

North Kesteven District Council's **Annual Report** 2020-21



North Kesteven District
Council supporting a District
of **Flourishing Communities**

Foreword

It is a pleasure to provide a foreword to the Annual Report looking back over 2020-21, a year characterised by the excellent, efficient and effective way in which Members and Officers of the Council supported, safeguarded and served our communities in unprecedented ways to sustain them through the Coronavirus pandemic. I've said it throughout the period in many different ways, and again I say 'thank you.'

'Thank you' to everyone within North Kesteven District Council for responding so positively; readjusting to working from home, meeting remotely, initiating new ways of doing what we do so well, engaging in partnerships that have made the world of difference in enhancing and saving lives, keeping our communities protected and well provided for and promoting safe practices, compliance and wellbeing support which have eased the lockdowns, the loneliness, isolation and privations of the pandemic.

All 380 members of staff and 43 Members responded and redoubled their efforts in support of our communities and businesses; most notably our waste and recycling crews who drew significant sincere and heartfelt praise from within the community for the manner in which they kept the show on the road.

'Thank you' again to everyone within the Council who, alongside the pandemic response, has ensured we remain on track, on target and far-sighted in our plans to progress an ambitious agenda of quality homes, jobs and community provision whilst also scoping a significant scale of Climate Actions to reach a net-zero carbon position by 2030.

'Thank you' to our partners across national and local government, in health and social care, the charitable and voluntary sectors, in education, employment and emergency response and those who share in our environmental concern.

And 'thank you' to all those in our communities who have taken neighbourly concern and consideration to a whole new level in providing for our District of Flourishing Communities.

Together we made the year 2020, and the beginnings of 2021, what it was and together we saw significant achievement and considerable success in responding to the changed circumstances of our residents, businesses and visitors.

While this Annual Report illustrates the excellent work carried out by this Council in support and furtherance of the Flourishing Communities which make up this great District, the NK Community Champion Awards programme which we were able to sustain in celebration of the extraordinary contributions made to our communities through voluntary endeavour, points to the spontaneous spirit which enriches them.


This document reflects 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 this Council carries out its duties and responsibilities. In the face of ongoing and emerging challenges, such achievements are under-pinned 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.

Within the year we mapped out a longer term ten-year strategy aligning our own aims and priorities to the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and moved our Climate Emergency declaration to a clearly-stated aim of zero-carbon for both the Council and the District by 2030.

Reflecting on the year to last April, I am struck by some phenomenal results across all areas of the authority. These are presented in the ensuing pages and I hope, like me, you are proud to have been a part of it – as resident, trader, partner, Member, Council colleague or contractor.

Together we kept building and improving homes, we delivered more business start-up units, we fulfilled a re-modelling of the Hub arts centre, we completed the restoration of Mrs Smith's Cottage as a heritage museum, we bared our arms for one of the country's highest levels of Covid-vaccine take-up and we ensured our communities were protected and well cared for.

It was quite a year and it brought out the best in all of us.



Council Leader Cllr Richard Wright



Corporate Priorities:

Our
Communities



Our
Environment



Our
Homes



Our
Economy



Our
Council



Vision

A District of Flourishing Communities

Purpose

A prosperous, sustainable district delivered through effective & efficient public services that meet local priorities, the challenges of climate change and the recovery from the economic and social impacts of Covid-19

Priorities

Our Communities:

To enhance the wellbeing, safety and health of all our communities; inspiring and supporting a sustainable and flourishing future

Our Environment:

To meet the challenge of climate change, ensuring integration and delivery of the Climate Action Plan across all NK Plan priorities

Our Homes:

To deliver sustainable housing growth, and pursue energy efficient development to meet the current and emerging needs of all our communities

Our Economy:

To enable all of our communities to flourish as part of the economic recovery from Covid-19 as well as opportunities from the Green economy

Our Council:

To aspire to be a high-performing, value for money Council that is agile and embraces the challenges and opportunities of the future

Ambitions

Promoting participation and engagement for all our residents and within all our communities in the recovery from the impacts of Covid-19 and staying safe whilst the virus remains

Champion greenhouse gas reduction, both within the Council and across the District

Facilitate the provision of community infrastructure to align with housing growth

Support business recovery in the district; the protection of existing jobs and the creation of new jobs

Deliver high quality, value-for-money services

Priorities - Our Communities

Ambitions

- ▶ **Promote healthy lifestyles by providing a range of leisure and cultural opportunities**
- ▶ **Provide effective and efficient support services for our residents**
- ▶ **Work with our communities towards a clean, safe and inclusive district**



Communities are the beating heart of the District, each with their own unique character and strengths. Harnessing the spirit and resilience of our communities is key to our aspirations to enhance the wellbeing, safety and health of all our communities; inspiring and supporting a sustainable, connected and flourishing future.

Performance Indicators:

- ▶ 251,330 visitors using Countryside NK's Stepping Out network activities and events
- ▶ 99,073 visitors to indoor leisure facilities and sports outreach services
- ▶ 10,964 visitors to NK Arts Partnership events, activities and education
- ▶ 92,385 visitors attended the Whisby Natural World Centre



Priority Delivery Actions

Residents' Wellbeing

Working in partnership through the countywide Wellbeing Lincs service, the Council has been helping to look after the most vulnerable people in our communities. It was recognised that there were two groups of people – the clinically vulnerable who needed to shield from Covid-19 due to health or other reasons, and vulnerable people who may struggle to get medicine, food and other things they needed whilst self-isolating. Through Wellbeing Lincs, work focused on linking people with the most appropriate support, with the majority of requests received focusing on help with receiving household essentials and regular access to prescriptions. A number of Council colleagues were redeployed to support this work and many more undertook follow-up calls to the 12,000 plus residents the Council wrote to because they were identified as being in greatest need of self-isolating.



National Centre for Craft and Design

There is a £1.2 million project to extend and enhance the National Centre for Craft and Design in Sleaford. As part of the Council's extensive programme of investment in its facilities, the Council approved funding for this arts venue to be reconfigured and extended to enhance the cafe area, develop more ground floor studio and exhibition space, and open it up to be more accessible. Further changes included developing conference capacity, a dance studio and large outdoor terrace. In addition, one floor of the building has been let to a leading global software company, retaining 60 jobs in the town. The refurbished and extended venue was completed and opened in mid-May 2021, and has been rebranded under the name of 'Hub Sleaford', fulfilling all of the set aims and to great acclaim of appreciative attendees.



Community Champions

The Council celebrated its tenth annual NK Community Champion awards, with many of the nominations received from people wanting to thank and honour the individual and collective responses to the pandemic. The ceremony was held online in a virtual celebration, and provided a sincere appreciation and celebration in relation to the contributions undertaken across the District by thousands of people.



Priorities - Our Communities

Poster Competition

Pupils of primary school age in the District were invited by the Council to design a poster about we can all help keep the air clean by doing things like

walking or cycling where possible. The winning posters selected by a panel will be put up outside primary schools in the District, along with other key locations, encouraging drivers to think carefully about their choices and to promote cleaner air.

Get Fit for Life

As part of our commitment to the wellbeing of communities, the Council runs a free healthy lifestyle programme to help people improve their health and boost their happiness. The 'Get Fit for Life NK' programme is entirely online and aims to help people improve all aspects of their wellbeing, including finding and maintaining a healthy weight. Thirty people completed the first pilot programme in 2019, saying they came away with better knowledge of labels and portion sizes, felt more confident to exercise and look after their mental as well as physical health.

New Grant to Help Those Facing Hardship

North Kesteven District Council and the City of Lincoln Council jointly launched a new grant scheme aimed at helping people facing financial difficulties due to new self-isolation laws. In recognition that some people may face financial difficulties due to having to self-isolate, and therefore being unable to work, the new self-isolation grant was set up awarding £500 to those who qualified.



Priorities - Our Environment

Ambitions

- ▶ Research and promote adaptations needed to increase resilience to climate change
- ▶ Promote and protect environmental health and deliver services to reduce the transmission of Covid-19
- ▶ Conserve and enhance NK's heritage assets
- ▶ Develop biodiversity across the district and support natural carbon capture



Climate and environmental enrichment are at the forefront of the Council's agenda, presenting both significant challenges and a wide spectrum of opportunity, cutting across all five of its priorities. Through bold ambition, determination, far-sighted commitment and inherent concern, the Council is well-placed to meet the challenge of climate change and achieve its net-zero carbon aspiration for 2030, ensuring integration and delivery of its Climate Action Plan across all endeavours.

Performance Indicators:

- ▶ 4.23% per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the District
- ▶ 97% of food businesses within the District broadly compliant with legislation
- ▶ 96% of new homes created reaching an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) level A-B



Priority Delivery Actions

Climate Action

Ahead of declaring a Climate Emergency in July 2019, significant work was already progressing on 15 identified strands across the Council's operations through which positive action could be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across areas such as energy, new housing, travel, trees, open spaces and procurement. Meanwhile, through the budget process, £100,000 was identified to support the development of a revised strategy for environmental action and advance early progress. It will assist in developing and implementing the necessary actions and influencing positive change including natural climate solutions; improving the way open spaces are managed and increasing the number of trees planted on Council land and across the district. As changes to our climate results in more frequent intense weather, the Council has been escalating its direct action to reduce the impact of its own activities, and those in the wider district.

