

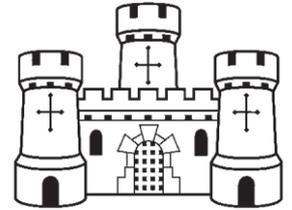
# Public Document Pack

**Date of meeting** Thursday, 7th December, 2023

**Time** 7.00 pm

**Venue** Astley Room - Castle

**Contact** Geoff Durham - 742222



**NEWCASTLE  
UNDER LYME**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Castle House  
Barracks Road  
Newcastle-under-Lyme  
Staffordshire  
ST5 1BL

## Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee

### AGENDA

#### PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 1 APOLOGIES
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
- 3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 8)  
To consider the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee.
- 4 UPDATE FROM CABINET ON ITEMS RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE
- 5 TOWN DEAL AND FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUNDS UPDATE (Pages 9 - 18)
- 6 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT & PERFORMANCE (Pages 19 - 28)
- 7 BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN UPDATE (Pages 29 - 34)
- 8 SOCIAL HOUSING WITHIN THE BOROUGH (Pages 35 - 64)
- 9 WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 65 - 68)
- 10 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME  
Any member of the public wishing to submit a question must serve two clear days' notice, in writing, of any such question to the Borough Council.
- 11 URGENT BUSINESS  
To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Members:** Councillors Bettley-Smith (Vice-Chair), Burnett-Faulkner, Edginton-Plunkett, Gorton, Grocott, Johnson, D Jones, Moss, Panter, J Waring and G White (Chair)

**Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training/development requirements from any of the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Democratic Services Officer at the close of the meeting.**

**Meeting Quorums :-** Where the total membership of a committee is 12 Members or less, the quorum will be 3 members....Where the total membership is more than 12 Members, the quorum will be one quarter of the total membership.

## **SUBSTITUTE MEMBER SCHEME (Section B5 – Rule 2 of Constitution)**

The Constitution provides for the appointment of Substitute members to attend Committees. The named Substitutes for this meeting are listed below:-

*If you are unable to attend this meeting and wish to appoint a Substitute to attend in your place you need go:*

- Identify a Substitute member from the list above who is able to attend on your behalf
- Notify the Chairman of the Committee (at least 24 hours before the meeting is due to take place)

Officers will be in attendance prior to the meeting for informal discussions on agenda items.

**NOTE:** THERE ARE NO FIRE DRILLS PLANNED FOR THIS EVENING SO IF THE FIRE ALARM DOES SOUND, PLEASE LEAVE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY THROUGH THE FIRE EXIT DOORS.

ON EXITING THE BUILDING, PLEASE ASSEMBLE AT THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING BY THE STATUE OF QUEEN VICTORIA. DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL ADVISED TO DO SO.

# Agenda Item 3

*Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee - 21/09/23*

## **ECONOMY & PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 21st September, 2023  
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

[View the agenda here](#)

[Watch the meeting here](#)

**Present:** Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith (Chair)

Councillors: Burnett-Faulkner Gorton Holland  
Edginton-Plunkett Grocott

Apologies: Councillor(s) Beeston, Johnson, Moss, Skelding and G White

Substitutes: Councillor Dave Jones  
Councillor John Tagg  
Councillor Joan Whieldon

Officers: Allan Clarke Planning Policy Manager  
Craig Jordan Service Director - Planning  
Simon McEneny Deputy Chief Executive

Also in attendance: Councillor Stephen Sweeney Deputy Leader of the Council  
and Portfolio Holder - Finance,  
Town Centres and Growth

### 1. **APOLOGIES**

The Vice-Chair shared apologies received and took the opportunity to inform members that Cllr Richard Gorton would replace former Cllr Moffat in the Labour subgroup of the Committee.

The Vice-Chair also read out the following statement from the Chair:

*"Members, please excuse my non-attendance this evening which is due to a business commitment.*

*At the last meeting HS2 was scrutinized and we deliberated length regarding the empty properties in Whitmore and Madeley.*

*We challenged HS2 to provide transparency and an action plan to ensure the properties were rented out as much as possible.*

*Following a half day meeting and walking the area and houses contained, the summary of the current situation and plan is:*

- *Whitmore Heath: there are 16 properties already let by HS2 and 20 vacant; of these 8 are either being marketed or will be marketed this side of Christmas, 4 have refurbishment underway and a further 8 are planned.*

## **Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee - 21/09/23**

- *Madeley: 6 properties are let and 8 are vacant; of these 4 are held for construction and will be demolished; the other 4 are being refurbished to be let within the next six months.*

*A monthly update will be provided to myself and Cllr Brian as the ward Councillors. The monthly update of course will come from HS2.”*

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th June, 2023 be agreed as a true and accurate record, subject to the inclusion of Craig Jordan, Service Director for Planning being marked as in attendance.

### **4. UPDATE FROM CABINET ON ITEMS RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE**

There were no updates from Cabinet required.

[Watch the debate here](#)

### **5. FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND AND TOWN DEALS UPDATE**

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth introduced the report on the appointment of Capital and Centric for two of the key regeneration projects that had been brought to Cabinet and full Council earlier in the week.

Members asked questions and responses were provided as follows:

- Cllr Edgington-Plunkett asked for re-assurance that the Company, being based in Manchester, was the right one for Newcastle. – The portfolio holder confirmed that they had worked on similar projects and were specialised in re-using old frameworks which would be the case here.
- Cllr Gorton wondered about taking York Place forward and to what extent the original design could be protected. – The portfolio holder confirmed the new structure would be very similar to the previous one which itself didn't look much different from the one that was there 50 years earlier.
- Cllr Panter wished to be reminded of the costs involved. – The portfolio holder said the initial contract had been signed for £256,000.
- Cllr Grocott asked about the land value. – The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed this would be part of the equation when working out whether the cost or the value would be the greater.
- Cllr Holland wished to know more about suggested designs. – The Deputy Chief Executive reiterated that while the building would be different, the design would be in line with what had been previously agreed and shared for planning.

- Cllr Jones wondered about how confident Cabinet members and lead officers felt about Capital and Centric capacity to translate the sort of works carried out at Stoke-on-Trent to Newcastle which was a very different town. – The Deputy Chief Executive provided a list of other small towns where projects had been undertaken by the company also out of the city centre. The contractors were very excited about working with the Council and a good proposal was to be expected. Cllr Jones requested that a copy of the proposal be shared with members.
  
- Cllr Jones asked how confident members should be that all aspects of the projects and with regard to all sites would be completed and what was the timeframe for each part. – The Deputy Leader confirmed he was fully confident that everything would be completed and the Deputy Chief Executive said the timescales would be provided with the initial plans and costings proposal which should come around Christmas. York Place would probably be first, then Midway with works kicking off around late 2024, early 2025 and then ongoing for 12 to 18 months over 2025 and 2026. The Ryecroft development would start around the end of 2025 or early 2026. These were however only estimates as programmes for those schemes had not been submitted yet. The Vice Chair requested that an update be provided at the December meeting.
  
- Cllr Grocott asked about the Kidsgrove town deal. – The Deputy Chief Executive said Chatterly Valley was progressing with a new contractor having been appointed to finish grounds work. The station works were still under discussion around the foundation works in the car park. The Sharded Services Hub was being designed and a planning permissions would be submitted shortly. The Sports Centre had been delivered.

**Resolved:** That the update be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

## 6. **HOUSING TASK & FINISH WORKING GROUP REPORT**

The Vice Chair introduced an update on the progress made with the Housing Task & Finish Working Group. A final report was to be expected at the next meeting of the Committee.

Cllr Grocott commented that the meetings had been amicable and relevant information had been supplied by all housing providers contacted.

Cllr Edgington-Plunkett and Cllr Jones wished to thank the Vice Chair and the working group for the comprehensive report provided and the upcoming presentation by Aspire Housing.

**Resolved:** That the update be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

## 7. **BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN UPDATE**

The Deputy Leader introduced the update on the Borough Local Plan. The Service Director for Planning went through the report on the consultation carried out in relation to the first draft of the local plan.

The Vice Chair referred to the petitions received which were to be considered as part of the responses to the consultation.

Members asked questions and responses were provided as follows:

- Cllr Whieldon asked if proportionality had been taken into account when considering the number of complaints received and that of people who would actually be impacted. – Information was still being collated.
- Cllr Edgington-Plunkett asked that it be confirmed that the consultation feedback form and ways to respond were actually publicised as well as the timing of the events. – These were indeed publicised well in advance and ways to communicate had been made clear.
- Cllr Gorton asked about the decision to hold drop-in events. Was this format kept everywhere and what was the sort of feedback received from residents who attended the event? – Drop-in events allowed people who were not necessarily comfortable in more formal environments to meet with officers and ask questions on one-to-one basis.
- Cllr Gorton asked what information would be provided by officers at the next meeting – This could be discussed under the work programme item.
- Cllr Jones wondered about the consultees' responses. – Comments received could be viewed in different parts of the document with the category of consultees being identified.
- Cllr Grocott asked if there was available data about why some people were not able to access the consultation as well as confirmation that the responses provided would be used and not ignored. – It had been made clear that anyone struggling to use the portal could respond to the consultation by other means such as emails and letters. People had been engaging into the process and there was an inspection system in place to ensure responses were taken into account.

**Resolved:** That the update following consultation on the First Draft of the Borough Local Plan be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

## 8. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Vice Chair went through the work programme and reminded members that the Final Report of the Housing Task & Finish Working Group would be added as an agenda item to the next meeting of the committee.

A joint meeting would also be held with the Heath, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee when appropriate.

Cllr Gorton was invited to present his query again about what was to be expected from the Local Plan update. – The Deputy Leader responded that reports that had gone through Cabinet would be submitted to the Committee.

## ***Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee - 21/09/23***

Cllr Grocott asked that a written update be provided by the BID rather than keeping hoping they would come and make a presentation. – The Deputy Leader said he would asked the question, bearing in mind that the BID was an independent organisation.

**Resolved:** That the work programme be accepted with the Housing Task & Finish Working Group Final Report to be added.

[Watch the meeting here](#)

### **9. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions received from members of the public.

### **10. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent business.

**Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith  
Vice Chair**

Meeting concluded at 7.49 pm

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**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S  
REPORT TO  
ECONOMY AND PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE / FINANCE, ASSETS AND  
PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Report Title:**           Town Deal and Future High Street Funds Update

**Submitted by:**       Deputy Chief Executive

**Portfolios:**           Portfolio Holders - Finance, Town Centres and Growth

**Ward(s) affected:**   All

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To update Scrutiny Committee on the Town Deal and Future High Street Funds projects.	
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	
That	
1. <b>Scrutiny Committee notes this report on the delivery of the Town Deal and Future High Street Funds projects.</b>	
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>	
To update the Scrutiny Committee on the progress with the various projects that are being funded or part funded through the two Town Deals – Newcastle and Kidsgrove, and the Future High Street Funds for Newcastle Town Centre.	

**1. Background**

1.1 As reported to previous Scrutiny meetings, the Council has secured Future High Street Funding and Town Deal Funds for the redevelopment of several key regeneration sites across the Town Centre and the wider Borough.

**2. Updates**

2.1 Future High Street Fund

Work has been continuing in the development of the schemes for the past couple of years, and the current position regarding each is as follows:

2.1.1 Market improvements

Work has been underway to upgrade the market experience through enhancing the existing assets and adding in new customer experiences in under utilised spaces at the bottom of High Street. It is planned to replace the fabric tops to the existing market stalls and the relocation / removal of some of the stalls along the bottom end of High Street to create spaces for pop up stalls and remove the under utilised fixed stalls that have become obsolete, to create a performance / market spill-over space, along with 'nipper parking' for quick, click and collect customers in the town, who only need up to 20 minutes of parking. (Funding £397k).

#### 2.1.2 York Place

The Council purchased this site in March 2022 and secured planning consent in June 2023 for the demolition of the current building and rebuilding of a mixed-use development. Demolition works were due to commence in October 2023 but are on hold as the Council is currently investigating, with Capital and Centric, the retention of the main concrete frame and refurbishing the building around the retained frame. IT is currently envisaged that the project will contain residential units around an open courtyard, with offices in one 'wing' of the development. the Council is also looking at an entertainment venue as well as new commercial units on the ground floor for new restaurants and event spaces. It is anticipated that these will be developed and shared with the Council in mid-January 2024.(Funding £3m but anticipated to bring in a Capital receipt upon completion of the project).

