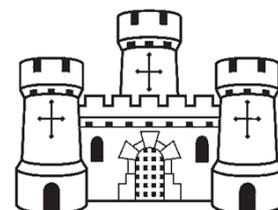


Date of meeting Tuesday, 17th March, 2026
Time 2.00 pm
Venue Astley Room - Castle
Contact Geoff Durham 742222



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**

BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Cabinet

AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 1 APOLOGIES**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive declarations of interest from Members on items included in the agenda.
- 3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS** (Pages 5 - 12)
To consider the Minutes of the previous meeting.
- 4 WALLEYS QUARRY UPDATE** (Pages 13 - 22)
- 5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RENTERS RIGHT ACT 2025 AND ASSOCIATED POLICIES** (Pages 23 - 70)
- 6 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND UPDATE** (Pages 71 - 146)
- 7 APPROVAL FOR AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR H&S MONITORING** (Pages 147 - 154)
- 8 RENEWAL OF CIVICA APP FOR REGULATORY SERVICES** (Pages 155 - 160)
- 9 PROCUREMENT OF MICROSOFT LICENSING** (Pages 161 - 166)
- 10 IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS 2025/26** (Pages 167 - 170)
- 11 FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 171 - 174)
- 12 URGENT BUSINESS**
To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 13 DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following reports, because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972.

PART 2 - CLOSED AGENDA

- | | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|
| 14 | APPROVAL FOR AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR H&S MONITORING - CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX | (Pages 175 - 182) |
| 15 | RENEWAL OF CIVICA APP FOR REGULATORY SERVICES | (Pages 183 - 188) |
| 16 | PROCUREMENT OF MICROSOFT LICENSING | (Pages 189 - 194) |
| 17 | IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS - CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX | (Pages 195 - 196) |

ATTENDANCE AT CABINET MEETINGS

Councillor attendance at Cabinet meetings:

- (1) The Chair or spokesperson of the Council's scrutiny committees and the mover of any motion referred to Cabinet shall be entitled to attend any formal public meeting of Cabinet to speak.
- (2) Other persons including non-executive members of the Council may speak at such meetings with the permission of the Chair of the Cabinet.

Public attendance at Cabinet meetings:

- (1) If a member of the public wishes to ask a question(s) at a meeting of Cabinet, they should serve two clear days' notice in writing of any such question(s) to the appropriate committee officer.
- (2) The Council Leader as Chair of Cabinet is given the discretion to waive the above deadline and assess the permissibility of the question(s). The Chair's decision will be final.
- (3) The maximum limit is three public questions at any one Cabinet meeting.
- (4) A maximum limit of three minutes is provided for each person to ask an initial question or make an initial statement to the Cabinet.
- (5) Any questions deemed to be repetitious or vexatious will be disallowed at the discretion of the Chair.

Members: Councillors S Tagg (Leader) (Chair), Sweeney (Vice-Chair), Heesom, Fear, Skelding and Hutchison

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:-

Substitute Members:

If you are unable to attend this meeting and wish to appoint a Substitute to attend on your place you need to identify a Substitute member from the list above who is able to attend on your behalf

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

NOTE: IF THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDS, 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.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

Tuesday, 3rd February, 2026
Time of Commencement: 2.00 pm

[View the agenda here](#)

[Watch the meeting here](#)

Present: Councillor Simon Tagg (Chair)

Councillors: Sweeney Skelding
Heesom Hutchison

Apologies: Councillor(s) Fear

Officers:	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Deputy Chief Executive
	Anthony Harold	Service Director - Legal & Governance / Monitoring Officer
	Craig Jordan	Service Director - Planning
	Nesta Barker	Service Director - Regulatory Services
	Georgina Evans-Stadward	Service Director - Strategy, People and Performance
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer
	Paul Dutton	Senior Media Officer
	Craig Turner	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 13 January, 2026 be agreed as a correct record.

3. **WALLEYS QUARRY UPDATE**

The Leader introduced a report updating Cabinet on the latest position regarding odours in the Borough associated with Walleys Quarry.

The Leader stated that the site was in a period of vast improvement compared to the same period last year.