Net Zero by 2030

New actions set out by the Council will cut emissions and improve natural carbon capture in North Kesteven - with an overarching aim, for not just our authority, but the District itself, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reach net zero CO2 emissions by 2030. The Council was the first local authority in Lincolnshire to declare a climate emergency, and already at the time had been taking measures to reduce our carbon footprint. Since the declaration, significant work has been undertaken to put together our Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. This details the steps needed to move towards the 2030 target, providing a breakdown of the sources of emissions and an indication of the high level interventions required.

Decision-Making and Service Delivery

When the Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019, we had already achieved a 67% reduction in emissions in the ten years to 2018 from our operations and 25% within the District due to initiatives, which included an energy efficiency overhaul, fleet management and securing surplus heat from the Sleaford Renewable Energy Plant (straw-fuelled) for the offices, Sleaford Leisure Centre, and other community facilities. The Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan builds on this, for example, the action plan includes updating the Council's Environment Policy, Sustainability Impact Assessments, procurement policies, and reviewing its financial portfolio, to ensure our climate ambitions are incorporated throughout service and project delivery.



Priorities - Our Environment

The Built Environment

All Council controlled buildings are now on certified zero emissions 100% renewable electricity tariffs, therefore our next step is to de-carbonise heating and phase out the use of gas and oil. Emissions from leisure operations have been cut dramatically, with further actions including working with our leisure contractors to switch these buildings to 100% renewable energy provision. Additional actions set out in the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan include improving house building standards in terms of energy and thermal efficiency, to increase the wellbeing of occupants and influence other developers to do the same.



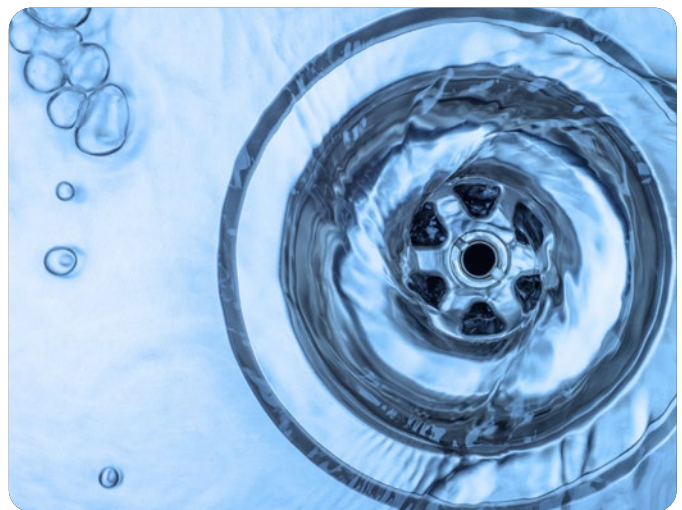
Travel

Travel emissions from vehicles remain one of the biggest climate challenges, therefore we will be focusing on reducing mileage from Council colleagues, by cutting the need for employees to own and use a car for work, and looking at how to support and incentivise staff to use low emissions vehicles. New refuse freighters entering into service have technology in place to tell us how much fuel they use and ensure optimal fuel efficiency. The wider District actions in the plan include: increasing sustainable travel (including foot and cycle routes), greater use of electric cars and prompting installation of new charging points by promoting available grants.



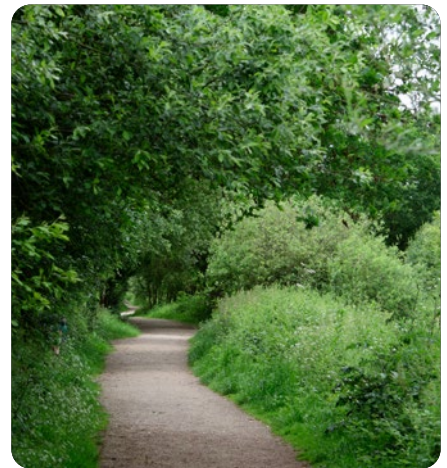
Waste and Water

The Council has already taken a number of steps to reduce its own waste, including lessening paper use and cutting non-essential plastic by introducing a Plastics Reduction Policy. The Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan focuses on areas, such as, minimising water use for existing Council homes and offices. Also in the action plan is an emphasis on increasing the quality of recycling, reducing instances of fly-tipping, and promoting water saving efforts in our communities with suppliers.



Tree Strategy

The Council has implemented a Tree Strategy, which aims to maximise tree planting on Council owned land, and how we will work with our stakeholders to increase tree canopy cover across the district. We aim to increase the number of trees on land the Council owns by 10% in the short term and by 25% by 2035. The Strategy also seeks to plant shrubs, hedgerows, meadow grasses and wild flowers, which will create interesting places for people to enjoy whilst providing new and enhanced habitats for wildlife.



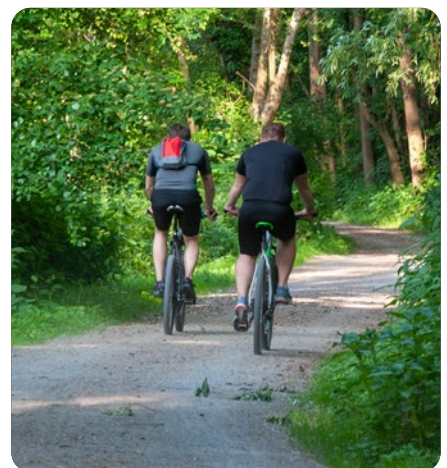
Purple Bin Trial

More than 7,200 households in North Kesteven, Boston and South Holland Councils have put their clean, dry paper and card into a separate purple recycling receptacle as part of a recycling trial. The paper and card collected has consistently been of a very high quality, which means more can be recycled and put to new uses. In our area, on average every household was recycling 1.5 kilos of paper and card a week with the rejection rate at only 3%. Following this success, the scheme will be rolled out across Lincolnshire in 2021.



Cycling

The Council is working with Lincolnshire County Council on Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plans, which will provide evidence that qualifies the authority to make priority bids for funding. The Council also refreshed its Cycling Strategy focusing on our long-term commitment to improve health and well-being through physical activity.



The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Review

The review of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan is progressing with the recent completion of a round of public consultation. At the heart of the Local Plan review is ensuring an effective response to the declared climate emergency and delivering sustainable growth for Central Lincolnshire compatible with a carbon neutral future. The Local Plan has recently consulted on a number of important measures to achieve this including, increasing and diversifying renewable energy generation which encompasses large scale generation, decentralised energy networks and renewable energy for individual dwellings, as well as requiring higher levels of energy efficient building, and being electric vehicle ready. The plan also seeks to reduce emissions through encouraging and supporting public transport, mobility hubs, community car clubs and walking and cycling links, integrated with existing infrastructure, so there is a comprehensive transport network and a realistic alternative to the private motor car for all communities across the district and Central Lincolnshire. Protecting and enhancing the natural environment, open space, water ways and promoting greater biodiversity are also important policy outcomes for the Local Plan.

Priorities - Our Homes

Ambitions

- ▶ **Provide high quality services for both housing and tackling homelessness**
- ▶ **Maintain, improve and future-proof housing**
- ▶ **Deliver the Local Plan, increasing the supply of sustainable housing**



Having pioneered a new era of council house building ahead of most other local authorities, the Council focuses squarely on increasing quality and quantity to ensure a balanced and sustainable set of housing choices across the District. Active in the delivery of sustainable housing growth and the pursuit of energy efficient homes to meet the current and emerging needs of all our communities, the Council remains at the forefront of enhancements as it expands availability of affordable, accessible, warm, comfortable and increasingly climate-conscious homes.

Performance Indicators:

- ▶ 24 new Council Homes provided
- ▶ 99.69% of repairs to Council Homes completed right the first time
- ▶ 89% of tenants satisfied with the Landlord service provided by the Council
- ▶ 104 affordable homes delivered
- ▶ 16 private sector empty properties brought back into use
- ▶ 507 homelessness cases prevented through advice and prevention tools



Priority Delivery Actions

Fabric First Building

The Council's own regeneration of social housing at Newfield Road, Sleaford includes 18 new build properties built to a high fabric-first standard, exceeding building regulations for thermal performance, air tightness and triple glazing, alongside heat recovery ventilation and bigger than standard living spaces.



300th Home Built

The Council's commitment to deliver high quality homes for residents reached an important milestone with its 300th home. From pioneering a new era of council house building ahead of others and setting up an arm's length company to respond to demand for private rental homes, the Council has directly delivered 300 houses over a decade.

Grinter House

Designs are being finalised which would see Grinter House, a former sheltered housing scheme in North Hykeham, redeveloped using almost £4 million of investment if approved. Under the new plan it would be completely remodelled to create affordable flats for general use, each with their own entrance and increased floor space. The properties will also benefit from higher energy-saving standards, such as, more efficient boilers and insulation, and some will include features, such as, sun pipes to make best use of natural light.