#### Ryecroft

#### 2.1.3 Castle Car Park

Planning consent was secured in June 2023 and a contract for delivery has been let to Morgan Sindall. Preliminary construction commenced in October 2023. with the main works commencing for the 450 space modern car park in January 2024, completion is due in the Autumn 2024. (Funding £12m (£3.50m from FSHF)).

#### 2.1.4 McCarthy and Stone Residential Development

An area has now been agreed with McCarthy and Stone on the corner of Merrial Street and Corporation Street for a 50 unit, over 55 year old residential facility. Planning permission will be submitted in the new year with an anticipated start on site target date of mid 2024. (Capital receipt to be obtained for the land sale)

#### 2.1.5 New Hotel

A procurement exercise has been undertaken to secure a brand that the hotel will operate under. Accor Hotels and Resorts have been selected for their Ibis Styles range. Initial works have commenced on design concepts and specifications required by the brand, through Capital and Centric design feasibility works. (option to operate the hotel and secure revenue funds or to obtain a capital receipt at the end of the project).

#### 2.1.6 Aspire Housing

We are working with Aspire to establish a site boundary for them to develop out residential units. We anticipate that this work / site agreement will be finalised in the new year. (Capital receipt to be obtained for the land sale).

## 2.2 Capital and Centric and Regeneration Projects

2.2.1 Since the last Scrutiny meeting the Council has completed its appointment of Capital and Centric to produce outline feasibility studies for three of the Key Regeneration projects in the town centre – Ryecroft, York Place and the Midway Car Park.

2.2.2 Their appointment is in line with other projects that we have undertaken in that an initial study piece of work has been commissioned for the delivery of outline plans, initial cost estimates and programmes. These plans for the three projects are due to be presented to the Council in mid-January and then a decision will be made if these plans are affordable, desirable and deliverable. A subsequent Cabinet decision will then be made to appoint Capital and Centric to work up the schemes to a full planning application / approval stage, with fully costed and programmed schemes, for further approval should the Council decide to proceed.

2.2.3 Currently plans are being developed and only early plans have been discussed between all parties – the Council, Capital and Centric, Aspire Housing and McCarthy and Stone. To date there are no formal plans to share with the Scrutiny Committee, but it is anticipated that plans will be shared at the next meeting, if it is viable to proceed with Capital and Centric.

## 2.3 Newcastle Town Deal

### Midway Car Park

2.3.1 Upon completion of the Castle Car Park on the Ryecroft site, the Midway Car Park will become surplus to requirements and therefore alternative uses will need to be considered. Funds are allocated in the Town Deal for its demolition, and the site is earmarked for residential development.



The Council has agreed to work with developer Capital and Centric to develop plans and the development of a business case for the Midway Car Park site, with the intent to start on this project element later in 2024 when the new Castle Car Park has opened. Early-stage survey work has been completed which will inform the development proposals that are put forward by Capital and Centric. It is currently anticipated that the concrete frame will be retained and the new development will be built off this frame, whilst cutting through various sections / elements to accommodate light wells and lift shafts. (Funding £1m with a potential capital receipt at the end of the project).

### 2.3.2 Astley Performing Arts Centre



Since confirmation that DLUHC had approved this project in August 2023 work has been completed at pace. Refurbishment of the Merrial Street building is well advanced in time for the fit-out contractor to start on site on week commencing 11 December 2023 to install the display elements. The Philip Astley CIC are due to take control of the building before Christmas and are busy with their delivery plans. The Centre is due to open to the public in January 2024. That will complete phase 1 delivery of this project with phase 2 due to commence in 2025. (Funding £1.81m)

### 2.3.3 Knutton and Chesterton

#### Knutton



The Project Adjustment Request that was submitted to DLUHC was approved in September 2023. This was to remove housing outputs from Town Deal to enable Homes England funding to be attracted for residential development at the High Street and former Community Centre sites. In September 2023 Aspire Housing submitted a planning application for residential development at the High Street site, this is due to be considered in early 2024. <http://publicaccess.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/23/00771/FUL>

An application for the former community centre site is currently under development and is hoped to be submitted before Christmas.

Planning permission for the extension to the Enterprise Centre was granted in July 2023 <http://publicaccess.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/23/00138/FUL>. A grant funding agreement with Staffordshire County Council was completed in November 2023. Work is scheduled to start on site in March 2024.

In September 2023, the Borough Council authorised officers to develop plans for a village hall at High Street in Knutton to planning application stage. It is vital however that interest is attracted in forming a committee to run the village hall if this development is to progress.

The Council was successful in securing Football Foundation funding toward development of football changing rooms at the Wammy. Unfortunately, however the Council is in the position of having to re-tender for a contractor to build the changing rooms so the start on site for this project will be delayed until this is completed. (Funding £3.534m)

### Cross Street Chesterton



Aspire Housing are continuing to deliver the earlier housing phases of this development. Town Deal funding was requested for the later phases of delivery however it has been necessary to review outputs attributable to each funding provider to ensure the correct outputs are being attributed to each funding source. The Council is still working with Aspire to finalise details for a Project Adjustment Request (PAR), a draft PAR has been submitted to DLUHC for an initial review to inform what further work might need to be done to finalise this request. (Funding £2.955m)

#### 2.3.4 Zanzibar Enterprise Units

These are to be Council owned small enterprise units to rent to small and developing businesses on North Street. The development is part of the wider former Zanzibar Nightclub site, owned by Aspire Housing. Morgan Sindall have been appointed on a design and build basis to develop out the residential scheme that Aspire have plans for and these units will be constructed at the same time. Initial plans have been shared but are still being worked on. The development is due to start on site in 2024 with a planned completion date in late 2025. (Funding £2.81m)

#### 2.3.5 Walking and Cycling Provision

Works for these schemes has begun through Staffordshire County Council with cycling improvements implemented along George Street, at Gallowstree Roundabout and works will commence along Barracks Road in the new year. (Funding £950k)

#### 2.3.6 Sustainable Travel

Following planning permission to install Real Time Passenger Information Totems (RTPI) at Newcastle Bus Station, work has been undertaken to install the power feeds for these and a works licence has been granted for the installation of the totems. Minor works have been undertaken by Staffordshire County Council in Merrial Street to lift the tree canopies that were overcrowding the bus shelters in this area. Costs have been established for the installation of RTPI in these bus shelters and a grant funding agreement is to be done for both Merrial Street and a further phase of RTPI which is proposed to be installed at bus stops around the Newcastle Town Deal area. Staffordshire County Council has established the bus stops which have the highest weekly use and the proposed locations are based on this work:



Stop Name	Stage Name	Total Passengers
Queen Elizabeth Park	Newcastle	482
Cherry Tree PH	Newcastle	448
Sainsbury's	Newcastle	406
Library	Chesterton	396
The Parade	Silverdale	346
Shops	Knutton / Cross Heath	276
Home Farm Drive	Keele	274
Rotterdam Road	Poolfields	237
Sneyd Arms	Keele	216
Drayton Street	Pool Dam	203
Wain Avenue	Poolfields	193

In other elements of this project, the team at Keele University are progressing plans for the new bus entrance with the aim of it being opened for the start of the 2024/25 academic year. Further development work is to be done on proposals for the new circular bus route before it can be commissioned for operation. (Funding £3.421m)

### 2.3.7 Digital Society – 53 Iron Market (Keele in Town)



The team at Keele University has been pushing on with delivery of Keele in Town, with publicity around the submission for planning permission receiving a positive response in the local press. ([Keele in Town - Keele University](#)). Planning permission was granted in September 2023 <http://publicaccess.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/23/00635/FUL>. Following a competitive procurement process a demolition contractor has started the strip out of the building. Procurement of a fit-out contractor is well underway, and the successful contractor will start on site in early

2024. Further information sessions with local businesses and residents are planned for 2024 and Keele in Town is due to launch in October 2024. (Funding £3.51m).

### 2.3.8 EV Charging Points

Construction of the new Castle Car Park where the EV charging points are to be delivered is delayed slightly due to a key supplier to Morgan Sindall going into administration. Construction will now start in January 2024 with the car park and new EV charging points opening in autumn 2024. Procurement of a partner for operation of the EV charging points will commence in December 2023 so that they are in place ready for opening of Castle Car Park. (Funding £400k).

### 2.3.9 Digital infrastructure



In response to the rapidly changing digital infrastructure environment, the subgroup agreed that it would be beneficial to commission a specialist review to support delivery of this project. Following a competitive procurement process, Regional Network Solutions was appointed to undertake this work. Over 26 stakeholder interviews took place in October 2023, including a range of local partners and commercial fibre providers. A report with proposals for delivery is in draft form and will be discussed at a Board meeting to be scheduled for December 2023. (Funding £2.285m)

## 2.4 Kidsgrove Town Deal

### 2.4.1 Chatterley Valley

The Town Deal has paid for the highway / entrance works to the new site, which are currently underway, yet subject to some delay due to the contractor going into administration in late Summer. AMEY have been appointed to complete the works and have started on site. (Funding £3.7m).

The Council is also working with the land owner on the development of the overall site and there is a potential for the Council to invest in the site for commercial returns and regeneration of the site – to bring employment opportunities to the Borough as set out below:

**Plot D** - to construct a circa 120,000 sq. ft. unit which will be let to an advanced ceramics organisation and associated research facility,

**Plot C** - to construct a circa 78,000 sq. ft. of industrial space which will be, split into units ranging from 19,000 sq. ft to 33,000 sq. ft. When built these units will form part of the Council's non-operational (investment portfolio) and be leased out.

Both of these developments and Council investments were subject to Cabinet approval on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

Both schemes / investments came to Cabinet on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to seek approval to undertake an independent third party review of the investment business cases prior to any decision being made on taking the investments further.

### 2.4.2 Kidsgrove Train Station works

There is currently an issue with the costs of car park underpinning due to mine works underground, which are being worked through. Network Rail are looking into costs and scope of works required and there is a suggestion that the HS2 cancellation will result in funds being transferred to this issue. We are awaiting feedback on several fronts before the scheme can progress. (Funding £3.85m)

### 2.4.3 Canal Pathways

Works are being developed by the Canal and Rover Trust with implementation during 2024. (Funding £420k)

### 2.4.4 Shared Service Hub

A site for the development has now been selected alongside the station in Kidsgrove – the Dales Garage and adjacent Car Park sites. Plans are being drawn to provide a new facility for Dales Garage and create the space for the Shared Hub.

Works are underway with a planning application submitted and a CIC to manage and operate the facility. (Funding £6.5m)

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 Scrutiny Committee notes the progress made to date and continues to receive further reports at subsequent meetings.

### **4. Reasons**

- 4.1 Generating efficiencies and additional income by adopting a more commercial approach is a key in the Council's plans for maintaining financial sustainability in the medium to long term. The Commercial Strategy provides a framework for managing and coordinating commercial activities, it is appropriate that the Council reviews key major projects when they are at an appropriate stage of business planning and contract award.

### **5. Options Considered**

- 5.1 The Council continues to progress a number of strategies and approaches to ensure that it can maintain a financially sustainable future and deliver the key priorities set out in the Council plan.

### **6. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 2000 - powers to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the Borough.
- 6.2 The Council will need to make sure that its commercial activities are legally and state aid compliant, including having regard to the Public Sector Duty within the Equality Act 2010, statutory guidance on local authority investments and The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 6.3 All commercial projects and investment opportunities will be examined to ensure that they are within the Council's powers and legal implications will be identified on a case-by-case basis.

### **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 The development of these projects does not create any specific equality impacts.

