

# The Annual Report **2016-17**



# Introduction

## New Leadership - Passing on the Baton

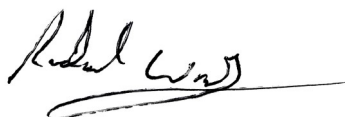
North Kesteven District Council elected Councillor Richard Wright as its new leader on Thursday 30th March.

Councillor Wright has represented his home ward of Ruskington since 2007 and has sat on the Executive Board for the past six years with responsibility for Enforcement, Waste Management, Licencing and Sustainability.

He said of his new appointment:

*"I am extremely proud and honoured to have been elected as leader of the Council and to have the support of my colleagues to continue and strengthen the delivery of our community-focused priorities over the coming years in support of our residents and local businesses."*

Council Leader  
Richard Wright



## Looking Back

I am very proud to provide a foreword to this Annual Report for 2016-17 which illustrates well the excellent work carried out by this Council in support and furtherance of the Flourishing Communities which make up this great District.

In it you can reflect on the Council's achievements in meeting its aims and aspirations; its continued success in reaching for the highest standards and delivering strong and resilient services that are truly relevant and responsive to our communities' needs; and the effective and efficient manner in which it carries out its duties and responsibilities.

In the face of ongoing and emerging challenges, such achievements are underpinned by the solid foundations of strong leadership and a clear plan of community-focused priorities, set out through the NK Plan and supported through the endorsement of partners, stakeholders, residents and businesses.

Although elected Council Leader on only the penultimate day of the year we are reflecting on, I had the great pleasure to be involved in the collective decision-making and direction-setting as an active Executive Board Member throughout. Giving credit where credit is undoubtedly due I pay tribute to my predecessor as Council Leader, former councillor Marion Brighton OBE, who through 16 years of continuous leadership, and 44 full years of service to North Kesteven, steered us in the direction which we continue to travel with clarity, vision and purpose.

- Council Leader Cllr Richard Wright





# Looking Forward

## Looking Forward

Looking forward into the year ahead I commit the Council to ensuring it remains at the heart of its community, through the continued delivery of excellent, reliable and relevant services.

By listening carefully to our communities, residents and businesses, pursuing and accepting only the highest standards and continuing a relentless focus on best value, we have laid out our three year strategic plan - the NK Plan.

This will guide us in our continued drive to add real value and foster wellbeing and prosperity within a clean and safe District; to show leadership and deliver against priority actions in pursuit of Our Communities, Our Homes, Our Economy and Our Environment; and to pursue effective efficiency in all that we do.

What this means is more of the highest quality homes, more jobs which meet the needs and aspirations of people locally, and more investment in the highest quality services which support safe, clean, attractive and healthy communities of the kind we have come to expect and enjoy in this great District of ours.

This is something we can all aspire to and pursue with enthusiasm.

- Council Leader Cllr Richard Wright





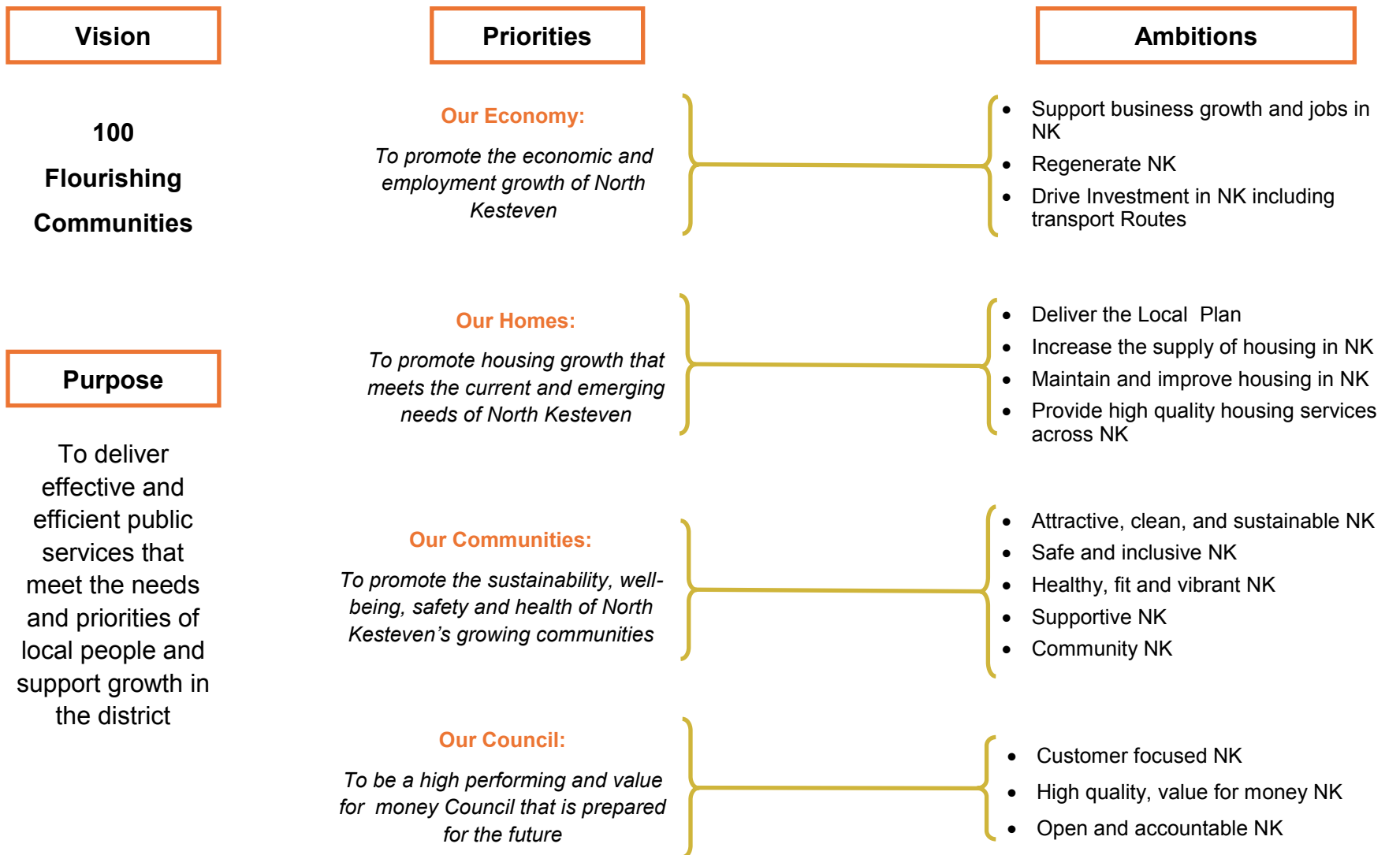
## Corporate Priorities:

- Priorities Framework
- Our Economy
- Our Homes
- Our Communities
- Our Council





# Priorities Framework



## Priorities

# Our Economy

### Ambitions:

**To support business growth and jobs in NK**

**To regenerate NK**

**To drive investment in NK including transport routes**



### **Performance Indicators :**

- 184 jobs created as a result of Council intervention
- 10 new investments in NK for regeneration projects
- 132 jobs created and/or safeguarded as a result of target support by the Council
- 3.57 hectares of employment land has been developed for delivery of jobs
- 96% average workshop occupancy across the workshop portfolio

### **Key Achievements**

£2 million investment from the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Single Growth Fund, for growth and regeneration in Sleaford.

The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan has been adopted by the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Through various S106 agreements the Council has secured more than £2 million for further development of infrastructure around the district.

The Planning department has generated an income of £1 million through c. 1,300 planning applications, without a single refund.

Whisby Natural World recorded its highest ever visitor numbers with 236,843 along with completion of the remodelling of the Little Darters Adventure area and the refurbishment of the basement.

A new Stepping Out Walk has been developed in Heckington alongside the finalisation of a long distance route for the Ridges & Furrows Arts & Heritage Trail.

Workshop tenants were polled on a series of criteria to find their overall satisfaction with the provision of Industrial units and the results show a 93% satisfaction rate.

## Priorities

# Our Economy

### £2m for Sleaford Growth Project

North Kesteven District Council has today been allocated £2 million to go towards the growth and regeneration of Sleaford. The money has been awarded through the latest round of The Single Local Growth Fund administered through the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

A Council spokesman said:

*“This is fantastic news for Sleaford and it will ensure the accelerated delivery of new housing, new employment space and new jobs in the town. The funding will enable aspirations as set out in the Sleaford Masterplan to be delivered, enabling the town to accommodate future growth in line with the emerging Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.”*

### Physical Work begins on Mrs Smith’s Cottage

The first signs of work taking place to restore Mrs Smith’s Cottage can now be seen with scaffolding around the building. The initial work is to investigate the condition of the roof and timber to ensure that there are no structural defects and to properly plan the rest of the development work.