Rough Sleeping

Additional funding was awarded to the Council to extend its response to rough sleeping. In partnership with South Holland, South Kesteven and West Lindsey district councils, the £600,000 Rough Sleeping Initiative funding will increase the number of outreach workers and mechanisms for supporting individuals across the four areas over a year. The aim of the Change4Lincs project is to reduce the number of rough sleepers by increasing levels of preventative intervention for people at risk, reducing the number of 'repeat' rough sleepers, improving physical and mental wellbeing, as well as providing greater levels of support in settled accommodation. The initiative will build on an established partnership and help some of the most vulnerable people access help, support and accommodation to feel safe again. By the end of March, in North Kesteven alone Change4Lincs outreach workers had worked alongside 13 people rough sleeping or at risk of doing so; provided tenancy support to 23 clients; accommodated 16 rough sleepers and homeless people in bed and breakfast accommodation; provided intensive housing support to three clients, found private accommodation for four more and helped one to access rehabilitation services.



Specialist Housing Provision

As an extension to its established programme of meeting housing need, the Council has set out plans to develop extra-care and specialist adult accommodation. The project, in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council, is planned for the former highways depot at The Hoplands in Sleaford, where there is also room for further housing to meet broader community need. Following agreement by both councils, North Kesteven will develop a £9 million scheme, including 40 extra-care housing apartments and 12 community supported living units for working age adults with social care needs, satisfying anticipated demand in the district. This project will open up choice enabling people to remain independent in a home of their own, stay connected to their local community and be supported by their social networks as they get older. In total the Council is investing more than £160 million in new housing options through to 2030. Using a £42,000 grant and £150,000 loan from the Government's One Public Estate archaeology and ecology assessments were able to be carried out over the summer of 2021 in order to accelerate and inform the development.



Lafford Homes

The Council's arms-length company, Lafford Homes, is expanding availability of market-level rental homes and unlocking more housing choice by bringing forward good quality, well-priced rental options. The project is providing a range of homes for which there is demand locally. For example, there will soon be 42 new properties at Waddington available for private rent. Further prospective Lafford Homes projects include 20 homes at Metheringham and six in Sleaford.



Housing Service

The Council remains amongst the best in the country at providing council housing, as shown in a report from 'Housemark'. The annual audit of the Council's service to tenants found that North Kesteven offered some of the best value for money and property quality and have some of the highest levels of tenant satisfaction when compared to similar providers. The Council scored better than average across the range of measures, and a full 5% ahead of the average for: satisfaction with maintenance; satisfaction that service charges offer value for money; and satisfaction that tenants' views are listened to and acted upon. The Council spends 8% more than average on planned maintenance and refurbishment, which reflects a proactive approach to maintenance, leading to 25% lower-than-average repair costs and a better experience for tenants. 99.69% of repairs were found to be completed at the first visit; ranking in the top three for this score.



Energy Efficient Homes

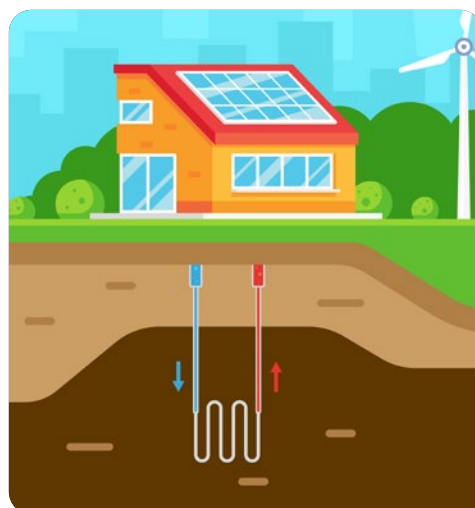
Work has begun to build eight new energy-efficient council houses in the District. They will all be built to the internationally-recognised Passivhaus standard, which makes them cheaper and more environmentally friendly to live in. The finished homes will have enhanced insulation, heat retention and draught proofing meaning their energy demands, fuel bills and maintenance are kept as low as possible. They are also warmer in winter and cooler in summer. The homes are super insulated and highly draught-proofed and require very little heating over and above the passive heat from the environment, such as, in-house appliances.

Empty Homes and E-On

A new initiative has been deployed to help owners of long-term empty houses bring them back into use as much needed homes. Under a new arrangement, the Council is working with energy providers E.ON on a project that aims to assist and accelerate action on 30 more empty homes over the next 15 months. E.ON is rolling out its project locally, in collaboration with the Council, to work with owners to establish what is needed to reverse the situation, provide financial advice with budgeting, and building works with qualified local trades people. The Council has long placed an emphasis on bringing back into use properties that stand empty for six months or more with a particular focus on properties that have been empty for over two years or more. Over the last decade there have been 250 empty properties successfully brought back into use through direct Council intervention, and last year 16 were supported back into use which has had positive knock-on benefits for communities, the local economy and the continuation of Council services.

Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Review

Significant progress has been made with our Central Lincolnshire partners (City of Lincoln, West Lindsey and Lincolnshire County Council) on the review of the local plan. The plan must be reviewed every five years and this provides the opportunity for the plan to be updated to reflect changing priorities at a local and national level. In terms of housing, the emerging plan reflects how the nationally derived Local Housing Need figure has reduced the expected rate of delivery of new homes in Central Lincolnshire. In addition, and bearing in mind the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in July 2019, the local plan review has enabled the Council and our partners to commission a suite of detailed evidence and to promote a net-zero carbon local plan. This ambition for a net-zero carbon local plan lies at the heart of the current consultation on the draft revised plan.



Priorities - Our Economy

Ambitions

- ▶ **Attract investment to improve physical infrastructure, support regeneration, and enhance digital connectivity**
- ▶ **Create a clear vision of place; celebrating and marketing all that the district has to offer**
- ▶ **Promote the economic opportunities from tackling climate change**



The District traditionally enjoys low unemployment, strong economic resilience and supports a mixed economy built on a high proportion of small and micro enterprises. Our aspirations are to take the economy to the next level, releasing the benefits from new skills, technologies and our own bold investments, and enabling all of our communities to flourish as part of the economic recovery from Covid-19 as well as opportunities from the 'green economy'.

Performance Indicators:

- ▶ 66 jobs created as a result of Council intervention
- ▶ 19 new investments in NK for regeneration projects
- ▶ 266 jobs safeguarded as a result of targeted support by the Council
- ▶ 4.4 hectares of employment land has been developed for delivery of jobs
- ▶ 94% average workshop occupancy across the workshop portfolio



Priority Delivery Actions

Major Investment in Jobs and Housing

A record £220 million capital investment programme has been mapped out by the Council for enhancements across a range of initiatives through to 2030. The ambitious ten year vision to carry North Kesteven forward throughout the coming decade is fully funded and grounded in the aspirations of residents who have told us they want to see more housing, more job opportunities and further investment in the services we deliver daily. More than half of this, £120 million, will be committed to increasing the availability of affordable housing and £50 million spent on building up opportunity for business and jobs growth. With expansion in the scope of the Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park, the capital programme grew to £230 million for the ten year period from April 2021.



Sleaford's Shopping Area

Sleaford's shopping area has twice the rate of independent retailers than the national average. This adds to the town's distinctive character and creates a vibrant shopping environment. Of all the ground floor shops and service industry units within Sleaford, 78.4% are independent businesses, more than twice the 36.6% national rate and significantly higher than the East Midlands' 40.3%.



Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park

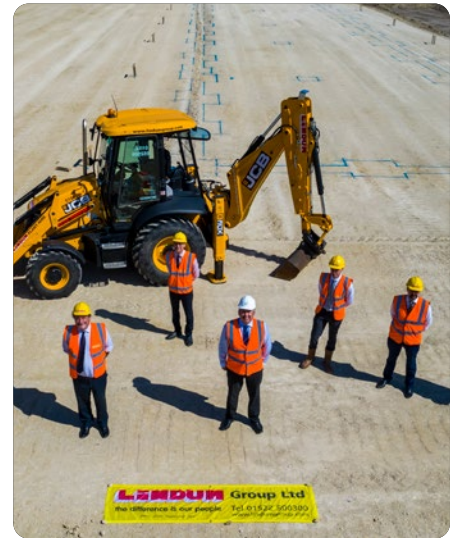
The Council is leading an ambitious 15 year scheme to create 485,000 square feet of business space across 12 high quality and flexible units in the business park in Sleaford. This is a £56 million investment, which is the largest single economic project the Council has ever undertaken. It will create much needed space for businesses to expand with the potential for attracting new investment to the district. Green site-wide measures include landscaping to bring in the natural environment, planting along the spine road to create a green backbone, tree planting in line with the Council's Tree Strategy, sustainable drainage systems and attenuation ponds doubling up as water sources for wildlife. Solar panels, UV light harnessing technologies, empowering the use of electric vehicles and bikes, wildflower verges and efficient insulation demand are also some of the measures to be explored for each plot.