The Council's Chief Executive advised that the report recognised that all agencies were now focussed on the steps towards restoration of the site, with the Environment Agency (EA) and their contractors still on site at present. The situation had moved out of 'incident' and into the next phase. However, should any future serious incident occur the 'incident' stage would again be implemented.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 2.5 of the report which showed that the levels of hydrogen sulphide had briefly raised in mid-January. The EA and their contractors were aware and had been looking into the cause. The issue had not continued beyond that period and no complaints had been received from the public.

The public were aware that there was activity on site and it had been useful to have the EA and site operations group as part of the next phase of the multi-agency response in existence for quickly getting together and working through such issues.

The Chief Executive asked the Leader to join him in thanking Glynn Luznyj from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service for chairing the group for a number of years and was due to become the next Chief Fire Officer.

The Leader also commended Glynn's work in chairing the co-ordinating group had been important and the focus on the very bad periods. The aim now was for the long term restoration capping which would cost money and, as was mentioned at a previous Cabinet meeting, it needed to be funded by the government and a public inquiry was needed.

Councillor Sweeney congratulated Glynn on achieving the post of Chief Fire Officer. Referring to the report, Councillor Sweeney stated that it was good news, with no odours across the Borough. He stated that the question was- who would pay for the restoration.

The Leader stated that this Council stood ready to react to any issues, should there be any deterioration or if any action was necessary in the future. However, the Council's only powers were through the abatement notice / statutory nuisance area and money remained in reserved, should it be required.

There would continue to be engagement with the EA. A meeting would be taking place with them in the near future with all key partners.

Resolved: That the contents of the update report be received and noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

4. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND STRATEGIES 2026/27

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth introduced the report seeking recommendation to Full Council for approval later this month for the 2026/27 General Fund Reserve Budget and the Capital Programme for 2026/27. In addition, recommendation to Full Council for approval was also sought for the Capital Strategy for 2026-36 as well as the Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy and Commercial Strategy for 2026-27.

The funding gap was £1.599m which had been found through the Council's Efficiency Board process and were all feasible and sustainable. This was not helped by the £1m reduction in funding from the government. The proposals had been considered twice by the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee and no amendments had been made.

The budget and strategies would be submitted to Full Council the following Wednesday including a 1.99% Council Tax increase towards services and programmes such as the Civic Growth Fund would still be supported.

The Leader stated that the proposals had been through all of the required processes, starting with the Efficiency Board, there had been the reduction in funding from the Government but the Council had still managed to balance the budget. The Leader referred to the Civic Pride Fund of £250,000 which, over the last few years had been put back into schemes and initiatives which the Council wished to support. Recommendation (vii) sought to freeze car parking charges for 2026/27 for the Council's commitment to support vibrant town centres. Free nipper parking at the bottom end of the town was also being introduced. These were all being done through the Council's Civic Pride Growth Fund along with the freeze to the outside sports charges which would help Newcastle's bid to be a Town of Culture.

The Leader stated that on social media there had been comments asking why the car parks were not free. This would result in residents in and around the town centre to park there twenty four hours a day which would, in turn take up spaces for shoppers. Furthermore, the Council had to pay business rates on its car parks which totalled £167,000 per year to keep them open, excluding maintenance on them. The Leader stated that if the Council wished to support its town centres with reducing parking charges and offering more free parking, the business rates needed to be reduced or waived completely. The Leader proposed that he would write to the local MP and ask him to take up the cause for that and that recommendation (vii) below be amended accordingly.

Councillor Sweeney echoed the Leader's comments regarding free parking in the town centre. The freeze to the outside sports charges was a good idea and such sports should be encouraged – especially amongst the younger generation.

Cabinet Members echoed the previous comments.