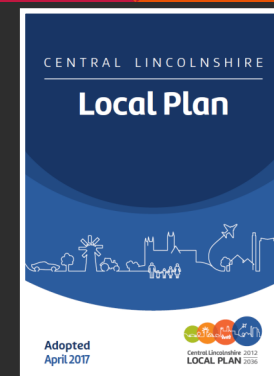
Councillor Mrs Marion Brighton OBE said of the project:

*“This is an important milestone for the restoration project as only when the full structural survey has happened will we know the extent of works needed.*

*“Mrs Smith’s Cottage is part of our heritage as it clearly shows what life was like in an early Victorian, Lincolnshire cottage.”*

### Local Plan Agreed

The headlines for Sleaford include, **Protecting Sleaford’s Setting and Character**, **Sustainable Urban Extensions** and **Regeneration and Opportunity areas**.



The plan outlines areas for conservation, improvement and development, whilst also providing guidance on how these developments should be made. Conservation certainly seems key to the Local Plan, with a clear intention to maintain the identity of the town and retain the iconic structures of the area.

However, the plans also outlined areas for substantial development and regeneration to meeting the need for new, sustainable housing as NK’s population increases.

Housing was not the only focus of the plan as it also outlined key areas for development of retail and industry.

## Priorities

# Our Economy

### To Support Business Growth and Jobs in NK

The Blackwood Court development at Teal Park, providing 20,000 square feet of modern workshop space, was fully let within 8 months of opening and is proving highly popular with its tenants providing as it does, small scale leasehold premises on flexible terms to meet the needs of small and start-up businesses. The Council runs a portfolio of 102 workshops across the District, the demand for which is clearly shown by an average annual occupancy rate of over 97% over the last year.

The Council are continuing to develop their workshop portfolio, with a further 10,000 square foot of space, providing 7 new units about to start construction at Metherringham, linked with the new refuse depot. These units will complement the existing Council owned units on the adjacent Moorlands Trading estate, providing valuable workshop space for the growing village of Metherringham and the surrounding area.

The Council continues to operate its discretionary rates policy to encourage future growth and investment into the area. This has resulted in a number of significant new build relocations into the District which has either secured or created additional jobs in support of the local economy.

The Council has also been successful in securing £2 million of Single Local Growth Funding money from Central Government to provide infrastructure improvements to support and accelerate the delivery of new housing, industry and employment in the town. The money will be used specifically to provide junction improvements to the A17/A 153 and to upgrade Holdingham roundabout to increase its traffic capacity.

The Council once again ran a Made In Sleaford event in the autumn of 2016. Made in Sleaford celebrates the importance of manufacturing, design and engineering in the town - bringing businesses in and around the town together, in a single space to raise awareness of historic legacy and potential for future growth and prosperity. The 2016 event recreated the successful exhibition format with 40 exhibitors (some new, some returning) but included the developed formal programme of STEM workshops on the Friday. Over 200 school children from eight schools attended four STEM Workshops and 2,500 visitors attended.

Along with South Kesteven, North Kesteven is part of the EU funded LEADER programme, and continues to support the LEADER LAG Board to consider applications for funding from ruraly based microbusinesses, cultural and heritage interests, rural tourism and farming interests. The Council's business support advisor helps with the identification of potential applicants and supporting applications into the process.



## Priorities

# Our Economy

### Quotes about Popup Shops:

*"I've been trading online and at events for a number of years now and people have been asking where my store is as they want to come and see the items I sell and have a browse. It's a big undertaking to have a shop but as soon as I saw the pop up shop project being advertised I decided to apply and find out more. This is perfect for me as it means I can try out whether my business works as a store but without the pressure of a long-term commitment."*

**-Wendy Nuccoll, first Pop Up shop owner**

*"Pop up shops are an innovative way to test a new concept in the market place – it is great news that NKDC has made this facility available in Sleaford and we look forward to a successful outcome for a number of new businesses."*

**-Herman Kok, Chairman of Partnership NK**

*"I saw an advert for the shop and when I met the team behind it they were very reassuring and supportive of what I wanted to do. From there, it all clicked into place and now I can't wait to open."*

**-Gill Allenby of Gills 2 Gems, second pop up shop**

### Regenerate NK

The Council continues to work on a number of fronts to facilitate regeneration schemes within its area. The key focus for this work remains in Sleaford with a number of different schemes ongoing. We continue to work with Tesco to bring forward the former Advanta seeds site for a mixed use development scheme offering retail, leisure and residential. The Council remains a key partner in the Heart Of Sleaford proposals, and in particular continues to explore with the landowners how we can deliver leisure facilities as part of the development proposals. We have also worked closely with Melbourne Holdings to support their redevelopment proposals for new retail and office space at the southern end of Southgate, helping to make the development proposals attractive and relevant to the types of retail uses that the town requires.

Further work has been undertaken on traffic modelling within the town centre with Lincolnshire County Council to determine whether pedestrianisation or partial pedestrianisation would be possible to alleviate traffic congestion within the town centre. Linked to this work, we have also commissioned work on developing a public realm strategy for the town centre. This work will provide practical and deliverable ideas for reinvigorating Sleaford Town centre.

The shop front improvement scheme continues to improve the overall appearance of the town's retail units with a significant scheme of repair and reinstatement work taking place in Market Place. The Council are also working in partnership with Sleaford Town Council to look at the future of Sleaford market and how it might be reinvigorated.

Discussions are also continuing with Network Rail to deliver a wider redevelopment vision for underused parts of their land in and around the railway station.

## Priorities

# Our Economy

### Drive Investment in NK including transport routes

The value of tourism continues to grow within North Kesteven. A total of £120 million was generated within the local economy through visitor and tourism business expenditure according to the latest published figures. That represents a growth of over 4% compared with the previous year. The industry supports nearly 1,900 full time equivalent jobs locally. Staying visitors, for example, spent £9 million on local accommodation, staying on average for 2.6 nights. Almost 2 million day visits were made to the district in 2015.

In support of the above, work is currently underway on a close to one million pound HLF project to restore Mrs Smith's Cottage to its former glory at Navenby. This work will see its roof totally refurbished and new visitor and audience development plans put in place to maximise its visitor attraction potential.

The economic development unit continues to work closely with its top 50 identified growth companies to support their employment and investment growth decisions. In the last year Greenray Turbines have moved into their new expanded facilities at Teal Park, Siemens have confirmed major expansion plans for their plant at Teal Park, and Sleaford Quality Foods have begun their expansion at their site in Sleaford.

There have been a number of improvements made along the Castle Line, the rail link between Lincoln, Newark and Nottingham. In November 2016 the improved car park and station at Swinderby was officially opened.

This provides a parking area, cycle facilities as well as improved shelter with information and follows on from the work undertaken to upgrade the car park at North Hykeham which is now completed too. This provided a significant number of additional spaces to augment those previously provided. Improvements continue to be made to the timetable. This has led to improved services at Hykeham on Saturdays with a changed stopping pattern. In the future there are likely to be other changes to the timetable. Work has also been undertaken by NKDC to agree a position statement on the approach it will adopt as part of the refranchising work which will begin next year. NKDC has written and consulted upon such a paper.

### Quotes about Made in Sleaford:

*"The event is a catalyst bringing together the town's diverse manufacturing, engineering, craft and technology industries to raise awareness of our businesses and the amazing things that are Made in Sleaford. It is a celebration of Sleaford and everything that makes the town grow and prosper."*

-Clare Edwards, from the NCCD

*"The event is a chance to showcase what our town has to offer. A lot of people will be surprised!"*

-Sarah Graves, from Appetites

*"Sleaford has a long, rich and proud heritage of industry, innovation and engineering excellence and we're delighted to keep this legacy going. We believe it is important to celebrate local manufacturing and innovation so that the next generation are aware of the opportunities available to them locally."*

-A spokesperson for SHD Composites

## Priorities

# Our Homes

### **This year we have built**

- 2 Houses at Princess Square, Billingham
- 3 Houses on Charlotte Street, Sleaford
- 12 Bungalows on Holland Way off Kesteven Court, North Hykeham.
- 14 Houses and 8 flats, including 2 Passivehaus', at Welchman Way, Heckington

### **And we commenced the building of**

- 6 Flats on Steam Court off Station Road, North Hykeham
- 7 Properties at Newfield Road, Sleaford
- 3 Houses being constructed specifically by a developer for purchase by NKDC upon completion.

### **Performance Measures:**

- 39 new Council Homes provided
- 95% of tenants satisfied with the service provided by the Council
- Local Plan agreed and approved on time
- 467 new homes constructed
- 99 new affordable homes delivered
- 21 private sector empty properties brought back into use

### **Ambitions:**

**To deliver the Local Plan**

**Increase the supply of housing in NK**

**Maintain and improve housing in NK**

**Provide high quality housing services across NK**





## Priorities

# Our Homes

### Key Achievements

The Council delivered 39 additional new council dwellings at Holland Court, Princess Square, Charlotte Street and Welchman Way and a number of other new build developments are currently under construction.

