermitage Leisure Centre (HLC) and Ashby Leisure Centre and Lido, and for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre (WCLC).
- 1.2 The new WCLC opened to the public on 14 February, five months ahead of schedule, at which point HLC was taken back by the council as a void property.
- 1.3 WCLC sits within a parkland leisure destination that includes a trim trail with activity stations, pedestrian and cycle access from Hermitage Recreation Ground (HRG) and Stephenson College, and a play area within the woodland, which links through to the HRG site.
- 1.4 As part of the building of the WCLC, the Council Delivery Plan for 2021-23 identifies the commitment to develop a framework of opportunities for the land adjacent to the new leisure centre, the HRG and the existing HLC Building and site, the intention being to create a destination site that retains and enhances the green and open space but also finds the best future use of the footprint of the HLC building and site.
- 1.5 Between November 2019 and August 2021, extensive stakeholder engagement took place to understand views on how they felt the HLC building, site and HRG could be used and/or enhanced.
- 1.6 In June 2021, V4 Services were engaged by the council to support an appraisal of the options available. Fundamental to this work was ensuring that the results from the stakeholder engagement were fully reflected within proposals made.
- 1.7 Following the work undertaken by V4 Services and then further work undertaken by NWLDC officers and partners, an Options Paper has been developed (**Appendix 1**) which gives further detail to this report.

2. CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 HLC closed to the public on 14 February 2022 with the council taking back the lease from EA on 15 February.
- 2.2 The wider HRG site continues to be used with facilities and activities including a fishing lake, a model railway, a 3G pitch, a changing pavilion, grass pitches and a children's play area. There are also events held in the area and usage for the area is estimated to be 27,000 visits per annum, excluding general visitors to the recreation ground and the play area.
- 2.3 The current revenue and capital costs for the HRG are;

Annual Revenue Costs	£117,160
Anticipated Capital Costs (over 16 years)	£196,500

- 2.4 Since its closure, HLC has been mothballed. The cost of this is £130,000 per annum.
- 2.5 Prior to the building closing, in December 2021 a condition survey was undertaken in order to understand the state of the building fabric and plant. The report stated;

"The property is considered to be in poor condition with significant defects evident to the structure, external envelope and engineering services, requiring either major work or replacement in the immediate to near future."

- 2.6 The costs to address the items identified in the HLC condition survey and to get the building to a usable standard are estimated to be £2,118,750.

3. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 3.1 Consultation took place with stakeholders between November 2019 and October 2021 to understand their views on how the HLC building and site could be best used, and what improvements could be made to HRG to create more of a visitor destination. This took the form of an open session at HLC, an open to all online consultation, engagement with all schools in the district, and engagement with the local charity Coalville CAN.

- 3.2 In total, over 1,100 residents took part in the consultation, and whilst responses came from the entire district, over 50% came from the Whitwick and Coalville areas. In summary, the community appear to be very supportive of outdoor sports/leisure facilities, football, trampolining, rock climbing, BMX facilities, walking, cycling and running spaces, and the retention of community car parking.

4. FUTURE VISION

- 4.1 In June 2021 V4 Services and LA Architects were appointed by the council to help develop a conceptual design and proposed direction of travel that could benefit the local community and the visitor economy, as well as responding to the comments and ideas that were gleaned from the various stages of community engagement.

- 4.2 Three key zones within the overall masterplan were identified as potential focuses for future investment and improvement on which more detail can be found within **Appendix 1:**

- Ecological Park and Lake
- Active Community Zone
- Reimagined Hermitage Building

Ecological Park Zone

- 4.3 This area of the site is seen as one that could receive a positive regenerative boost to its environmental credentials whilst increasing biodiversity, with enhancements to improve the ecology and biodiversity of the lake and woodland area, including:
- Indigenous tree planting
 - Defined footpaths and boardwalks with activity nodes
 - Perimeter fencing with gated access
 - Lakeside Reed and Iris planting.

Active Community Zone

- 4.4 Proposals for this area continue the focus on encouraging more people to become active in the outdoor environment building on the paths used in the Ecological Zone. It would provide a destination for the community with a series of features that promote activity, including:

- A community and visitor centre including a small food and beverage operation, a flexible exhibition/event space, and controlled access to a pier feature accessing the lake
 - Children's active play facilities
 - 100 tree community orchard
 - Wildflower planting and an improved landscape
- 4.5 The concept retains the synthetic training pitch (3G pitch), the miniature railway, the grass pitches, the car park and existing footpaths in their current configuration.

Reimagined Hermitage Building

- 4.6 The vision for the part of the site currently occupied by HLC is to create a street activity centre. Activities would include skateboarding, biking, Parkour, street dance/art and one on one basketball or football.
- 4.7 The concept seeks to retain of some of the existing walls and slab of the existing centre and also allows the inclusion of a profit generating activity to help support the funding costs.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF FUTURE VISION

- 5.1 The total costs to deliver the future vision, as set out by V4 Services and LA Architects, is estimated to be £5.7 million. However, it should be noted that these are indicative figures at this stage, reflecting the early stage of the project based on the information available. This is made up of the following, including the addition of a 10% contingency cost;

CAPITAL COSTS – FUTURE VISION	Cost (£)	One Off / Annual
Development zone 1 - Ecological Park and Lake	£602,250	One Off
Development Zone 2 – Active Community Zone	£1,540,000	One Off
Development Zone 3 – Reimagined Hermitage Building	£3,056,446	One Off
TOTAL	£5,198,696	

- 5.2 Affordability is a key requirement for this project and the aim has been to ensure any proposal does not place any additional financial burden on the district council given the current and growing pressures on local government finance.
- 5.3 Consequently, V4 Services did explore the potential of generating revenue from the new site to offset the increased expenditure.
- 5.4 Officers have appraised the vision using the council's standard appraisal tool. The expected net present value of the project is between -£2.0 million and -£4.3 million over 25 years. This highlights that a potential annual subsidy of between £127,000 £250,000 would be required once the site is fully operational and established. A higher level of subsidy is likely in the early years;
- 5.5 This level of investment would be a significant increase on the council's existing leisure spend, which is budgeted at £854,000 in 2022-23 and is expected to fall significantly in future years as a result of income from the new leisure centre.
- 5.6 The delivery of this vision would go against the preferred financial direction of travel of the council which is to reduce the net cost of service in the medium term in order

to meet the anticipated reduced council funding and deficit due to the impending government review of business rates.

- 5.7 Consequently, officers have considered how the vision could be delivered in phases to allow for certain elements to be delivered when funding opportunities present themselves.

6. OPTIONS ANALYSIS

Ecological Park Zone

- 6.1 The council has a requirement to incorporate ecology mitigation measures that have arisen following the disposal of the Council-owned Cropston Drive/Waterworks Road site. As a result of residential development there is an obligation to realise a Biodiversity Net Gain through a mitigation and compensation strategy to offset the development proposals at an alternative location within the district, and this is included as a planning condition attached to the current outline planning consent for Cropston Drive.
- 6.2 As agreed by Cabinet on 31 August 2021, a £250,000 capital contribution for the ecology works was earmarked from the disposal of Cropston Drive/Waterworks Road to fulfil this planning condition, and it is anticipated that these improvements could be delivered as part of the Ecological Park Zone. However, any works associated with the Ecological Park will need a strong link back to the Cropston Drive project team to ensure the obligations are fully discharged.
- 6.3 The provision of additional tree planting could be pursued as a separate project in order to assess feasibility. Initial conversations have taken place with the National Forest, Earthwatch and LCC who are extremely supportive of the proposals and are keen to help fund the project in any way they can.
- 6.4 Delivery of the future vision of the rest of the Ecological Park Zone is outside of the Council's affordability and would require additional funding.

Active Community Zone

- 6.5 The existing facilities and activities can continue to be maintained at no additional cost to the council.
- 6.6 The Whitwick branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) are supportive of the planting of a Community Orchard with 100 trees to celebrate 100 years of their existence, and with taking responsibility for its maintenance.
- 6.7 Alternative management options such as a community asset transfer can be considered for the 3G pitch, the grass pitches, and/or the changing pavilion.
- 6.8 Delivery of the future vision of the rest of the Active Community Zone is outside of the council's affordability and would require additional funding.

Hermitage Leisure Centre

- 6.9 There are a number of options for the Hermitage Leisure Centre building and site, including the car park, although not all of them will deliver the vision set out in the previous sections. Six options have been identified as follows:

0. Retain the mothballed building as it is, in a mothballed state
1. Knock down and landscape the site either temporarily in preparation for future works, or permanently
2. Knock down and utilise the area for residential or commercial development
3. Knock down and build a new street activity centre in line with the vision presented by V4
4. Repurpose the existing building and utilise it for community use as per proposals from the local community, which presents activities within the existing building
5. Retain part of the existing building and repurpose it as a new Street Activity Centre to deliver the vision in line with the V4 vision

6.10 The table below gives an overview of each of these options;

Option	Description	Capital Cost /(Receipt)	Annual Revenue Cost/ (Surplus)	Key Issues
0 Retain mothballed building	Retain empty building and manage it as void property	£-	£130k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not deliver vision Building will continue to deteriorate
1 Knock Down & Landscape	Demolish Centre and landscape over the site Could be permanent or temporary position	£0.3 million	Cost neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not deliver vision in short/medium term Could be a temporary solution to enable delivery of vision in future
2 Knock Down & Develop for residential / commercial development	Development of Option 1 to generate value from land	(£1.5) million	£6k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not deliver the vision Delivers the best return for the Council Option to sell to the open market or to retain within the council which would allow more flexibility over the design and type of development Allows investment into Active Community zone and/or the Eco Park

				zone
3 Knock Down and new build street activity centre in line with the vision from V4	Deliver the proposed vision through a purpose-built facility	£3.1 million (£2.1m after capital receipt)	£59k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivers vision presented by V4 – capital expenditure likely to be same as option 5 Potential to bring in commercial activity Assumes some housing enabling (£1m capital receipt)
4 Repurpose the existing Centre (aligned with Coalville Can's proposals)	Utilise the existing centre to deliver community activities as per proposals from the local community	£3.3m plus additional investment	£13k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These costs are subject to additional funding being identified by the Community It also includes a share issue in the community facility There is a risk that this funding will not be forthcoming
5 Retain part of the existing building and deliver Street Activity Centre in line with the V4 vision	Use the existing facility to deliver the street activity centre through refurbishment	£3.1 million (£2.1m after capital receipt)	£105k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retains little of the existing facility Delivers the V4 vision for a street activity centre Assumes some housing enabling (£1m capital receipt)

6.11 If the council wishes to deliver the vision of a street activity centre, then there is a capital requirement of circa £3.1m to deliver this, whether a new build or refurbishment. Whilst there is little difference in cost between repurposing the existing building or building new, it is likely that a new facility would deliver a lower revenue cost and a more efficient building improving the carbon footprint.

6.12 There has been an approach from the local community group Coalville CAN to utilise the existing facility for community activities including street sports and other activities. This presents an opportunity for the centre to deliver similar activities to the Street Activity Centre, however it would require the condition survey works of £2.5 million to be undertaken and also may require additional investment in the building to repurpose it. The proposal from the local community suggests this can be achieved through external funding sources and also the issuing of shares to the public and

local community, however there are no definitive commitments to this within their proposal. The opportunity for external capital funding from Sport England has been explored to support any community proposals. Sport England have confirmed that given the pressures on the Treasury they are unlikely to be a major funder for any capital scheme going forward for at least 2 years. In addition, an approach of this nature would need to ensure all procurement guidelines are adhered to as there may be other community groups also interested in managing elements of the site.

- 6.13 Option 2 assumes that the land would be sold in order to maximise the value from the site. It is also possible to appropriate that land to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to enable the council to develop the land for affordable housing. This option delivers the best financial return for the council and also allows greater control over the nature of the design.
- 6.14 The appropriation of the land to HRA would result in a saving to the general fund, which members may choose to use to subsidise some of the improvements to the Ecological Park and Active Community Zones. The level of the subsidy would depend on the value of the land and the council would also need to consider whether the land could be developed viably within the HRA as part of further scoping work if this proposal was adopted.
- 6.15 The cost of demolishing the HLC building would be £300,000. This cost could be covered through the general fund with a view to then seeking approval to increase the capital programme to capitalise the £300,000 cost.
- 6.16 With all of the options there is a cost to continuing to mothball the facility which will vary depending on the timescales involved.

7. ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

- 7.1 In October 2021, Whitwick Parish Council successfully made an application to have HLC listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) on the basis that it furthers the social wellbeing and interests of the local community. This listing lasts for 5 years until October 2026 and stipulates that if the council gave notice that it intended to dispose of HLC, then there would need to be a formal period of opportunity (moratorium) during which time the parish council, or any other community group, would decide if they wanted to be considered as a potential bidder for the asset, and to allow them time to raise the funds required to bid to buy it. This process only gives community groups a right of first refusal and there is ultimately no obligation to sell to the group at the end of the moratorium period.
- 7.2 It should be noted that these moratorium requirements only apply if the council decides to dispose of the asset. If the council retains ownership of the leisure centre and uses the building for an alternative purpose, or demolishes it and then uses the land for an alternative purpose, the moratorium requirements would not be triggered. However, the listing would remain until the expiry of the listing period.

8. SUMMARY

- 8.1 Considering the affordability and the potential for the phasing of the delivery of the options highlighted, the following is considered the most appropriate way forwards:

Ecological Park Zone

- 8.2 The ecological enhancements and tree planting could be delivered as the first phase.
- 8.3 Further funding opportunities could then be explored to deliver the overall Future Vision.

Active Community Zone

- 8.4 The delivery of the existing recreation provision can be continued, alongside the delivery of the Community Orchard.
- 8.5 Alternative management arrangements for the 3G pitch, changing pavilion, and/or grass pitches can be explored.
- 8.6 Further funding opportunities could then also be explored to deliver the overall Future Vision.

Hermitage Leisure Centre

- 8.7 The options for a reimagined HLC suggest that there is no cost benefit in retaining the existing centre. The cost of developing a new Street Activity Centre is comparable, if not less expensive, than retaining the existing centre and refurbishing it. In addition to this, demolishing the existing centre removes the costs and risks associated with mothballing it for a period of time.
- 8.8 If the aim is to deliver on the Future Vision for the building then it is suggested that there would need to be an option to test the market and invite expressions of interest for a potential investment opportunity. However, this option could prove cost prohibitive given the end of life state of the building and the level of investment required.
- 8.9 Alternatively, the council could decide to progress with housing development on the site or demolish and leave as greenfield. Both of these options will be at limited cost to the council.
- 8.10 If developed for housing, any savings generated within the general fund could be used to deliver elements of the Future Vision within the Ecological Park and Active Community Zones.