Priorities - Our Economy

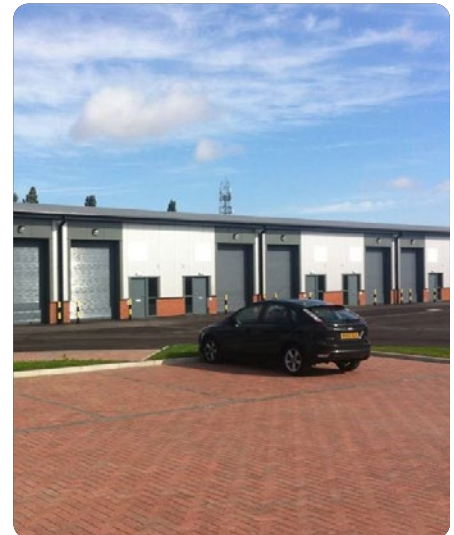
Discovery Court

Planning permission was granted for the Council's £2.2 million investment in more business workshop units at in North Hykeham. Following the successful planning application for 15 new business units at Discovery Court, a joint venture was pursued between the Council and Lindum Group to provide 21,000 square feet of start-up and grow-on space. Focused on creating space and opportunity for new and growing businesses to expand, develop and flourish, Discovery Court has added to the existing 111 Council owned workshops across 11 sites. This further investment in another workshop scheme, the fourth in six years, demonstrates the Council's continued commitment to providing support to growing businesses. This scheme is now complete, and are all fully occupied.



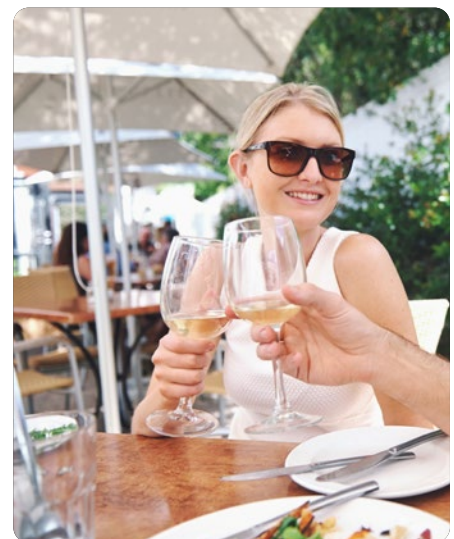
Supporting Our Businesses

The Council's focused support of businesses, from large enterprises through to sole traders, has escalated across the pandemic to guide them through restrictions, grant schemes and fresh trading opportunities. Up to the start of March 2021, the Council had administered £28 million of government grants in almost 5,000 payments across 12 distinct grant schemes, supporting approximately 2,000 businesses. In the initial weeks of the first lockdown, £19.5 million was allocated to support 1,743 businesses and throughout the year there has been a range of funding initiatives to administer, with 861 different businesses receiving £6,786,178 worth of grant funding support from November 2020 to March 2021. In addition, we have recently extended our business support offer, now providing free support to high street businesses through our Retail Adviser. Since October, we have reached out to 186 retailers across the district, discussing the challenges they face, and identifying and providing targeted support to assist them through challenging times. Going forward we want to explore new avenues of specific support for local businesses, based on the current needs of the business community in the area.



Outdoor Seating Areas

A new al fresco dining experience scheme was launched by the Council by giving permission to create three outdoor seating areas. This was set up with social distancing and Covid-19 hygiene and cleaning procedures in mind. The Council supported all three businesses through the process, particularly as the scheme ties in with the authority's Masterplan for the town which identified the need to focus on public realm improvements in the centre, better links for pedestrians and improved settings for key attractions and heritage assets.



Priorities - Our Economy

Tourism

Tourism and day trips within the District generate £162 million to the local economy, supporting almost 4,000 jobs at the season's summer peak. In relation to the pre-Covid period, figures released for the impacts of the visitor economy in 2019, showed a tenth annual growth in the numbers of people visiting and the length of their stay, with the self-catering sector in particular, seeing continued expansion. The Council has worked hard to promote the tourism offer in the District by creating the Heart of Lincolnshire brand, and giving uplift to the area's aviation heritage, such as, the International Bomber Command Centre and Cranwell Aviation Heritage Museum. The industry-standard data from Global Tourism, released at the end of 2020, forms part of a national reporting scheme and shows that tourists enjoyed 5% longer stays in the District. North Kesteven outperforms gains made by Lincolnshire overall with a greater increase in visitor numbers and length of stay, as well as amount spent in local businesses. Visits to Sleaford's Navigation House rose by 6%, while 76% more people paid a visit to the National Centre for Craft and Design.



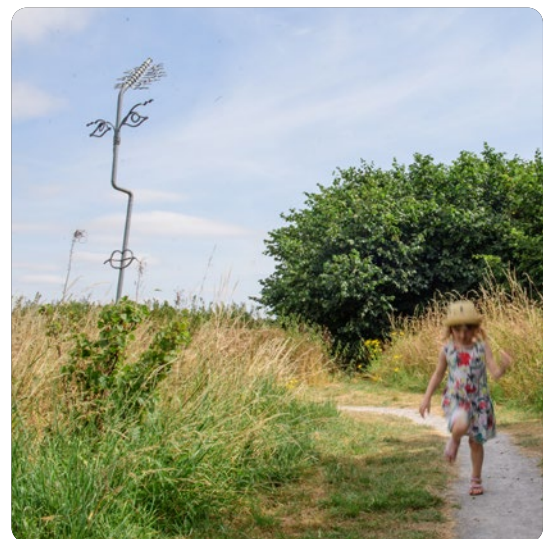
Mrs Smith's Cottage

Four years of vital improvements have been undertaken at Mrs Smith's Cottage and have restored the building to its former glory. This garnered the support of the local community, plus the funding and expertise of the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Following the initial lockdown and, operating in a new more controlled environment, a diverse programme of activities was offered at the Cottage.



Lollycocks Field

An existing pond and public amenity area next to the River Slea could be significantly enhanced to improve its ecological value. This will be enhanced using a variety of measures: the development of a hedgerow on the boundary, grassland management to enhance the grasslands located on the site, increasing wild flowers on the site, plus a habitat creation for birds, bats, small mammals, invertebrates and amphibians.



Priorities - Our Council

Ambitions

- ▶ **Ensure our Council is financially resilient**
- ▶ **Be open and accountable**
- ▶ **Maintain a strong focus on our customers**



As a trusted community leader, champion and advocate, operated through the determination of its 43 members and in partnership with – and in support of – equally-focused agencies, North Kesteven works wholly on behalf of its communities; maintaining financial resilience, good governance, rigour and integrity. Continually aspiring to be a high-performing, value-for-money Council that is agile, embraces the challenges and opportunities of the future, is accountable to its residents and drives the District forward.

Performance Indicators:

- ▶ 85% of customers were able to contact the Council via their preferred communication method
- ▶ 78% of residents felt that the Council provides good quality services
- ▶ 92% of complaints are responded to within 15 working days.



Priorities - Our Council

Looking to 2021 and Beyond

Plans have been set out to invest in the future of North Kesteven so it can still flourish, regardless of the pandemic. A new NK Plan from 2021 to 2024 has been shaped by the Council and details exciting and transformative investments for North Kesteven in five key areas - our communities, our environment, our homes, our economy and our council. It clearly sets out the Council's vision and ambitions for the District and its continued effect on residents, communities and local livelihoods. The NK Plan is backed by our new Community Strategy, which sets out a longer 10-year vision.

2030 Community Strategy

A route map to where the Council wants the District to be in 2030 – looking towards a net zero carbon future with better levels of health and a more vibrant economy – was unanimously agreed within the Council. The ten-year vision aligns the Council's own aims and ambitions alongside the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It became the overarching principles under which the 20:30 vision established priority principles of Environment, Economy, Homes, Communities and Council. The 2030 Community Strategy also identified and connected the Council's five priorities to the United Nations' parallel aspirations of A Future, A Job, A Home, A Life and A Champion. It also established financial strategies, a ten year £230 million capital programme and reinforced the Council's long-term commitment to addressing the challenges from climate change.

Elections

Elections were held in May 2021, to select County Councillors, a Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire and for three local polls. Every effort was made prior to May 2021 to ensure voting at Polling Stations was as safe as possible during the pandemic. Guidance was made available for members of the public, a 'frequently asked questions' page created and additional training for colleagues was provided resulting in a successful Election delivered during this period.



Priorities - Our Council

Council Meeting

The Government gave Councils new powers to hold public meetings 'virtually', using technology, including electronic, digital, virtual locations and telephone conferencing. The Council embraced the new way of working in order to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic to ensure residents and the media could be part of the democratic process.



Investors in People

The Council was awarded the Gold 'Investors in People' standard, which recognises the Council's 'clear focus on people', its 'high level of health and wellbeing provision', a 'passion for making things better for the employees and communities' and a 'pride in making North Kesteven a truly great council'. The Council has joined 2% of organisations globally by achieving this.

Team of the Year

The Democratic Services Team at the Council won 'Team of the Year' at the Association of Democratic Services Officers Annual Awards Ceremony. This was due to their hard work and determination in moving online with the democratic processes needed to serve the District during the pandemic, and ensuring as many people as possible were given the opportunity to participate and be part of the democratic process.



Census 2021

The Council ensured its Corporate Information Team were the Census Liaison Representatives with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) leading up to, and during, the Census 2021. The Team worked with the ONS to help improve census response rates locally and reinforce confidence in census results. The Council helped co-ordinate census activity in the local area and ensured an integrated approach to service delivery.