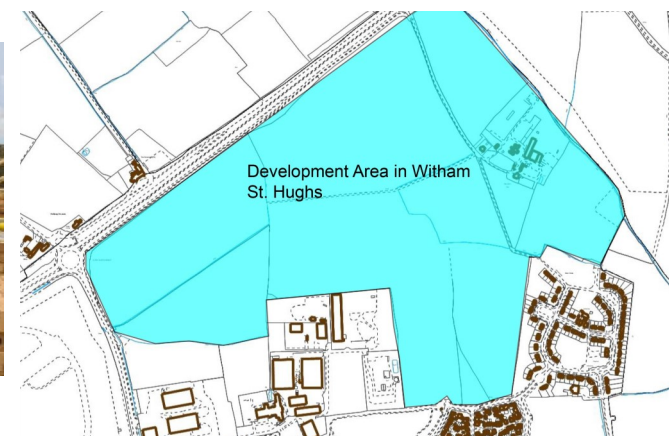
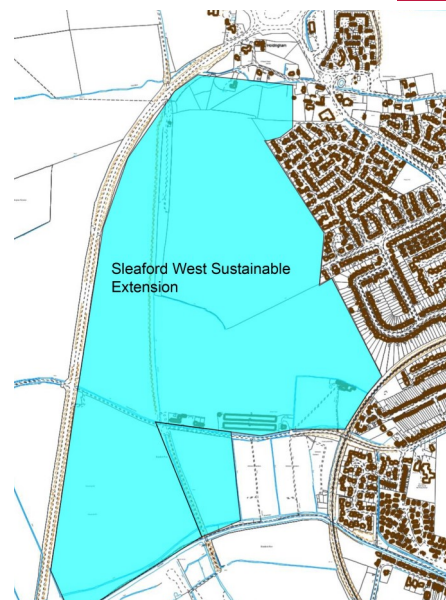
The Council has continued investment in the current housing stock to maintain them at the Council's "NK Fabric First Plus" standard.

The major refurbishment and new build programme at Newfield Road, Sleaford is progressing and is scheduled for completion in November 2018.

Planning is currently being undertaken to create a specialised unit for single people to improve the temporary accommodation service and to vastly reduce the overall cost of temporary accommodation.

Planning permission has been granted for the creation of 1,250 new homes in Witham St. Hughs and a further 1,400 houses are to be built on the outskirts of Sleaford.

The Building Control Department has implemented a series of training measures in order to improve their customer awareness and business capacity in order to retain their position in an ever more competitive market.



## Priorities

# Our Homes

### Customer Comments ...

#### Disabled Facilities Grant applicants said:

*"I was very happy with the respect from all workers, the tidiness of the work and the quality."*

*"I must thank the builder for a fabulous job, better than I expected and I must thank the Council for the D.F.G which enabled the work to be done. I am more than satisfied with the people and the project from start to finish. Many thanks again."*

#### Recipients of the Disabled Adaptations to Council Properties said:

*"I am very grateful to the council as the work carried out has made life easier for myself as full time carer for my wife and her disablement."*

*"We appreciate the work you had done in the bathroom for my husband, it has made it much better for him, with many thanks."*

#### New Build Properties:

Tenants have described these new properties as:

*"Spacious", "Quiet", "Warm" and "Good Quality"*

### Service Statistics

#### Property Services

Of the 3,875 Council properties 3,686 (95%) meet the NK Homes Standard.

All 2,639 Council properties that require a gas safety certificate have a valid certificate for this year.

66 referrals for Disabled Facilities Grant completed, with an 100% satisfaction rate of those surveyed.

99% of emergency repairs completed on time.

99% of tenants were satisfied with their repairs.

#### Housing services

On average it takes 28 working days to process a homeless application

#### Wellbeing Service

1047 referrals were made to the Wellbeing service, 96% of which were assessed within 5 working days and 100% of which met the highlighted outcomes by the end of Wellbeing intervention.

## Priorities

# Our Communities

### Key Achievements

The Waste and Street Scene Team have seen serious efforts to future proof their service delivery with the new talent management and following the Living Wage criteria.

The Partnerships Team led on organisation of both the Armed Forces Events and the Snowdrop Charity Walk.

NewsNK has received a re-design in order to better communicate with the residents of NK. The Council's online news presence is being further developed through the extension of video and social media content.

2016/17 Also saw another successful year for the Community Champion awards which further recognised the efforts and activities of individuals around the district.

The Environmental Health Team have seen a complete review of various different policies including taxis, animal licences and caravans.

Enforcement of Fly Tipping has seen 17 cases taken to court which resulted in 31 charges being heard.

Collection of almost £1million of section 106 financial contributions, that will be spent on key infrastructure in NK to support new development, including affordable housing.

Introduction of a proactive development monitoring system – the team has monitored the implementation of 57 new developments, offering advice and guidance in order to prevent breaches of planning control occurring.

The Enforcement team also assisted with the delivery of the extension to Hykeham Station's car park, through use of its enforcement powers.

### Ambitions:

**Attractive, clean, and sustainable NK**

**Safe and inclusive NK**

**Healthy, fit and vibrant NK**

**Supportive NK**

**Community NK**

### Performance Measures:

- 23,930 visitors to outdoor and countryside facilities/events
- 712,991 visitors to indoor sport and leisure facilities
- 384,767 visitors to Cultural venues and ArtsNK Programs
- 38% adult participation in sport
- 688 homelessness cases prevented through advice and prevention tools
- 70% of residents agree that the streets are clean within the district



## Priorities

# Our Communities

### Customer Comments ...

#### Waste Collection

*"Amazing service thank you and please thank all concerned." - Ted Wallis, on the replacement of his Garden Bin.*

*"I just wanted to let you know how impressed I was with two of your gentlemen that came to help remove some items for a tenant yesterday." - Deb Priestley, on the Refuse Collector's sensitivity and understanding when assisting a tenant in need.*

*"I would like to praise those at NKDC who handle the collection of Bulk Items from homes in the area ... I have always found your council to be efficient and professional whenever I have had cause to contact them." - A.R. Howard, on efficiency and professionalism of the bulk collections service.*

#### Public and Open Spaces

*"Generally very well maintained and have a lot of planned events which are enjoyable."*

*"I think they are good. Clean, well maintained"*

*"Important areas that need to be preserved & maintained."*

### Service Statistics

#### Waste Collection

3,410,840 wheeled bins were collected in 2016/17

4,208 collections of bulky items were completed, with 95% being completed with 5 working days

The Waste Fleet travelled 617,222Km (383,524 miles) and used 293,957 litres (64,661 gallons) of fuel in the process.

Each week we collect from 928 litter bins including litter and dog waste bins.

#### Street Scene

814Km (506 miles) of streets were swept throughout the year

And as a result 76% of residents felt that the footpaths were clean, 73% that the kerbs were clean and 60% that the verges were clean.



## Priorities

# Our Council

### Key Achievements:

The Council have delivered 6 sets of elections in this financial year including the Police and Crime Commissioner, the EU Referendum, the Parliamentary By Election, District Council By Elections, Parish By Elections and the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum.

This year's consultation activities have been more successful than ever with the household survey being completed by more 3,300 people.

The Council has successfully set a balanced budget once again.

The Multimedia team have extended the utility of the Corporate Website by including the functions of booking 'Civic Collections' and a 'Find my Polling Station' page, in an effort to better serve residents and make services more accessible.

The Multimedia Team have worked with the Building Control team to redesign their webpages to further advertise their business and assist possible clients.

The Council has also seen an over haul of the IT security systems including a new Anti-Virus and Web Filtering software to ensure the resilience of our IT systems.



### Ambitions:

**Customer focused NK**

**High quality, value for money NK**

**Open and accountable**

### Performance Measures:

- 89% of customers found it easy to access the services they require
- 94% of customers satisfied with the way their request was handled
- 85% of residents felt that the Council provides good quality services
- 83% residents believe that the Council offers value for money
- 81% of people are satisfied with the way that the Council runs things
- 92% of complaints responded to within 15 working days.