The Leader stated that the Civic Pride Fund (formerly the Borough Growth Fund) could be used to help the economic situation in the town. It was also used for projects such as tree planting and improvements to car parks. The Leader stated that at Full Council next week he would outline how the Fund would be allocated for the benefit of the Borough.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the Revenue and Capital Budgets as detailed in this report and in the report to Cabinet dated 13 January 2026, be recommended to Full Council for approval.
 - (ii) That the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31 (Appendix 2) be recommended to Full Council for approval.
 - (iii) That the strategy for ensuring a balanced revenue outturn position for 2025/26, be approved.
 - (iv) That the calculation of the Council Tax base and a proposed Council Tax increase for 2026/27 of 1.99% per Band D equivalent property, be recommended to Full Council for approval.
 - (v) That the risk assessment at Appendix 3 and the Section 151 Officer's recommendation on the level of reserves

and contingencies provisionally required to be maintained in 2026/27, be recommended to Full Council for approval.

- (vi) That the Civic Growth Fund priorities for 2026/27, be approved.
- (vii) That an extension of the freeze, already announced to £1 after 1pm car parking, be recommended to all hourly car parking charges in support of the motion agreed by Full Council on 21 January 2026 to support the Borough's Town Centres, High Streets and Villages. And, that the creation of free 'nipper' parking at the South High Street be noted. It was further resolved to write to the Chancellor and local Member of Parliament to seek the removal of business rates for town centre car parks.
- (viii) That a freeze in fees relating to tennis, bowls, football and rugby fees and charges for 2026/27, be recommended.
- (ix) That the Capital Strategy (Appendix 5) for 2026/36, be recommended to Full Council for approval.
- (x) That the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix 6) for 2026/27, be recommended to Full Council for approval.
- (xi) That the Investment Strategy (Appendix 7) for 2026/27, be recommended to Full Council for approval.
- (xii) That the Commercial Strategy (Appendix 8) for 2026/27, be recommended to Full Council for approval.
- (xiii) That the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Appendix 9) for 2026/27, be recommended to Full Council for approval.

[Watch the debate here](#)

5. FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW REPORT - THIRD QUARTER 2025/26

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth stated that the budget was £3000 underspent at the present time and it was projected to be £4000 underspent at the end of the current financial year.

The Portfolio Holder stated that it had been previously commented that there was not enough information in these reports and therefore a lot more information had now been added.

The Leader invited portfolio holders to comment on performance indicators.

Priority 1 – One Council delivering for Local People

The Leader stated that the average number of days lost to sickness rose during December, most likely due to a widespread virus that had emerged on the run up to Christmas.

Councillor Sweeney pointed out the time taken to process Housing Benefit, percentage of Council Tax collected and percentage of National Non-Domestic Rates collected were all on or above target.

The Leader referred to digital online transactions which was below target. The Council now had 'citizens access' for transactions which meant that there were fewer clicks to get to the required pages on the website. This indicator would be looked at when they were next refreshed.

Priority 2 – A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough

The Leader stated that planning enforcement performance had improved – reaching 88% in the last quarter. Appeals relating to major applications was off target but a low number of major applications had been received.

Priority 3: Healthy, Active and Safe Communities

Cllr Hutchison reported that there had been a slight dip in the percentage of recycling materials collected. The amount of garden waste had fallen due to a very dry summer. However, dry recycling had gone up by 1.5% and food waste by 7%.

Household collections for food waste and residual waste were above target and successful collections was 99.98%.

All targets relating to Streetscene were at 100%.

The Leader, on behalf of the Cabinet passed thanks to the staff that had worked through the recent bad weather and the catch up that had been required.

Councillor Skelding that there was continued growth in people accessing the Museum with 52,129 visitors. School bookings were on the increase which had led to taking on more temporary staff.

Customer satisfaction at J2 had hit an above target mark of 79.25%. There were currently extensive repairs and maintenance going on but disruption was at a minimum to members. There was also a follow up project, through Salex funding, to replace the gas boilers with air sourced heat pumps and back-up boilers to help to future proof the site against rising energy costs.

Councillor Heesom referred to the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases stating that the Council continued to work with partners to reduce ASB and ensure that complaints were dealt with effectively and open cases were reducing.

The Vulnerability Hub continued to have a high number of complex cases and it was encouraging to see the number of referrals made.

Referring to the Disabled Facilities Grants, Councillor Heesom state that they were being dealt with in a timely fashion with 19 out of 26 grants dealt with within 120 days.