Financial Review:

- ▶ General Fund
- ▶ Housing Revenue Account
- ▶ Capital Expenditure



Financial Review: General Fund

Financial Environment

The financial year began with the setting of the budget in February 2020. The following sections describe the actual performance against this budget.

In common with the rest of local government, the Council has seen significant reductions in its core funding creating an increasing reliance on Council Tax and the need to seek alternative income sources to maintain service delivery.

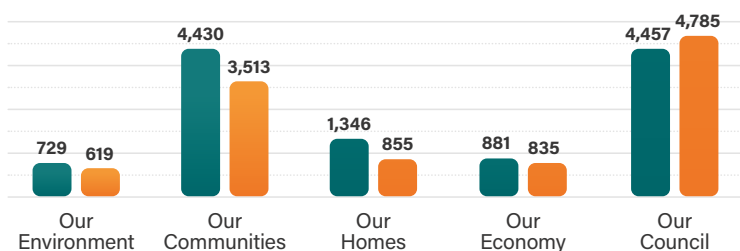
Therefore, difficult decisions have been taken by the Council in order to establish a balanced financial plan for the next three financial years, given the finite resources that will be available. The Council has proactively sought to find ways to protect services and has found the majority of savings from efficiencies and increased income, rather than cuts to service delivery.

General Fund

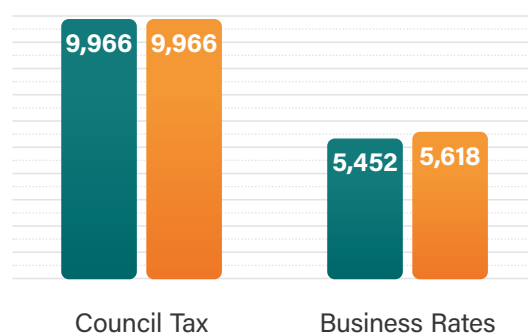
The General Fund covers all net spending by the Council on services other than those accounted for in the Housing Revenue Account. General Fund services are funded via contributions from Business Rates and Council Tax, Fees and Charges, as well as Government Grants.

The graphs below show both the expenditure of the General Fund, broken down by Corporate Priority, as well as the revenue stream from which this money came.

Corporate Priority - Service Expenditure (£'000s)



Revenue Streams (£'000s)



■ Budget ■ Actual

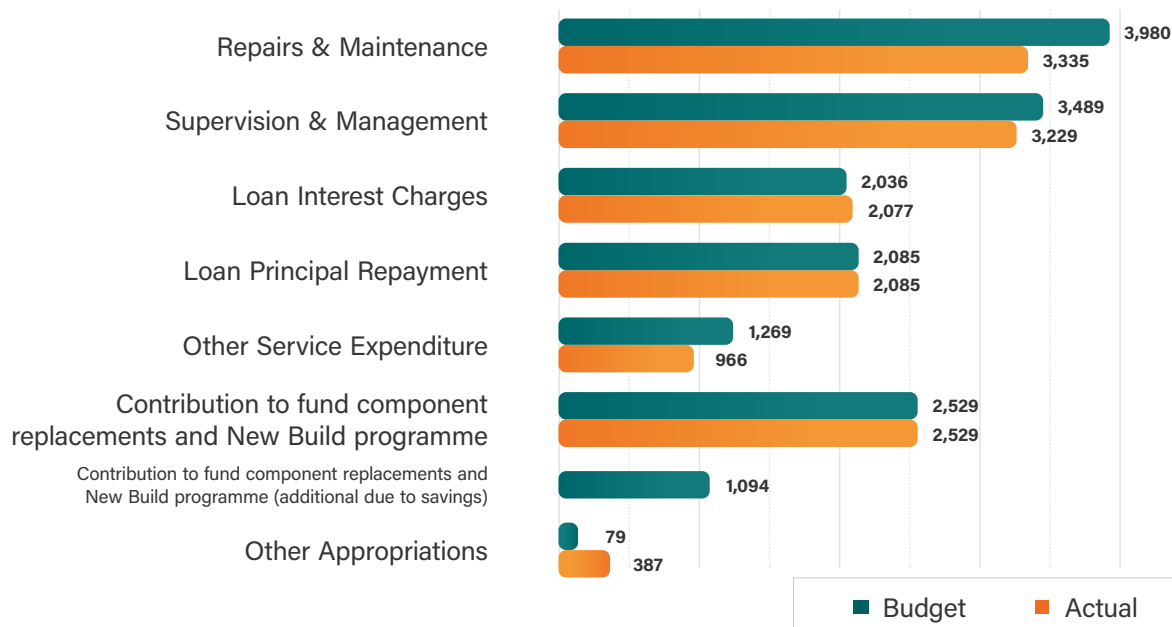
Financial Review: Housing Revenue Account

Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has to be maintained 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 social landlord.

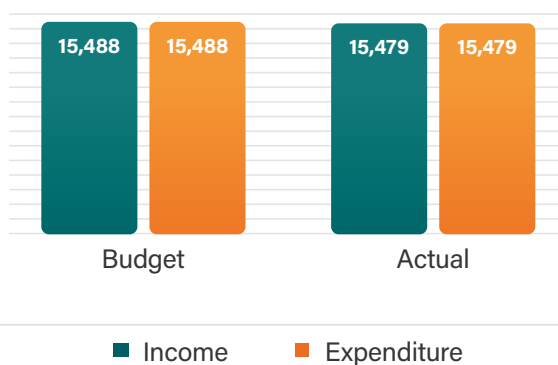
For 2020/21, the approved budget for the year showed a balanced Income and Expenditure. The actual net expenditure for the year reflected a surplus of £1,094,610.

Housing Revenue Account Expenditure (£'000s)



As at 31 March 2021, the Council maintains a working balance for the HRA to cover any unforeseen expenditure in the operating of the Council's housing stock and any unforeseen financial risks.

HRA Income vs. Expenditure



Financial Review:

Capital Expenditure

Capital Expenditure

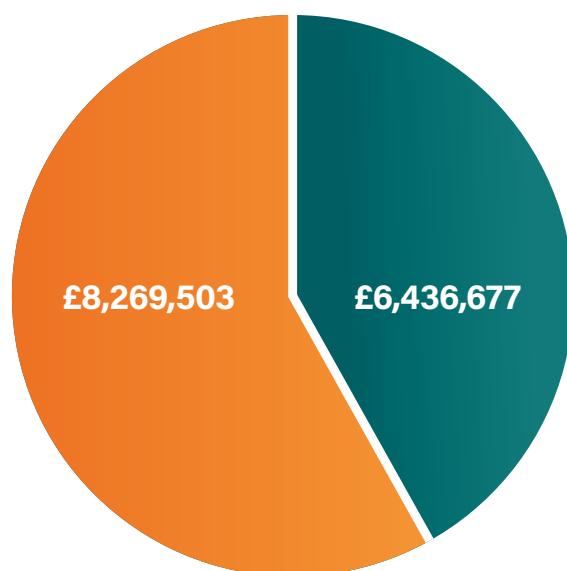
The Council's capital expenditure on the provision of new or enhanced assets is largely met from reserves and borrowing, but also to a lesser degree from government grants and contributions from third parties.

Capital expenditure for the 2020/21 financial year amounted to £14.706 million compared to the approved capital programme budget of £37.208 million, representing an underspend of £22.502 million.

The Council is embarking on the most ambitious capital programme since the mid-1980s. The Housing Capital Programme consists of both investment in the current housing stock in order to maintain the NK Standard and the New Build Programme.

Whereas the General Fund Capital Programme is focused on the delivery of market rental properties through its wholly owned company, Lafford Homes Limited, the Heart of Sleaford Scheme and the refurbishment of the National Centre for Craft and Design.

Capital Spend Programme 2020/21



- Housing Revenue Account Capital Spend in Year
- General Fund Capital Spend in Year

Corporate Functions:

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



HR - Our People

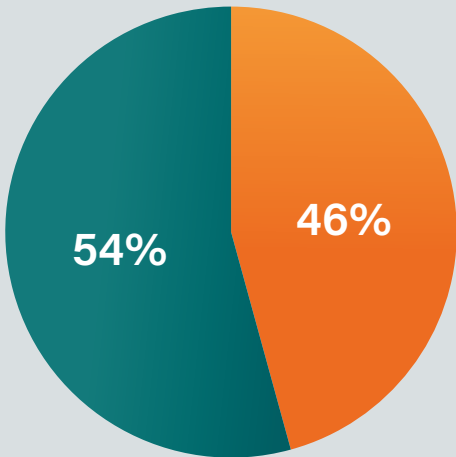
North Kesteven District Council employs over 380 members of staff in more than 190 different roles across multiple sites.

The average age of employees is 45 years.