Overall Conclusion

- 8.11 As presented, the Future Vision is unaffordable, requiring circa £5.7 million in capital and an ongoing revenue cost to deliver this across all three areas. However, having considered the elements within the Future Vision, the financial implications, and the views of the community, the following approach would deliver a significant part of the vision and would present the best overall balance.
- Appropriate the HLC site to the HRA so a housing scheme can be developed, and utilise the savings to the general fund to invest in the Future Vision of the Ecological Park and Active Community Zones.
 - Demolish the HLC building and retain as green space, as there is no cost benefit in retaining the Centre. Even if the council decided to develop a street activity centre then a new build is as cost effective and also likely to be less costly to run and deliver a more energy efficient building.

- The £250,000 capital contribution from the disposal of the Cropston Drive/Waterworks Road site to deliver ecology mitigation measures and a Biodiversity Net Gain attached be delivered as part of the Ecological Park Zone
 - Continue to maintain the existing facilities in the Active Community Zone.
 - In the medium term, look to deliver the Ecological Park and Active Community Zone vision.
 - Future car parking provision for the needs of the local community to be considered as part of the HRG and HLC site development and to be subject to public consultation.
- 8.12 The approach highlighted above would also allow for further consultation to be undertaken as proposals develop for both the housing scheme and the Active Community Zone.

9. APPROPRIATION OF THE HLC SITE TO THE HRA

- 9.1 Attached as **Appendix 2** is a further report which gives an overview of the appropriation of the HLC site into the HRA.
- 9.2 Assuming HLC is demolished and planning permission is in place, then the area, including the car park, has been independently valued at an estimate of between £1.95 and £2.4 million although the final valuation will be determined by whether the land is developed for affordable housing or as a private development. Without HLC being demolished and with no planning permission in place, the area has been independently valued at an estimate of between £0.45 and £0.6 million.
- 9.3 Dependant on when the appropriation of the site takes place to the HRA, it's likely the savings to the General Fund will be between £28,000 and £122,000 per annum, and these could be used to subsidise the capital costs of improvements to the HRG, allowing a capital investment of between £0.37 and £1.49 million.
- 9.4 Consequently, the timing of the appropriation is critical to ensure the financial viability of the scheme for the HRA and any improvements to the HRG. If appropriated early without HLC being demolished and with no planning permission in place, then this would be low risk to the HRA as fewer properties would be required on the site to make it financially viable, but then only £0.37 million funding would be available to deliver improvements to the HRG. Conversely, if appropriated with the building having been demolished and with planning permission, then although £1.49 million would potentially be available to deliver improvements to the HRG, more properties would be required to make it financially viable to the HRA.
- 9.5 There are a number of advantages to appropriating the site to the HRA;
- Supporting delivery of the council's priorities though the provision of affordable homes for rent in Whitwick which is an area with demand
 - The council retains control of the site and so has greater control to develop the area in a way that complements the wider plans for the Hermitage Recreation Ground and can dictate the overall design of the scheme and the density
 - The ability to progress in a timely fashion which will allow savings to the general fund which could be invested into the Future Vision of both the Ecological Park and Community Action Zones
- 9.6 The appropriation does not impact the HRA Capital Programme, although the existing New Supply Programme will need to be reprioritised to accommodate the capital costs of this new project.

- 9.7 In order to progress the appropriation, further investigation and due diligence will be required to ensure the business case is feasible and to understand the timing of the appropriation in relation to both the demolition of the building and the seeking of planning permission to ensure a more equitable sharing of the benefits of the land between the HRA and general fund.

10. RISKS

- 10.1 There are number of risks with progressing the afore-mentioned options which are summarised in the table below, along with the mitigations to help manage these;

Risk	Mitigation
The £250,000 ecological improvements in the Ecological Park Zone do not meet the requirements of the Cropston Drive development as stipulated by the planning condition	- Close liaison with LCC colleagues to ensure all proposals are approved prior to implementing
The tree planting and community orchard proposals may require funding	- Liaison with National Forest and LCC colleagues to mitigate against this - Investigate all funding opportunities - Develop proposals to meet the budget available
The RBL may fail to maintain the community orchard	- Obtain commitment prior to progressing
Community groups may not be willing to take on the management and liabilities associated to the 3G pitch, the pavilion, and/or the grass pitches	- Undertake market testing prior to progressing - Retain the management of the facilities in the council as part of maintaining the existing facilities
Mothballing costs of HLC may increase as the building deteriorates over time	- Ensure the building is demolished in a timely fashion - Ensure adequate security and building management measures are in place
Not delivering the Street Activity Centre on the HLC site does not deliver the Future Vision	- Liaise with the council's leisure partner, Everyone Active, to see what additional activities could be delivered at WCLC - Health and Wellbeing team to liaise with Coalville CAN to see what support can be given to providing activities and facilities at alternative locations - Ensure adequate communication with stakeholders on the financial justifications behind any decision made
Funding may not be available to deliver all or some of the Future Vision	- Explore all funding opportunities - Value engineer various options so they can be delivered within budget - Ensure adequate communication with stakeholders on any potential changes or developments
The appropriation of the HLC site to the HRA to develop for housing contradicts the results of the stakeholder consultation	- Ensure adequate communication to stakeholders so they fully understand the rationale behind investing the savings to the general fund to be able to support delivery of the Future Vision in the Ecological Park and Active Community Zones - Ensure the design of any development is sympathetic to and complements the HRG
Appropriation of the HLC site to the HRA may create a financial viability risk to the HRA and/or the general fund	- Ensure that all financial due diligence is undertaken prior to the appropriation - Ensure a full business case is developed and approved by Cabinet prior to any development taking place
The Right to Buy Scheme on rented council properties may impact on HLC being listed as an Asset of	- Ensure full legal advice is obtained and this issue is fully considered as part of the business case to

Community Value	be presented to Cabinet
If the whole HLC site is developed then this may create car parking issues for both visitors to HRG and residents who currently use the car park to either park their vehicle or access their property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaise with housing colleagues with a view to creating public parking as part of any development - Consider car parking opportunities as part of the Active Community Zone - Ensure residents can still access their properties as part of any development

11. FURTHER CONSULTATION

- 11.1 A further stakeholder consultation event on the proposals for HLC and the HRG was undertaken at WCLC on Thursday 9 June. Invitations for this event were sent to Whitwick Parish Council, sports clubs who use the HRG 3G pitch and/or the grass pitches, Whitwick based community groups, local Tenants and Residents Associations, Ashby Angling Club, and the NWL Society of Model Engineers (Model Railway Club).
- 11.2 The event outlined the proposals within this report and asked for feedback from stakeholders on their views so these could be fed back to Cabinet for consideration as part of their decision making process at their meeting on 19 July.
- 11.3 An overview of the feedback received will be presented to members at the meeting.

12. CABINET 19 JULY 2022

Cabinet will be asked to consider a report on this project at their meeting on 19 July 2022. Subject to the comments from Scrutiny, Cabinet will be asked to :

- **Consider the appropriation of the HLC site to the HRA and delegate authority to the portfolio holder to progress this subject to due diligence being undertaken on the business case.**
- **Agree to procure a contractor to demolish the HLC building and fund the cost of £300,000 from general funds, with a view to seeking approval to increase the capital programme to capitalise the £300,000 cost.**
- **Receive a further report from Housing Services detailing the business case for a housing development on the HLC site, highlighting the amount of savings to the general fund that could be invested into improvements at the HRG.**
- **Approve that the £250,000 from the proceeds of the disposal of the Cropston Drive/Waterworks Road site to provide ecology mitigation measures can be allocated to the Ecological Park development, and that external support can be procured to ensure the measures are delivered to an acceptable standard.**
- **Agree to progressing tree planting in the Ecological Park Zone and the community Orchard in the Active Community Zone.**
- **Agree to a review of the future management options for the 3G pitch, the changing pavilion and/or the grass pitches in the Active Community Zone, and delegate authority to the portfolio holder to progress this subject to due diligence being undertaken on the business case.**

- Approve that external support can be procured to support development of the future vision within the Ecological Park and Active Community Zones to allow for a business case to be developed for consideration by Cabinet at a future meeting.
- Ensure that future car parking provision for the needs of the local community will be considered as part of the HRG and HLC site development and business cases, and will be subject to public consultation.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting Coalville to be a more vibrant, family-friendly town - Our communities are safe, healthy and connected - Local people live in high quality, affordable homes - Developing a clean and green district
Policy Considerations:	Supporting delivery of the NWL Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the NWL Zero Carbon project.
Safeguarding:	None.
Equalities/Diversity:	Providing activities, facilities, and open spaces that all members of the community can access
Customer Impact:	Ensuring residents have access to high quality and affordable activities, facilities and open spaces. Engaging and supporting local community groups.
Economic and Social Impact:	Helping supporting the health and wellbeing of residents through encouraging increased levels of physical activity and creating spaces that help support mental health. Engaging local community groups to help support elements of the Future Vision.
Environment and Climate Change:	The creation of an Ecological Park will improve levels of biodiversity, and the planting of trees will support the Zero Carbon Project.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Undertaken with key stakeholders to understand their desires for the area, followed by further consultation on specific options as set out in the report.
Risks:	As highlighted in section 10.
Officer Contact	Paul Sanders Head of Community Services paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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Hermitage Site – Options Paper.

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Document Quality Management

Original Date // March 2022

Prepared By // Paul Sanders

Document Audit

Version	Date Issued	Summary of Change	Author
1.0	1 st April 2022	First Issue	Paul Sanders
2.0	20 th April 2022	Amendments incorporated to reflect team feedback	Paul Sanders
3.0	10 th May 2022	Amendments	Paul Sanders

Project Objectives & Context

Project Objectives

Identify and highlight proposals for the development of Hermitage Recreation Ground to create a visitor destination that links into the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre as well as developing options for the use of the Hermitage Leisure Centre building and/or site following the decommissioning of it in late February 2022.

The project also encompasses the requirement to undertake ecological enhancement works at HRG as a result of the housing development on the Council-owned parcel of land off Waterworks Road / Cropston Drive. The housing project received outline consent Q1 2022 and it is expected that a Reserved Matters application will be presented to Planning Committee Summer 2022.

Project Context

The council entered in to a formal partnership with Everyone Active for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre (WAC) which opened to the public in February 2022. The new leisure centre has replaced the Hermitage Leisure Centre (HLC) which was taken back by the council as a void property once the new centre opened.

The new leisure centre project was delivered a full five months ahead of schedule.

The new leisure centre sits within a parkland leisure destination that includes a trim trail with activity stations, pedestrian and cycle access from Hermitage Recreation Ground and Stephenson College, and a play area within the woodland.

There is a contractual requirement to preclude any facilities or activities which would compete with those that are offered by Everyone Active in the new leisure centre.

Site Characteristics

The site previously operated as a brickworks during the industrial revolution, with the existing lake being formerly a clay extraction pit. Following the reshaping of the British railway network in the 1960's the adjacent railway track was removed, with the land repurposed for community use.

The site has a number of current well-established amenities, including:

- A semi mature park with a good expanse of water
- Strong interconnecting footpaths and cycle routes
- Existing pitches and play areas
- Adjacencies to Stephenson's College and the new leisure centre
- An established community destination

In addition to the general use of the area by visitors for walking and other recreational purposes such as using the play area, an estimation of usage for other areas across the year is:

Activity	Estimated Annual Usage 2021/22
3G Pitch	13,000
Grass Pitches	2,000
Angling	7,000
Railway	2,500
Events	2,500
TOTAL	27,000

The council manages all these park facilities in house through its Parks and Car Parking Teams. The council's budget for maintaining the land around the leisure centre including the car park and the park is £117,160 per annum (22/23). A summary is as below:

Budget Area	Budget (£)
Recreation ground – maintenance & repairs	88,850
Recreation ground – sports pitch & angling club licence (10-year licence to 2032)	(2,320)
3G pitch – surplus income (EA)	(9,760)
Pavilion	4,620
Leisure centre grounds	8,990
Car park	26,780
Railway club 25-year lease till 2033 £35 pa peppercorn if demanded	
Total	117,160

Note – the table above reflects the current revenue expenditure based on current budget allocations.

There will need to be some capital improvements to these facilities over the next X years and the table below captures the planned and preventative maintenance together with the planned improvements.

The current facilities at Hermitage Recreation Ground include;

Fishing Lake

Ashby Angling Club currently have a lease for the management of the fishing lake which is due to be renewed in June 2022 for a further 10 years. Their responsibilities include;

- The management of fish stocks
- Improving water banks and facilities
- Supervision of the area and the removal of unauthorised fishers
- The permitting and management of night fishing
- The delivery of a ticketing service

As well as generating a nominal income for the council, the lease allows services to be delivered that the council wouldn't be able to manage, as well as effecting savings on the monitoring and management of the service and lake. Given the arrangement, there are no foreseeable financial capital implications for the council.

Model Railway

The North West Leicestershire Society of Model Engineers have a 25-year lease with a peppercorn rent to deliver the model railway at the rear of the 3G pitch. The lease commenced in April 2008 and runs until March 2033. Whilst there is no financial benefit to the council, the value of this service was recognised by residents that attended the consultation event at Hermitage Leisure Centre where general consensus was that it should be retained as an attraction. There are no financial capital implications for the council in retaining the service.

Changing Pavilion

This is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Parks and Open Spaces team. A condition survey was undertaken on the building in February 2022 which identified a life expectancy of 20 years providing regular maintenance is delivered. As part of the condition survey, a number of works were identified that would be required over the 20 years to maintain the building above and beyond the routine maintenance, and the cost of these is estimated to be £26,500 plus any inflationary increases.

3G Pitch

Whilst historically managed through Hermitage Leisure Centre, the opening of the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre means that the management of the 3G pitch will move fully to the Parks and Open Spaces team from 1 May 2022. As part of the transfer, a condition survey was undertaken on the pitch which highlights a life expectancy of 4 years for the pitch and the fencing. The indicative cost for the replacement of the pitch is £120,000 and for the fencing £50,000 and both would then have a life expectancy of 10-12 years.