### **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 The Council was awarded Future High Streets Fund funding in June 2021 of £11.0m to progress projects to help future economic growth. The full £11.0m has now been received of which £5.7m has been spent at 30 September 2023, as shown below:

Project	Award (£000's)	Spend/Ordered (£000's)	Remaining (£000's)
Ryecroft / Site Preparation	3,756	2,799	957
Multi Story Car Park	3,500	654	2,846
York Place	3,015	1,938	1,077
Stones Public Realm	321	-	321
Market Stalls	76	3	73
Project Management	380	260	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,048</b>	<b>5,654</b>	<b>5,394</b>

8.2 £23.6m was awarded to the Council via the Town Deals Fund for Newcastle to enable a vision to improve communications, infrastructure, and connectivity in Newcastle-under-Lyme to become a reality. £15.0m has been received to date of which £1.0m has been spent as shown below:

Project	Award (£000's)	Spend/Ordered (£000's)	Remaining (£000's)
Digital Infrastructure	2,285	-	2,285
Sustainable Public Transport	3,421	-	3,421
Electric Vehicle Charging	400	-	400
Pedestrian Cycle Permeability	950	-	950
Transform Key Gateway Sites	3,810	-	3,810
Astley Centre for Circus	1,810	12	1,798
Digital Society	3,510	273	3,237
Heart into Knutton Village	3,534	169	3,365
Cross Street, Chesterton	2,955	-	2,955
Project Management	925	529	396
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,600</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>22,617</b>

8.3 £16.9m has also been awarded via the Town Deals fund for Kidsgrove to enable real and lasting economic benefits to be realised in Kidsgrove and the surrounding area. To date £9.2m has been received of which £6.8m has been spent as shown below:

Project	Award (£000's)	Spend/Ordered (£000's)	Remaining (£000's)
Kidsgrove Sports Centre	2,328	2,328	-
Chatterley Valley West	3,661	3,661	-
Kidsgrove Station	3,638	182	3,456
Shared Services Hub	6,183	25	6,158
Canal Enhancement	420	-	420
Project Management	670	608	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,900</b>	<b>6,804</b>	<b>10,096</b>

## 9. Major Risks & Mitigation

9.1 Management of risk is central to the Council's commercial approach and all potential activities will be assessed with due regard to the risks being taken. This will be in line with the Council's corporate approach to risk management.

## 10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

10.1 These projects support the realisation of the following UNSDG objectives:-



## 11. Key Decision Information

11.1 The plans affect more than 2 wards and any future investments have the potential to have significant financial implications. These will be subject to further reports which may be key decisions.

## 12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

12.1 None.

## 13. List of Appendices

13.1 None.

## 14. Background Papers

14.1 None.

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S  
REPORT TO**

**ECONOMY AND PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**07 December 2023**

**Report Title:**            **Planning Enforcement and Performance**

**Submitted by:**        **Service Director Planning**

**Portfolios:**            **Strategic Planning**

**Ward(s) affected:**    **All**

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To report on the Council's planning enforcement regime and related performance in the past 12 months.	
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	
<b>That Committee:</b>	
1. <b>Notes the contents of this report</b>	
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>	
To note the organisational arrangements for undertaking planning enforcement at the Council and to receive information on planning enforcement activity that has taken place over the period September 2022 to October 2023. To also note the service and customer improvements that have been undertaken or are due to take place as part of current and planned service delivery.	

**1.    Background**

1.1    Planning enforcement is a discretionary power available to local planning authorities. As such national guidance advises that Council's approve and adopt a planning enforcement plan setting out their approach to enforcement matters for the benefit of residents, communities, business and the development industry.

- 1.2 The Council's Planning service regulates development within the Borough. Development can constitute physical building works ranging from the construction of small extensions and other minor works through to major schemes such as the construction of new factories and housing estates. In addition, development can comprise the change of use of land or buildings, for example the conversion of an office building to a block of flats.
- 1.3 A large proportion of development work in the Borough requires approval through the granting of planning permission, although some smaller works can be undertaken without the need to apply for consent from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) if they fall within the parameters of that which is deemed 'permitted development' pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. The legislation on permitted development is complex, in part because it addresses nearly all forms of development from household extensions through to infrastructure projects including highway and railway works and has been amended over the years.
- 1.4 Despite these opportunities existing for developers to secure approval through the appropriate legislation, there has historically been a low level of development in the Borough that does not benefit from consent either through an application to the Council being submitted and approved or through being permitted development. This work is unauthorised and therefore the LPA can consider whether enforcement action is necessary to remedy any breach that has occurred.
- 1.5 Whilst the Council has a range of powers to enforce against unauthorised development, the Government, in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the supplementary Planning Practice Guide, states that enforcement action is discretionary and LPAs should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control.

## **2 Issues**

- 2.1 Planning guidance states that all enforcement activity carried out by local planning authorities should be informed by an agreed Enforcement Policy/Plan. This plan should set out clearly how an Authority will respond to claimed breaches of planning control and what factors will be taken into account in determining whether or not to take any action after investigations have been carried out.
- 2.2 The Council has reviewed its existing Enforcement Policy to ensure that it is up to date – reflecting national guidance on good practice – and can be delivered to the satisfaction of members and the local community.
- 2.3 A new Enforcement Plan was agreed by Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and endorsed by Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023. This plan will guide enforcement activity going forward.

## ***Planning Enforcement and Performance***

### *Resources*

- 2.4 At the present time the Council has one dedicated Planning Enforcement Officer who sits within the Planning Services Development Management and Enforcement Team. That officer principally carries out investigations into claimed breaches of planning control and liaises with the Development Management Manager on actions to be taken following investigations.
- 2.5 In addition to the Enforcement Officer, Development Management Officers also carry an enforcement workload alongside dealing with planning applications and matters relating to the same.

### *Caseload*

- 2.6 Currently, the planning service has c200 cases it is actively dealing with. A recent review has resulted in a number of additional cases being closed down as these were of an historical nature. Just over half of the c200 cases are allocated to the Enforcement Officer with the remainder being picked up by Development Management Officers.
- 2.7 In the period September 2022 to October 2023 a total of 256 cases were recorded by the service. In the calendar years 2021 and 2022 the respective notifications were 279 and 213. In 2023 to date the figure is 213.

### *Performance*

- 2.8 Performance of the Council's enforcement function is monitored and reported on. There are no statutory performance measures however the Council does record and reports on the time taken to investigate a possible breach and then to respond back to the complainant set against specified timescales in the approved Enforcement Plan. As part of the Council's Performance Reporting Framework the aforementioned performance is reported on a quarterly basis with the current target being 75% within the stated timescales. The breakdown of performance per quarter for the 4 quarters between October 2022 and September 2023 is shown in **Appendix 1**, with a high of 74.6% and a low of 59.8%. The overall level of performance for the period October 2022 – September 2023 was 67.2% (172 out of 256 cases).
- 2.9 Not all claimed breaches of planning control are - following investigation - found to be breaches or are judged to be of a scale/nature that it is considered justifies action being taken. Only in certain circumstances are breaches therefore deemed to be 'actionable'. Many recorded cases as such can and are closed once they have been investigated.
- 2.10 In terms of formal action, where the Council deems it appropriate to progress from an investigation to enforcement this can take various forms. In many cases formal action is not required or instigated if a negotiated position can be reached or it is deemed that a proven breach is not sufficient to cause any material harm to local residents or environment. In the reporting period the

subject of this report the Council has served one planning contravention notice pending further issuing of notices, 2 Enforcement notices and 1 Listed Building Enforcement Notice.

- 2.11 It should be noted that investigating, assessing and then acting upon claimed breaches of control is not an easy process and also can be very time consuming, requiring officers to review what often can be lengthy and complicated planning histories and needing to verify in many cases what the actual breach is. Often a single site can generate a number of different breaches which all need to be considered. Having established whether or not a breach has occurred a judgement has to be made and this may involve a number of considerations. In undertaking enforcement work and carrying out all aspects, this is a demanding area of planning. It is important therefore that resources are used in the most efficient way and that as a Council we explain our approach toward enforcement clearly and suitably manage customer expectations.

### **Service Improvements**

- 2.12 In addition to a new Enforcement Plan, the planning service has also been reviewing its practices and looking at where it can make best use of resources to meet enforcement demands and improve the customer experience. Work streams to help identify new capacity to support the enforcement function and make the service easier to access and engage with have been developed as part of the Council's One Council Programme.
- 2.13 As a result of the One Council work improvements have been made to allow customers an easier and simpler way to notify the Council of potential breaches of planning control using online forms. Similarly, processes have been changed so that letters and other forms of notification can be sent out using IT systems – this lessens administrative demands in this area. To help customers understand better the powers and responsibilities of the Council when it comes to planning enforcement more information is going to be placed on the relevant Council webpages. It is hoped that this will reduce the number of enquiries that the planning service receives and has to respond to.
- 2.14 Another planned area of improvement is that of the use of mobile tablets which will allow officers to undertake site visits and access information and input data direct whilst out on site visits, saving time and hence improving productivity. Freeing up resources to enable claimed breaches to be investigated is also part of the revisions to the Enforcement Plan.
- 2.15 A further area where it is intended to bring forward improvements is in the recording of information in respect of breaches and related enforcement actions, this would allow the service to respond better to member enquiries but also those that come via external customers including through Freedom of Information requests. This work is in hand.

### *Concluding comments*

- 2.16 Planning enforcement is a topic which generates a lot of interest and debate within Council's and their respective local communities. The position is the

same in Newcastle Borough. There is a general feeling that where we have a planning system which seeks to regulate and control the development and use of land in the public interest all bodies – whether private individuals, organisations or businesses – should abide by the rules in the spirit of fairness and equity, respecting the interests of the wider public and the local environment. That said only in prescribed circumstances is it actually illegal to be in breach of planning controls and as stated at the beginning of this report planning enforcement is not in itself a mandatory requirement, local planning authorities have the ability to review and determine whether a breach has or hasn't taken place and even then have a degree of flexibility as regards whether or not to take action.

- 2.17 As Council members have made it clear that they expect residents and businesses to comply with the provisions of the planning system and not breach planning controls in the Borough. Where this does not happen and clear and obvious harm is seen to take place then actions will be taken to remedy matters.

### **3 Recommendation**

- 3.1 That the Committee notes the contents of this report.

### **4 Reasons**

- 4.1 That the Committee receives information on planning enforcement activity and reviews performance.

### **5 Options Considered**

- 5.1 Not Applicable

### **6 Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The principal legislation underpinning planning enforcement is enshrined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and related amendments. A raft of other associated legislation does however also apply in certain areas/forms eg. The Localism Act 2011. The main policy guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and related National Planning Policy Guidance.

### **7 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 The Council's approved Enforcement Policy and its subsequent implementation through the activities of the Authority are intended to address issues around unauthorised development. The approach advocated does not consider nor should it the individual perpetrators (alleged or otherwise) of such development nor seek to show bias toward or against any particular residents or local communities that are impacted.

## 8 Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 The costs of undertaking investigations and any related enforcement action(s) are intended to be met within existing Planning Service budgets.

## 9 Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 The risk of being challenged on the Council's approach towards planning enforcement is mitigated by having an up to date and relevant Enforcement Plan. A new plan has recently been approved and adopted. The expectations of local residents and communities as to if, when and how enforcement activity will take place is a matter to be managed and informed by the aforementioned plan. Being clear and consistent in assessing cases and reaching decisions will be the key here.

## 10 UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

- 10.1 The planning system acts to provide for suitable and sustainable development that meets justified needs. Planning Enforcement powers allow local planning authorities to investigate breaches of planning control including developments which may not be sustainable in themselves or adversely affect the environment of a locality and living conditions.



## 11 Key Decision Information

- 11.1 Not Applicable

## 12 Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

- 12.1 Cabinet agreed a new Enforcement Policy at its meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023. [Decisions 19th-Sep-2023 16.00 Cabinet.pdf \(newcastle-staffs.gov.uk\)](#)
- 12.2 Council endorsed the new Policy and formally adopted it at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023.