Priority 4: Town Centres for All

The Leader commented on the car park usage, town centre footfall and occupancy of market stalls stating that they were all encouraging figures.

Councillor Sweeney stated that the markets were going well and in the summer months the new television screen would be an asset to the town centre

The Leader stated that overall, the indicators gave a good picture with 82% of them being on target.

Resolved: That the contents of the attached report and appendices be noted and that the Council's service and financial performance for this period continue to be monitored and challenged.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND DEVOLUTION UPDATE

The Leader introduced a report advising Cabinet of recent developments in respect of the Government's planned agenda for local government reorganisation (LGR) and English devolution.

This Council's proposals for a Newcastle Unitary were submitted in November, 2025 and a public consultation would be commencing imminently. Five proposals had been put forward by Staffordshire Councils.

The report also sought to set up a cross-party Cabinet Panel which would be chaired by the Leader which would aid Cabinet in the future to formulate its response and to monitor this Council's work towards dealing with the LGR. It would also give opportunity to scrutinise MP's on which proposal they supported. It was also important to look at the latest Government policies and initiatives on this.

A further £800,000 had been set aside, on top of £200,000 previously put aside to fund the process. However, it was felt that the two-tier system should continue as it had worked well for many years.

It should be known by this Summer whether the Government wish to proceed with LGR, what the Unitary boundaries would be or if it would be delayed.

It was confirmed that elections would go ahead in May this year, as planned.

Councillor Sweeney agreed that cancelling the elections would be wrong. Regarding LGR, Councillor Sweeney stated that he would be interested in the MP's view on it.

Councillor Hutchison agreed with all of the comments made.

The Leader advised that the link to the consultation would be advertised on the Council's website and encouraged all residents to take part.

Resolved: (i) That the forthcoming statutory consultation on proposals for local government reorganisation (LGR) in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, be noted;

- (ii) That a cross-party LGR Cabinet Panel be established, chaired by the Leader of the Council.
- (iii) That the work being undertaken to support a devolution offer for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent be noted and endorsed;
- (iv) That it be noted that the Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government has acknowledged receipt of the Council's intention to hold elections in May 2026 and has confirmed this will proceed.

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. FORWARD PLAN

The Leader presented the Forward Plan

Resolved: That the Forward Plan be received and noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

8. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

9. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

There was no confidential business

**Councillor Simon Tagg
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 2.41 pm

This page is intentionally left blank

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

17 March 2026

Report Title: Walleys Quarry Update

Submitted by: Chief Executive

Portfolios: Sustainable Environment; One Council, People & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To update Cabinet on the latest position regarding the problematic odours in the Borough associated with Walleys Quarry.			
<u>Recommendation</u>			
That Cabinet:			
1. Notes the contents of this update report.			
<u>Reasons</u>			
To ensure Cabinet is kept updated on the ongoing work Walleys Quarry landfill.			

1. Background

- 1.1 For a number of years, parts of the borough have suffered from foul odours from the Walleys Quarry Landfill Site in Silverdale which has, until its liquidation been operated by Walleys Quarry Ltd. The Environment Agency (EA) is the lead regulator for permitted landfill sites, testing and enforcing compliance with the permit under which the site operates. The Council also has a role in influencing the operation and performance of such sites, where an operator fails to comply with actions required under an abatement notice issued by the Council in relation to any statutory nuisance caused by the site.
- 1.2 In March 2021, Council held an extraordinary meeting to receive the report of the Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee review into the Walleys Quarry issues, and to debate a motion demanding the immediate suspension of operations and acceptance of waste at the Walleys Quarry Landfill site.
- 1.3 Following extensive work, officers determined that the odours from the Walleys Quarry site amounted to a Statutory Nuisance and, on 13 August 2021, served

an Abatement Notice on Walleys Quarry Ltd. (WQL). Following an appeal by Walleys Quarry Ltd, and a successful mediation process, His Honour District Judge Grego approved the settlement that the parties had reached and issued a court order upholding the Abatement Notice and dismissing WQL's appeal on 6 October 2022.