Grass Pitches

These are managed by the Parks and Open Spaces team. Currently there are two clubs that use the pitches and the expectation is that from August 2022 the 2 clubs will have 4 teams using them. There are no foreseeable financial capital implications.

Events

Events in the area are managed by the Parks and Open Spaces team. Whilst there are no events booked or planned for 2022/23, events historically have included;

- Woodstock in Whitwick
- Coalville CAN Open Days
- Funfairs
- Circuses

Future Management Options

Consideration could be given to the future management options of the 3G pitch, the grass pitches and the pavilion, for example, a community asset transfer or a long-term lease whereby the council retains the freehold. This could be for all or some of the afore-mentioned facilities and could remove some of the capital and revenue costs currently covered by the council.

Capital Costs

The forecast capital costs that the council would have to currently stand over the next 16 years, excluding any inflationary increases;

Item	Cost
Changing Pavilion	£26,500
3G Pitch	£120,000
3G Fencing	£50,000
TOTAL	£196,500

Hermitage Leisure Centre

The central reason for the construction of the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre was because the Hermitage building was no longer fit for purpose, had reached the end of its life as a leisure building and that it no longer met the needs of our expanding communities. A building condition survey was carried out in 2018 as part of the procurement exercise for the operator of the new WAC leisure centre which has subsequently been updated on 17th December 2021. This confirms that the defects and building faults identified in 2018 have continued to deteriorate and that the building requires significant work and replacement interventions in all areas of the building – both in building fabric (walls, windows, doors, roof) and internal areas and infrastructure. In summary the December report states that:

"The property is considered to be in poor condition with significant defects evident to the structure, external envelope and engineering services, requiring either major work or replacement in the immediate to near future."

The building was assessed in December 2021 in three segments to see if there was any potential for reuse – in part or in full. In terms of structural and fabric integrity, the following were highlighted as key issues and challenges:

Pool and Plant

- Evidence of concrete deterioration to pool structure in several areas as a result of high humidity and chemical use
- Concrete has spalled and fallen away in several areas
- Pool roof has expired and required wholesale replacement
- Pool elevations of metal sheeting and glazed curtain walling is life expired and requires substantial repair and replacement.
- Water is migrating through the structure underneath.

Sports Hall, Gym, Dry Change

- Sports hall structure is in fair condition and can be reused
- The roof is life expired with evidence of erosion to roof sheets and clear signs of gutter corrosion – all of which requires wholesale replacement
- Cladding to sports hall is life expired and requires imminent replacement to protect the integrity of the building.

Squash Courts, reception, studios, offices, and wet change.

- The structure is in fair condition
- Roofs are poor and need wholesale replacement

- Issues with ease of access to this area and security/railings required to prevent access/falls – requiring specialist installations given layout of area
- Glazed curtain walling and windows have failed and require renewal
- Internal finishes tired throughout.

The survey goes on to highlight the key issues affecting the mechanical and electrical aspects of the building as follows:

Mechanical

- The plant is in a poor condition and at the end of its life with leaks, control failures and corrosion
- Only one of the four boilers is working
- Issues with squash court radiant heaters
- Heating pipes requiring upgrading
- CHP non-operational
- Ventilation systems near life end
- Overall inefficiency

Electrical

- Electrical panel and sub boards need replacing due to damage and wear
- Mains cables reaching the end of life
- Some of installed lighting at end of working life
- Circuits and outlets likely to be at end of life
- Fire alarm system reaching end of life
- Panic alarm reaching end of life
- CCTV requires upgrading with camera replacements

The costs to address the items identified in the condition survey are as follows:

Immediate	£30,750
Year 1	£1,200,000
Years 2 – 5	£147,500
Total	£1,378,250

It should be noted that the above excludes the following:

- Inflation (the costs are dated at day one, i.e. December 2021)
- Contractor's preliminaries
- Contingencies.
- Professional & statutory fees (e.g. Planning, Building Control, legal, project management, cost management, architectural; engineering services etc.)
- VAT

The table below captures the likely outturn costs once the above factors have been added to the baseline costs:

Item	Cost (£)
Works costs (as per CBRE assessment above)	£1,378,250
Inflation allowance to mid-point construction (say, Q3 2022) with inflation allowance at 1% per quarter	£41,500
Sub-Total	£1,419,750
Prelims @ 15%	£213,000
Sub-Total	£1,632,750
Contingency allowance @ 10%	£163,000
Sub-Total	£1,795,750
Professional & statutory fees @ 18%	£323,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED WORKS' COSTS (excl. VAT of £423,750)	£2,118,750

The council took back the lease from Everyone Active on 15th February 2022 when the new leisure centre opened and has in place a robust asset management plan and period of decommissioning the building as a leisure centre, making it safe and secure whilst emptying any equipment (including chemicals and the pool water infrastructure) required by Everyone Active. The cost of this work is as follows:

Item	Cost (£)
Security & Fencing to protect the building	£29,031
Site Clearance	£20,000
Condition Surveys	£8,750
Utilities	£13,200
Repairs & Maintenance	£3,140
Compliance/Service contracts	£1,000
TOTAL COSTS	£75,121

Full Council in February 2022 allocated a budget for a 12-month period to keep the building safe and secure in advance of options for its future being confirmed. A one-off budget allocation of **£130,000** has been set aside for this work. This is made up of business rates of £32k per annum and ongoing security and utilities costs:

Item	Cost (£)
Security	£9,446
Business Rates	£32,000
Decommissioning requiring specialist contractor	£10,000
Utilities	£29,000
Repairs & Maintenance	£25,220
Compliance/Service contracts	£9,031
Contingency	£15,303
TOTAL COSTS	£130,000

Council's Delivery Plan (2021 – 2023)

The council's Delivery Plan for 2021-23 identifies the commitment to develop a framework of opportunities for the land adjacent to the new Leisure Centre, the Hermitage Recreation Ground and the existing Hermitage Leisure Centre Building.

The overall aim of this project is to help create a destination site that retains and enhances the green and open space but also finds the best future use of the footprint of the Hermitage Leisure Centre. The project has the potential to contribute to a number of the council's delivery priorities such as

- Keeping our communities safe
- Health and connects
- Developing a clean green district
- Enabling local people to live in high quality, affordable homes.

The project must also be cognisant of the council's medium term financial position which shows that the council is particularly vulnerable to a significant funding reduction caused by the potential resetting of the business rates baseline. As a result, options for the Hermitage Project, as with any project, need to demonstrate both affordability and value for money.

Stakeholder Engagement

Community Engagement – Stage 1

Consultation took place with stakeholders and user groups in Hermitage Leisure Centre's (HLC) sports hall in November 2019 to help collect ideas for the future use of both the leisure centre and the recreation ground. This was supplemented with an online consultation that ran from November 2019 until February 2020.

Approximately 150 people attended an event at HLC and they were invited to speak to organisations who had or could have a link to the centre and/or the recreation ground and then to highlight what activities and facilities were most important to them. The online survey was undertaken using a Citizen Space Survey and was completed by 290 people.

Across both surveys, responses across the district were received from residents living in the following locations;

Location	Percentage of Responses
Whitwick	50%
Coalville	21%
Hugglescote	9%
Other	20%

Key findings were as follows:

- The majority of people (207) supported a mix of uses on the site and would prioritise free recreation like cycling, walking and running with the creation of more (233)
- The linking of existing cycleways and footpaths
- Most people (179) supported new recreation activities with a similar number (177) stating that they would prioritise paid for recreation
- Examples of new activities included rock climbing and tennis
- The inclusion of water sports was mentioned specifically, including paddle boarding, canoeing and rowing
- A large number of people (68) specifically commented that they didn't want to see housing on the site
- A high number of people (162) supported parking on the site

- There was support from 132 people for indoor recreation facilities including activities such as specialist sporting facilities (athletics, gymnastics, trampolining, tennis, BMX track), a community centre, or a leisure facility with examples being an ice rink, cinema, climbing wall, bowling alley, café, soft play centre, roller skating
- Only 35 people believed that the site should be left as it is

The table below gives an overview of the responses / suggestions received;

Option	Total	Percent
Free recreation (e.g. cycling, walking, running)	148	81%
Linking existing cycleways and footpaths	113	62%
Paid for recreation (e.g. paddle boarding, rock climbing, tennis)	94	51%
Improving what is already there	76	42%
Water sports	54	30%
Development of some sort (e.g. housing, sheltered accommodation, indoor recreation)	10	5%
Not Answered	8	4%

Community Engagement – Stage 2

There was a lack of engagement from children and young people during Stage 1 and to ensure a wide-reaching set of views were received, further consultation was undertaken between 21st September 2020 and 8th November 2020 with children and young people once the schools were fully up and running following the initial covid outbreak.

Every secondary school and college in the district was engaged through online and paper surveys. 681 responses were received from a relatively even balance of male and female respondents (47% / 45% respectively) with 8% preferring not to state. The breakdown of ages was as follows:

Age	Total	Percent
11 - 12	197	29
13 - 14	229	34
15 - 16	202	30

17 - 18	42	6
19 – 21	11	1

Responses were received from children living in the following locations;

Location	Percentage of Responses
Coalville	57%
Hugglescote	8%
Whitwick	7.5%
Ashby	5.5%
Thringstone	3.5%
Other	18.5%

Whilst 681 people undertook the survey, the survey offered multiple choice options which resulted in there being 2,428 responses which is considered to be an ample response rate.

The key findings were as follows:

- The most popular options selected by young people was indoor sporting activities, with 934 responses out of the 2428, such activities like trampolining, gym equipment, community sporting events, climbing wall.
- There was a significant desire for a café to be located at the site with 333 responses.
- Outdoor activities were favoured too, with 690 responses to see activities like football, Astroturf for football, hockey and netball on the site, plus play area space at the site.
- There was a degree of interest in water sport provision (308).
- When asked what is most important to the community, there were equal levels of interest on outside space to play and explore (349 responses) and indoor space to play and organised sports and games (353 responses). There was also a strong response to having space to run, cycle and walk with friends and family (284) showing a desire for sport and leisure facilities in the outdoor site space.
- The majority of young people (589) agreed that they would visit the Hermitage Recreation Ground more frequently if the space was improved.

The table below gives an overview of the responses / suggestions received;

Option	Total	Percent
Trampolining	352	52%
A café	333	49%
Water sports	234	34%
Astroturf pitches for sports (football, hockey, netball etc)	209	31%
Gym Equipment	208	31%
A climbing wall	201	20%
A building for indoor activities e.g. sports, community events	192	28%
A skate park	181	26%
Football pitches	173	25%
A play area	127	19%
BMXing	89	13%
Paddle boarding	74	11%
Athletics	55	8%

Stakeholder Engagement – Coalville CAN

Detailed engagement with the local charity Coalville CAN was carried out during the latter part of 2021. In summary this focused solely on the Hermitage Leisure Centre site and identified the following responses / suggestions:

- The site to be of mixed use for the community.
- To include rental space for martial arts.
- An indoor skate park.
- A café / social space which is dog friendly.
- A Parkour centre.
- Creche and soft-play area.

- A creative area used for mentoring/drop-in counselling and contact with the community.

Stakeholder Engagement – Combined Results and Feedback/Suggestions

The feedback from the three initial consultations was analysed and presented to the project board. The Project Board was asked to either:

1. Include suggestions for further consideration.
2. Reject them in the event that the activity is being provided at Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre and/or Ashby Leisure Centre and Lido given the contractual obligation in which the Council are bound by.
3. If it was deemed unfeasible to deliver the suggestion from a cost and viability perspective.

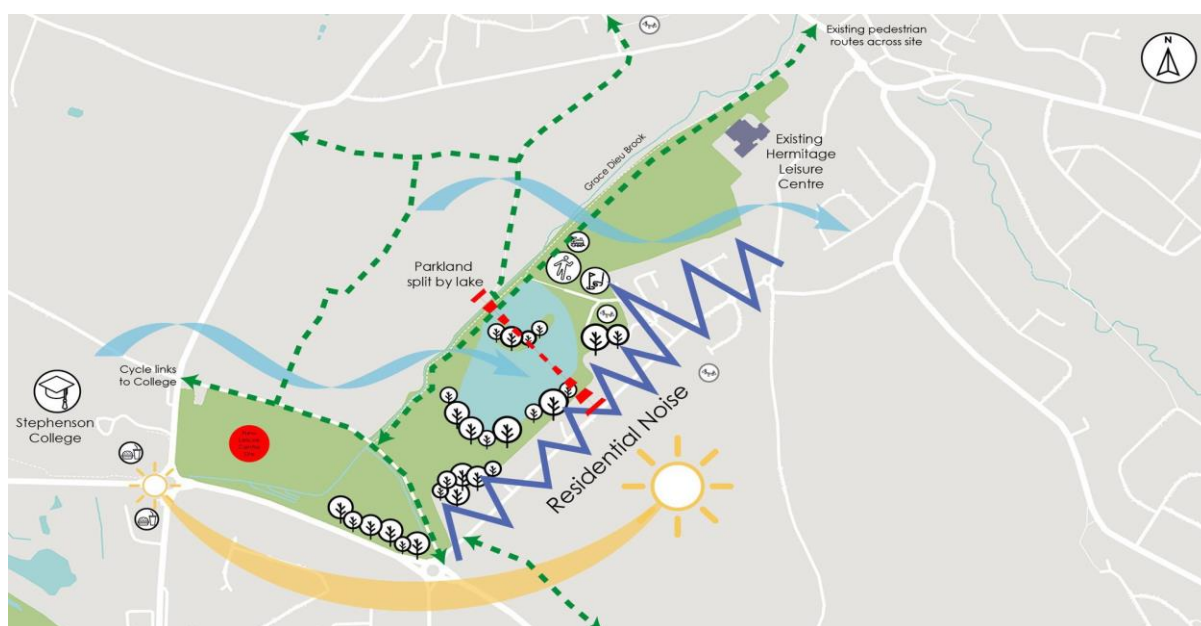
In summary, from the two consultations, the community appear to be very supportive of:

- Outdoor sports and leisure facilities
- Football
- Trampolining
- Rock climbing
- BMX facilities
- Walking
- Cycling
- Running spaces
- Water sports
- Café

Future Vision

On 7th June 2021, V4 Services and LA Architects were appointed by the council to help develop a conceptual design and proposed direction of travel that could benefit the local community and the visitor economy, as well as responding to the comments and ideas that were gleaned from the various stages of community engagement.