### **13 List of Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1 Enforcement Performance October 2022 – September 2023

### **14 Background Papers**

14.1 None

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Planning Enforcement Performance – October 2022 – September 2023

	Quarter			Quarter			Quarter			Quarter			Actual
	Oct-	Dec	2022	Jan-	Mar	2023	Apr-	Jun	2023	July-	Sept	2023	Perf.
	No.	Total	%/No.	(01.10.2022 - 30.09.2023)									
% of complainants informed	01.10.22	to	31.12.22	01.01.23	to	31.03.23	01.04.23	to	30.06.23	01.07.23	to	30.09.23	
within required timescale of any	28	46	60.9%	36	61	59.0%	58	82	70.7%	50	67	74.6%	67.2%
action to be taken	28	46	60.9%	64	107	59.8%	122	189	64.6%	172	256	67.2%	

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**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S  
REPORT TO**

**ECONOMY AND PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**07 December 2023**

**Report Title: Borough Local Plan Update**

**Submitted by: Deputy Chief Executive**

**Portfolios: Strategic Planning**

**Ward(s) affected: All**

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To provide an update on the Borough Local Plan.	
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	
That Committee:	
1. <b>Members note the update on the progress of developing a Borough Local Plan</b>	
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>	
To provide an update on the progress of developing a Local Plan. To ensure that the process of adopting a Local Plan is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).	

**1.    Background**

- 1.1    The Local Plan sets the vision and framework for how the Borough will grow up to 2040. It sets out targets for the number of jobs and homes to be delivered in the Borough and a spatial strategy to guide development to the most sustainable locations.
- 1.2    The Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on the 12 December 2022, requested that a standing item be added to future meeting agendas to provide an update on the current position with regards to the emerging Borough Local Plan.
- 1.3    As was previously reported, consultation on the First Draft Local Plan ended on the 14th of August 2023. At the last Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee (21 September), a report was received on the consultation process undertaken and the main headline topics that have been commented on by respondents.

## 2. Issues

- 2.1 During the consultation on the First Draft Local Plan, the Council received: -
- 5,159 comments from 1,378 consultees registered on our consultation portal
  - 13 comments on the Sustainability Appraisal from 11 consultees registered on our consultation portal
  - 18 comments on the Habitats Regulation Assessment from 14 consultees registered on our consultation portal

- 2.2 There have also been four recorded petitions submitted to the consultation, these include: -

- “Request NULBC to Review Housing Targets for Local Plan”. As at the 14 November, 1,857 people have signed the online petition (this petition was considered at Full Council on the 26 July 2023).
- ‘Save your Newchapel and Harriseahead Green Belt from housing development’ (sites NC77 and NC13) with 88 signatures currently.
- “Housing proposals at Red Street, High Carr Farm, Talke Pitts, Butt Lane, West Avenue and Congleton Road”. This petition claims that infrastructure cannot take that level of development in such a small area and alleges that there are no plans for additional schools or GP surgeries with over 500 signatures.
- ‘Save Hassell Street Car Park’ submitted by several local businesses on Hassell Street, Newcastle entitled with over 450 signatures

- 2.3 Several key themes have been identified through the consultation responses although it should be noted that detailed analysis of consultation responses will be reported to Cabinet in early 2024. These include: -

- That the overall housing numbers should be re-calculated and are either too high or too low
- That brownfield sites should be prioritised in the Plan
- That further work is needed to understand the infrastructure requirements of the Local Plan
- Concerns expressed over the need and justification for Green Belt release

Further feedback on the strategic employment sites. The outcome of the consultation will now inform the next stages of Local Plan preparation.

- 2.4 Cabinet considered a report on the Draft Borough Local Plan on the 17 October 2023 and resolved the following: -

- That the update following consultation on the First Draft of the Borough Local Plan be noted;
- That the Local Development Scheme 2023-2026 be published to confirm that the Council intends to prepare a Final Draft (Regulation 19 stage) of the Local Plan by Summer 2024;
- That approval be given to allocate £300,000 from the Budget Support Fund to fund the Local Plan programme.

- 2.5 The update on the consultation provided to Cabinet on the 17 October was similar in content to that provided to this Committee on the 21 September 2023.
- 2.6 The Local Development Scheme sets out the timetable for Local Plan making in the Borough. The report to Cabinet on the 17 October 2023 notes that the intention is to move to the final draft of the Local Plan (called the Regulation 19 version) and seek approval, to consult on the Final Draft Local Plan in the summer of 2024 (indicatively at Full Council on the 24 July 2024). This is with the aim of submitting the Local Plan for examination by the end of 2024.
- 2.7 Cabinet also approved funds to support the continuation of Local Plan programme (to the order of £300,000) through to July 2024. The intention of the funds is to provide additional consultancy support on items associated with the completion of a Local Plan. This will include updates to our existing evidence base and / or commissioning of further evidence in the light of consultation responses received.
- 2.8 An item has also been added to the forward plan for Cabinet to consider a report on the 16 January 2024 on the consultation outcomes from the First Draft Local Plan.

### 3. **Recommendation**

- 3.1 To provide an update on the progress of developing a Borough Local Plan.

### 4. **Reasons**

- 4.1 To provide an update on the progress of developing a Local Plan. To ensure that the process of adopting a Local Plan is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

### 5. **Options Considered**

- 5.1 The Council has already expressed its clear intention through its Local Development Scheme and through the progress of a Local Plan to date that it intends to put in place a comprehensive set of up-to date planning policies for the Borough.
- 5.2 The option of not to proceed with a Local Plan and to cease work is not considered a reasonable option as;
- i. the Council has a statutory duty to prepare development plan documents.
  - ii. to ensure that the existing development plan is updated so that our planning decisions reflect current policies and best practice
  - iii. the possibility without a forward supply of development sites that the Council fails to demonstrate a 5-year land supply. This would result in planning applications being determined in line with the presumption of sustainable development.

### 6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

**6.1** In accordance with section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) the Council has a statutory duty to prepare planning policies and maintain an up to-date development plan. Secondary legislation contained in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 provides additional guidance on Plan making.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

**7.1** The Local Plan will be supported by an Equality Impact Assessment. This will consider how development proposed and planning policies impact on different groups within the community.

## **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

**8.1** The preparation of the Local Plan is resourced through the Planning Policy budget. The report taken to Cabinet on the 17 October 2023 noted how further funding was required to support the development of the Local Plan. This has been agreed with an additional £300,000 from the budget support fund to deliver the Local Plan.

## **9. Major Risks & Mitigation**

**9.1** Changes in National Policy, Legislation and Guidance - The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act now has Royal Assent. The Act will have implications for the formulation of Local Plans. The Government has outlined that Councils have until 30 June 2025 for old style Plans to be submitted for examination (to be adopted by 31 December 2026). Alongside this, the government has consulted on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. This may result in changes to the approach to Plan making, particularly in respect of the Green Belt. Again, this position will be kept under review. Transitional arrangements are likely to apply and implications of any changes to the approach and content of the Local Plan will be kept under review.

## **10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

**10.1** As the Local Plan is primarily focused on the use of land, overall levels of growth and the relationship to the environment and infrastructure then several of the UN Sustainable Development Goals will overlap with the aims of the Plan.



## 11. Key Decision Information

11.1 This report provides an update on the Borough Local Plan. Decision reports associated with the formal consultation and submission of the Local Plan will affect all wards in the Borough.

## 12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

12.1 Cabinet – 6 June 2023 – Cabinet decision to consult on the First Draft Local Plan - [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 6th June, 2023, 2.00 pm – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council \(newcastle-staffs.gov.uk\)](https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/agenda/2023/06/06/)

12.2 Cabinet – 17 October 2023 – update following consultation on the First Draft Local Plan and consideration of Local Development Scheme - [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 17th October, 2023, 2.00 pm – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council \(newcastle-staffs.gov.uk\)](https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/agenda/2023/10/17/)

## 13. List of Appendices

13.1 N/A

## 14. Background Papers

14.1 Local Development Scheme (2023 – 2026) - [Local Development Scheme 2023-2026 \(newcastle-staffs.gov.uk\)](https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/agenda/2023/06/06/)

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**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO**  
**Economy Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee**  
**07 December 2023**

**Report Title:** Social Housing within the Borough Newcastle under Lyme Housing Task and Finish Group

**Submitted by:** Service Director – Regulatory Services

**Portfolios:** Community Safety and Wellbeing

**Ward(s) affected:** All Wards

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To provide an update to the Committee about the activities of the Housing Task and Finish Group, which was formed to assess Social Housing within the Borough.			
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>			
That Committee:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Takes note of the report that has been prepared (Appendix A), which sets out the activities of the Housing Task and Finish Group to date.</li> <li>2. Considers the three recommendations made by the Group and to provide guidance, as to when and by which date the recommendations should be enacted.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As significant enhancement works are being proposed by the RP's, in terms of energy efficiency and mitigating risks such as damp and mould, it makes sense to assess the condition of the housing stock once these improvements have been made.</li> <li>2. Aspire Housing has agreed, at the request of the Working Group, they would be willing to give a presentation, via TEAMS (available for all Councillors), to enable Councillors to hear what progress was being made to improve their housing stock and their response times, along with information on the reporting mechanisms and the complaints escalation process.</li> <li>3. The Committee resolves that in the near future, (within 12 months) to take stock of how the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the new, proactive consumer regulation regime is being embedded within the working of Registered Providers.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>			
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>			
The Housing Task and Finish Group was formed at the request of the Economy, Environment & Place Scrutiny Committee. Therefore, it is appropriate for the Committee to note the report and the recommendations contained within it.			

## 1. **Background**

- 1.1 An Inception meeting for the Housing Task & Finish Group was held on the 8th March 2023.
- 1.2 The working group was formed with the aim of focussing on social housing provisions in the borough. It was composed of members who all have different experiences and backgrounds who would contribute to the objective.
- 1.3 The rationale for the focus on social housing, was the acknowledgement it represents an important function; as low income and vulnerable households within our communities require such housing. There was a recent national focus on conditions ('damp and mould') in England's social housing, (following a tragic death in Rochdale in November 2022)
- 1.4 The approach of the Group was to initially request by way of background, a number of reports from officers which would set out:
  - a) information about the social housing within the Borough and
  - b) the regulatory framework for social housing.
- 1.5 This was to be followed by a 'call for evidence' to all Registered Providers, asking them to provide a focussed insight into key issues of social housing, by way of open questions. The questions related to complaints made to the Housing Ombudsman, challenges of retrofitting and remediating their housing stock, their relationship with the Social Housing Regulator and any future challenges.
- 1.6 A presentation and a hearing before the Task and Finish Group by Aspire Housing, by virtue of it being the largest provider within the Borough was also made.

## 2. **Issues**

- 2.1 A detailed report has been prepared and is included as an appendix, which sets out in detail the activities of the Housing Task and Finish Group and the issues related to Social Housing within the Borough which it has considered.
- 2.2 To avoid repetition, the details contained within the report have not been included here within and the Committee is asked to refer to the appended report.

## 3. **Recommendations**

### 3.1 That Committee:

1. Takes note of the report that has been prepared, which sets out the activities of the Housing Task and Finish Group to date.
2. Considers the three recommendations made by the Group and to provide guidance, as to when and by which date the recommendations should be enacted.
  1. As significant enhancement works are being proposed by the RP's, in terms of energy efficiency and mitigating risks such as damp and mould, it makes sense to assess the condition of the housing stock once these improvements have been made.

2. Aspire Housing has agreed, at the request of the Working Group, they would be willing to give a presentation, via TEAMS (available for all Councillors), to enable Councillors to hear what progress was being made to improve their housing stock and their response times, along with information on the reporting mechanisms and the complaints escalation process.
3. The Committee resolves that in the near future, (within 12 months) to take stock of how the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the new, proactive consumer regulation regime is being embedded within the working of Registered Providers.

#### **4. Reasons**

- 4.1 The above recommendations are considered logical next steps, with respect to the activities undertaken by the Housing Task and Finish Group. Aspire Housing, by virtue of it being the largest provider of social housing within the Borough fulfils an important role and the Committee should be kept aware of its performance. The Committee should also be attuned to the impact of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

#### **5. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 5.1 The local authority has to “periodically review the housing needs of its area in relation to housing conditions and the needs of the district” (Housing Act 1985).
- 5.2 The Housing Act 1996 places a number of statutory duties on a local authority; broadly, the duties relate can be categorised into:
  - i) allocating social housing;
  - ii) providing housing information and advice and
  - iii) preventing and resolving homelessness.

#### **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 No differential impact arises from the proposals contained in this report.