## Priorities

# Our Council

### Customer Comments ...

#### Customer Service

*"A good service. Efficient. Thank you."*

*"... customer service was exemplary."*

*"Any time I have contacted you be it at our local office or by telephone, the service and staff have been excellent. Keep doing the same, thank you."*

#### Community IT Groups

*"Now on my second session with the IT group I feel more confident in using my laptop & tablet that I now have a Smart phone as well. I hope the sessions will continue."*

*-Mr B. J. Phillips*

*"Both my husband and I have and area attending classes in Heckington. For me especially it has been invaluable'. Not only have I now learned how to use my tablet but we have both made firm friends - long may it last."*

*-Ann & Tom Dunn*

*"As a learner I can't say how much I appreciate this unique and invaluable service provided by the volunteers. It is reassuring to know that problems - which to me are insurmountable-will be quietly and efficiently explained. This helps me to move on. Long may the service remain."*

*-Ann Foster*

### Service Statistics

#### Customer Services:

24,468 switchboard calls answered and 69,834 calls answered in the call centre.

486,579 sessions on the website by 316,106 resulting in 1,952,895 page views and 18,330 online forms submitted.

23,733 visitors to the Sleaford Office and 3,288 to the North Hykeham Office

#### Invoices:

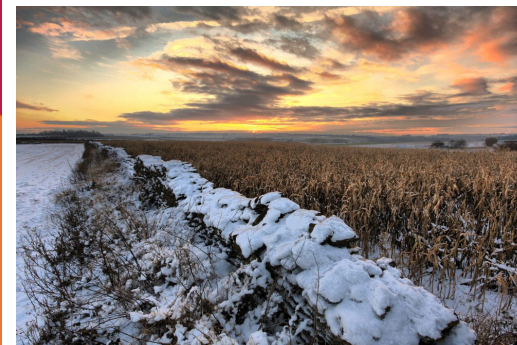
34,883 total invoices in 2016/17 of which 92.56% being paid within 10 days of receipt and 99.33% being paid within 30 days.





## Financial Review:

- General Fund
- Housing Revenue Account
- Capital Expenditure
- Future Financial Plans



# Financial Review: General Fund

## Financial Environment

The financial year began with the setting of the budget on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016, when a challenging balanced budget was set. The following sections describe the actual performance against this budget.

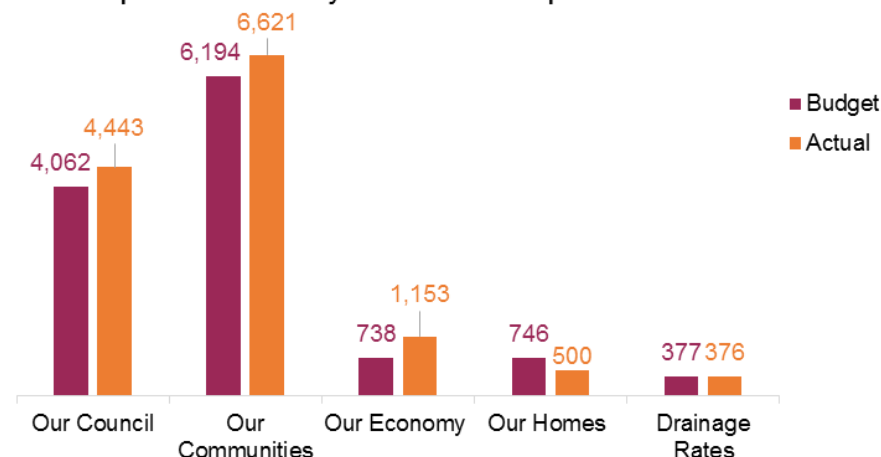
## General Fund

The General Fund covers all net spending by the Council on services other than those accounted for in the Housing Revenue Account. General Fund services are funded via contributions from Business Rates and Council Tax, Fees and Charges as well as Government Grants.

### Key budgetary areas for the near future:

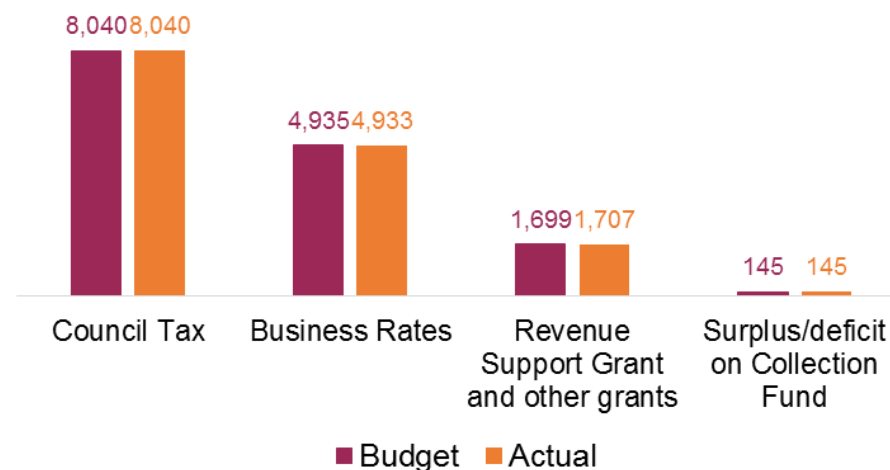
- Central Government had offered a four year financial settlement, but it was important to note this was subject to conditions which might change within that time.
- It was also noted that Revenue Support Grant had a reduction of 51% from 2016/17 to 2017/18.
- It had been indicated that, by 2019/20, Revenue Support Grant would be eliminated.
- The trigger for Council Tax increases that can be applied by local authorities where a referendum of local taxpayers would be necessary remained at the higher of 2% or £5.
- The amount received from Retained Business Rates could be volatile due to reliance on growth of businesses and appeals.
- It was noted that being part of the business rates pool offered the opportunity to retain a larger proportion of the income generated through business rates.
- It was noted that the Council would receive £2.3 million in the form of New Homes Bonus in 2017/18.

### Corporate Priority - Service Expenditure £'000



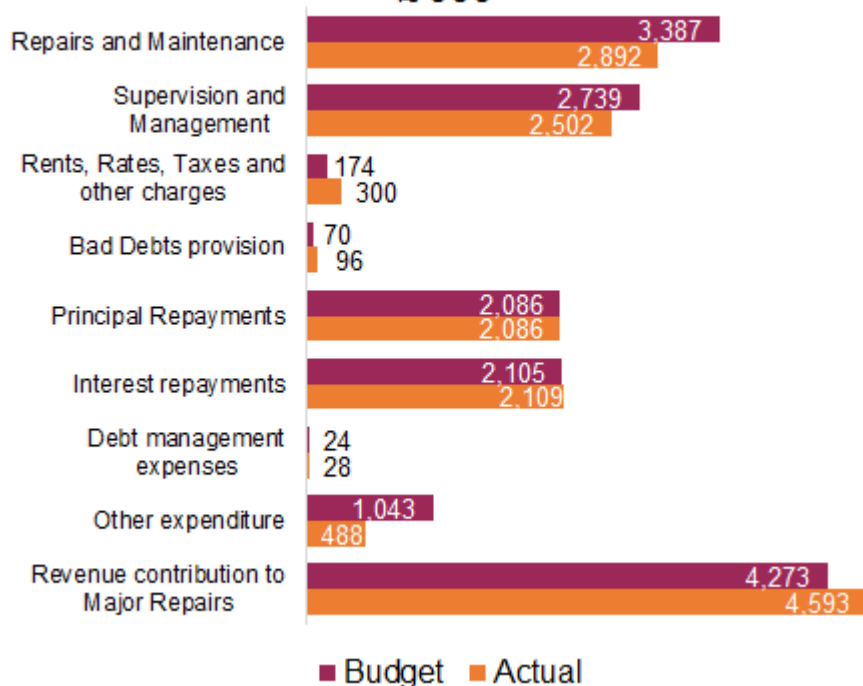
(For the purpose of the above graph the New Homes Bonus has been removed from the Our Homes calculation)

### Funding £'000



## Financial Review: Housing Revenue Account

### Housing Revenue Account - Expenditure £'000



### Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has to be kept as a separate account and contains all the expenditure and income relating to the Council's function of managing and maintaining Council owned dwellings as a landlord.

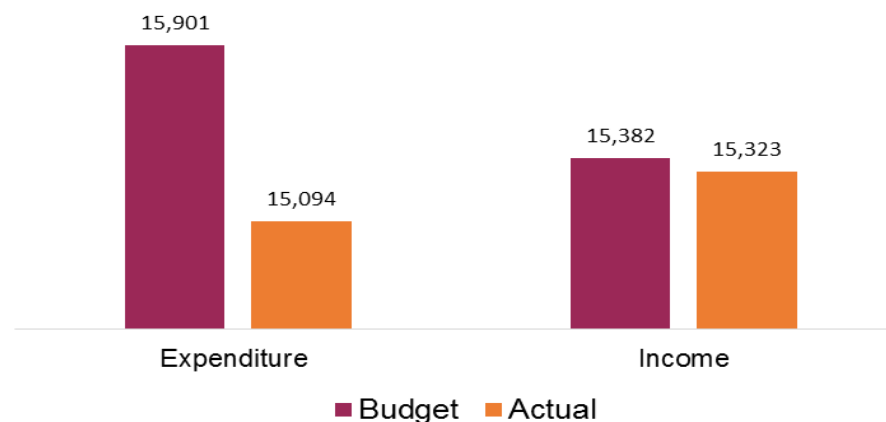
For 2016/17, the approved net expenditure budget for the year showed a surplus of £31,400. The actual net expenditure for the year reflected a surplus of £193,200. The graph to the left provides a summary of the final outturn position for the HRA against the net budget.