The diagram below sets the site within the context of its location and specifically its connections via the various rights of way.



V4 proposed an overall future vision for the site with a range of options that could be delivered either in a single phase or in a number of separate projects to suit the funding that's available.

The design has responded well to the aspirations of the community consultation although some elements have not been taken forward for the reasons set out below:

Elemental Options for the Scheme	Included within Proposals	Subject to further review	Not included within Proposals	Notes
Indoor skatepark including special events, training and courses	•			Proposed within the repurposing of the existing Hermitage Leisure Centre Building

Martial arts & boxing including special events, training and courses			•	Conflict with Everyone Active facility provision – Not Provided.
Creche / Day care / Soft Play			•	Flexible nature of Visitor/Community Centre could accommodate creche/day care. However, such facilities tend to dominate operational model - dedicated facility to be considered subject to operator demand.
Video / Gaming / Board games area	•			Proposed within the repurposing of the existing Hermitage Leisure Centre Building.
Parkour including special events, training and courses	•			Proposed within the repurposing of the existing Hermitage Leisure Centre Building.
Dog Friendly Community Café space	•			Visitors/Community Centre to include café area. Dogs and responsible owners will be welcome.
Wellbeing hub – with support	•			Proposed within the repurposing of the existing Hermitage Leisure Centre Building.
Safe place for LGBTQT & Neuro diverse groups	•			Gender neutral facilities to be provided in accordance with NWL guidance and Equality Act.
Flexible creative space for hiring – e.g. for dance, circus Skills, craft	•			Flexible Nature of Visitor/Community Centre can accommodate this use.
Music Studio & rehearsal Space	•			Proposed within the repurposing of the existing Hermitage Leisure Centre Building.
Enterprise Hub – with E commerce.		•		Not currently provided. Opportunity to considered for inclusion within existing

				reimagined Hermitage Leisure Centre building.
Retail Store		•		Not currently provided. Opportunity to considered for inclusion within existing reimagined Hermitage Leisure Centre building.
Mini Golf			•	Existing Mini golf not retained in current proposals. Alternative provision of Adventure golf to be considered within commercial leisure element.
Fishing Activities (on the lake)	•			Angling access to be retained. Enhancements in biodiversity will improve water quality. Perimeter landscaping may reduce areas of access.
Wild swimming (in the lake)		•		Opportunity To be considered. Enhancements in biodiversity will improve water quality. Possible use conflict with existing Angling Club lease.
Retention of the Mini Railway on site	•			Retained. The miniature railway is recognised as a major asset of the site.
Retention of the Synthetic Training Pitch (STP) 'caged' areas	•			Retained. Budget will not allow refurbishment. Relocation to northern end of site desirable to improve visibility of miniature railway and community activities.
Bike hire		•		Opportunity for cycle hire kiosk subject to further review.
Maintenance, repair & upcycle centre		•		Opportunity for cycle maintenance to be considered within cycle hire kiosk if provided.

Proposed Development Zones

Three key zones within the overall masterplan were identified as potential focuses for future investment and improvement:

1. Ecological Park and Lake
2. Active Community Zone
3. Reimagined Hermitage Building

The diagram below shows the above 3 development zones:

Key:

1. Existing Hermitage Leisure Facility
2. Existing Grass Pitches
3. Miniature Railway
4. Toilets/Changing Pavilion
5. Synthetic Training Pitch (STP)
6. Car Park
7. Pop-Up Food Stalls
8. Visitor/Community Centre
9. Active Play
10. 100 Fruit Tree Orchard
11. Activity Nodes
12. Reedbed
13. Lake
14. Observation Platform
15. Ecological Park
16. Boundary Gate
17. New Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre (By Others)
18. Car Park (By Others)
19. Trim Trail (By Others)



Development Zone 1 – Ecological Park and Lake

Enhancements to improve the ecology and biodiversity of the lake and woodland area, including:

- Indigenous tree planting
- Defined footpaths and boardwalks with activity nodes
- Perimeter fencing with gated access
- Lakeside Reed and Iris planting

This area is seen as one that could receive a positive regenerative boost to its environmental credentials whilst increasing biodiversity. The scheme proposes a more controlled approach to its management with a defined fence and access gates at various points. The fences and access gates would not be about preventing access but helping to protect some parts where wildlife could develop without disturbance.

Other key features proposed include the planting of more indigenous trees and plants along with the addition of constructed boardwalks and natural footpaths with the addition of a lakeside observation platform.

Along the paths several points of interest and activity are proposed. This could for example be a log for a young child to balance and walk along or larger more explorative or interpretive item that would for example allow the park visitor to name the trees or birds or identify the birds by their songs.

The proposals demonstrate the benefits to wildlife while also allowing continues but enhanced community access to the park.



Development Zone 2 – Active Community Zone

Proposals for this area continue the focus on encouraging more people to become active in the outdoor environment building on the paths used in the Ecological Zone. This zone would provide a destination for the community with a series of modest features that promote activity. At the heart of the area is a proposed community and visitor centre which would provide for a small food and beverage operation, controlled access to a peer feature and a flexible event or exhibition space.

Other proposed features include:

- New children's' active play facilities adjacent to the new community centre that not only cater for the very young with standard see saws, swings and merry go rounds but also more creative solutions to challenge all ages including adults. These can be interconnected net climbing rigs, variable rigs and lower-level basketball hoops that can challenge yet assist in the development of skills.
- 100 tree community orchard (with beehives) created by working with local residents and the voluntary sector (e.g. Royal British Legion) with apple/pear trees or a single variety. Such an area would provide a natural larder for the local community and would encourage bees and people to alike to enjoy the

dappled shade and smell of blossom. It would help to create a rich landscape of biodiversity within the park.

- Wildflower planting and an improved landscape design to enhance the linkages between the various built facilities.

This concept suggests retaining the STP, the miniature railway, grass pitches, car park and footpaths in their current configuration.

The plan overleaf shows how this part of the site could look.



Development Zone 3 – Reimagined Hermitage Building

The vision for the part of the site currently occupied by the Hermitage Leisure Centre is to create a street activity centre, which provides a range of "street activities", which have been found to be attractive to young people who might otherwise not participate in traditional sport or healthy physical activity.

- Street activities include:
- Skateboarding
- Biking
- Parkour
- Street dance
- Street art
- One on one basketball or football

It is the social aspect and informality that distinguished street activities. This is often referred to as "hanging out", in spaces and places that feel owned and adopted by young people. This element of the scheme in particular received strong endorsement from the Community Safety Team.

The overall vision for this aspect of the site would fit well with the feedback from the community engagement, would not compete with the new Whitwick & Coalville Leisure Centre and perhaps most importantly target young people to engage in physical activity and health and wellbeing.

This concept seeks to retain some of the existing walls and slab of the existing centre which would be stripped out to reveal a skeleton structure and use of the pool tank for skate bowls specifically

In order to help fund the cost of this concept V4 have suggested the inclusion of an indoor activity concept that could generate profits to help cross subsidise the scheme. The concept focuses on "gamified" play such as Tag Active which offer young people and families an alternative healthy physical activity choice. The facility would then be equipped by the operator in return for a long-term lease of the area.

Other options to help fund the scheme could be the development of a number of homes on the car park consisting of independent living units and / or young people starter homes. The space available suggests around 39 one- and two-bedroom apartments could be constructed.

The plan overleaf shows how this part of the site could look.



Option Costs

Development Zone 1 – Ecological Park and Lake

The overall estimated cost for this Eco Park and Lake zone is £602,250. This is broken down as below:

Description	Cost (£)
Cutting back trees and vegetation to facilitate the proposed new layout	£10,000
Semi mature native trees allowance	£75,000
Access gates x 3	£15,000
Soft landscaping	£165,000
New planting including wetland planting	£80,000
Information points	£15,000
Street furniture/activity nodes	£50,000
New perimeter fencing	£94,500
New footpath allowance	£97,750
TOTAL	£602,250

Development Zone 2 – Active Community Zone

The overall estimated cost for Active Community Zone is £1,540,000. This is broken down as below:

Description	Cost (£)
New community and visitor centre	£1,050,000
Children active play incl. lakeside pier and welfare facilities	£450,000
Orchard area incl. fruit trees; removal of mini-golf, existing play area and making good	£20,000
Wildflower planting	£20,000
TOTAL	£1,540,000

Development Zone 3 – Reimagined Hermitage Building

The overall estimated cost for the reimagined Hermitage Building is £3.1m. This is broken down as below:

Description	Cost (£)
Internal reconfiguration and refurbishment including fixed furniture and equipment for music production, parkour, skateboarding etc.	1,449,196
New M&E services installations	1,407,250
External works including skate park; services allowance and landscaping	200,000
TOTAL	£3,056,446

Summary of Costs

The total costs to deliver this vision, as set out by V4 Services and LA Architects, is therefore estimated to be **£5.7 million** (this includes a 10% contingency applied to the figures listed above). However, it should be noted that these are indicative figures at this stage, reflecting the early stage of the project based on the information available.

Affordability and value for money

Affordability is a key requirement for this project and the aim has been to ensure any proposal does not place any additional financial burden on the district council given the current and growing pressures on local government finance.

V4 Services explored the potential to generate revenue from the new site, including:

- Sale of part of the site for Housing, generating a capital receipt estimated at £1 million.
- Rent from the indoor activity concept, estimated at £100,000 per annum.
- Income from the street activity centre and skatepark of £144,000 per year once established, generated from a combination of charges, coaching fees, sales of food and drinks as well as potential retail sales on the site.
- Income of £50,000 per year from community and visitor centre once that is established. This is through venue hire, events and the sales of food and drinks.
- Other income totalling £16,600 per year from other areas, such as the sale of honey from the proposed orchards and further income from the sale of food and drink around the park and lake.

These figures are indicative and this stage and have not been verified through market testing. There is, therefore, a risk that the potential income set out could be overstated. There is a proven tendency for the early appraisals to overstate potential income and understate potential costs; a concept known as optimism bias.

Nevertheless, officers have appraised the vision using the Council's standard appraisal tool. The expected net present value of the project, without any allowance for optimism bias, is -£2.0 million over 25 years. If a 25% allowance for optimism is applied to all day-to-day income and expenditure, the net present value would fall to -£4.3 million.

This means delivering the future vision as set out above will need significant and continued subsidy from the Council to keep it running over time. The table below shows that the potential annual subsidy required once the site is fully operational and established will be £127,000, or could be as high as £250,000 if the initial high level assessment is optimistic. A higher level of subsidy is likely in the early years. This would be a significant increase on the Council's existing leisure spend, which is budgeted at

£854,000 in 2022-23 and is expected to fall significantly as a result of income from the new leisure centre.

	Based on no optimism bias	Based on 25% optimism bias
Income	£(319,000)	£(239,000)
Expenditure	£275,000	£318,000
Operating (Surplus)/Deficit	£(44,000)	£79,000
Annual Capital Costs	£171,000	£171,000
Annual (Surplus)/Deficit	£127,000	£250,000

It is possible that this subsidy could be afforded by reprioritising existing spend within the Council's budgets. However, the Council's latest medium term financial plan, presented to Cabinet on 1 February 2022, noted that whilst the Council's general fund remains healthy for 2022-23, the Council is particularly vulnerable to potential changes to business rates and new homes bonus that are anticipated. In response, the budget for 2022-23 included a requirement to find £895,000 of savings in 2022-23, a requirement that grows to £1.3 million by 2026-27. Any reprioritisation of spend would need to be considered alongside these savings needs and take into considering the relative value that could be drawn from the spend.

Options Analysis

The work undertaken by V4 and LA Architects has identified a potential vision for the site and three specific areas, however the costs to deliver this vision are significant and likely to be outside of the Council's affordability. There are a number of options for the future delivery of certain aspects of the vision as set out in the following sections.

In particular these options consider the cost implications and the overall benefits. It should also be recognised that the options can be developed independently for each area and may be undertaken in different timescales.

In addition to the costs presented below there are overall site costs which will need to be factored in which have been estimated by V4 at £91,000.

Options for the Ecological Park Zone

The overall vision for this zone suggests a cost of £602,000 to deliver the vision set out earlier, however there are two aspects of the vision which could be delivered for lower cost as set out below.

Ecology Enhancements

The council has secured planning consent on Waterworks Road and a requirement of that development is the need to re-provide certain ecological features in an off site location. Given the masterplan highlights the opportunities for such mitigation the council will seek to implement these works within the Eco Park Zone. The value of these enhancements is estimated at **£250,000** and include the following features:

- Seeding and wet and dry meadow mixes planting
- Pond creation with scrapes and wetland ditch creation
- Bee hive protection
- Aquatic planting
- Long term maintenance and protection regime

Tree Planting Scheme

The provision of additional tree planting can be pursued as a separate project in order to assess feasibility and will take 2 forms. Firstly, in partnership with Earthwatch the provision of a Tiny Forest to cover an area of 120m² which will create a dense fast-growing native woodland of 600 trees in order to produce a rich biodiversity capable of attracting over 500 animal and plant species within the first 3 years, and which would have minimal management and maintenance requirements. The estimated cost of this is £30,000.

Secondly, in partnership with the National Forest and Leicestershire County Council (LCC), the planting of additional trees generally within the area. The estimated cost of this is £20,000, although the amount would vary dependant on the number of trees required. Any financial contribution would hopefully be supported and/or match funded by the National Forest which would increase the amount of trees available. Initial conversations have taken place with the National Forest and LCC who are extremely supportive of the proposals and additional tree planting and are keen to help fund the project in any way they can.

Both options would require the support of local community groups to both implement and maintain.

The council's Parks and Open Spaces team would manage the area once these features have been installed.

As a result of these two options identified above there are therefore 3 options available for the future delivery of the Ecological Park aspect, as summarised in the table below.