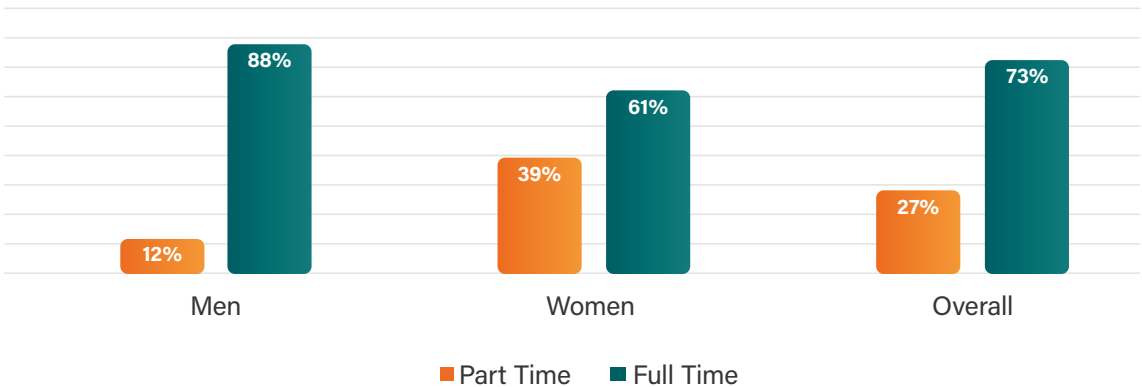
The average length of continuous service for Council employees is 10 years.

Gender mix of Council employees

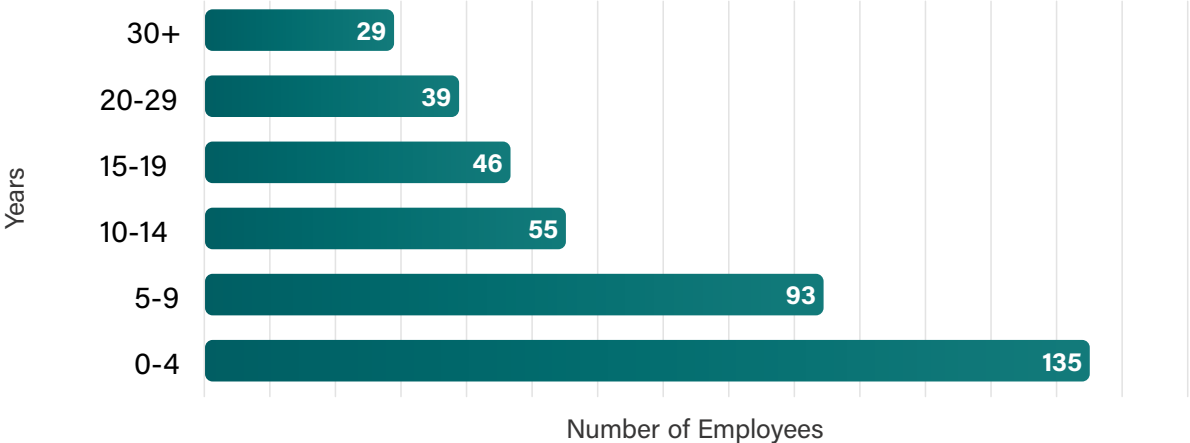
Men (185)
Women (215)



Contract Type: Part/Full Time



Length of Service



Access to Information

Access to information consists of: Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests, Data Protection Act (DPA) requests and Subject Access Requests (SAR).

These Regulations cover almost all areas of the authority giving the public access to 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 2020/21:

619 FOI Requests

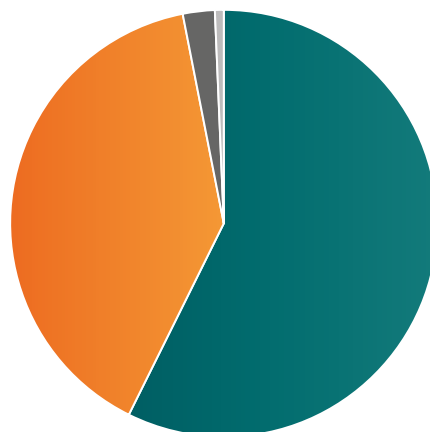
478 EIR Requests

16 DPA Requests

9 Subject Access Requests

1,122 overall requests

Information Requests 20/21



■ FOI (57%) ■ EIR (40%) ■ DPA (2%) ■ SAR (1%)

How we performed this year:

99%

of all requests were completed within the statutory time frame.

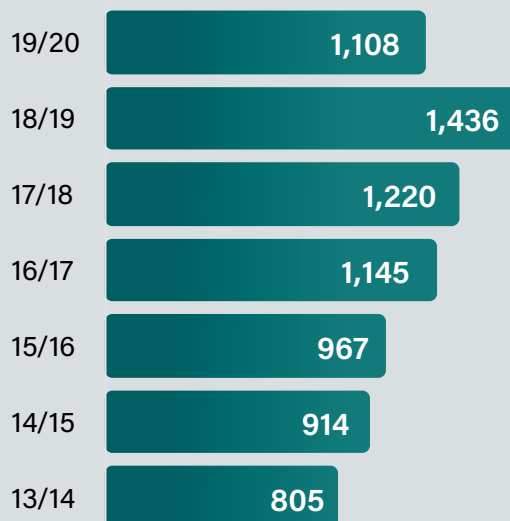
Since 2010 there have been over 10,000 requests, including:

6,621 FOI Requests

3,454 EIR Requests

182 DPA Requests

Total Requests Per Year



Complaints 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.

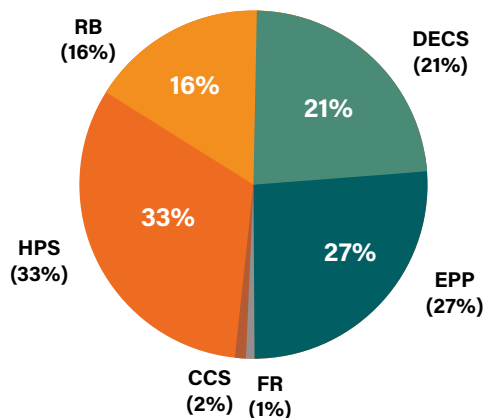
Key Statistics for 2020/21:

- 100 complaints in total, 97 first time complaints and 21 escalations, 3 started at stage 2
- 23% of all complaints made were upheld to some extent
- 88% of complaints were answered within the 15 day time frame

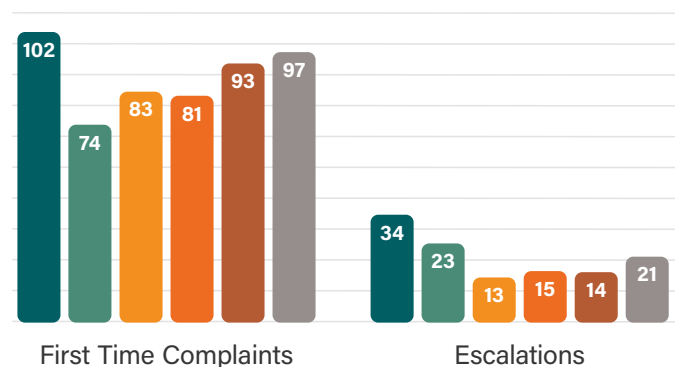
Service Areas:

- EPP: Environment and Public Protection
- DECS: Development, Economic and Cultural Services
- RB: Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
- HPS: Housing and Property Services
- CCS: Corporate and Community Services
- FR: Finance and Resources

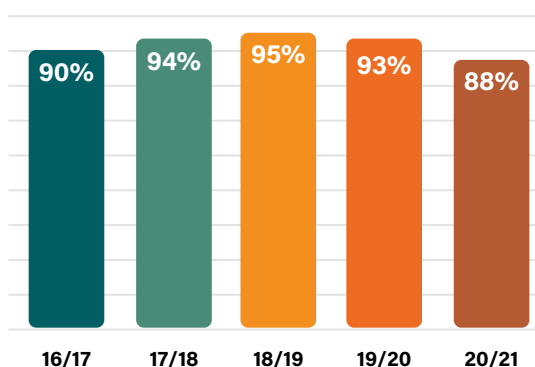
Complaints by Division



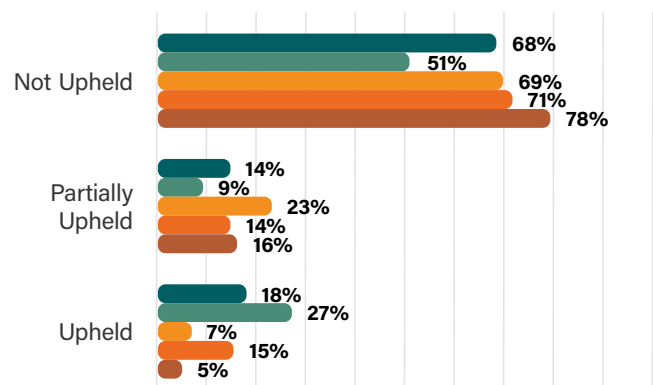
Overall Complaints Received



Complaints Responded to on Time



Complaints Outcomes



Consultation

Surveys are one of the Council's preferred methods for engaging with members of the public. They offer a straightforward 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 received over 5,000 consultation responses from residents on topics including corporate planning, recycling and council tax support.

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.