#### **7. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications. Officers and Members resources will need to be directed to implementing the recommendations if agreed by the Committee.

#### **8. Major Risks & Mitigation**

- 8.1 If the recommendations were not implemented, there may be reputational damage.

#### **9. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

- 9.1 The proposal contributes to the following UN Sustainable Goals:



**10. Key Decision Information**

10.1 None

**11. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

11.1 None

**12. List of Appendices**

- 12.1 Appendix A - Housing Task and Finish Group Social Housing within Newcastle under Lyme  
Appendix 1: Housing Duties Report.  
Appendix 2: Regulation of Social Housing.  
Appendix 3: Housing Task and Finish Working Group - regulation of social housing.  
Appendix 4: Private Sector Housing Activities Report

**13. Background Papers**

13.1 None

# **Housing Task and Finish Group**

## **Social Housing within Newcastle under Lyme**

### **Introduction**

The Housing Task and Finish Group was established on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

The membership of the group consisted of:

- Councillor David Hutchison
- Councillors Bettley-Smith
- Councillor Grocott
- Councillor Holland
- Councillor Moffat

In recognition of the importance of social housing, specifically for low income and vulnerable households who require affordable housing and national focus on damp and mould in England's social housing, (following a tragic death in Rochdale in November 2022) the Group was instructed, by the Scrutiny Committee, to examine the condition of and regulation of social housing in the Borough.

### **Approach**

The approach of the Group was to initially request by way of background, a number of reports from officers which would set out:

- i) information about the social housing within the Borough and
- ii) regulatory framework for social housing.

These reports are contained at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

This was to be followed by a 'call of evidence' to all Registered Providers, asking them to provide a focussed insight into key issues of social housing, by way of open questions. The questions related to complaints made to the Housing Ombudsman, challenges of retrofitting and remediating their housing stock, their relationship with the Social Housing Regulator and any future challenges. The call for evidence has been included at Appendix 3.

A presentation and a hearing before the Task and Finish Group was undertaken by Aspire Housing, the largest provider within the Borough.

### **What we found**

Social housing is delivered at below-market rates by Registered Providers (RPs). There are 19 providers of social housing within the Borough. The total number of social homes is 9,909 comprising 8,687 general needs homes, 948 special homes (supported or older people accommodation) and 274 Low cost Homes. The majority of providers oversee a small number of units. Those with a significant number of properties are Aspire Housing, Honeycomb Group Ltd and Sanctuary Housing Association.

The Council itself is not a stock holding authority and social housing is provided by Registered Social Landlords that are not-for-profit organisations that own, let, and manage rented housing. The distinction between social rented properties and those rented privately is that social homes are more affordable and provide a more secure, long-term tenancy.

The Council has developed a Housing Allocations Policy. This has been done jointly and in partnership with Aspire Housing, who are the largest housing provider within the Borough.

The Council operates a choice based letting scheme and applicants accepted onto the housing register may express an interest in (bid for) a social home when a suitable one becomes available.

The Housing Allocation policy, and the housing register is the way to determine priorities for allocating social housing and ensuring that the allocation of social housing to the people who need it the most. The policy determines if they are eligible and qualify for social housing. If they do qualify for social housing they will join the council's housing register.

### **Condition of Social Housing**

The Local Authority is required to “to know about the condition of all housing stock in its area and to keep the housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken under various specified pieces of legislation”.

The Local Authority has duties and powers to take action to deal with properties that have certain hazards. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a system that local authorities use to assess housing conditions.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System applies to all tenures. Primarily, the local authority assesses private sector properties, as private landlords are not regulated, the propensity for hazards to be present are more likely. Notwithstanding this, the system can be used to assess social housing properties. However, registered social landlords are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing.

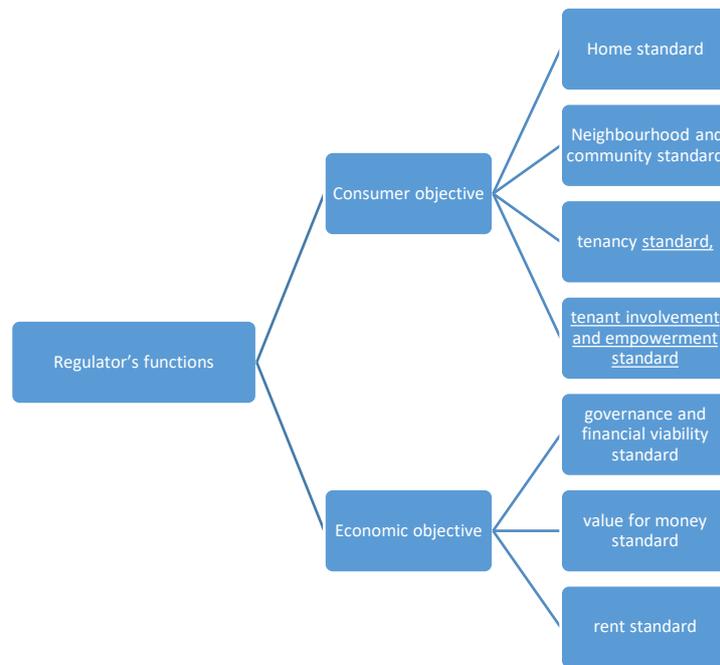
Our Officers are aware of an acute focus on ‘damp and mould in England’s social housing, following a tragic death in Rochdale in November 2022. Following this, a series of actions were initiated;

- i) the Social Housing Regulator asked all larger social landlords to submit evidence about the extent of damp and mould in tenants’ homes they were responsible for and their approach to tackling it.
- ii) On the 19th November 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities wrote to all the Local Authority Chief Executive and council leaders, directing them under section 3(3) of the Act, that all local housing authorities review housing conditions. The Borough Council responded to this directive and made a submission on the 29th November 2022.

### **Regulation of Social Housing**

In 2018, the Government established the Regulator of Social Housing, created from the Homes and Communities Agencies). The regulator’s functions are set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

An infographic sets out the Regulator’s Functions;



The consumer objective is to: support the provision of social housing that is well-managed and of appropriate quality; ensure that actual or potential tenants of social housing have an appropriate degree of choice and protection; ensure tenants of social housing have the opportunity to be involved in its management and to hold their landlords to account; and encourage registered providers of social housing to contribute to the environmental, social and economic well-being of the areas in which the housing is situated.

The economic objective; the second of the two fundamental objectives under the 2008 Act is to: ensure that registered providers “are financially viable and properly managed, and perform their functions efficiently and economically”; support the provision of social housing sufficient to meet reasonable demands (including by encouraging and promoting private investment in social housing); ensure that value for money is obtained from public investment in social housing; ensure that an unreasonable burden is not imposed (directly or indirectly) on public funds; and guard against the misuse of public funds

The regulator’s approach to regulating consumer standards has been found to be unsatisfactory. In a Parliamentary Select Committee report <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/23116/documents/169311/default/> it was noted; that the regulator, with respect to the consumer objective; “interprets its duty to minimise intervention and act proportionately to mean that it should only find a provider non-compliant with the consumer standards if it also finds evidence of systemic failure. The application of this ‘systemic failure’ test has resulted in perhaps the most passive consumer regulatory regime permissible under the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.”

**Social Housing Ombudsman**

The role of the Social Housing Ombudsman is to investigate and resolve disputes between tenants and providers who are members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme (all housing associations and local housing authorities (councils) must be a member of the Scheme).

For the 19 RSL’s operating within Newcastle under Lyme, the following table lists the number of cases determined between 1 April 2021 and March 2022.

Alpha (R.S.L.) Limited	<5
Anchor Hanover Group	26
Aspire Housing Limited	<5 (2 determinations)
Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Ltd	<5
Brighter Futures Housing Association Limited	<5
Choices Housing Association Limited	<5
Clarion Housing Association Limited	145 (109,545 properties)

Empowering People Inspiring Communities Limited	<5
Golden Lane Housing Limited	<5
GreenSquareAccord Limited	18 (20878 properties)
Honeycomb Group Limited	<5 – (0 determinations)
Housing 21	5 (18881 properties)
Midland Heart Limited	30 (29814 properties)
Plus Dane Housing Limited	6 (13228 properties)
Sage Housing Limited	<5
Sanctuary Housing Association	50 (80790 properties)
The Guinness Partnership Limited	41 (61,414 properties)
The Riverside Group Limited	27 (52716 properties)
The Wrekin Housing Group Limited	<5

It should be noted that the majority of providers have a small number of units within the Borough and operate across a multiple number of local authority boundaries. Those with a significant number of properties within the Borough are Aspire Housing, Honeycomb Group Ltd and Sanctuary Housing Association.

### **Call to Evidence**

The call for evidence requesting the Registered Providers [RPs] to provide information related to a number of issues, which were set out as open questions. This request was sent to all the Registered Providers [RPs] who have housing stock within the Borough.

Nine registered providers responded and provided written submissions. Although, each of the RPs responded independently, (addressing issues specific to their own experiences), generally, the sector is attuned to the requirements related to fire safety and carbon neutrality, which would require retrofitting and remediation. Registered providers have alluded to a challenging environment, with the economy experiencing interest rate increases and inflationary pressures.

Following the submission of written responses as part of the Call for Evidence, the Group met with Aspire Housing on 13 September 2023, the largest provider within the Borough.

Following a comprehensive presentation by Aspire Housing, the Group was unanimous in its view that the condition of Aspire Housing stock is much better than what was initially perceived, when the group was set up, in response to concerns raised by some Councillors.

The situation is significantly better and there is a considerable amount of work in progress to enhance the quality of the housing stock, along with proactive measures to deal with damp and mould. Additionally, reporting mechanisms and response times to repair requests are being improved.

### **Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023**

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act received royal assent in July 2023. It has three core objectives which are to facilitate a new, proactive consumer regulation regime; to refine the existing economic regulatory regime; and to strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing's (Regulator) powers to enforce the consumer and economic regimes.

It is envisaged that the Act will bring about the following changes;

- strengthening the Regulator of Social Housing to carry out regular inspections of the largest social housing providers and the power to issue unlimited fines to rogue social landlords
- additional Housing Ombudsman powers to publish best practice guidance to landlords following investigations into tenant complaints
- powers to set strict time limits for social landlords to address hazards such as damp and mould
- new qualification requirements for social housing managers
- introducing stronger economic powers to follow inappropriate money transactions outside of the sector

In conjunction with the Act, the Regulator of Social Housing launched a consultation on draft consumer standards, which closed in October 2023. The results of the consultation will be known in due course.

### **Private Rented Sector**

While the Housing Task and Finish Group was primarily focused on social housing, a report on the private rented sector accommodation was also submitted by way of comparison and is included as an Appendix 4.

### **Recommendations**

- 1. As significant enhancement works are being proposed by the RP's, in terms of energy efficiency and mitigating risks such as damp and mould, it makes sense to assess the condition of the housing stock once these improvements have been made.**
- 2. Aspire Housing has agreed, at the request of the Working Group, they would be willing to give a presentation, via TEAMS (available for all Councillors), to enable Councillors to hear what progress was being made to improve their housing stock and their response times, along with information on the reporting mechanisms and the complaints escalation process.**
- 3. The Committee resolves that in the near future, (within 12 months) to take stock of how the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the new, proactive consumer regulation regime is being embedded within the working of Registered Providers.**

**Appendix 1: Housing Duties Report.**

**Appendix 2: Regulation of Social Housing.**

**Appendix 3: Housing Task and Finish Working Group - regulation of social housing.**

**Appendix 4: Private Sector Housing Activities Report.**

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# **Statutory Housing Duties**

## **Introduction**

The Housing Task and Finish Group's Inception Meeting was held on the 8th March 2023. A 'baseline' report, which would pull together key information about the statutory housing duties which are placed on the local authority and, contextual information about the performance of these housing function by the Council would be of assistance to the Committee in developing a work programme.

Given the expansiveness of the housing duties, it is envisaged that this will be the first in a series of reports that will be presented to the Committee. Therefore, consciously, the 'statistics' used within the report aim to provide context and not to acutely focus on any specific issue, albeit, future reports may look to zone into specific areas.