Option	Estimated Capital Cost/ (Receipt)	Estimated ongoing revenue costs / (income)	Opportunities	Risks
Ecology Enhancement	£250k	As existing budget £84k for recreation ground - TBC	Ecology enhancement works (species-rich grassland; trees; bee preservation etc.)	Will need careful managing and protection that complies with the ecological mitigation measures required by LCC as part of the Cropston Drive/Waterworks Road development
Tree Planting Scheme	£50k	As existing budget £84k for recreation ground - TBC	Tree planting schemes to include general tree planting in partnership with the National Forest and LCC, and the creation of a Tiny Forest in partnership with Earthwatch	Will require funding
Future Vision as per Framework	£602k	£17k	V4: Delivers as per the vision including significant tree and soft planting, activity nodes, fencing, gates and footpaths.	Will require additional funding

Both the Ecology Enhancements and the Tree Planting zone can be developed independently and offer the opportunity to deliver significant enhancements and delivery against the future vision, funded through existing budgets and external funding. Delivery of the future vision is outside of the Council's affordability, with a net present value of -£890,000 and an estimated annual subsidy of £40,000. The net

present value and subsidy or the Ecology Enhancements and Tree Planting scheme will be £0, as they are funded through existing budgets or external funding.

Options for the Active Park Zone

In addition to the overall delivery of the vision there are a number of options for the Active Park Zone, which include

- Maintain Existing – essentially maintain the existing activity on the site through continued delivery and investment in the 3G pitch and the existing pavilion
- Community Orchard – through the planting of 100 trees to celebrate 100 years of the Royal British Legion. This option can be progressed with any of the other options
- Alternative Management Options – through seeking a third party operator or community asset transfer to the clubs who currently use the site. This is in effect maintaining the existing but transferring the service to the community.
- Vision (excluding Community Centre Building) – development of the vision and delivery of the outdoor activity presented but excluding the development of a new Community Centre Building.
- Vision (including Community Centre Building) – development of the vision and delivery of the outdoor activity presented and also the development of a new Community Centre Building

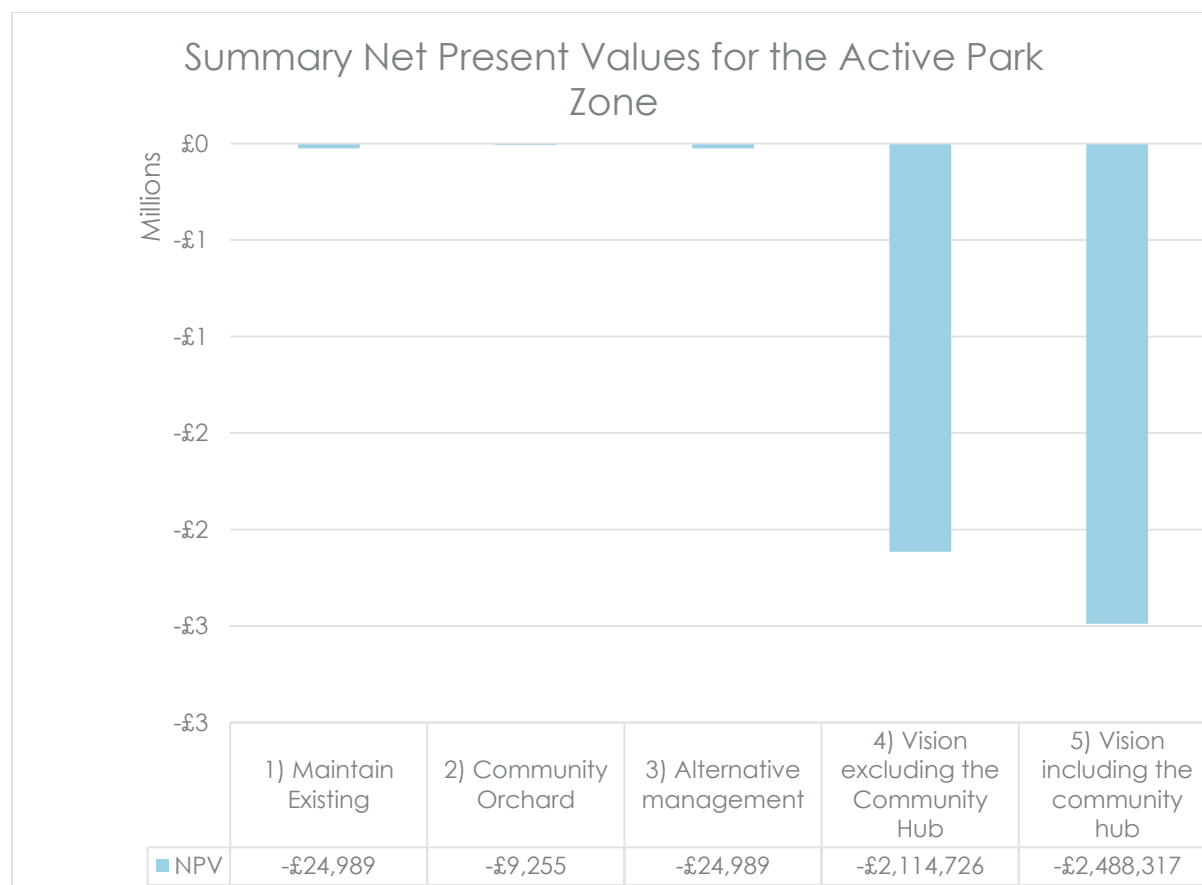
The considerations of these options are presented in the table below, although it should be recognised that the options are not mutually exclusive as the community orchard could be progressed in parallel with the other options.

Option	Estimated Capital Cost/ (Receipt)	Estimated ongoing revenue costs / (income)	Opportunities	Risks
Maintain Existing	£27k (based on investment in existing pavilion & 3G pitch)	£79k – which is the Ongoing Council Budget	Maintain the existing facilities (with limited investment to ensure fit for purpose and to facilitate the potential for a community asset transfer for the ATP (existing group / club/s)	No significant improvement in the active recreation or opportunities Potential for community asset transfer
Community Orchard	£10,000	£0	Development of a Community Orchard to celebrate 100 years of the Whitwick Royal British Legion branch	The RBL fail to maintain the area and responsibility falls back onto the council
Alternative Management	£27k (based on investment in existing pavilion & 3G pitch)	£79k – assumed ongoing current commitment would be required	Consider alternative management options for the 3G pitch, grass pitches and/or changing pavilion	Community groups or clubs may not be willing to accept the financial liabilities associated to the 3 areas
Vision (excluding Community Centre Hub)	£490K	£73k	Invest as per concept design, excluding the Community Centre Hub	
Vision (including Community Centre Hub)	£1.54 million	£67k	Invest as per concept design, including the Community Centre Hub	

The Whitwick branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) are supportive of the planting of a Community Orchard with 100 trees to celebrate 100 years of their existence, and this has been included as part of the proposal. It can be progressed as a separate project in partnership with both the RBL and the National Forest. As an extension of the arrangements for the Community Garden in Coalville Park, the RBL will take responsibility for maintaining the area through engaging local community groups and schools.

The options presented in the table above enable the Council to progress towards the vision through maintaining the existing facilities and seeking to either continue to operate or transfer to the community.

This would then enable the future vision to be delivered in the future if funding allowed. The net present value calculations for each of the above options are outlined in the graph below, and the annual potential subsidy for options 4 and 5 vary between £100,000 and £134,000.



Options for the Hermitage Leisure Building

There are a number of options for the Hermitage Building site, although not all of them will deliver the vision set out in the previous sections. These options include the following

- Option 0 – Retain the mothballed building as it is, in a mothballed state
- Option 1 – Knock down and landscape the site either temporarily in preparation for future works, or permanently
- Option 2 – Knock down and develop for residential
- Option 3 – Knock down and build a new street activity centre in line with the vision presented by V4 (but through a new build as opposed to a refurbished building)

- Option 4 – Repurpose existing building and utilise for Community Use as per proposals from local community, which presents activities within the existing building
- Option 5 – Retain part of existing building and repurpose as a new Street Activity Centre to deliver the vision in line with the V4 vision, but retaining the existing building

None of the options above seek to bring back the leisure centre into use in its present form as to do this would result in two potential issues

- Significant capital implications to bring the facility back into its current use (circa £2.5 – 3 million) plus ongoing revenue costs to operate
- A competing facility for the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre which would result in compromising the future operation of the new facility.

As such the options presented above are developed to avoid these scenarios. The annual costs are based on an average over the next 10 years.

Option	Description	Capital Cost /(Receipt)	Annual Revenue Cost/ (Surplus)	Key Issues
0 Retain mothballed building	Retain empty building and manage it as void property	£-	£130k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building will continue to deteriorate
1 Knock Down & Landscape	Demolish Centre and landscape over the site Could be permanent or temporary position	£0.3 million	Cost neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not deliver vision • Could be a temporary solution to enable delivery of vision in future
2 Knock Down & Develop for residential / commercial development	Development of Option 1 to generate value from land	(£1.5) million	£6k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not deliver the vision • Delivers the best return for the Council

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to have limited housing development with option 3 or 4 • Valuation advice is £1.8 - £1.95 million • Option to sell to the open market or to retain within the council which would allow more flexibility over the design and type of development • Capital receipt figure allows for all costs to deliver the receipt
3 Knock Down and new build street activity centre in line with the vision from V4	Deliver the proposed vision through a purpose-built facility	£3.1 million (£2.1m after capital receipt)	£59k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers vision presented by V4 – capex likely to be same as option 5 • Potential to bring in commercial activity • Assumes some housing enabling (£1m capital receipt)
4 Repurpose the existing Centre (aligned with Coalville Can's proposals)	Utilise the existing centre to deliver community activities as per proposals from the local community	£3.3m plus additional investment	£13k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These costs are subject to additional funding being identified by the Community • It also includes a share issue in the community facility

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a risk that this funding will not be forthcoming
5 Retain part of the existing building and deliver Street Activity Centre in line with the V4 vision	Use the existing facility to deliver the street activity centre through refurbishment	£3.1 million (£2.1m after capital receipt)	£105k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retains little of the existing facility Delivers the V4 vision for a street activity centre Assumes some housing enabling (£1m capital receipt)

The options presented above illustrate that if the council wishes to deliver the vision of a street activity centre, then there is a capital requirement of circa £3.1 million to deliver a facility of this scale (whether a new build or refurbishment), although the figures above (for Options 3 and 5) present some commercial investment through enabling housing development. The initial analysis undertaken by V4 suggests that there would still need to be a revenue subsidy to operate the proposed facility, however there may be opportunities for this to be delivered at nil cost to the Council. There is little difference in cost between repurposing the existing building or building new as illustrated above, although it is likely that a new facility would deliver a lower revenue cost and a more efficient building improving the carbon footprint.

In addition to this there has been a proposal from the local community to utilise the existing facility for community activities including street sports and other activities. This presents an opportunity for the Centre to deliver similar activities to the Street Activity Centre, however it would require the condition survey works of £2.5 million to be undertaken and also may require additional investment in the building to repurpose. The proposal from the local community suggests this can be achieved through additional funding sources and also issuing of shares to the public and local community, however there are no definitive commitments to this within their proposal.

Any option which seeks to repair the building as a leisure centre and bring it back into use as a leisure centre should recognise that the cost for doing this has been made acutely clear by the December 2021 CBRE condition report. The cost to do so would amount to a required investment of **£2.5m** plus VAT. Given that the reason for building a new leisure centre was made on the basis that the Hermitage building was no longer fit for purpose and had reached the end of its life as a leisure building this option is not considered viable and would create an unacceptable competitive facility to the council's new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre.

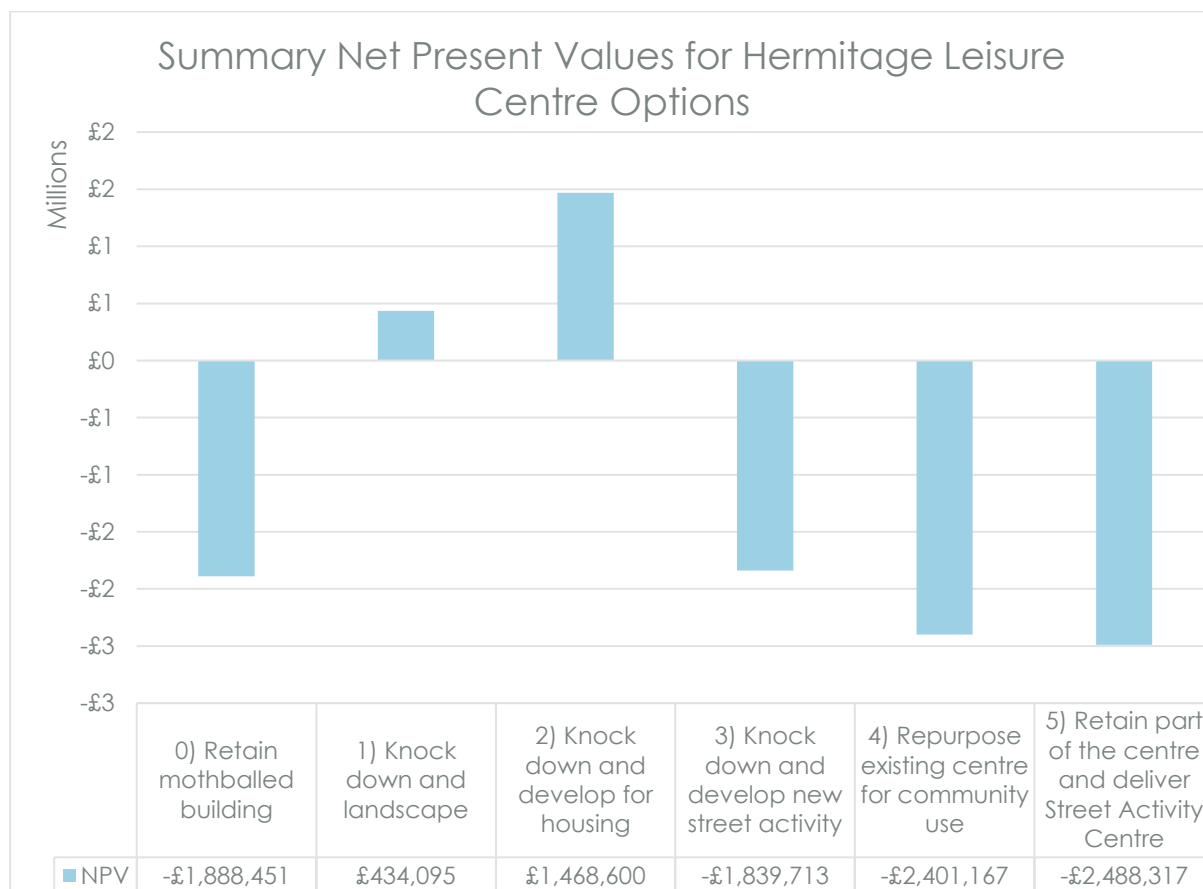
In addition to any capital investment in the building it is likely that there would be significant revenue costs in

- a. The operation of the Hermitage Leisure Centre as has been the case
- b. A claim from Everyone Active on the impact to their management fee through the council's promotion of a competing facility

As a result, this option has only been considered if the building could be brought into use for community use which does not conflict with the Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre. It is still likely that the £2.5 million will be required to deliver a safe building plus further costs for refurbishment and remodelling to enable its intended use.