- 1.4** Further instances of statutory nuisance identified which amount to a breach of the Abatement Notice, the Council's Enforcement Policy will guide the process to be followed [Reference: Environmental Health enforcement policy – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council (newcastle-staffs.gov.uk). This would determine what action the Council would take, and whether that would be formal or informal. Enforcement is usually considered sequentially but should the circumstances or nature of the breach be such, escalation direct to prosecution is possible. The Council needs to obtain the consent of the Secretary of State before it is able to prosecute an offence of breaching an abatement notice, as the site is permitted by the Environment Agency. Such consent has been obtained.
- 1.5** Members and Officers have attended Liaison Meetings to maintain contact with Walleys Quarry Ltd, and with other agencies involved with the issue. Cabinet has received monthly updates on the issues relating to the odours, and Council has also been regularly updated.
- 1.6** At its meeting of 23 July 2025, full Council resolved to write to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the local member of parliament, the Chief Executive of the Environment Agency and the Leader of Staffordshire County Council. The following updates on this correspondence are provided.
 - 1.6.1** The Secretary of State, Steve Reed OBE MP, was asked to provide a timetable for a public enquiry into the actions of the Environment Agency through the Walleys Quarry process and for confirmation that he would provide a guarantee that all costs of remediation would be met by UK Government.
 - 1.6.2** In response, correspondence has been received on 18 September 2025 from Mary Creagh CBE MP, and is set out in Appendix 4 in the Cabinet report dated 14 October 2025.
 - 1.6.3** The Member of Parliament for Newcastle-under-Lyme, Adam Jogee MP, was asked for specific assistance in getting the relevant Government departments and agencies to engage with the multi-agency co-ordinating group; to call for Government to play an active role in the safe restoration of the site; and to join calls for a public enquiry into the site and its regulation. There has to date, been no written response. On 24 November 2025 the Council's Health and Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny considered an item on Walleys Quarry, and raised concerns regarding not having received a response from the Member of Parliament. The Scrutiny Committee requested that a further letter be sent, which was issued on 28 November 2025.
 - 1.6.4** The Chief Executive for the Environment Agency was asked to commit real and lasting financial support for the restoration of the site; that

continuous monitoring would continue to be in place; and that a public meeting be held by the end of September. A reply was received on 20 August 2025 and is set out in the Cabinet report dated 2 September 2025.

- 1.7 On the anniversary of the issue of the Environment Agency’s Closure Notice, the Leader of the Council, members of the Stop the Stink Campaign group and the Member of Parliament for Newcastle-under-Lyme took part in media interviews, with the Council continuing to press for funding for full restoration of the site.
- 1.8 The Council continues to assess the prevalence of odours off site.

2. Issues

- 2.1 This updated report shows the data in respect of complaints reported to the Council and officer monitoring through a number of figures shown below.

Fig 1. Monthly odour complaint data for 2025. In 2025 the total number of complaints received to the Council was 1821.

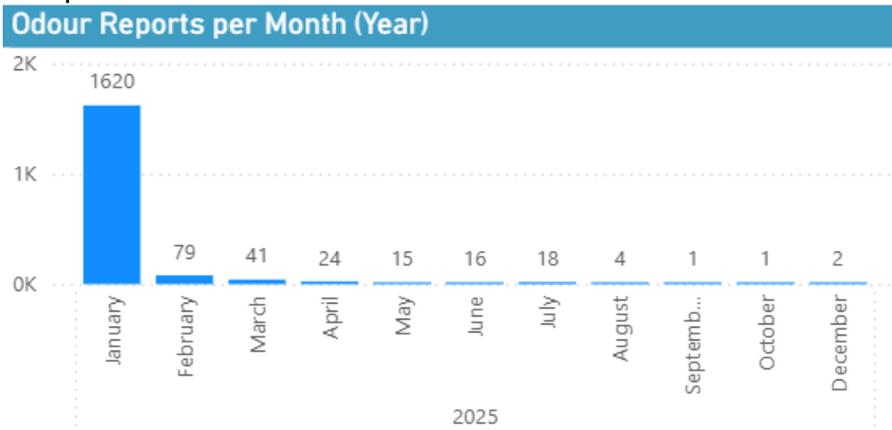
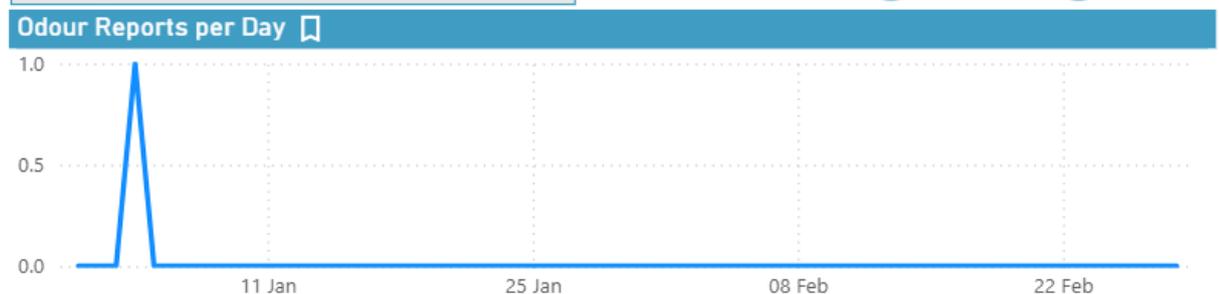