Survey	Total Responses
Customer Service Satisfaction	1,605
NK Plan Consultation	829
Covid-19 Business Survey	338
Website Feedback	315
Recycling (Purple Lidded Bin)	2,228
Council Tax Consultation	129

The Headlines from our Surveys



78% of residents are satisfied with the quality of the Council's services

84% of residents feel they have a good knowledge about the causes and effects of climate change



100% of recipients of a disabled adaptation were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall adaptation process



93% residents rated the kerbside waste collection of recycling and general waste as 'very good' and 'good'



98% of residents feel that recycling is a good idea and 85% rate their general understanding and knowledge of waste and recycling as good or very good



96% of residents who contacted our customer services team found it either easy or very easy to access the service they required

Decision Making:

- ▶ Political Structure
- ▶ Executive Board
- ▶ Overview and Scrutiny Panels:
 - » Performance and Resources
 - » Environment
 - » Communities and Economy



Political Groupings and Decision Making

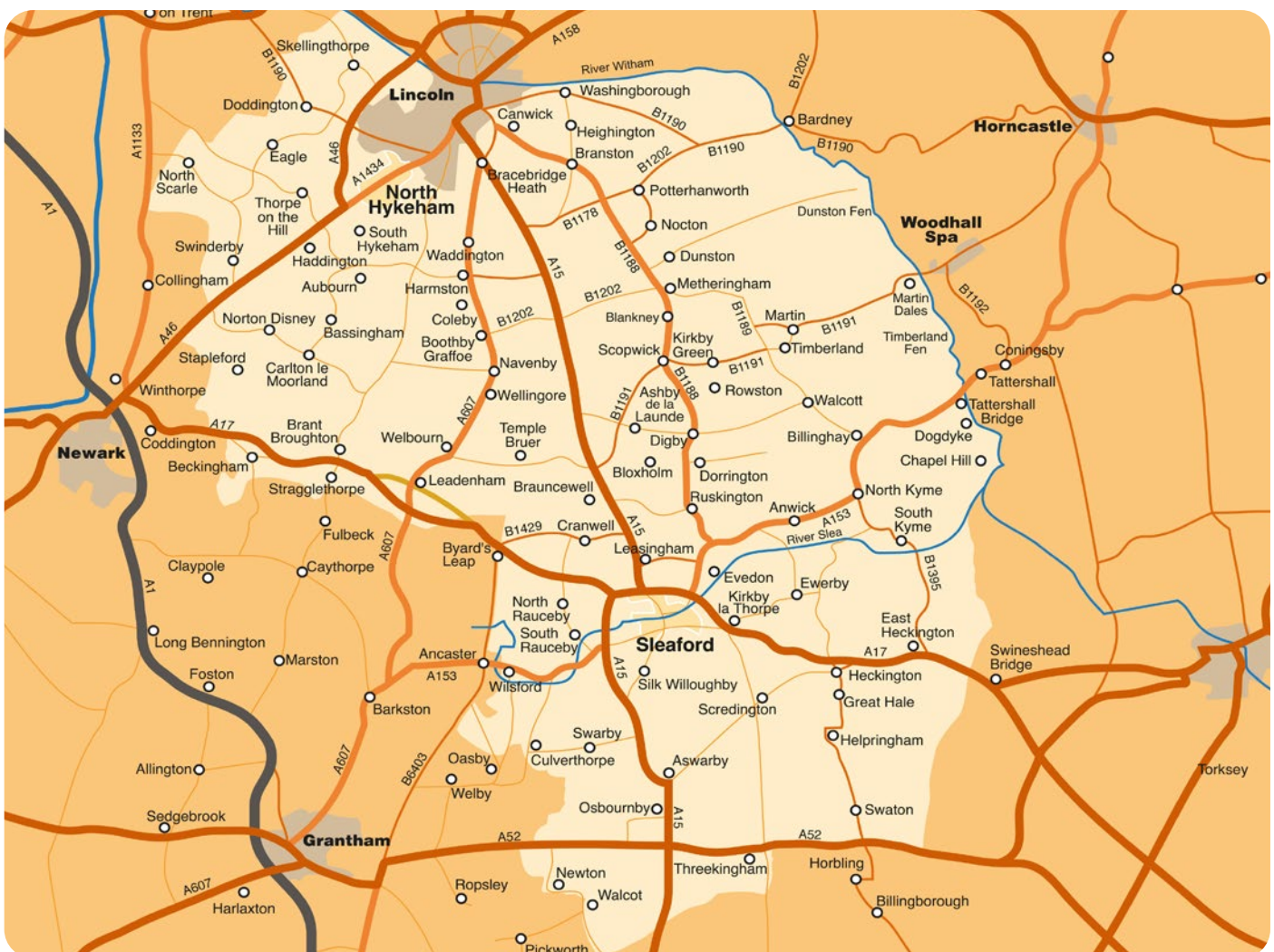
Political Structure

The Council has a total of 43 councillors spread over 26 wards. The role of an elected Member includes setting strategy, allocating resources, monitoring performance, representing people within their ward and community leadership and engagement.

There are:

- 26 Councillors from The North Kesteven Administration Group**
- 12 Councillors from the NK Independent Group (Lincolnshire Independents and Independents)**
- 2 Unaligned Councillors**
- 3 Vacancies**

(Information correct as of September 2021)



Executive Board

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.

Executive Board Members



Cllr Richard Wright
(Leader)



Cllr Ian Carrington
(Deputy Leader)



Cllr Sally Tarry



Cllr Ray Cucksey



Cllr Mervyn Head



Cllr Steve Clegg

A flavour of the decisions made:

- Approval of the Corporate Plan - The NK Plan 2021-24 - with a focus on climate change reflected throughout the plan structure
- Creation of a Community Development Partnership
- Approval of the Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan for consultation
- Approval of a Community Strategy setting the aspirations for the next 10 years



Performance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Key Actions for the Year:

As well as their regular performance updates on Finance Monitoring, Treasury Management, HR Dashboard and Lafford Homes, Members received the Target Budget for the year ahead. Other highlights include:

Pandemic Updates – throughout the year: Members of the Senior Management Team provided updates to Panel Members throughout the year, focusing on the financial resilience of the Council, financial forecasting and colleague welfare.

Revenues and Benefits Performance Update – September 2020:

Members were presented with an update on the Shared Revenues and Benefits Service, which has been in operation since 1 June 2011. The Panel were pleased to note that the service was performing exceptionally well, despite the issues caused by the pandemic. Members were assured that the expected significant increase in benefits claims caused by the pandemic would be dealt with efficiently by the Team.

Council Tax Support Schemes – November 2020:

Members were presented with the annual Council Tax Support Scheme Report, which was presented by the Revenues and Benefits Manager. Members supported the proposed increase in the Council Tax Empty Homes Premium, and felt that the Council should take advantage of all opportunities provided for by government legislation.

Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) Annual Report – November 2020:

The Corporate Information Manager presented the report that informed Members of the Council's information governance and data protection compliance.

Procurement Lincs 2019/20 Annual Report – January 2020:

Members were presented with the Procurement Lincolnshire Annual Report by the Senior Commercial and Procurement Officer. This outlined the services, support and benefits provided by Procurement Lincolnshire to the Council. The Panel were informed that approximately £128,000 savings had been achieved and 83% of contracts had been awarded to local suppliers, which represented an increase of 23% on the previous year.

Gender Pay Gap – March 2021:

The Gender Pay Gap report was presented by the Corporate Information Manager. Members were informed that a Gender Pay Gap action plan was being developed and the Panel would be kept abreast of this. Members were also informed that the mean gender pay gap stood at 10%, whilst the median gender pay gap stood at 0%.



Cllr Stephen Roe
(Chairman)



Cllr Anthony Brand
(Vice-Chairman)

Service Areas

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

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Key Actions for the Year:

The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel has engaged in some valuable scrutiny over the past year, with a range of internal and external representatives being invited to discuss a range of issues. Some highlights include:

Pandemic Updates – throughout the year:

Members were kept informed of the Council's plans to remain in operation throughout the lockdown with services responding to the three objectives of: save lives, protect vulnerable people and maintain service delivery. Members were assured that a suitable emergency response had been developed to cope with local outbreak control plans and social distancing measures.

Climate Change Strategy Updates – regular updates through the year:

The report was presented by the Sustainability Policy and Programme Manager, who provided the following information: the switching of leisure facilities to a certified 100% renewable electricity tariff was being reviewed; there was an investigation into energy efficiency options for street lighting; and measuring and monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions towards 'net zero.' The Panel were informed that transport emissions had regrettably increased 0.25% since 2005, but the Council's corporate emissions had been reduced by 60% and the District emissions had reduced by 27%. In addition, future work was being pursued concerning fuel poverty.

Waste Strategy – September 2020 and June 2021:

The Head of Environment and Public Protection updated Members on the twin stream bin trial (purple bin trial), which had been running for approximately one year, with the aim to increase recycling and the quality of recycling. The trial had received positive feedback from residents and funding was secured to rollout the scheme across the rest of the county. Members were assured that the scheme ensured a reduction in recycling contamination, which also helped reduce plastics waste. Further work was also underway to reduce plastics use in North Kesteven, with manufacturers being engaged nationally.

Developer Contributions – September 2020:

The Compliance and Enforcement Team Leader provided Members with the Annual Developer Contributions report for funds collected and distributed recently. A new requirement came into effect in September 2019 to create greater transparency concerning developer contributions across local authorities under an Infrastructure Funding Statement. The Panel were pleased to hear that during 2019/20, £600,000 of community infrastructure levy contributions and £1.6 million Section 106 contributions had been collected by the Council. Of the Section 106 contributions, £550,000 had been received by the District Council and £99,000 was received by a range of Parish Councils across the district. Pandemic lockdown measures had temporarily put construction projects on hold and, as such, the building rate could not be anticipated at this time.