The other options of demolishing HLC and either landscaping or development for housing would not require any condition survey works and allowance has been made for demolition.

Each option has been appraised using the Council's standardised investment appraisal model. The graph below shows the net present values for each scenario based on a 25-year period. Option 2 (knocking down and developing the site) provides the healthiest return, based on the value of the land that is sold. Option 1 has a positive net present value as it minimises revenue costs whilst retaining the land for future use. All other options would require significant ongoing subsidy, from £130,000 a year for mothballing the building to £187,000 for option 5.



The option for developing housing on the sight assumes that the land would be sold in order to maximise the value from the site. It is also possible to appropriate that land to the Housing Revenue Account to enable the Council to develop the land for affordable housing. This option would allow the Council to retain greater control over the density, property type and design and subsequent management of the scheme. The appropriation of the land to Housing Revenue Account would a result in a saving to the general fund, which Members may choose to use to subsidise some of the improvements to the ecological and active park zones, The level of the subsidy would depend on the value of the land and the proposed improvements to the ecological and active park zones that are planned. The Council would also need to consider whether the land could be developed viably within the HRA as part of further scoping work if this proposal was adopted.

If the Council were to consider delivering the vision (Options 3, 4 or 5) then it would be suggested that an initial stage would be to seek expressions of interest from the market and local community to expand on the proposals presented to date, to fully understand the cost implications. The Council could set certain parameters for this which make it clear the Council will not be funding any opportunity and any interested parties will need to allow for condition survey costs.

This approach would need careful management and transparency given the state of the building and the need to ensure that no use would compete whatsoever with the activities and facilities on offer in the new leisure centre over the 25 years of the contract and service specification that the council has with Everyone Active. Bidders whether they be from the private, public or voluntary sectors would need to demonstrate their ability to meet this requirement as well as the significant investment required in the fabric, structure and mechanical and electrical installations as highlighted in section 6 of this report. Potential bidders would initially attend an open day to assess interest and appetite for the opportunity and a set of tender and lease documentation would then need to be prepared and then published

It should be recognised that in all of the options there is a cost to continuing to mothball the facility and depending on the timescales involved will be a cost to be factored into each of the options.

Summary of Options and Recommended Way Forward

The overall approach the council should seek to consider are a number of key decisions to be taken depending on the affordability and ambition of the council. It should also be recognised that there is the opportunity for the council to consider phased developments. We summarise the approach for each area below

- Ecological Park

The ecological enhancements and tree planting options which can be funded from existing funding is affordable and could be the first phase, with the council seeking further funding to achieve the overall concept vision.

- Active Community

The maintaining the existing provision of the grass pitches and AGP maintains existing recreation provision and delivers on the active community, with investment in the existing pavilion and 3G AGP. If this option is delivered initially (either through the Council directly or through alternative management) then it gives the opportunity to identify additional spaces and activities which could be introduced over time, predominantly the outdoor spaces and activities.

If the council wishes to progress with the Community Centre, then there is a requirement for capital investment of circa £1 million, which is likely to be a long-term ambition should funding be available.

The development of the community orchard has the potential to be funded and can be considered as a standalone option.

- Reimagined Hermitage Leisure Centre

The overall vision sets out the potential development of a street activity centre and also the options for the repurposing of the HLC for community space. The options for redevelopment of the HLC suggest that there is no cost benefit in retaining the existing centre. The cost of developing a new Centre is comparable (if not less expensive) than retaining the existing Centre and refurbishing it.

In addition to this by knocking down the existing Centre this removes the costs and risks associated with mothballing the existing Centre, for example there is always a risk that people could access the existing Centre and injure themselves.

If the aim is to deliver on the vision then it is suggested that there would need to be an option to put the site to the market for a potential investment opportunity. This could take the form of a market test which would have some broad principles:

- The council would seek to place some parameters based around full transfer of risk and liability and there would be no cost to the Council (either capital or revenue)
- The use of the building could not conflict with the Whitwick & Coalville Leisure Centre and should seek to deliver on the overall aims of the street activity centre
- The market would within these parameters be at liberty to propose solutions which could resolve around repurposing of the site

If the council was to undertake a market test which would invite expressions of interest from the community and potential commercial partners, it is recommended that the building is demolished prior to this to remove costs and risks.

Alternatively, the council could decide to progress with housing development on the site or demolish and leave as greenfield. Both of these options will be at limited cost to the council (or in the case of housing gives a return).

Following the market test (if unsuccessful) the council could decide to demolish the centre and leave as greenfield as further work is done to explore housing or a street activity centre delivered by the Council.

Overall Conclusions

As presented the vision is unaffordable, requiring circa £5.7 million in capital and an ongoing revenue cost to deliver the vision across all three areas. There is however an opportunity to deliver a significant part of the vision through the following approach:

1. Demolish the Hermitage Leisure Centre and retain as green space, as there is no cost benefit in retaining the Centre and even if the Council decided to develop a street activity centre then a new build is as cost effective and also likely to be less costly to run and deliver a more energy efficient building.
2. Develop the Leisure Centre part of the site for a housing scheme and utilise the savings to invest in the Eco Park Zone and Active Community Zone of the site.
3. Utilise the £250,000 from Waterworks Road development to invest in the Ecological Park Zone, which will improve both the Hermitage Recreation Ground and fulfil the Council's obligations from the Waterworks Road development.
4. Continue to maintain the existing facilities in the Active Community zone.
5. In the medium term, look to deliver the Ecological Park and Active Community vision (potentially to include the new Community Centre building) subject to further detailed plans and funding available to the project.

This approach will enable the council to deliver improvements to the community use and activities at the site, in an affordable way and complement the activities at the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre.

In order to progress this approach, it is recommended that the immediate actions would be to agree to:

1. Develop plans to appropriate the Hermitage Leisure Centre site to the Housing Revenue Account and launch the necessary consultation process to do so.
2. Demolish the existing Hermitage Leisure Centre (subject to the outcome of the above).
3. Deliver the required ecology enhancement works required by the Cropston Drive / Waterworks Road development in the Ecological Park Zone.
4. The council can then progress plans to develop the Hermitage Leisure Centre site for affordable housing as a business-as-usual project, alongside developing further plans for investing in the Ecological Park and Active Community vision once the financial implications from the appropriation are fully known.

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

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 29
JUNE 2022

Title of Report	AIR QUALITY CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING (DEFRA)	
Presented by	Paul Sanders – Head of Community Services	
Background Papers	<p>Cabinet 8 June 2021 http://prod-modgov:9070/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=126</p> <p>Cabinet 8 Dec 2020 http://prod-modgov:9070/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=126&\$LO\$=1</p>	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	<p>There are no direct financial implications to the Council. The Council has been awarded a grant of £27,240 from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) of which £6,000 is a revenue grant and £21,240 is capital.</p> <p>As part of the grant conditions, match funding is required from North West Leicestershire District Council and Harborough District Council of £2,745. This match funding is delivered in terms of staff time which is already included on the General Fund budget.</p>	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	<p>The Council's Capital Rules do not allow the capital grant money to be spent unless the project is in the Capital Programme. Therefore, to spend the capital grant money, it is necessary for the Capital Programme to be amended retrospectively.</p>	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	Match funding elements of the Grant Award	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Reason Agenda Item Submitted to Scrutiny Committee	<p>To advise Community Scrutiny Committee of the successful joint bid for DEFRA Air Quality Grant funding.</p> <p>To offer Community Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to consider and comment on the retrospective addition to the capital programme prior to consideration by Cabinet on 19 July and approval by Council 6 September 2022. The capital element of the grant funding will be used to purchase air quality monitoring equipment.</p>	

Recommendations	THAT COMMUNITY SCRUTINY: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NOTE THE AWARD OF THE DEFRA AIR QUALITY GRANT FUNDING; AND 2. CONSIDERS AND COMMENTS ON THE RETROSPECTIVE ADDITION TO THE COUNCIL'S CAPITAL PROGRAMME OF £21,240 FOR DELIVERY OF THE AIR QUALITY PROJECT.
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. In December 2020 the council adopted the Air Quality Delivery Plan. The plan included a priority action to work collaboratively in the county on air quality. The health impacts from particulate matter are a key priority especially from PM2.5.
- 1.2. Each year the government through DEFRA announces funding opportunities for work that supports the improvement of Air Quality.
- 1.3. The criteria DEFRA are looking for is detailed below: -
 - To help deliver compliance in areas in current and projected exceedance of UK air pollution targets in the shortest possible time
 - To support LAs (particularly those with a Smoke Control Area) to reduce PM2.5 emissions from domestic wood and coal burning
 - To support projects which develop solutions over the longer term by increasing awareness to encourage behavioural changes.
 - To support projects that align with the objectives of Defra's Clean Air strategy
 - To support projects that reduce nitrogen dioxide (NO2) emissions
 - To support innovative projects that can improve local air quality, especially in relation to delivering effective air pollutant emissions reduction measures, and to share this best practice.
- 1.4. Since NWLDC and Harborough District Council (HDC) share an Air Quality Officer and work collaboratively on air quality it was logical to develop a joint bid for the funding that DEFRA announced on 7 Sept 2021.
- 1.5. Local Authorities do not know when DEFRA will announce their funding and do not know what the funding pre-requisites will be. There is also often a narrow window of time to apply for the funding. The deadline for submission of the application was the 8 Oct 2021. The funding round in Sept 2021 required the bid to be composed of 78% Capital and 22% revenue along with match funding elements, bringing the total for the project to £29,985.

2. FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

- 2.1. The table below details the bid funding applied for.

Element of Project	Revenue Grant	Capital Grant	Total Grant	Match Funding	Total
Work Package 1 – Monitoring		£21,240	£21,240	£911	£22,151
Work Package 1 – Monitoring Analysis	£6,000		£6,000		£6,000
Work Package 2 – Public Awareness Campaign				£824	£824
Work Package 3 – Survey of behaviour in relation to solid fuel burning				£333	£333
Work Package 4 – Monitoring and Evaluation				£677	£677
Total	£6,000	£21,240	£27,240	£2,745	£29,985

- 2.2. As per the council's constitution, capital expenditure can only be incurred where it is in the capital programme. Approval by Council of the capital programme shall be a prerequisite for the commencement of a project and to enter into a contract. Due to the tight deadline for the bid application, there was insufficient time to go through the council's governance process to add the capital element of the funding bid into the capital programme which was approved as part of the budget process by Council on the 24 February 2022. Following advice from the Deputy S151 Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer, a decision was made, due to the value of the expenditure and to avoid the risk of losing the funding, to apply for the grant, commit to the capital expenditure and retrospectively seek approval from Council to add the project into the capital programme. The capital programme would usually be considered by Corporate Scrutiny as part of the annual budget process. However, the Constitution provides that the items generally falling within the remit of one Scrutiny Committee can be considered by the other Committee if necessary. Given the timescales on this matter and the interest which this Committee has shown in the issue of Air Quality, it was considered appropriate to bring this report to this meeting.
- 2.3. NWLDC is the lead authority for the bid therefore it is NWLDC's governance process that needs to be followed to approve the retrospective addition of this capital project to the Capital Programme.
- 2.4. Having been successful with the joint bid and securing £27,240 of grant funding from DEFRA this report provides an update to Community Scrutiny Committee on the Air Quality Project and asks Scrutiny to comment on the retrospective addition to the capital programme OF £21,240 (being the capital element of the grant funding) for the Air Quality project prior to consideration by Cabinet on 19 July and approval by Council 6 September 2022
- 2.5. Whilst this report primarily relates to the financial governance process for amending the capital programme, it was considered an opportune time to update this Committee on the Air Quality Project.

3. AIR QUALITY PROJECT - SOLID FUEL BURNING

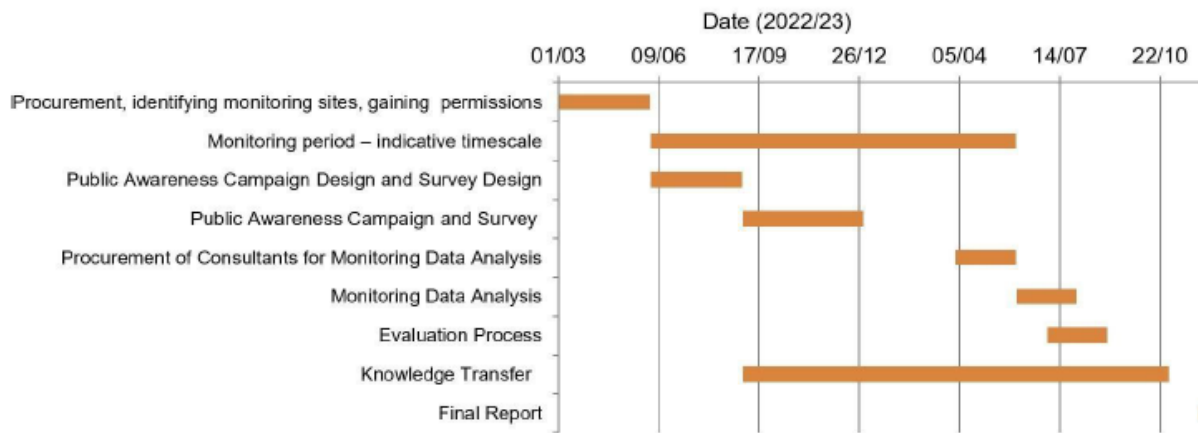
- 3.1. Due to the tight timeframes and reporting requirements to DEFRA for the project NWLDC and HDC have commenced the project whilst the retrospective governance process is followed.