## **Statutory Housing Duties**

Local authorities are bound by statute. Their functions are set out in numerous Acts of Parliament and many of these functions have associated legal duties. In 2011, the government agreed with the Local Government Association that it should compile a list of these duties to give clarity about what these are.

On 30 June 2011, a list of duties were published, enabling a clearer picture of the requirements on local authorities. For sake of comprehensiveness, a link to this list is attached.

For the purposes of this report, the 'housing duties' are the focus.

It should be noted, that the Borough Council is not a stock holding authority. It carried out a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) of its housing stock, (Council Homes) to a company called Newcastle Housing Ltd (subsequently renamed Aspire Housing) in 2000.

Therefore, statutory housing duties related to local authorities who own stock has been omitted from this report. For ease of understanding, rather than listing the housing duties, an infographic has been produced and the duties have been broadly classified as; i) Meeting and assessing housing needs, ii) Provision of Housing Advice and Homelessness Services and iii) Improving Private Sector Housing.

## Meeting & Assessing Housing Needs

Periodically review the housing needs of its area in relation to housing conditions and the needs of the district (Housing Act 1985 Section 8)

To consider caravan site licence applications submitted by applicants. (Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 Section 3)

To provide facilities for disabled persons in dwellings (Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996)

Duty of local housing authority to formulate a homelessness strategy (Homelessness Act 2002)

Duty of local housing authority to formulate and publish a housing strategy [not actually commenced (Local Government Act 2003, Part 7)

## Housing Advice & Homelessness

Secure that advice and information is available free of charge to persons in their district about the right to make an application for an allocation of accommodation.

Have an allocation scheme, publish a summary of it and allocate housing accommodation in accordance with the scheme.

Duty to make inquiries into cases of homelessness or threatened homelessness

Interim duty to accommodate in case of apparent need

Duty to persons becoming homeless

Duties in case of threatened homelessness

Duty of local housing authority to provide advisory services

## Private Sector Housing

Keep the housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken under various specified pieces of legislation

Inspect premises in specified circumstances with a view to establishing whether there is a "hazard".

Take appropriate enforcement action where a category 1 hazard exists.

Consult with the fire and rescue authority for the area where a fire hazard exists before taking enforcement action.

Revoke improvement notice and prohibition order, as appropriate, in specified circumstances.

Mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

### **Meeting and Assessing Housing Need.**

**The local authority has to “periodically review the housing needs of its area in relation to housing conditions and the needs of the district” (Housing Act 1985 Section).** This function is to ensure that local authorities understand the housing needs of their communities. Further legislation requires that when authorities carry out a review under s. 8, that they have regard to the special needs of chronically sick or disabled persons (section 3 of Chronically Sick and Disabled Person's Act 1970, as amended) and carry out reviews of accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers residing in or resorting to their district (s. 224, Housing Act 2004).

This is complimented by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which requires local planning authorities (LPAs) to have a clear understanding of the housing needs in their area, the scale and mix of housing and range of housing tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.

On 13 January 2021 the Council resolved to undertake a new local plan for the borough, which would set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure, as well as a basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places. The plan is produced in a number of stage.

**The local authority has “to consider caravan site licence applications submitted by applicants. (Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 Section 3),** which is to license all privately owned residential caravan sites (including park home sites) and holiday sites to ensure they are fit for purpose.

**The local authority has to provide facilities for disabled persons in dwellings (Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996).** This mandates that local authorities give grants to disabled persons (subject to means testing and up to a prescribed maximum) to allow them to adapt their homes to meet their needs.

In 2017 Newcastle-under-Lyme joined a Staffordshire County Council led procurement exercise for Staffordshire Independent Living Service (SILIS), a Home Improvement Agency that would deliver DFGs throughout the county. This contract to provide the Disabled Facilities Grants, was awarded to Millbrook Healthcare Limited in 2018 and ends on 31st March 2023. The contract will not be extended nor will the service be recommissioned by Staffordshire County Council, with the service to be delivered directly by the Council.

**The local authority has a duty to formulate and publish homelessness strategy (Homelessness Act 2002)** at least every 5 years and take it into account in discharging its functions. Complimenting this, is the requirement to formulate a **housing strategy**, which would set out a vision for housing in its area, including objectives, targets and policies on how the authority intends to manage and deliver its strategic housing role. The Strategy provides an overarching framework against which the authority considers and formulates other policies on more specific housing issues.

The Borough Council has an up to date published Homelessness strategy and a Housing Strategy. These policies are available on <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/directory/2/policies-and-strategies/category/12>

### Housing Allocations and Homelessness

The Housing Act 1996 places a number of statutory duties on a local authority; broadly, the duties relate can be categorised into i) allocating social housing ii) providing housing information and advice and iii) preventing and resolving homelessness.

The local authority has **“to ensure that advice and information is available free of charge to persons in their district about the right to make an application for an allocation of accommodation and to have an allocation scheme, publish a summary of it and allocate housing accommodation in accordance with the scheme.”**

The Housing Allocation policy, and the housing register is the way to determine priorities for allocating social housing and ensuring that the allocation of social housing to the people who need it the most. The policy determines if they are eligible and qualify for social housing. If they do qualify for social housing they will join the council’s housing register.

The Council has developed a Housing Allocations Policy. This has been done jointly and in partnership with Aspire Housing, who are the largest housing provider within the Borough. The policy is currently being reviewed, after being applied for a period of 24 months.

The Council is not a stock holding authority and social housing is provided by Registered Social Landlords that are not-for-profit organisations that own, let, and manage rented housing. The distinction between social rented properties and those rented privately is that social homes are more affordable and provide a more secure, long-term tenancy.

There are 19 providers of social housing within the Borough. The total number of social homes are 9,909. There 8,687 general needs homes, 948 special homes (supported or older people accommodation) and 274 Low cost Homes. The majority of providers have a small number of units. Those with a significant number of properties are Aspire Housing, Honeycomb Group Ltd and Sanctuary Housing Association.

<u>Names of RSL</u>	<u>Total Social Stock</u>	<u>% Total Social Stock in area</u>
Alpha (R.S.L.) Limited	71	0.7%
Anchor Hanover Group	41	0.4%
Aspire Housing Limited	8,103	81.8%
Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Ltd	4	0.0%
Brighter Futures Housing Association Limited	6	0.1%
Choices Housing Association Limited	8	0.1%
Clarion Housing Association Limited	79	0.8%
Empowering People Inspiring Communities Limited	35	0.4%
Golden Lane Housing Limited	6	0.1%

GreenSquareAccord Limited	2	0.0%
Honeycomb Group Limited	521	5.3%
Housing 21	63	0.6%
Midland Heart Limited	23	0.2%
Plus Dane Housing Limited	4	0.0%
Sage Housing Limited	41	0.4%
Sanctuary Housing Association	772	7.8%
The Guinness Partnership Limited	5	0.1%
The Riverside Group Limited	9	0.1%
The Wrekin Housing Group Limited	116	1.2%
	9,909	100%

Under section 170 of the 1996 Housing Act, it is a requirement of registered providers to co-operate with the Local Authority as much as is reasonable in offering accommodation to people with priority from under the Local Authority's allocation scheme. The Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards 2015 sets out the requirement to cooperate with the Local Authorities strategic housing function.

Private registered providers of social housing (PRPSH) usually allocate an agreed level of properties that become available within the Borough to applicants nominated by local authorities, from the Housing Register. The Council has a Nominations Agreements with its Social Housing Providers (Registered Providers), which sets out the mechanism by which the Council will make nominations to Registered Providers, it also provides the procedures that are to be used to make existing and arising void properties available for nominations by the Council.

The Council operates a choice based letting scheme and applicants accepted onto the housing register may express an interest in (bid for) a social home when a suitable one becomes available.

Year	Total households on the housing waiting list	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	More than 3 bedrooms	Unspecified number of bedrooms or those on the register more than once
2021/ 2022	1,238	652	324	210	52	0
2020/2021	1,269	691	348	181	49	0

2019/2020	1,384	733	416	187	48	0
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Nominations taken up - Private Registered Provider dwellings let to households in response to a nomination from your LA		
2021/2022	2020/2021	2019/2020
480	372	417

The local authorities has a number of duties pertaining to providing advice and assistance to those that are **homelessness or threatened homelessness\***. These duties range from the duty is to make inquiries of app to establish whether any duties arise under legislation, to securing accommodation, to ensure that advice about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness is available free to everyone in their district.

Until recently, the housing register, housing advice and homelessness services had been contracted out as a commissioned service and was branded as Newcastle Housing Advice. The service was brought back and integrated with the Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. For consistently and the fact that the NHA brand had been used for a number of years – the NHA website has been retained.

A report was taken to the Health Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee on the 07 March 2022, outlining the delivery of Newcastle Housing Advice Service.

### Private Sector Housing

The Local Authority is required to **“to know about the condition of all housing stock in its area and to keep the housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken under various specified pieces of legislation”**.

A Housing Stock Condition Survey was undertaken in 2016. This report was completed by the Building Research Establishment. The life of such surveys are from five to ten years. In the near future, consideration will need to be given to updating the Housing Stock Condition survey, with the availability of financial budgets.

The Local Authority has duties and powers to take action to deal with properties that have certain hazards. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a system that local authorities use to assess housing conditions.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assesses 29 housing hazards and the effect that each may have on the health and safety of current or future occupants of the property. The HHSRS provides a way that hazards can be assessed. If a hazard is a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety, this is known as a Category 1 hazard. If a hazard is less serious or less urgent, this is known as a Category 2 hazard.

If an inspection reveals the presence of one or more Category 1 hazards the local authority must take the most appropriate courses of action, set out in the Housing Act 2004. Category 2 hazards are judged to be less serious and authorities can still take action to tackle these hazards where it is believed necessary.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System applies to all tenures. Primarily, the local authority assesses private sector properties, as private landlords are not regulated, the propensity for hazards to be present are more likely. Notwithstanding this, the system can be used to assess social housing properties. However, registered social landlords are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. The advice to tenants experiencing issues which make the homes unsuitable is to contact their landlord. The landlord should address underlying issues effectively, where this is not done tenants can invoke the internal complaints process and if they remain unhappy with their landlord's response to contact the Housing Ombudsman, who can help resolve complaints.

The approach of the Borough Council, if contacted by social housing tenants who complain of potential hazards existing with their homes, in the first instance is to advise them to use the internal complaint process of the Registered Social Landlord. If issues remain unresolved, the Council will look to intervene and meet with both the RSL and the tenant.

Officers are aware of an acute focus on 'damp and mould in England's social housing, following a tragic death in Rochdale in November 2022. Following this, a series of action were initiated;

- i) the Social Housing Regulator asked all larger social landlords to submit evidence about the extent of damp and mould in tenants' homes and their approach to tackling it.
- ii) On the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities wrote to all the Local Authority Chief Executive and council leaders, directing them under section 3(3) of the Act, that all local housing authorities in carrying out their duty to review housing conditions. The Borough Council responded to this directive and made a submission of this on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

The Local Authority is responsible for mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Mandatory licensing is required where the HMO is occupied by five or more persons living in two or more separate households. Children of any age contribute to the number of occupants.

Landlords who intend to rent out HMO need to apply for a licence. A licence will be granted following consideration of whether the proposed licence holder is a fit and proper person and the most appropriate person to hold the licence and whether proper management standards are being applied at the property and the HMO is reasonably suitable, or can be made suitable, for occupation by the number of tenants allowed under the licence with at least the minimum prescribed standards of amenities and facilities. These include the number, type and quality of shared bathrooms, toilets and cooking facilities.

	Total number of dwellings in Private Rents Sector, following an inspection, have found to have one or more category 1 hazards	Provide an estimate of the total number of HMOs within your authority.	Provide an estimate of the total number of mandatory licensable HMOs within your Local Authority Area	State the actual number of properties with mandatory HMO licences (issued within your authority).	How many properties identified as being mandatory licensable HMOs have been found upon inspection to have Category 1 hazards (according to the HHSRS)?
2021/ 2022	37	753	201	196	0

2020/2021	28	778	217	198	9
2019/2020	50	695	181	182	3

It is hoped that the above information has provided the Committee with a broad understanding of the housing duties placed on the Council and some context as how the Council is meeting these duties.