Whilst the overall income was short by £59,000 the overall expenditure came in £807,000 under budget meaning that, after a £36,000 contribution to the reserves and the removal of the appropriation of £550,000, the budget closed with a surplus of **£193,000**.

### Income £'000

Budgeted Rental Income:	£15,338	
Actual Rental Income:	£15,223	-£115
Budgeted Other Income:	£44	
Actual Other Income:	£100	+£56
Overall Budgeted Income:	£15,382	
Overall Actual Income:	£15,323	-£59

### Overall HRA Income vs. Expenditure, £'000





## Financial Review: Capital Expenditure

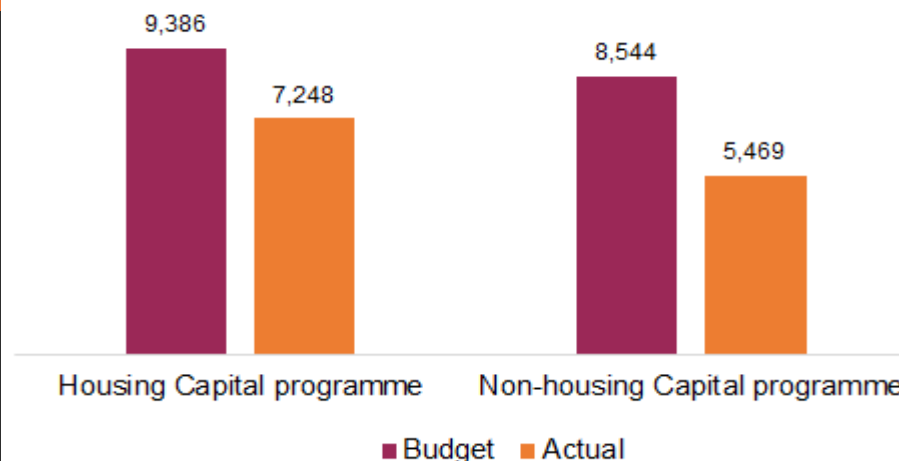
### Capital Expenditure

The Council's capital expenditure on the provision of new or enhanced assets is largely met from reserve contributions, borrowing, government grants, capital receipts and contributions from third parties.

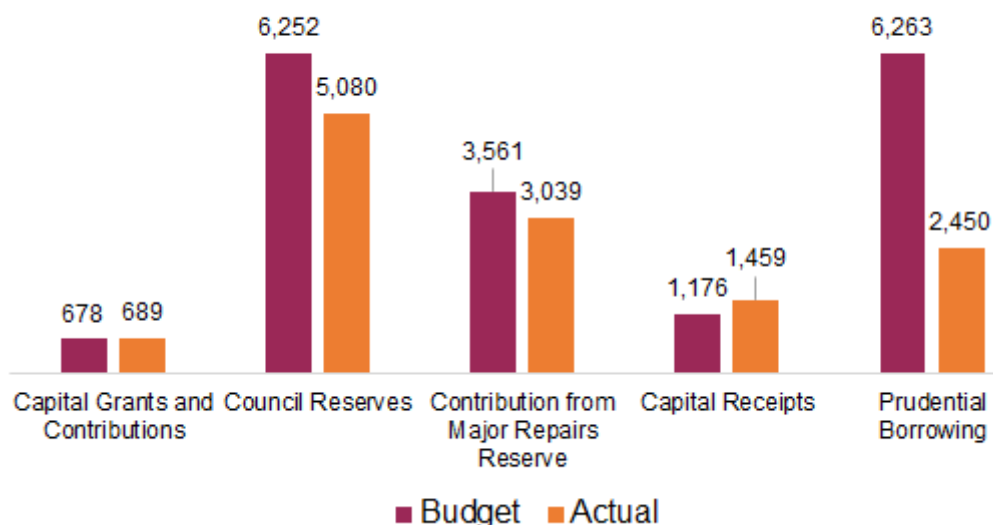
Capital expenditure in the year amounted to £12.717 million compared to the approved capital programme budget of £17.930 million, representing a net underspend of £5.213 million.

The underspend is a result of effective budget management and some scheme phases now due in the 2017/18 financial year.

### Capital Expenditure, £'000



### Capital Programme: Financed by, £'000



The Council's capital programme has supported Broadband Infrastructure rollout in the District, continued to invest in the Council's refuse vehicle fleet, delivered multiple major refurbishments at Whisby Natural World, purchased land to enable the Refuse Depot relocation and Industrial Workshop scheme to progress, and invested in Lafford Homes Limited Housing Company.

The Council delivered 39 additional new council dwellings at Holland Court, Princess Square, Charlotte Street and Welchman Way and a number of other new build developments are currently under construction. Three properties were also acquired from the open market. The Council has continued investment in the current housing stock to maintain them at the Council's "NK Fabric First Plus" standard. The major refurbishment and new build programme at Newfield Road, Sleaford is progressing and is scheduled for completion in November 2018.

# Financial Review: Future Financial Plans

## Corporate Plan and Vision:

The NK Plan responds to the main challenges facing the district, ensuring that the Council, either directly or in partnership with others, uses its resources and influence to deliver priorities and services needed by communities across North Kesteven.

## Impact of Further Government Funding Reductions

The Council continues to face an unprecedented and extremely challenging short to medium term financial environment as it responds to the Government's spending review and reductions in Revenue Support Grant that it pays to the Council. Indications are that income levels are returning to pre-recession levels and becoming more sustainable. Changes in the way Business Rates are now retained by the council, combined with growth in the district's economy supporting the future General Fund position.

## Housing Revenue Account Spending Plans

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the July 2015 Budget Statement that social rent levels with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 would be subject to an imposed 1% per annum reduction for four years, covering the financial years 2016/17 to 2019/20. The compound effect of this imposed income reduction meant that NKDC had to change the way it planned for component replacements and its new build unit delivery target. NKDC ensured through the budget setting process that it could still deliver a viable 30 year business plan, maintaining high quality stock and deliver new build schemes from the increased limited resources. In the absence of Central Government guidance, it is anticipated that rent setting will revert back to 'formula rent' (CPI plus 1%) for the financial year 2020/21.

## Capital Spending plans

### *Housing Capital Programme*

With the introduction of HRA Self Financing, the Council is able to invest the money that previously would have been paid into the Housing Subsidy system (a net £4 million) once it has repaid the loan principal and interest associated with the buyout of Housing Subsidy. This has meant that the Council is projecting significant surpluses in the HRA to put towards capital improvement works and the provision of new housing. The Council's extremely successful New Build programme has continued during 2016/17 with a further £31.102 million approved planned investment from 2017/18 to 2026/27 to increase the Council's housing stock. The Council's existing stock continued to be enhanced to 'Fabric First' homes standard during 2016/17 with a further £32.372 million approved planned investment from 2017/18 to 2026/27 in the Council's existing housing stock.

### *Non-housing Capital Programme*

Resources available for investment in non-housing capital assets and schemes have been increasingly scarce in recent years and the Council continues to work hard with stakeholders and partners in order to provide investment in non-housing assets.

NKDC has created a new Housing Company named 'Lafford Homes Limited', to deliver market housing for rental within the District. This limited company is wholly owned by NKDC. It is anticipated that this will have a positive impact on the District housing requirement shortfall. All profits being paid to the Council as sole shareholder to partially negate the impact of reduced central Government grants receivable in the future.

The Non-Housing Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2019/20 includes an investment of £0.750 million in a Regeneration Fund, Refuse Depot Relocation and Industrial Workshops budget of £3.734 million, £1.073 million for Refuse Vehicle Fleet Replacement, £6.866 million budget to deliver Housing Developments and £6.970 million identified for Loans and Financial Assistance to Lafford Homes Limited.



## Corporate Functions:

- Governance
- Our People
- Access to information
- Complaints
- Consultation





# Governance

## Purpose of the Statement



## Governance, a new and improved approach

The Council's Governance Charter comprises the system and processes, culture and values by which the Council is directed and controlled. The Charter places sustainable economic, societal and environmental outcomes as a key focus for the Council's governance framework and has been developed to enable the Council to shape its own

approach to effective governance which takes into account the Council's Vision, Corporate Objectives and Values.