- 3.2. PM2.5 and solid fuel burning was chosen for the bid because the Government's Clean Air Strategy sets out a wide range of actions by which the UK Government will seek to reduce pollutant emissions and improve air quality. Actions are targeted at four main sources of emissions: Transport, Domestic, Farming and Industry. The Strategy highlights that emissions from solid fuel use are significant. Burning wood and coal in open fires and stoves makes up 38% of the UK's primary emissions of fine particulate matter (PM2.5), and is, therefore, a potentially significant source of primary PM2.5. NWLDC and HDC are more likely to have a greater number of households burning solid fuel as there are several communities that do not have a mains gas supply, due to the rural location.
- 3.3. The objective of the project is to increase the level of knowledge of PM2.5 and ultimately reduce PM2.5 emissions by changing behavioural attitudes to solid fuel burning. There is increasing local public concern around PM2.5 across the two authorities, and it is recognised that currently there is little information in relation to current concentrations, how concentrations vary across the districts and the magnitude of contributions from different sources relative to the overall emissions.
- 3.4. The project will use a combination of additional monitoring, and a public awareness programme to achieve these objectives. The main benefits from the project relate to reduced emissions from solid fuel burning, but also awareness raising more generally. Reduced emissions should ultimately reduce pollutant (PM2.5) concentrations within solid fuel burning areas, and therefore improve health, but this will not be quantifiable or measurable. It is also anticipated that the public awareness work will be built on in the future (if funding allows) and expanded to a more ambitious, and potentially regional awareness campaign in line with public health priorities. This project will test out messaging, and methods of awareness raising in a cost-effective way.
- 3.5. The Public Awareness Campaign and survey will be undertaken just prior to and during peak solid fuel burning season. The project will be underpinned by a communications strategy and both council communications teams are working closely with officers to develop the survey and pre-campaign messaging.
- 3.6. The monitoring period will commence in June/July and run for 12 months. This is to ensure that all seasonal variations are accounted for, and that a full analysis at the end of the project can be undertaken. The monitoring will be undertaken using a piece of equipment known as a Zephyr. Both councils already use this equipment and the bid has enabled 3 further Zephyrs to be used, 2 in NWLDC and 1 in HDC. The locations will be chosen by using data on usage of solid fuel burning areas in both districts.
- 3.7. Monitoring Data Analysis will take place after 12 months of monitoring and written up into a report which is public friendly and can be used for knowledge transfer. The final report will be submitted to DEFRA in Oct/Nov 2023. The high-level programme is outlined in a chart in Appendix 1.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing a clean and green district - Our communities are safe, healthy and connected
Policy Considerations:	N/A
Safeguarding:	N/A
Equalities/Diversity:	N/A
Customer Impact:	The project will positively engage with the public and raise awareness.
Economic and Social Impact:	N/A
Environment and Climate Change:	The project seeks to have a positive effect on the environment and climate by reducing emissions of PM2.5 and behaviour change amongst the public that burn solid fuel and this has been captured in the Zero Carbon agenda for NWL.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Public awareness campaign and resident surveys in solid fuel burning locations. Communication Strategy in place for the campaign.
Risks:	Identification and management of any risks have formed part of the project plan for the bid to DEFRA
Officer Contact	Clare Proudfoot Environmental Protection Team Manager clare.proudfoot@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

Appendix 1

High-Level Programme



NORTH-WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 29
JUNE 2022

Title of Report	SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22	
Presented by	James Arnold Strategic Director of Place	
Background Papers	Agendas and Minutes of meetings of the Scrutiny Committees and Task and Finish Groups	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	None identified	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	None identified	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	Resources are referred to in the body of the report but there are no major staffing or corporate implications.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Reason Agenda Item Submitted to Scrutiny Committee	To consider and make comment on the annual report in order that it be presented to Council setting out the work of the Scrutiny Committees over the preceding twelve-month period.	
Recommendations	THAT THE SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT BE RECEIVED FOR COMMENT AHEAD OF ITS SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A corporate peer review which was undertaken in 2019 prompted the establishment of a Cross Party Scrutiny Working Group which was tasked with looking at improving the scrutiny process. The Working Group recommended a number of actions, one of which was that an annual report be submitted to Council which sets out the work of both the Scrutiny Committees over the preceding twelve-month period.
- 1.2 The Annual Scrutiny report for 2021/22 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Both the Community Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity of making comment and suggesting changes to the report before it is reported to Council.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	All
Policy Considerations:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Safeguarding:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Equalities/Diversity:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Customer Impact:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Economic and Social Impact:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Environment and Climate Change:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Risks:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Officer Contact	Mel Long Democratic Services Team Manager Melanie.long@nwleicestershire.gov.uk



North West Leicestershire District Council

SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

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1. Foreword

“As the Chairs of the Community and the Corporate Scrutiny Committees, we are pleased to present this Annual Report for the 2021/22 municipal year. This report provides a summary of the work undertaken by both Committees during this period and provides an opportunity to reflect on this work. Whilst the past year has been another challenging period for the Council due to the ongoing covid pandemic, we feel that both Committees continued to constructively play their part in terms of scrutinising performance and contributing to key council policies and decisions.

We look forward to working with the new Chief Executive and will continue to work closely with the Council’s senior managers and staff to ensure that it is a productive year ahead; and we would like to offer our thanks and appreciation to the officers and Members who support both the Committees”.



Councillor Russell Boam
Chairman, Corporate Scrutiny Committee



Councillor Jim Hoult
Chairman, Community Scrutiny Committee

2. Membership

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Russell Boam (Chairman)
Councillor B Harrison-Rushton (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Elliott Allman
Councillor Dave Bigby
Councillor Alexander Bridgen
Councillor Gill Hoult
Councillor Tony Saffell
Councillor Sean Sheahan
Councillor Nigel Smith
Councillor Michael Wyatt
Councillor Carl Benfield (Substitute)
Councillor David Everitt (Substitute)
Councillor Marie French (Substitute)
Councillor Stuart Gillard (Substitute)
Councillor Russell Johnson (Substitute)
Councillor Virge Richichi (Substitute)
Councillor John Bridges (Substitute)
Councillor Rachel Canny (Substitute)
Councillor Dr Terri Eynon (Substitute)
Councillor Louise Gillard (Substitute)
Councillor Dan Harrison (Substitute)
Councillor Michael Hay (Substitute)
Councillor Jenny Simmons (Substitute)
Councillor Jake Windram (Substitute)

Community Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Jim Hoult (Chairman)
Councillor Ray Morris (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Carl Benfield
Councillor Alexander Bridgen
Councillor Dr Terri Eynon
Councillor John Geary
Councillor Michael Hay
Councillor Gill Hoult
Councillor Jenny Simmons
Councillor Michael Wyatt
Councillor Dave Bigby (Substitute)
Councillor Angela Black (Substitute)
Councillor John Clarke (Substitute)
Councillor Tony Saffell (Substitute)
Councillor Carol Sewell (Substitute)
Councillor Rachel Canny (Substitute)
Councillor Marie French (Substitute)
Councillor Louise Gillard (Substitute)
Councillor Stuart Gillard (Substitute)
Councillor John Legrys (Substitute)
Councillor Sean Sheahan (Substitute)

3. Introduction

North West Leicestershire District Council adopts the Cabinet system to operate its decision making and there are two Scrutiny Committees comprising non-Cabinet members – the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Community Scrutiny Committee. Below is a non-exhaustive list of their respective areas of responsibility. Each Committee may receive reports and comment on matters of policy or items of business of a reasonably similar nature to those listed.

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Asset Management
Estates and property
Review of Constitution
Communications
Customer Services
Finance
Human Resources
Equalities
ICT
Legal Services
Revenue and Benefits
Shared Services

Community Scrutiny Committee

Business/Economy
Planning and Building Control
Tourism
Partnerships
Community Safety
Leisure
Health and Wellbeing
Waste Services
Stronger Safer Communities
Environmental Health
Licensing
Environmental Protection
Statutory crime and disorder committee
Strategic Housing – Housing Strategy
Housing Management
Economic Development
Regeneration

Scrutiny is central to the Council's decision-making process and has two main roles.

- (1) The development and review of policies for a wide range of subjects and services.
- (2) The critical examination of the Council's performance and effectiveness of its decisions.

The Scrutiny Committees look into areas of local concern; they recommend improvements the Council can make to ensure quality of life is improved for all. The main tasks of the Committees are:

- **Performance Monitoring** – The Council has to meet corporate priorities set out in the Council Delivery Plan and report against those indicators. Scrutiny can examine any aspect of the Council's performance, including services that it delivers through partnerships with other organisations.
- **Holding the Cabinet to Account** - Decisions made by the Cabinet but not yet put into practice can be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committees and challenged.
- **Policy review and development** - Scrutiny can propose new policies or review existing policies and recommend changes to the Cabinet.
- **External Scrutiny** - Any issue directly affecting the residents of North West Leicestershire can be scrutinised by the Committees, including services provided by another organisation

It is through demonstrating the value and impact that effective scrutiny can have in supporting councils and other organisations to deliver better, more cost-effective services, that scrutiny is a valued element of local democracy.

4. The Committee's Resources

Support to the Committees is provided by the two Strategic Directors who offer sound and practical advice on subject matters and help the Committees manage their respective work programmes with regular dialogue with the Chairmen of the two Scrutiny Committees.

Administrative support is provided by Democratic Services under the direction of the Democratic Services Team Manager.

Legal advice is provided by Legal Services under the direction of the Monitoring Officer.

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) is regarded as a focal reference point for professional advice and training; and East Midlands Councils has offered support, as required, to assist with Task and Finish Groups.

The Committee does not have its own dedicated budget and its work is funded from the Democratic Services budget.

5. The Work of Scrutiny

Scrutiny work is Councillor led. In addition to Councillors leading on which subjects they wish to consider in depth through Task and Finish Groups, they also set their own work programme which is populated with topics selected from the Cabinet's Forward Plan, matters relating to the Council's priorities and challenges, and issues of importance to local residents.

Scrutiny does not get involved in minor matters or individual concerns which are not of wider community significance. These need to be addressed through the appropriate service unit, Ward Councillor, or the Portfolio Holder responsible for the issue.

Scrutiny does not deal with individual complaints as these should be addressed through the Council's Complaints Procedure.

The Council's Constitution sets out the rights of Scrutiny Committee Members to 'call in' a Cabinet decision if they feel it has not been made in accordance with decision-making principles set out in Article 12 of the Constitution. The Monitoring Officer is able to support and advise any members wishing to call in an item.

The 'call in' procedure may result in the convening of a special meeting to consider the matter unless the next programmed meeting falls within the deadlines set in the Council's Constitution. The 'call in' process has not been initiated during the past 12 months.

6. Scrutiny Cross Party Working Group

A Cross-Party Working Group was established in 2020 to deliver the outcomes of the corporate peer review. Whilst the Cross Party Working Group is not be a decision-making body, the group is tasked with:

- Monitoring the progress of the project against the agreed action plan.
- Acting as 'critical friends' providing feedback and comments throughout the project.
- Acting as 'champions' for the successful delivery of the project within their respective groups by ensuring that the progress of the project was regularly reported back to all group members.
- Making recommendations to appropriate decision making bodies based on the consensus of the Group.

Its membership comprises

- Councillor Robert Ashman, Deputy Leader
- Councillor Dan Harrison, Conservative
- Councillor Nigel Smith, Conservative
- Councillor Terri Eynon, Labour
- Councillor Sean Sheahan, Labour
- Councillor Tony Saffell, Independent

At its meeting on 26 October 2021, the Scrutiny Cross Party Working Group made a recommendation to establish a Scrutiny Work Programming Group to include the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees, the Directors and members of the opposition. This recommendation was agreed by both the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Community Scrutiny Committee at the meetings held on 5 January and 9 February 2022 respectively.

7. The Scrutiny Work Programming Group

The Terms of Reference were agreed by the Scrutiny Work Programming Group at its first meeting. The terms are as follows:-

Lead Officers	Strategic Directors
Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider requests for inclusion on the work programmes of each Scrutiny Committee;• Consider whether there are other ways of receiving information;• Consult with members of Scrutiny Committees, Senior Officers, Cabinet Members for horizon scanning on policy development;• Look at the corporate priorities, Council Delivery Plan and Cabinet Forward plan and identify key issues/topics for investigation/inquiry• Consider events and decisions in the Council's calendar which could require an input/consultation via Scrutiny• Review any follow up work required after previous scrutiny
Membership	Membership to comprise the chairs of the two scrutiny committees and an opposition scrutiny committee member from each group.
Meetings	The Work Programming Group will meet approximately every 2 months (6 meetings a year)

It was agreed that Scrutiny Work Programming Group would run for a year. This would allow time to determine whether a more formal arrangement, such as a Scrutiny Commission, would likely be an effective addition to the process.

8. Scrutiny Principles

The following principles-based approach for identifying and managing the scrutiny work plan have been agreed.

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

Scope and plan

- Decide which scrutiny topics/work will be done each year
- Add to the work programme for each year to ensure manageable agendas for each meeting
- Consider allowing some scrutiny time for ad hoc requests which arise mid year
- Ensure that items on the work programme are clearly scoped, with clear objectives for the committee and officers (use scoping form where possible)

Recommend (if appropriate) based on the following

- Being specific about the recommendations
- Ensure that they are evidence based and realistic
- Focus on measurable outcomes (where appropriate)
- Address a specific person or group
- Be realistic about any financing requirements
- Develop in partnership with the executive, council officers and partners

Respond – Cabinet should respond to recommendations made by Scrutiny within 2 months.