It is recommended, that the report and the information be used to develop a work programme, whereby the Committee sets out which specific area, its wishes to focus on;

- Assessing and Meeting Housing Needs
- Providing Housing and Homelessness Advice and Assistance
- Improving the Private Rented Sector

By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Report to:** Housing Task and Finish Working Group  
**Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> May 20023  
**Purpose:** Information Report on the Regulation of Social Housing

### **Regulation of Social Housing**

#### **What is social housing?**

Social housing is housing to rent at below market rents or to buy through low-cost home ownership schemes such as shared ownership. Social Rent levels are typically set at around 50-60% of market rents. Affordable Rent is set at a maximum of 80% of the local market rent and was introduced by the 2010 Coalition Government.

Social housing is provided by local authorities and private registered providers, which are primarily housing associations but can include for-profit organisations.

#### **Why is it important?**

Social Housing is made available to help those whose find it difficult to access housing through the market.

Four million households live in rented social housing in England, just under a fifth (17%) of all households. In 2021/22, 10% (2.5 million) of all households rented from housing associations, and 6% (1.6 million) from local authorities.

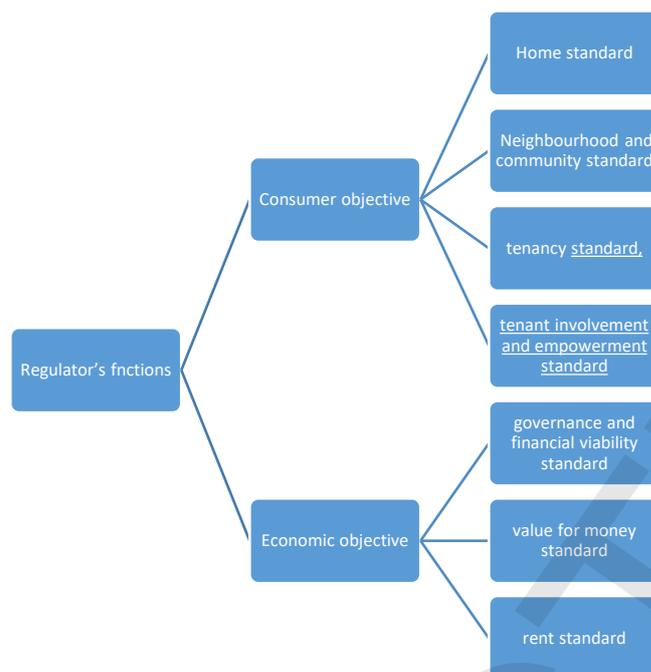
According to estimates from the English Housing Survey, there are approximately 202,000 households living in shared ownership homes in England.

Shared ownership enables people to buy a share of a property and pay a subsidised rent on the remaining share. Most shared ownership homes are delivered and managed by housing associations.

#### **How is Social Housing regulated?**

In 2018, the Government established the Regulator of Social Housing, created from the Homes and Communities Agencies). The regulator's functions are set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

It sets consumer standards, with the ability to take enforcement action where standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants. It also undertakes the economic regulation of providers of social housing, focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money.



The consumer objective is to: support the provision of social housing that is well-managed and of appropriate quality; ensure that actual or potential tenants of social housing have an appropriate degree of choice and protection; ensure tenants of social housing have the opportunity to be involved in its management and to hold their landlords to account; and encourage registered providers of social housing to contribute to the environmental, social and economic well-being of the areas in which the housing is situated.

To enable it to achieve its consumer objective, the regulator is permitted to set standards for registered providers “as to the nature, extent and quality of accommodation, facilities or service provided”

There are currently four such consumer standards: the home standard, the tenancy standard, the neighbourhood and community standard and the tenant involvement and empowerment standard.

1. The Home Standard sets expectations to provide tenants with quality accommodation and a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service.
2. The Tenancy Standard sets to let their homes to tenants in a fair, transparent and efficient way.
3. The Neighbourhood and Community Standard sets expectations to keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes they own clean and safe, co-operate with relevant partners to promote the wellbeing of the local area and help prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour.
4. The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard sets expectations to provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants, a clear approach to complaints and a wide range opportunities for them to have influence and be involved

The economic objective; the second of the two fundamental objectives under the 2008 Act is to: ensure that registered providers “are financially viable and properly managed, and perform their functions efficiently and economically”; support the provision of social housing sufficient

to meet reasonable demands (including by encouraging and promoting private investment in social housing); ensure that value for money is obtained from public investment in social housing; ensure that an unreasonable burden is not imposed (directly or indirectly) on public funds; and guard against the misuse of public funds.

To meet this objective, the regulator has set three economic standards: the governance and financial viability standard, the value for money standard and the rent standard.

1. The Governance and Financial Viability Standard looks at how well an organisation is run and if it is financially viable.
2. The Value for Money Standard looks at whether a provider is making the best use of the resources that it has to meet its objectives.
3. The Rent Standard sets the requirements around how registered providers set and increase rents for all their social housing stock in line with government policy as set out in their Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing.

### **How well is the social housing sector regulated?**

The regulator's approach to regulating the consumer standards has been found to be unsatisfactory. In the Select Committee report, it was noted; that the regulator, with respect to the consumer objective; "interprets its duty to minimise intervention and act proportionately to mean that it should only find a provider non-compliant with the consumer standards if it also finds evidence of systemic failure. The application of this 'systemic failure' test has resulted in perhaps the most passive consumer regulatory regime permissible under the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008."

It is for this reason the Government is now legislating to via the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill [HL] to introduce a more proactive regime for regulating the consumer standards by repealing the 'serious detriment' test and establishing a system of regular inspections for larger providers.

With respect to the economic standards, the regulator takes both a proactive and a reactive approach; its proactive regulation only applies to providers with more than 1,000 homes and includes, among other things, periodic in-depth assessments (IDAs). The frequency of IDAs depends on providers' risk profiles but in most cases they are done every three or four years. Throughout its engagement, the regulator says it will "require evidence of compliance, rather than assuming it". Where necessary, it publishes regulatory judgments on providers' compliance with the governance and financial viability standard. There are four governance grades (G1, G2, G3 and G4) and four viability grades (V1, V2, V3 and V4). Grades G1 and G2 and V1 and V2 are considered compliant, although the expectation is that all providers should be G1 and V1.

The regulation of the economic standards is generally considered to have been a success. While generally thought to be effective, it faces a number of challenges, in particular from:

- the diversification of providers into non-traditional business streams;
- the increasing reliance on borrowing to fund housebuilding and investment in existing stock;
- large-scale mergers resulting in very big providers that some argue have forgotten their original social mission; and
- the emergence of for-profit providers. As touched on earlier, these developments have been partly driven by changes to how social housing is funded.

## The Housing Ombudsman

The role of the ombudsman is to investigate and resolve disputes between tenants and providers who are members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme (all housing associations and local housing authorities (councils) must be a member of the Scheme and some private landlords can become voluntary members) For a complaint to be investigated the complaint must have been made by a tenant, former tenant or prospective tenant, or by a representative of such a person and the tenant must have referred their case through a “designated person” (the ‘democratic filter’) or waited eight weeks after exhausting their provider’s own complaint handling process. Following an investigation, the ombudsman may make a finding of maladministration, and it can order or recommend that the provider, among other things, apologise to the complainant, pay compensation or perform contractual or other obligations between the member and the complainant. If a member fails to comply with an order, the ombudsman may refer them to the regulator.

Historically, there has been evidence that slow complaint handling from Registered Providers has delayed the moment when tenants can take their case to the ombudsman. In response to this; in 2021, changes to the Housing Ombudsman Scheme were introduced which included a new Complaint Handling Code; (the Government is currently legislating through the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill to place the code on a statutory footing) setting out clear expectations for landlords on handling housing complaints, together with a new power to issue a determination of complaint handling failure – a complaint handling failure order – where a landlord is failing to comply with its membership obligations.

The Ombudsman is committed to openness and transparency and an important part of which is to provide statistical information about individual landlord performance reports with five or more cases determined between 1 April 2021 and March 2022.

For the 19 RSL operating within Newcastle under Lyme, the following shows the number of cases determined between 1 April 2021 and March 2022.

Alpha (R.S.L.) Limited	<5
Anchor Hanover Group	26
Aspire Housing Limited	<5 (2 determinations)
Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Ltd	<5
Brighter Futures Housing Association Limited	<5
Choices Housing Association Limited	<5
Clarion Housing Association Limited	145 (109,545 properties)
Empowering People Inspiring Communities Limited	<5
Golden Lane Housing Limited	<5
GreenSquareAccord Limited	18 (20878 properties)
Honeycomb Group Limited	<5 – (0 determinations)
Housing 21	5 (18881 properties)
Midland Heart Limited	30 (29814 properties)
Plus Dane Housing Limited	6 (13228 properties)
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Sanctuary Housing Association	50 (80790 properties)
The Guinness Partnership Limited	41 (61,414 properties)
The Riverside Group Limited	27 (52716 properties)
The Wrekin Housing Group Limited	<5

It should be noted that the majority of providers have a small number of units within the Borough and operate across a multiple number of local authority boundaries. Those with a significant number of properties within the Borough are Aspire Housing, Honeycomb Group Ltd and Sanctuary Housing Association.

### **How is Social Housing allocated?**

In principle, social housing should be available to help those whose find it difficult to access housing through the market. To identify people in need, local authorities have an allocation scheme and a housing register.

A Registered Provider (as it is not part of the Local authority) can have arrangements to allocate its properties directly and outside the scope of the Local Authorities Housing Allocations Policy. However, under section 170 of the 1996 Housing Act, it is a requirement of registered providers to co-operate with the Local Authority as much as is reasonable in offering accommodation to people with priority from under the Local Authority's allocation scheme. The Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards 2015 sets out the requirement to cooperate with the Local Authorities strategic housing function.

In practice, the majority of all RP lettings to 'general-needs' (as opposed to 'special-needs' accommodation) are made to those nominated by local authority housing departments. These lettings go to people registered on the authority's waiting list

To allocate the remainder of their vacant properties, most PRPSHs accept referrals or nominations from other statutory or voluntary organisations. These may include social services departments, the probation service, district health authorities, and advice centres.

To facilitate the nominations of social housing to applicants on the housing register; local authorities may maintain joint housing registers with PRPSHs called common registers.

The Council is not a stock holding authority and social housing is provided by Registered Social Landlords that are not-for-profit organisations that own, let, and manage rented housing. The distinction between social rented properties and those rented privately is that social homes are more affordable and provide a more secure, long-term tenancy.

There are 19 providers of social housing within the Borough. The total number of social homes are 9,909. There 8,687 general needs homes, 948 special homes (supported or older people accommodation) and 274 Low cost Homes. The majority of providers have a small number of units within the Borough and operate across a multiple number of local authority boundaries. Those with a significant number of properties are Aspire Housing, Honeycomb Group Ltd and Sanctuary Housing Association.

<b><u>Names of RSL</u></b>	<b><u>Total Social Stock</u></b>	<b><u>% Total Social Stock in area</u></b>
Alpha (R.S.L.) Limited	71	0.7%
Anchor Hanover Group	41	0.4%
Aspire Housing Limited	8,103	81.8%
Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Ltd	4	0.0%
Brighter Futures Housing Association Limited	6	0.1%
Choices Housing Association Limited	8	0.1%
Clarion Housing Association Limited	79	0.8%
Empowering People Inspiring Communities Limited	35	0.4%
Golden Lane Housing Limited	6	0.1%

GreenSquareAccord Limited	2	0.0%
Honeycomb Group Limited	521	5.3%
Housing 21	63	0.6%
Midland Heart Limited	23	0.2%
Plus Dane Housing Limited	4	0.0%
Sage Housing Limited	41	0.4%
Sanctuary Housing Association	772	7.8%
The Guinness Partnership Limited	5	0.1%
The Riverside Group Limited	9	0.1%
The Wrekin Housing Group Limited	116	1.2%
	9,909	100%

The Council has developed a Housing Allocations Policy. This has been done jointly and in partnership with Aspire Housing, who are the largest housing provider within the Borough. The policy is currently being reviewed, after being applied for a period of 24 months.