A significant investigation was carried out to review and revise any policies, processes and procedures that did not meet the criteria for the 'ideal state' as set forth in the new charter. Whilst this substantial piece of work highlighted various areas of improvement that have since been addressed we continue to work diligently to further enhance our governance arrangements.

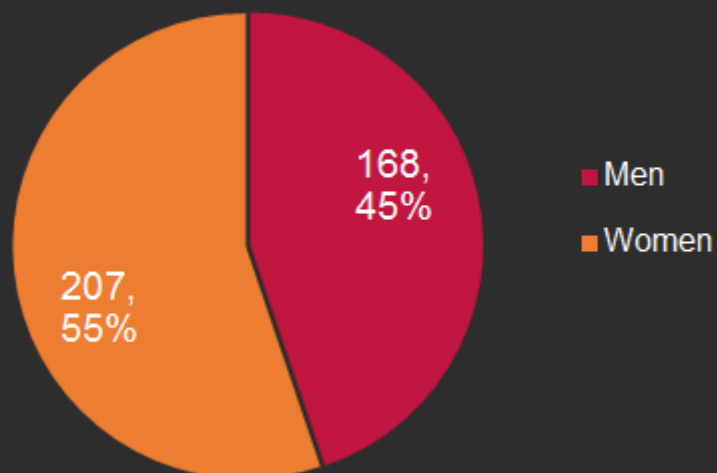
These improvements, as set out in the 2015/16 Annual Governance Statement, will be monitored and measured as part of the 2016/17 Governance Statement to ensure continued development.

Annual  
Governance  
Statement  
**2015/16**

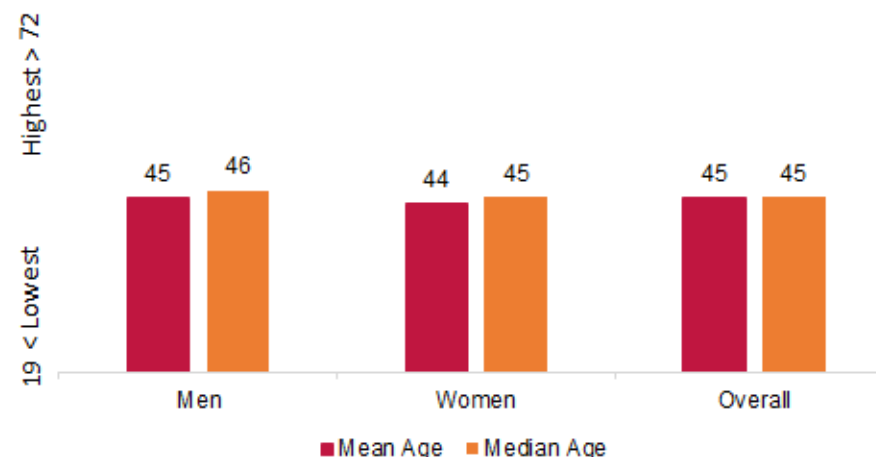


## HR- Our People

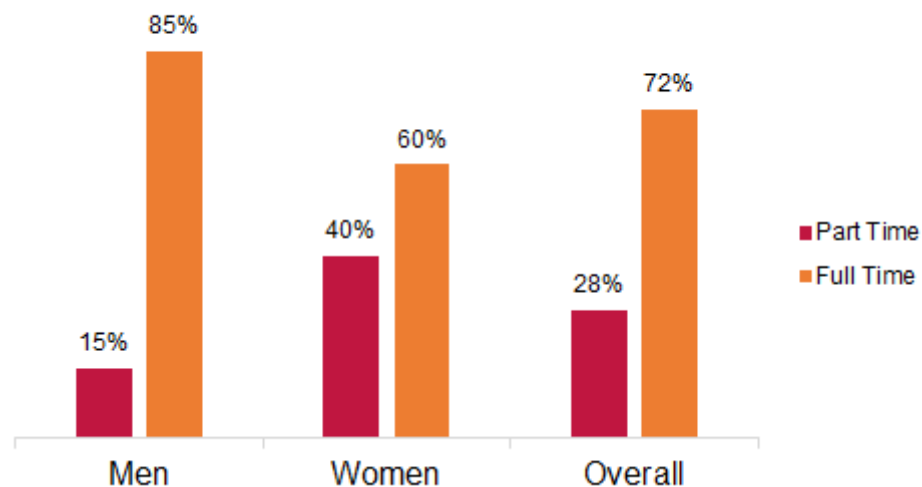
Gender Mix of Council Employees



Median/Mean Age of Employees



Contract Type: Part/Full Time



### Length of Service

The average length of continuous service for all council employees is 10 years, in men it is also 10 years but for women the average length is 11 years.

4 Employees have achieved over 40 years continuous service

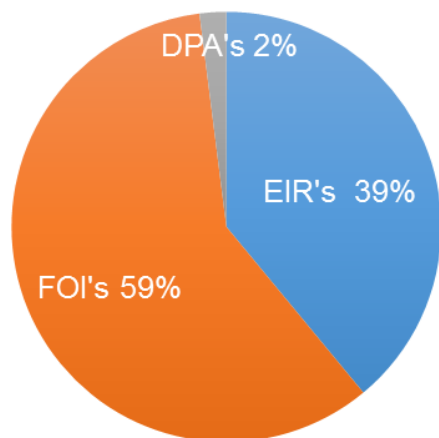
14 Employees have achieved between 30 and 40 years continuous service

41 Employees have achieved between 20 and 30 years continuous service

108 Employees have achieved between 10 and 20 years continuous service

# Access to Information

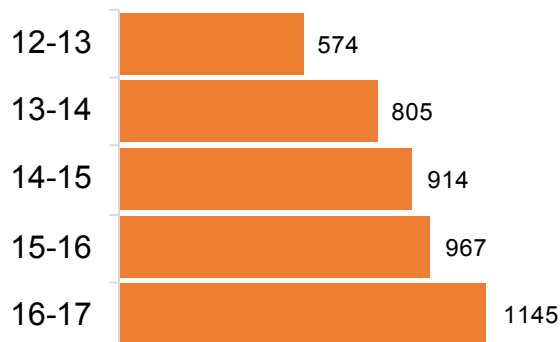
## Information Requests 16/17



## Since 2010 there have been:

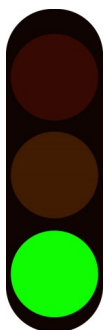
**5,317** overall requests  
**3,858** FOI Requests  
**1,366** EIR Requests  
**93** DPA Requests

## Requests since 2012/13



## How we performed this year:

Of the 1145 individual requests answered only 18 were answered outside of the statutory time frame. Which is less than 2% of the overall requests.



## Access to Information:

Access to information consists of three main pillars, Freedom of Information requests, Environmental Information Regulations requests and Data Protection Act requests. These regulations cover almost all areas of the authority giving the public access information about the operations and activities of the Council. This in turn creates an atmosphere of openness and transparency which will lead to an increase in public confidence in the authority.

## Key Statistics for 2016/17:

- **1145** overall requests
- **637** FOI Requests
- **445** EIR Requests
- **27** DPA Requests
- **98.5%** answered on time
- **98.3%** of requests were answered without any form exemption applied

# Complaints

## Complaint Management:

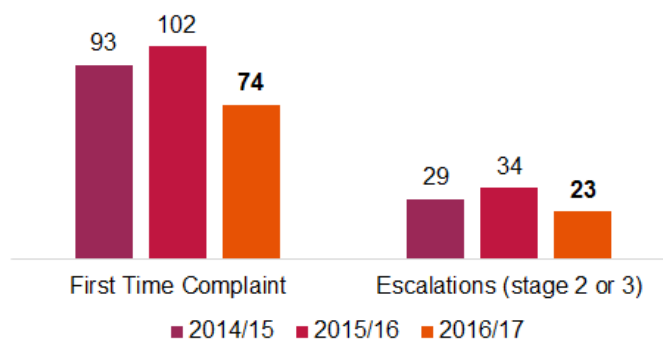
The council takes complaints very seriously and deals with them quickly and efficiently. We are committed to provide excellent customer service, but realise that sometimes things can and do go wrong.

We want to know if our residents are unhappy or dissatisfied with our services so that, wherever possible, we can try to put things right. We value resident's roles in helping us to improve our services.