The response should be:

- A commitment to deliver the measure within the timescale set out
- A commitment to be held to account on that delivery in 6 months or years time
- Where it is not proposed that a recommendation be accepted, the provision of substantive reasons as to why not
- Can be given by way of Cabinet report/meeting considering the recommendations

Review and evaluate

- Regularly review progress and evaluate outcomes eg at Directors/Chairs meetings
- Produce an annual report which demonstrates the work the Committees have done and their impact

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

9. The Scrutiny Year

Over the 12 meetings which the Scrutiny Committees held during 2021-22, several different topics were scrutinised, as shown in the table below:

Item	Considered by	Action of the Committee	Outcome
Community Grants Annual Report	Community Scrutiny Committee on 19 May 2020	Listened to representatives from the Citizens Advice Bureau and Age UK and asked questions around the content and criteria.	Helped shape the format of future reports and gain a better understanding of the grant criteria.
Zero Carbon	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2021	Received an update on the progress made so far on the Council's zero carbon aims and raised a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider.	Urged Local Plan Committee to seriously consider what could be done to impose good targets for the Carbon Footprint on new houses built in the District.
Corporate Accommodation	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2021	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision	Gained a better understanding of the issues regarding the accommodation and sought assurances that customer services would not be adversely affected.
Community Hub	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2021	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision	Gave examples of where improvements could be made to the customer experience.
Council Delivery Plan Review	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2021	Considered the draft Plan and asked questions around the content and format.	Helped shape the format and content of future reports.
Disposal of Land Holding	Community Scrutiny Committee on 22	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of	Cabinet considered the issues raised as part of

	July 2021	questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision	this confidential report before making its final decision
Marlborough Centre	Community Scrutiny Committee on 22 July 2021	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision	Cabinet considered the issues raised as part of this confidential report before making its final decision
Fleet Management Strategy	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2021	Commented on the proposals which included the purchase of electric vehicles to replace diesel; the options for replacement diesel; and the future potential location of the Waste and Parks depots	Helped to gain an understanding of hydrogen technology; the costs associated with electric charging and the lifecycle of a battery.
Special Expenses Policy	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2021	Commented on the draft policy which aimed to formalise the Council's current position on special expenses.	Supported the views of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party
Recovery of Leisure Centres	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2021	Received a presentation on the recovery of the leisure centres during the Covid-19 pandemic.	Gained an understanding of the issues faced by the Leisure Centres during the pandemic.
Draft Housing Strategy	Community Scrutiny Committee on 26 October 2021	Commented on the draft strategy	Helped to understand how information was gathered to inform the future needs of housing and asked that Right to Buy, being the most affordable way of getting on the housing ladder be included in the Strategy.
Medium Term Financial Plan	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 10 November 2021	Noted the changes to assumptions that drive the MTFP and questioned some of the thinking behind it.	The Committee now has a better understanding of the issues which drive the MTFP.
Shop Front Scheme	Community Scrutiny Committee on 24 November 2021	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues	Requested that all businesses be encouraged to take pride in the whole unit, not just the initial shop front.
Zero Litter Strategy	Community Scrutiny Committee on 24 November 2021	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision	Sought assurances that the provision of more cameras would be a priority. Asked that the Government be lobbied on the promised litter picking incentives and deposit scheme.
NWLDC Cycling and Walking Strategy	Community Scrutiny Committee on 24 November 2021	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead	Sought a more user friendly document with more ambition and with speedier action. As a

		of its final decision	result, officers agreed to look at clarifying several details within the strategy including population and housing numbers, confidence levels, HS2, PCT assumptions and other ambitious figures presented.
Budget Proposals 2022/23	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 8 December 2021 and 5 January 2022	Commented on the budgetary proposals to be taken forward as part of the developing 2022/23 budget.	Comments were considered by Cabinet and Council when formulating and agreeing the budget.
Customer Services Strategy	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 8 December 2021	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision	Sought assurances that the systems used for self-serve were accessible on all user platforms so as not to put obstacles in people's way that could deter them from using the service.
NWL Visitor Economy Plan	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 5 January 2022	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision and its opposition to the closing of Ashby Tourist Information Centre	Asked that more work be done on attracting tourists to the area.
Flood Management in NWL	Community Scrutiny Committee on 9 February 2022	Received a presentation and made a number of comments.	Gained a better understanding of flood management in the district and suggested an annual report.
Empty Homes Policy	Community Scrutiny Committee on 9 February 2022	Commented on the draft policy.	Suggested that the service could revisit a Council run grant scheme to help get homes in use again
Economic Growth Plan	Community Scrutiny Committee on 9 February 2022	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision	Encouraged more work to be done around climate challenges and engagement with developers about the efficiencies of their buildings from the outset and then work with existing employers to see how they could improve the efficiency of their sites and premises.
Marlborough Square Public Realm	Community Scrutiny Committee on 9 February 2022	Considered the proposals and submitted a number of questions and issues for Cabinet to consider ahead of its final decision	Officers reflected on the comments made in respect of making the area more pedestrian.

Housing Asset Management Plan	Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 9 March 2022	Commented on the draft plan.	Ensured that the Plan was changed to make reference to the installation of electric vehicle charging points in council housing areas.
Coalville Regeneration Framework	Community Scrutiny 6 April 2022	Provided comments and observations to inform the final version.	The Committee asserted its hopes that by the year 2035, all of the authority's licenced taxis would be electric in order to comply with Zero Carbon objectives.

10. Task and Finish Groups

The Scrutiny Committees can set up special working parties called Task and Finish Groups when they need to undertake a detailed, in-depth investigation into a particular issue. The work is undertaken by a small group of councillors appointed from the membership of the Scrutiny Committee.

During 2020/21 Scrutiny Members established the following Task and Finish Group:-

Housing Strategy

The Group was tasked with looking at if and how NWLDC can influence an increase in the supply of affordable housing in the district and was asked to make recommendations to Cabinet to this effect.

The membership was:-

- Cllr E Allman
- Cllr T Eynon
- Cllr K Merrie
- Cllr S Sheahan
- Cllr N Smith
- Cllr M Wyatt

The Group held four meetings between the period of 14 April 2021 and 18 August 2021 and considered a range of reports and presentations as part of their work to review the targets for affordable housing provision in the district.

The concluding report to the Task and Finish Group was used at the Group's final meeting on 18 August 2021 to inform the debate which resulted in the Group's final recommendations being agreed by the Community Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26 October 2021 and subsequently supported, subject to an amendment, by Cabinet at its meeting on 9 November 2021.

11. Looking Ahead to 2022-2023

The year ahead will see the Corporate Scrutiny Committees being chaired by a different member and we therefore welcome Councillor Nigel Smith.

The Scrutiny Committees will continue to grow and develop in their role of holding the authority's decision makers to account. The key priority for the year ahead will be the establishment of the Scrutiny Work Programming Group which could act as a pre-cursor for the establishment of a

Scrutiny Commission, subject to its success or otherwise. This will be against a backdrop of a change in leadership with the introduction of a new Chief Executive.

12. Members' Attendance Record

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Attendance	9 June 2021	1 Sept 2021	10 Nov 2021	8 Dec 2021	5 Jan 2022	9 Mar 2022	%
Russell Boam	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	83%
Bertie Harrison-Rushton	N	N	Y	N	N	N	17%
Elliott Allman	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	50%
Dave Bigby	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Alexander Bridgen	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	83%
Gill Hoult	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Tony Saffell	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	67%
Sean Sheahan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Nigel Smith	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	50%
Michael Wyatt	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	50%

Community Scrutiny Committee

Attendance	19 May 2021	22 Jul 2021	26 Oct 2021	24 Nov 2021	9 Feb 2022	6 April 2022	%
Jim Hoult	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	83%
Ray Morris **	N/A	N/A	Y	Y	Y	N	75%
Carl Benfield	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	67%
Alexander Bridgen	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	33%
Dr Terri Eynon	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
John Geary	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Michael Hay	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Gill Hoult	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	67%
Jenny Simmons	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Michael Wyatt	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	67%

** Appointed to the Committee on 7 September 2021

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
WEDNESDAY, 29 JUNE 2022

Title of Report	ESTABLISHMENT OF FUEL POVERTY TASK AND FINISH GROUP	
Presented by	James Arnold Strategic Director	
Background Papers	Minutes from Council – 10 May 2022	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	As the Task and Finish Group will require additional support from East Midlands Councils (EMC), due to the nature of the review, there will be a cost involved for this service.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	None identified at this stage	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer:	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	The Task and Finish Group will require additional resources to help support it, this will be provided by East Midlands Councils.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service:	
Reason Agenda Item Submitted to Scrutiny Committee	To ask the Committee to establish a Task & Finish Group comprised of Community Scrutiny Members to review the work which the Council is doing to minimise fuel poverty in NWL in accordance with the motion agreed at Council on 10 May 2022.	
Recommendations	THAT COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (1) ESTABLISH A TASK AND FINISH GROUP TO REVIEW THE WORK WHICH THE COUNCIL IS DOING TO MINIMISE FUEL POVERTY IN NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE. (2) AGREE THE PRINCIPLES SET OUT IN THE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TASK & FINISH GROUP, AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX B, (3) DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF PLACE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, TO SEEK NOMINATIONS FROM THE GROUP WHIPS TO FILL THE SEATS ON THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP.	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A motion was tabled at the meeting of Council on 10 May 2022 in relation to the reduction of fuel poverty within North West Leicestershire. The motion as amended and resolved at the meeting is detailed at appendix A.
- 1.2 The newly established Scrutiny Work Programming Group met for its first meeting on 24 May 2022 to discuss work programmes for both Scrutiny Committees including this referral from Council. It was felt that due to the nature of the review request, the establishment of a Task and Finish Group would be the most appropriate way to conduct the review.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 It is proposed that, a Task and Finish Group undertake a review on the work the Council is doing to minimise fuel poverty in North West Leicestershire by 2030.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Work Programming Group considered that as fuel prices are expected to rise again in the Autumn, the result of the review be presented back as soon as possible and it is proposed to target Community Scrutiny at its meeting in November.
- 2.3 It is also proposed that, in order to ensure an appropriate level of support is given to the review, the East Midlands Council be approached to assist. This is an approach that was agreed as part of the general discussion of the Scrutiny Cross Party Working Group and is to be used when a Task and Finish Group is undertaking a large project when officers workloads are such that in-house support would be difficult.
- 2.4 The draft Terms of Reference of the Task and Finish Group are appended to this report and will be formally agreed at the first meeting of the group.
- 2.5 Meetings will be held, as required, culminating in a draft report for consideration by the Community Scrutiny at its meeting scheduled for 23 November 2022.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	Our communities are safe, healthy and connected
Policy Considerations:	None identified as part of this report but will be considered as part of the work of the T&F Group
Safeguarding:	None identified as part of this report but will be considered as part of the work of the T&F Group
Equalities/Diversity:	None identified as part of this report but will be considered as part of the work of the T&F Group
Customer Impact:	None identified as part of this report but will be considered as part of the work of the T&F Group
Economic and Social Impact:	None identified as part of this report but will be considered as part of the work of the T&F Group
Environment and Climate Change:	None identified as part of this report but will be considered as part of the work of the T&F Group
Consultation/Community Engagement:	None identified as part of this report but will be considered as part of the work of the T&F Group
Risks:	None identified as part of this report but will be considered as part of the work of the T&F Group
Officer Contact	James Arnold Strategic Director of Place james.arnold@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

NOTICE OF MOTION: END FUEL POVERTY

This Council notes the work to date on reducing fuel poverty in our area but acknowledges that thousands of households are estimated to be in fuel poverty and more can be done to end fuel poverty by 2030.

This Council resolves:

- To request that Community Scrutiny Committee review the work which the Council is doing to minimise fuel poverty in North West Leicestershire by 2030. This will include the work being done on the following:
 1. continuous improvement in the energy efficiency of Council housing stock
 2. partnership working to improve the energy efficiency standards in housing association stock
 3. enforcement of existing regulations on energy efficiency and property standards in the private rented sector
 4. reviewing the outcomes achieved by the [2017 Statement of Intent](#), eligibility criteria and access to Energy Company Obligation funding via the Local Authority Flexibility arrangements
 5. leveraging in funds to improve the energy efficiency standards of all housing
 6. making private tenants' aware of their rights to Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and help under the Government's ECO scheme
 7. providing accessible information, advice and guidance in a variety of formats to those most in need
 8. maximising the incomes of low-income households through the efficient delivery of Council-administered benefits, sensitive recovery of debt and the provision of advice and support
 9. working in partnership with other agencies and voluntary and community groups to implement and monitor delivery of the Strategy
 10. how the Council reports on progress on these areas of work
- To consider whether this Council can support the work of the End Fuel Poverty Coalition.

Fuel Poverty Task and Finish Group

Terms of Reference

What is the Role of Fuel Poverty Task and Finish Group?

To review the work which the Council is doing to minimise fuel poverty in North West Leicestershire by 2030.

What are the Principles of the Review?

- To review the work being done on the following:
 1. Continuous improvement in the energy efficiency of Council housing stock.
 2. Partnership working to improve the energy efficiency standards in housing association stock.
 3. Enforcement of existing regulations on energy efficiency and property standards in the private rented sector.
 4. Reviewing the outcomes achieved by the [2017 Statement of Intent](#), eligibility criteria and access to Energy Company Obligation funding via the Local Authority Flexibility arrangements.
 5. Levering in funds to improve the energy efficiency standards of all housing making private tenants' aware of their rights to Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and help under the Government's ECO scheme.
 6. Providing accessible information, advice and guidance in a variety of formats to those most in need.
 7. Maximising the incomes of low-income households through the efficient delivery of Council-administered benefits, sensitive recovery of debt and the provision of advice and support.
 8. Working in partnership with other agencies and voluntary and community groups to implement and monitor delivery of the Strategy.
 9. How the Council reports on progress on these areas of work
- To consider whether this Council can support the work of the End Fuel Poverty Coalition.

What is expected of members of the Housing Strategy Task and Finish Group?

Whilst the Task and Finish Group will not be a decision making body, the group will be asked to:

- Review the information available to review the work being done on points 1 – 9 above and provide recommendations to Cabinet.
- Review the work undertaken by the End Fuel Poverty Coalition, consider how the Council can support the work and make recommendations to Cabinet.
- Act as critical friends during key aspects of the report, in relation to the scrutiny function, providing comments and feedback as required.
- Agree a majority consensus for recommendation back to Cabinet.

Who has voting rights on the recommendations?

Only elected Members (or their substitute) have voting rights.

Members of the Task and Finish Group

- Conservative – name tbc
- Conservative – name tbc
- Conservative – name tbc
- Labour– name tbc
- Labour– name tbc
- Lib Dem/Independent– name tbc

Where any of the above councillors are not able to attend a meeting, they may select a councillor of their choosing to take their place drawn from either of the Scrutiny Committees.

What is expected of officers of the Task and Finish Group?

- Provide professional advice, as required, throughout the task;
- Ensure effective administration of the working group including provision of agendas and minutes;
- Help formulate the views of members into a number of recommendations for consideration by Cabinet.

Officers of the Task and Finish Group

- James Arnold, Strategic Director of Place
- Rachel Wallace, Democratic Support Officer
- Officer from East Midlands Council to be confirmed
- Other officers/representatives as appropriate or requested

How often will the Group meet?

- Meetings will be held, as required, culminating in a draft report for consideration by the Community Scrutiny at its meeting scheduled for 23 November 2022.

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