Cllr Chris Goldson
(Chairman)



Cllr Stewart Ogden
(Vice-Chairman)

Service Areas

- Building Control
- Emergency Planning
- Enforcement
- Environmental Services and Public Protection
- Health and Safety
- Local Plans Team
- Licensing
- Open Spaces and Trees
- Street Scene
- SustainNK
- Waste Management

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Lincoln SE Quadrant Concept Plan – September 2020:

The Development Manager updated the Panel about the Lincoln South East Quadrant (SEQ) Concept Plan. The SEQ is an allocated development site defined within the Local Plan, situated between Bracebridge Heath, Lincoln and Canwick, which will eventually deliver 6,000 new homes. Due to the scale of the SEQ, it was proposed that the development should be subject to a set of design codes, in order to give guidance and coherence to future planning applications and decisions. The design codes should provide guidance on scale, massing, building materials, make provision for a range of open spaces, local transport connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and buses, as well as providing key vistas of Lincoln Cathedral. Members were pleased to hear that the draft design codes incorporated designs to maximise sustainable transport, including cycle paths and an integrated mobility hub.

Local Plan Review – January 2021:

The Housing Strategy Manager presented the Local Plan Annual Report. The report provided an update on the delivery of the adopted 2021-36 Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and also provided an update on progress of the Local Plan Review. The report included the key findings of the North Kesteven Annual Monitoring Report and the Central Lincolnshire 5 Year Land Supply Report (1 April 2021 – 31 March 2026). Members were provided with information in relation to how the Climate Change aspirations and challenges of delivering a carbon neutral future were being considered through the review, including the delivery of renewable energy.



Cllr Chris Goldson
(Chairman)



Cllr Stewart Ogden
(Vice-Chairman)

Service Areas

- Building Control
- Emergency Planning
- Enforcement
- Environmental Services and Public Protection
- Health and Safety
- Local Plans Team
- Licensing
- Open Spaces and Trees
- Street Scene
- SustainNK
- Waste Management

Communities and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Key Actions for the Year:

As well as regular updates from Economic Development, including Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park, Heart of Sleaford project, Leisure Contracts and Health Scrutiny throughout the year, the Communities and Economy OSP invited a range of internal and external representatives to discuss a range of issues. Some highlights included:

Pandemic Updates – throughout the year:

The Panel received several updates throughout the year on the success of the Council to make available millions of pounds worth of government grants issued to businesses due to the pandemic; how the Council was providing help to vulnerable residents; and the work planned for economic recovery. Members thanked the Economic Development Team for mobilising to process applications and distribute the grants to local businesses. The Panel also thanked all colleagues that helped contact 14,000 vulnerable people in the district at the beginning of the first lockdown.

Defibrillators – July and September 2020:

Members discussed various issues that had come to their attention regarding public access defibrillators in the district. Members noted that some people had experienced issues accessing them and there was concern that this may lead to preventable deaths in the future. An East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) representative provided Members with information on how the system works and that they had been tasked with compiling information on all the appliance locations and codes to unlock them. The Panel realised that this was a difficult task as many community groups and businesses were making the appliances available and did not always inform EMAS of their existence. The Panel had made concerns about the current access issues to the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire.

Flourishing Communities – September 2020:

The report was presented by the Head of Corporate and Community Services and set out the proposed approach for the 'Be the Better You' programme, and outlined the local strategic partnership, community project funding options and the role of the Partnerships Team going forward. Work was also underway to identify communities in need of targeted support. Support was to be provided in the form of qualified and vetted local community groups and established groups. Mental health was an important aspect of the project, especially following the impact of the pandemic. Funding options were being explored, including the Local Resilience Forums Community Services, which responded to the impacts of the initial lockdown. Funding was also being sought to establish Good Neighbourhood Schemes to support the Council's Flourishing Communities. Members were encouraged by the work being carried out with communities across the district.



Cllr Ross Little
(Chairman)



Cllr Mrs Allan
(Vice-Chairman)

Service Areas

- Community Safety Partnership
- Strategy and Business Transformation
- ICT
- Communications and Graphics
- Corporate Information
- Cultural Services - Leisure Client, Sports, Arts, Tourism and Heritage
- Customer Engagement
- Economic Development and Development Control
- Partnerships NK and Community Initiatives
- Property Services
- Strategic Housing (Private Sector, Housing Tenants and Landlord Services)
- Community Initiatives

Communities and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Empty Homes – September 2020:

The Empty Homes Officer provided a report on work that had been carried out in relation to empty homes. Lockdown had temporarily halted empty home visits and inspections, however long-term monitoring had been maintained. The Empty Homes Working Group had been meeting remotely to continue their management of ongoing cases. Long-term empty property cases had continued to reduce over the last two years across the district. Members were particularly pleased to hear that a partnership with E.ON had been established in July 2020. Since this, 16 properties had been reoffered and five properties had been surveyed to inform the owner on costs associated with bringing them back into use. E.ON offered a completed service – including referral, survey, works and estate agency allocation by utilising local companies and contractors.

Domestic Abuse – September 2020:

The Domestic Abuse report was presented by the Assistant Housing Services Manager (Options). The report was brought to Panel at the request of Members, who were worried about the national trend of domestic abuse rising during the pandemic. The NK Domestic Action Plan was continuing to be delivered and was being adapted accordingly to incorporate Covid-19 related issues into service delivery. Forums had been meeting every two weeks – this had been increased to every one week during the lockdown. In addition, social media had been used to promote campaigns. Internal guidance concerning domestic abuse for staff had been developed to target abuse instances amongst colleagues, with domestic abuse service supporting both males and females.

Cycling Strategy – September 2020:

Members received a report on the Council's Cycling Strategy from the Housing Strategy Manager. Members were informed that the updated Cycling Strategy sought to reaffirm the Council's commitment to cycling and incorporate matters included within the recently adopted Our Environment Priority, as well as some further changes brought to light by the pandemic.

Rent Consultation and Setting 2020/21 - January 2020:

The Assistant Housing Services Manager presented the report in relation to Rent Consultation and Setting 2020/2021. Members were informed that the Regulator of Social Housing introduced a new Rent Standard, which would take effect from 1st April 2020. There was a proposal of a 2.7% increase, which would give the Council the opportunity to help fund service improvements, invest in energy efficiency schemes and new build opportunities.



Cllr Ross Little
(Chairman)



Cllr Mrs Allan
(Vice-Chairman)

Service Areas

- Community Safety Partnership
- Strategy and Business Transformation
- ICT
- Communications and Graphics
- Corporate Information
- Cultural Services - Leisure Client, Sports, Arts, Tourism and Heritage
- Customer Engagement
- Economic Development and Development Control
- Partnerships NK and Community Initiatives
- Property Services
- Strategic Housing (Private Sector, Housing Tenants and Landlord Services)
- Community Initiatives

Communities and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Key Actions for the Year (continued):

Cycling Strategy – January 2020 and Bike Rental March 2020:

The Housing Strategy Manager presented the report in relation to the Cycling Strategy and provided a summary of the achievements the Council had over the last year. Members were informed that the Cycling Strategy aimed to increase the number of people cycling in the District by improving cycling infrastructure, information and safety. Members were informed about the achievements of the Cycling Strategy, including: Regular contacts with local cycling clubs with the aim of supporting further expansion; The first NK Family Cycling Festival (in partnership with Giant and Access Lincoln), which took place in June 2019; The Council had successfully partnered with Active Lincolnshire to promote the 'Go Explore Lincolnshire App', and had twelve digital routes available. Members were particularly pleased to learn that the Council had funded the improved cycle routes to Teal Park and Discovery Park.

In March 2020, Members welcomed the Access Lincoln Project Manager for LCC, Phil Watt to the meeting. Phil provided an insight into the Bike Hire Schemes in Lincoln and North Hykeham, and possible new routes into North Kesteven. The contract for the Lincoln Bike Rental scheme was currently out to tender. LCC were asking tenderers to explore opportunities to expand the current area with the villages of Washingborough, Branston and Waddington being considered as extensions to the current network. Members were informed that LCC and NKDC were looking to improve the cycle and walking plan network for Sleaford. Members also learned of a cycling and walking network plan, which was being developed as part of the wider Lincoln Transport Strategy. Work on the Sleaford plans was due to start in April 2020.

Rent Consultation and Setting 2020/21 – January 2020:

The Assistant Housing Services Manager presented the report in relation to Rent Consultation and setting 2020/2021. Members were informed that the Regulator of Social Housing introduced a new Rent Standard. The New Rent Standard would take effect from 1st April 2020, which the Housing Team used to propose a 2.7% increase for 2020/2021. This increase would give the Council the opportunity to help fund service improvements, investment in energy efficiency schemes, component replacement and new build opportunities.

Mental Health Provision Task and Finish Group:

In March 2020, the Panel agreed to the formation of a Task and Finish Group to investigate NK's role in mental health provision and addressing mental health issues in North Kesteven. This Task and Finish Group is currently still in operation.