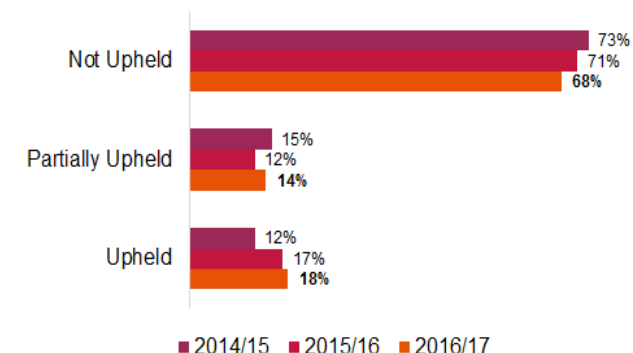
## Key Statistics for 2016/17:

- 97 complaints in total, 74 first time complaints and 23 escalations
- 32% of all complaints made against were upheld to some extent
- 90% of complaints were answered within the 15 day time frame

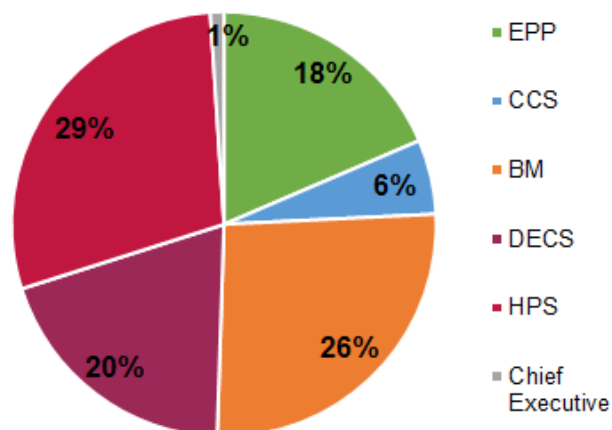
Overall Complaints Recieved



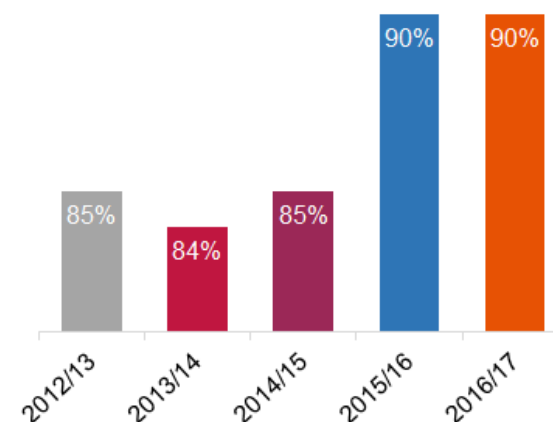
Complaints Outcome



Complaints by Division 2016/17



Complaints Responded to on Time



# Consultation

## Surveys

Surveys are one of the Council's preferred methods for engaging with the public. They offer a straight forward way of contacting a targeted audience on a variety of different topics. They are both affordable and effective for data collection with a rapid turn around.

This financial year we have formally consulted with circa. **11,700** residents on topics including tenancy, improvement works, Public Space Protection Orders, Customer Services and the Household Survey.

We currently offer two different methods for completing our surveys, in order to be as inclusive as possible, a paper and an online version. This helps us to get views from a wide demographic mix. We also trialled some face-to-face consultation which whilst more time consuming can produce a more focused response base.

## Paper responses vs Online responses

4,493 Paper responses

7,215 Online responses

**Generic Paper Survey**

To improve the way we provide our service to you, our customers, the Customer Services Team at North Kesteven District Council are conducting a survey on customer satisfaction. We would be grateful if you would spend a few minutes answering the questions below. All the responses that you give will be strictly confidential and will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. If you have any questions please contact the Customer Services Supervisor on 01529 414155.

This document can be made available in large print, Braille, audio tape, electronic formats such as CD, or in a different language. For a copy please Contact Corporate and Customer Services at the Council using the following options:

Phone: 01529 414155 (main switchboard)  
Minicom: 01529 308088  
Web: [www.n-kesteven.gov.uk](http://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk) Email: [equality@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:equality@n-kesteven.gov.uk)  
Corporate and Customer Services  
North Kesteven District Council, Kesteven Street  
Sheffield, Lincolnshire NG24 7EP.

**Generic Online Survey**

To improve the way we provide our service to you, our customers, the Customer Services Team at North Kesteven District Council are conducting a survey on customer satisfaction. We would be grateful if you would spend a few minutes answering the questions below. All the responses that you give will be strictly confidential and will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. If you have any questions please contact the Customer Services Supervisor on 01529 414155.

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Corporate and Customer Services  
North Kesteven District Council, Kesteven Street  
Sheffield, Lincolnshire NG24 7EP.

Restart Next

## Largest Response Rates from Surveys in 2016/17

Survey	Questions	Responses Paper	Responses Online	Total
Customer Service Satisfaction	17	1,106	2,923	4,029
Household Survey	39	249	3,122	3,371
Lincs Homefinder Annual Customer Satisfaction	15	1,151	—	1,151
STAR Survey	11	1,013	—	1,013
Improvement Works Survey	7	585	—	585

## The Headlines from our Surveys

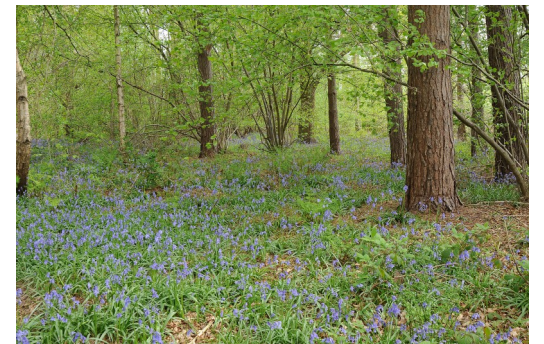
- **83% of consultees feel the Council performs well with the money it has available**
- **85% of consultees positively rated the quality of the Council's services**
- **81% of consultees were either satisfied or very satisfied with the way that the council runs things**
- **80% were satisfied with the quality and provision of open spaces within the district**
- **70% felt that the district's streets, paths and verges are clean**





## Decision Making:

- Political Structure
- Executive Board
- Overview and Scrutiny Panels:
  - ◇ Performance and Resources
  - ◇ Environment
  - ◇ Community and Economy



# Political Groupings and Decision Making

## Political Structure

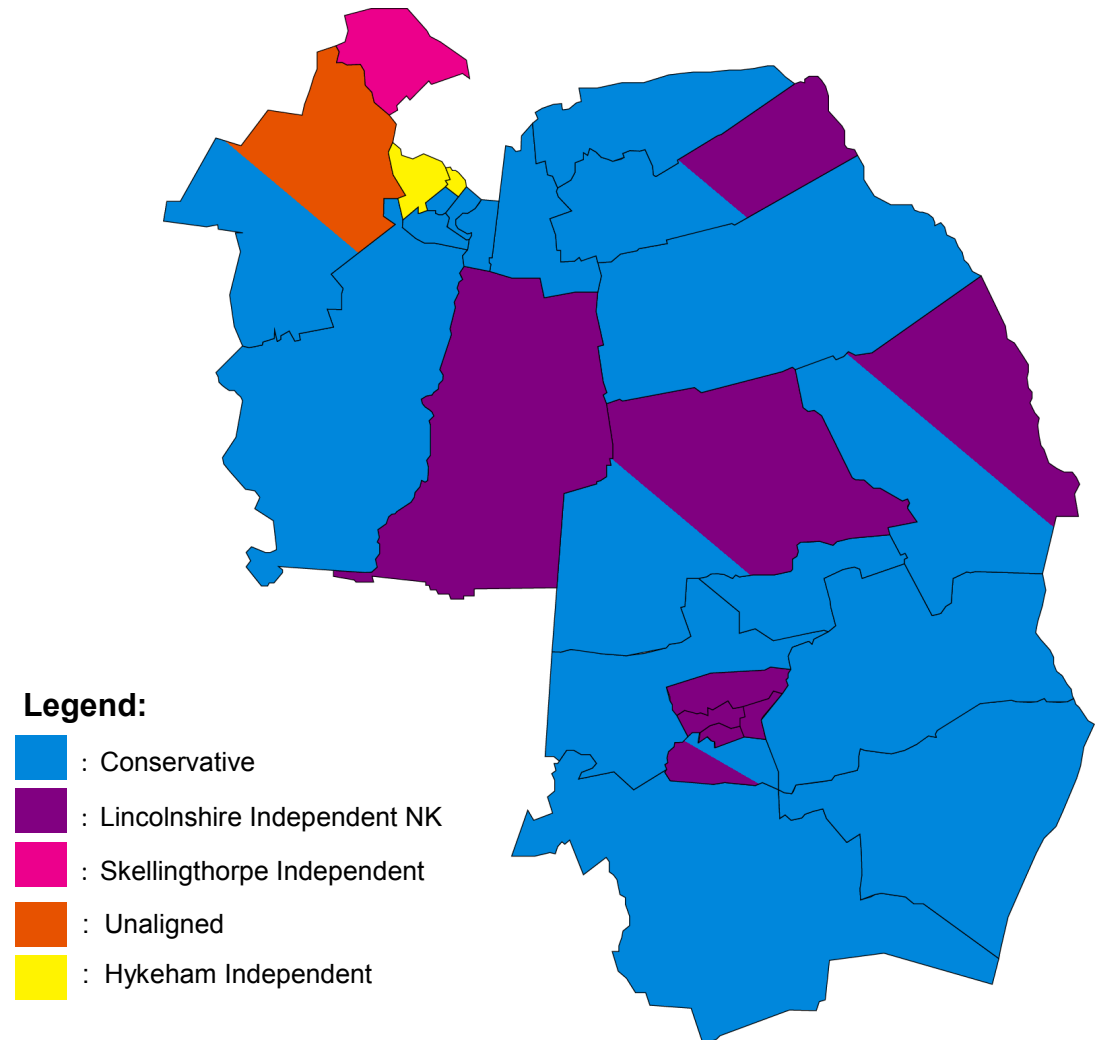
The Council has total of 43 councillors spread over 26 wards. The members roles including setting strategy, allocating resources, monitoring performance, representing people within their ward and community leadership and engagement.