The Council operates a choice based letting scheme and applicants accepted onto the housing register may express an interest in (bid for) a social home when a suitable one becomes available.

Year	Total households on the housing waiting list	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	More than 3 bedrooms	Unspecified number of bedrooms or those on the register more than once
2021/2022	1,238	652	324	210	52	0
2020/2021	1,269	691	348	181	49	0
2019/2020	1,384	733	416	187	48	0

The Council has a Nominations Agreements with its Social Housing Providers (Registered Providers), which sets out the mechanism by which the Council will make nominations to Registered Providers, it also provides the procedures that are to be used to make existing and arising void properties available for nominations by the Council.

The nominations agreement with Aspire Housing is underpinned by the Transfer Agreement 2000, which stipulate that the Council has the right to make nominations to 75% of available properties. The agreement with the other Registered Providers, is that nominations will be at 50% of available properties.

Nominations taken up - Private Registered Provider dwellings let to households in response to a Nomination the LA		
2021/2022	2020/2021	2019/2020
480	372	417

<b>Nominations Summary Statistics 21/22 for NBC</b>					
	<b>Aspire</b>	<b>Sanctuary Housing</b>	<b>Staffs Housing</b>	<b>Wrekin</b>	<b>Total Lettings</b>
TOTAL LETTINGS					
Q1 Noms	112	11	0	0	123
Q2 Noms	108	0	5	0	113
Q3 Noms	131	5	3	2	141
Q4 Noms	91	3	7	2	103
TOTAL NOMS	<b>442</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>480</b>

### **Key / Pertinent issues within the Social Homes**

The debate about the quality of social housing in England is very prominent; driven by the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, (where allegations against the housing provider of marginalising residents and repeatedly ignoring concerns about the building's safety) and more recently; about the levels of disrepair in some social housing, including serious damp and mould.

In November 2021, an inquiry into the quality and regulation of social housing in England with a call for evidence was launched by the House of Commons levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee.

### **Overcrowding**

Information was requested about households who had registered on the Housing Register and who were experiencing overcrowding.

There were 344 applicants on the Housing register, who were overcrowded in their current home. 217 (63%) applicants were in a social rented property and 127 (37%) were in the private sector.

Of the 344 applicants, their bedroom requirements were as follows:

	<b>Social rented tenants</b>	<b>Private occupier / tenants</b>	<b>Total</b>
1 bed room	16	46	62
2 bed room	34	45	79
3 bedroom	128	25	153
4 bedroom or more	39	11	50

The following table compares the number of applicants in need, occupying overcrowded accommodation with the numbers who were housed in social homes. The ratio gives an indication of the level of unmet need, the greater the number indicating a shortage of properties.

	<b>Total lettings</b>	<b>Total Need</b>	<b>Lettings: Need Ratio</b>
1 bed room	11	62	1:5.63
2 bed room	41	79	1:192
3 bedroom	17	153	1:9
4 bedroom or more	4	50	1:12.5

RESTRICTED

# Housing Task & Finish Working Group calls for evidence into social housing in the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme

20<sup>th</sup> June 2023

The Housing Task & Finish Working Group, has begun to examine the condition of and regulation of social housing in the Borough.

Social housing is rented at below-market rates by Registered Providers (RPs). There are 19 providers of social housing within the Borough. The total number of social homes are 9,909. There 8,687 general needs homes, 948 special homes (supported or older people accommodation) and 274 Low cost Homes. The majority of providers have a small number of units. Those with a significant number of properties are Aspire Housing, Honeycomb Group Ltd and Sanctuary Housing Association.

The Working Group will examine issues about the quality of social housing, in particular damp and mould [following the Awaab Ishak case in Rochdale], but also with a focus on the relationship that RPs have with the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman.

## Terms of reference

The Working Group welcomes evidence submissions, in writing, on the terms of reference outlined below.

The closing date for written submissions is set for **14<sup>th</sup> July 2023**, if this deadline, cannot be met, RPs are expected to make a submission explaining why the information is not available and by what date it could be submitted to the Working Group.

The Working Group seeks evidence on the quality of social housing in the Borough and the effectiveness of the regulatory regime; in particular, the inquiry seeks answers to the following questions:

- How many complaints have been made to the Housing Ombudsman about the quality of social housing within the Borough, the nature of these complaints and how these were addressed?
- What is the impact on social housing providers' resources, and therefore their ability to maintain and improve their housing stock, of the need to remediate building safety risks and retrofit their homes to make them more energy efficient?

- How does the RP fulfil its obligations under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, as required by the Social Housing Regulator, and does this present any particular issues to the organisations?
- What is the relationship that the RP's has with the social housing regulator? How often are they audited and the housing inspected and what was the outcome of the most recent inspection?
- Are there any issues that the RPs have with their framework and processes to allow tenants to effectively resolve issues?
- A number of reforms are proposed in the social housing White Paper to improve the regime, what are the views of RPs on these changes?
- What challenges do social housing providers expect to face (diversification of the sector, economic changes – interest rates) in the near future and their potential impacts?

The Working Group is not seeking at this stage policy documentation in respect of the various issues that the RPs deal such as; health and safety fire risk assessment etc., it is interested in knowing what issues RP's face and the problems that they pose. The group would value qualitative responses to the questions proposed as it will inform the Council's work programme going forward.

## Chair's comment

*Cllr Robert Bettley-Smith said: "Social Housing is a vital component of the housing stock within the borough to meet the needs of individuals and families that otherwise would face difficulties finding somewhere to live. Therefore, as a Borough Council we need to ensure their needs are met and that the quality of housing they are provided with is adequate to meet statutory requirements and, just as importantly, the needs of those living in social housing. As a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, and a former owner and manager of let housing (including social housing), I am driven to ensure Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council does what we can to make things better for people."*

## Further information

Please contact Gill Taylor of Gillian Taylor, Housing and Vulnerability, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council; [gillian.taylor@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.taylor@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk)

**Report to:** Housing Study Group  
**Subject:** Private Sector Housing Activities  
**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

## Introduction

At the Housing Study Group on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023 information was requested on complaints and enforcement activities in relation to the private rented sector in the borough.

Regulation of housing conditions in the private rented sector is undertaken by environmental health officers / technical Officers as part of the wide range of activities carried out by the Housing and Vulnerability Service.

The table below identifies;

- The service requests logged relating to private rented sector conditions requiring detailed advice or inspection and investigation.
- Inspections of houses in multiple occupation, these are properties shared by 2 or more unrelated households (ie bedsits / shared accommodation)
- Applications for a house in multiple occupation licence – these are the larger properties occupied by 5 or more people
- Certificate checks relating to houses in multiple occupation, these relate to fire alarm systems, emergency lighting, electrical and gas safety.

<b>Environmental health housing activities</b>	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Service requests logged	217	242	191	217
House in multiple occupation inspections	73	1	3	27
House in multiple occupation licensing applications	1	3	37	13
House in multiple occupation certificate checks undertaken	73	127	157	162

During property inspections officers are assessing for the presence of hazards to health under the Housing Health and Safety Hazard Rating System. There are 29 hazards assessed for grouped in to physiological, psychological and safety. Depending on the severity they are then classed as either category 1 or category 2 hazards. If hazards are identified the authority has a duty to carry out some form of action to remove them.

The table below shows the hazards to health removed from properties through our actions over the last four years and identified the most commonly occurring hazards to health.

	damp/ mould	excess cold	electrical	falls	fire	misc	total	
cat 1 - 19/20	1	12	9	4	2	3	31	
cat 2 - 19/20	8	7	4	8	32	27	86	
<b>total 19/20</b>								117
cat 1 - 20/21	8	5	11	0	8	4	36	
cat 2 - 20/21	11	7	6	12	18	9	63	
<b>total 20/21</b>								99

cat 1 - 21/22	0	5	10	1	12	11	39	
cat 2 - 21/22	5	3	7	5	5	12	37	
<b>total 21/22</b>								76
cat 1 - 22/23	3	12	25	5	14	12	66	
cat 2 - 22/23	8	9	8	12	20	14	71	
<b>total 22/23</b>								137

The service has a Housing Enforcement Guide which sits under the corporate enforcement policy and guides our enforcement decisions for consistency and fairness. This has an approach moving from informal action to enforcement action depending on the circumstances of each case. The table below identifies the notices served over the 4 years

Notices	all notices	Notices for category 1 hazards
19/20	18	10
20/21	9	3
21/22	39	3
22/23	45	8

### Summary

The details included are a snapshot of the work undertaken in relation to activities to maintain safe, warm, and suitable accommodation in the private rented sector. Further details on the activities or further work of the team can be provided.

## ECONOMY AND PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



### Work Programme 2023/24

**Chair**

Cllr G. White

**Vice-Chair**

Cllr R. Bettley-Smith

**Members**

Cllrs D Jones, G. Burnett, J. Edgington-Plunkett,  
R. Gorton, D. Grocott, M. Holland, T. Johnson,  
B. Panter, J. Waring

**Scrutiny Champion**

Simon McEneny

**Portfolio Holders within the  
Committee's remit**

Cllr S. Sweeney - Deputy Leader – Finance, Town  
Centres and Growth  
Cllr D. Hutchison – Sustainable Environment  
Cllr A. Fear – Strategic Planning

This committee scrutinises how the council influences, affects and interacts with the natural and built environment. It also scrutinises how the council influences, affects and interacts with the local, regional and national economy.

This Work Programme is set and reviewed at quarterly meetings of the Scrutiny Management Group. The Chair and Vice Chair also meet regularly with the Portfolio Holders to discuss this Work Programme. There is an opportunity for committee Members to discuss the Work Programme at each committee meeting. Part D of the Council's [Constitution](#) governs the scrutiny process.

For more information on the Committee or its work Programme please contact the Democratic Services:

- ✚ Geoff Durham at [geoff.durham@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk](mailto:geoff.durham@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk) or on (01782) 742222
- ✚ Alexandra Bond at [alexandra.bond@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk](mailto:alexandra.bond@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk) or on (01782) 742211

**Planned Items**

<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
7 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Enforcement &amp; Performance</li> <li>• Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals for Kidsgrove and Newcastle under Lyme</li> <li>• Borough Local Plan</li> <li>• Housing Task &amp; Finish Working Group Final Report</li> </ul>	
18 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knutton Master Plan</li> <li>• Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals for Kidsgrove and Newcastle under Lyme</li> <li>• Borough Local Plan</li> </ul>	

**Special Meeting**

A53/Bus Gate – Final Business Case – joint meeting with HWE Scrutiny when appropriate

**Pending**

BID Update – To be presented by the BID Manager

**Previous Items**

<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
15 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HS2 – look ahead to the next 12 months on works impacting on the Borough</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Environment Strategy, Action Plan</li> <li>• Future High Streets Fund update &amp; Town Investment Plans for Newcastle and Kidsgrove – update on progress</li> <li>• Borough Local Plan</li> <li>• Police presence in the town centre</li> </ul>	
1 August 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough Local Plan Call-In</li> </ul>	
1 September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling and Waste Services Update – Town Centre Impact</li> <li>• Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals for Kidsgrove and Newcastle under Lyme</li> </ul>	
12 December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic management of the Town Centre</li> <li>• Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals for Kidsgrove and Newcastle under Lyme</li> <li>• 850 Commemorations</li> <li>• Local Plan timings and next steps</li> </ul>	
16 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Management of the Town Centre/NUL BID</li> <li>• Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals for Kidsgrove and Newcastle under Lyme</li> <li>• Borough Local Plan</li> <li>• Housing Provision – set up Working Group</li> </ul>	
8 June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HS2 Update</li> <li>• Borough Local Plan</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Planning</li> </ul>	Including consultation responses and housing numbers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals for Kidsgrove and Newcastle under Lyme</li> </ul>	Including an update on York Place and the Multi-Storey Car Park
12 June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Plan Reg 18 Call In – TBC</li> </ul>	Meeting date held for potential Reg 18 Call In
21 September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals for Kidsgrove and Newcastle under Lyme</li> <li>• Borough Local Plan</li> <li>• Report of the Housing Task and Finish Group</li> </ul>	

Last updated on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023