There are:

- 28 Conservative Councillors
- 10 Lincolnshire Independent NK Councillors
- 2 Hykeham Independent Councillors
- 2 Skellingthorpe Independent Councillors
- 1 Unaligned Councillor

(all information correct as of June 2017)

## Map: District Ward Composition



# Executive Board

## Executive Board Composition:

- Cllr Richard Wright (Leader)
- Cllr Sue Howe (Deputy Leader)
- Cllr Lindsey Cawrey
- Cllr Ray Cucksey
- Cllr Peter Burley
- Cllr John Money



## The Executive Board:-

- Provides leadership at a top level.
- Recommends the budget and key policy proposals to Full Council for agreement;
- Decides some policies and is responsible for implementation of major plans and strategies;
- Prepares and publishes a rolling Forward Plan every month, covering the four months from the date of publication. This Plan contains matters that the Executive Board thinks will be the subject of a key decision during the period of the Plan. A key decision is one likely to involve expenditure or savings of more than £50,000 of revenue expenditure or £100,000 of capital expenditure, or to have a significant effect on people living or working in two or more wards; and
- Takes most of the key decisions within the budget and policy framework agreed by Full Council.

## A flavour of the decisions made:

- Approval has been given for a short term contract with Community Lincs to provide funding for neighbourhood planning.
- Extended the post of the 'Affordable Warmth Officer' from a temporary position to a permanent one. The main responsibility of the this post is to reduce the utility costs for council tenants in order to improve their quality of life and financial position. Its inclusion as a permanent position shows the commitment of NK toward assistance of its residents.
- Approved the new Improvement and Transformation approach. This strategy addresses all aspects of the council with the intention of finding areas where improvement can be made or money can be saved. Executive Board approval reconfirmed their commitment toward ongoing improvement of council functions.
- The Board also regularly review alcohol, taxi and general licencing.

# Performance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel

## Performance and Resource OSP

### Composition 2016/17:

Cllr Mrs Sue Howe (Chairman)

Cllr Mrs Julia Harrison (Vice-Chairman)



## Service Areas

- Democratic Services & Member Development
- Procurement
- Revenues and Benefits Client
- Human Resources & Corporate Training
- Financial Services
- Payroll & Exchequer
- Insurance
- Efficiency and Value for Money
- Audit, Risk and Governance

## Performance & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel

**At the February 2017 meeting, members considered Finance Monitoring: 3rd Quarter and Year End 2016/17 and June 2016: Revenues & Benefits Shared Service progress with Universal Credit.**

The Financial information detailed the budget monitoring information for each service within the Council, a summary of the income and expenditure, and the projected outturn variations.

Members were given the opportunity to raise questions and the following issues were responded to by the Officers present:-

Members expressed concern over staffing resources in planning. The Head of Development, Economic and Cultural Services advised that planning fees income had to be ring-fenced. He further commented that staffing resource in planning had been an issue this year due to the exceptionally challenging year with large scale applications and the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

## Progress with implementation of Universal Credit

The service had been proactive in the implementation of the welfare reform agenda, key achievements during 2016 were detailed in the report and included:-

*A Universal Support Delivered Locally* trial; Preparation for initial implementation of Universal Credit; *Requirements of the Universal Credit Delivery Partnership Agreement* with Department of Work and Pensions.

The Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits drew attention to the key challenges for local authorities of the introduction of Universal Credit. These were set out in detail in the report covering issues of financial inclusion, digital inclusion, employment, partnership working and staffing. The report provided details of how these challenges would be addressed during 2016/17.

The Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits responded to a number of questions raised by Members of the Panel, including details of the training being provided to the staff on the introduction of Universal Credit.



# Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel

## Environment OSP 2016/17:

Cllr Chris Goldson (Chairman)

Cllr Kate Cook (Vice-Chairman)



## Service Areas

- Building Control
- Environmental Services and Public Protection
- Street Scene
- Open Spaces & Trees
- Waste Management
- Licensing
- Enforcement
- SustainNK
- Emergency Planning
- Health and Safety
- Joint Planning Unit

## The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel

**The Head of Environmental Service at Lincolnshire County Council, Sean Kent, attended a special meeting on 8th March 2017, to talk about the Energy from Waste Plant.**

The presentation covered a basic historical overview of the Energy from Waste Plant (EfWP), from its conception to full operating status. The Panel were pleased to hear that the EfWP had succeeded in reaching the main aim of significantly cutting landfill waste in Lincolnshire, and saving the Council significant money. Sean Kent made several comments about the development of a new 'Waste Strategy' that would possibly lead to a plan for an Anaerobic Digester for the County's food waste, the provision of a second line at the EfWP, and potentially a joined-up whole-County plan for the collection and disposal of waste and consistency in recycling.

**Panel members asked lots of questions, amongst them the following:-**

Why was the plant near its full capacity after only 3 years of running out of a 25 year lifespan? Sean Kent responded that the EfWP had been a major success and had been taking a great deal more waste than initially planned. The original point of the planned plant, was for LCC to wipe-out its Landfill Tax obligation. The new Waste Strategy would develop ways to stop contaminated and less desirable waste being burnt. For example, food waste was currently accepted, but a County wide Anaerobic Digester may be developed in the future to take the waste and produce electricity. There was also the possibility that a joined-up County wide recycling plan could send most of the paper and plastics currently incinerated to be recycled for profit instead.

Sean Kent assured members that the new Waste Strategy took account of the predicted population growth in North Kesteven and Lincoln. This may include building a second line, an Anaerobic Digester or a Countywide recycling scheme, which would cut the amount of waste currently being put in to the plant and allow for the increase in waste from a larger population.

# Communities and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

## Communities and Economy OSP Composition 2016/17:

Cllr Peter Burley (Chairman)

Cllr Miss Sarah Pearse (Vice Chairman)



## Service Areas

- Economic Development,
- Development Control,
- Cultural Services – Leisure Client, Sports, Arts, Tourism & Heritage
- Customer Engagement
- Corporate Information
- Communications & Graphics
- Business Transformation and ICT
- Partnerships NK & Community Initiatives
- Strategic Housing,
- Property Services
- ASB Investigations

## Communities & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Panel

**In October 2016**, members held a Work Programming Workshop just prior to the meeting, where they discussed various topics, and considered whether they were short, medium or long term priorities for Scrutiny to investigate. These included:- *Community Initiatives, The Kesteven Community Safety Partnership\*, Corporate & Customer Services, Property Services, and the new housing company.*

Members felt that **Short Term (3-6months):- were** Environmental Health & Licensing, Central Lincs Local Plan, Waste & Street Scene and Building Control. all other topics were considered medium, **(6-12months)** and long term priorities **(12-36months)**.

## Parish ICT Consultation Response

The Administration Manager (Development Control) presented results of the consultation with parish councils in relation to the delivery of planning applications by electronic means. Two options were predominantly favoured by parish councils.

**Option 1** –Electronic Consultation only – this would see **no** paper sent to the Parish Council, a notification email would be sent to the Parish Clerk email address and from there could be distributed to Parish Councillors etc. The application would be viewable on planning online.

**Option 2** – ‘Request a Plan’ – this would be the same as option 1, but if the Parish found they really did need to view a paper plan or document for a particular planning application, then it could be requested that item be sent to them.

Members considered the information provided and the following observations were made during the debate:-

- It was noted it was not necessary to have plans, unless it was a major application where it might be useful to have sight of a plan.
- Most parishes have some form of electronic device to access planning online.
- Some parishes do not have up to date electronic devices and may need assistance in purchasing the correct equipment.
- It was noted that parish councils could purchase a projector to display the plans for all to view at parish meetings.

Following the debate, Members voting on the two options.

**Vote: 6 Members voted in favour of Option 1. 4 Members voted in favour of Option 2.**