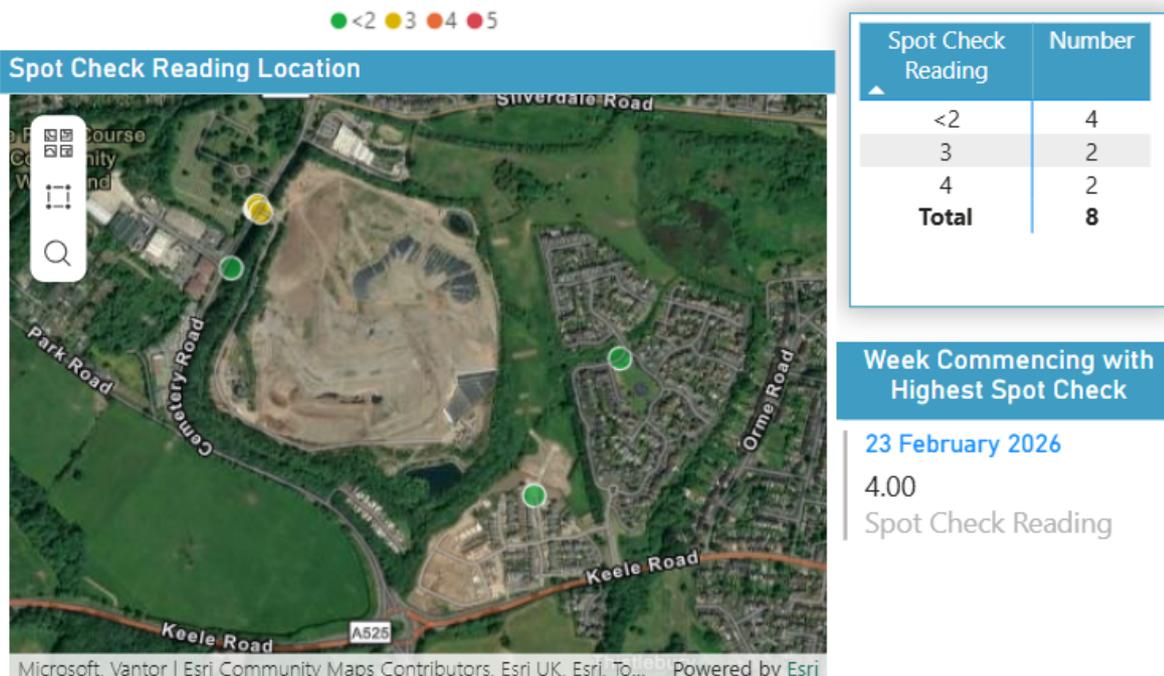
Fig 2. Daily complaint data for January and February 2026. No odour complaints were reported to the Council in February 2026. The total number of complaints in 2026 remains at 1.



Odour assessments

- 2.2 Fig 3. Officer odour assessments - February 2026.

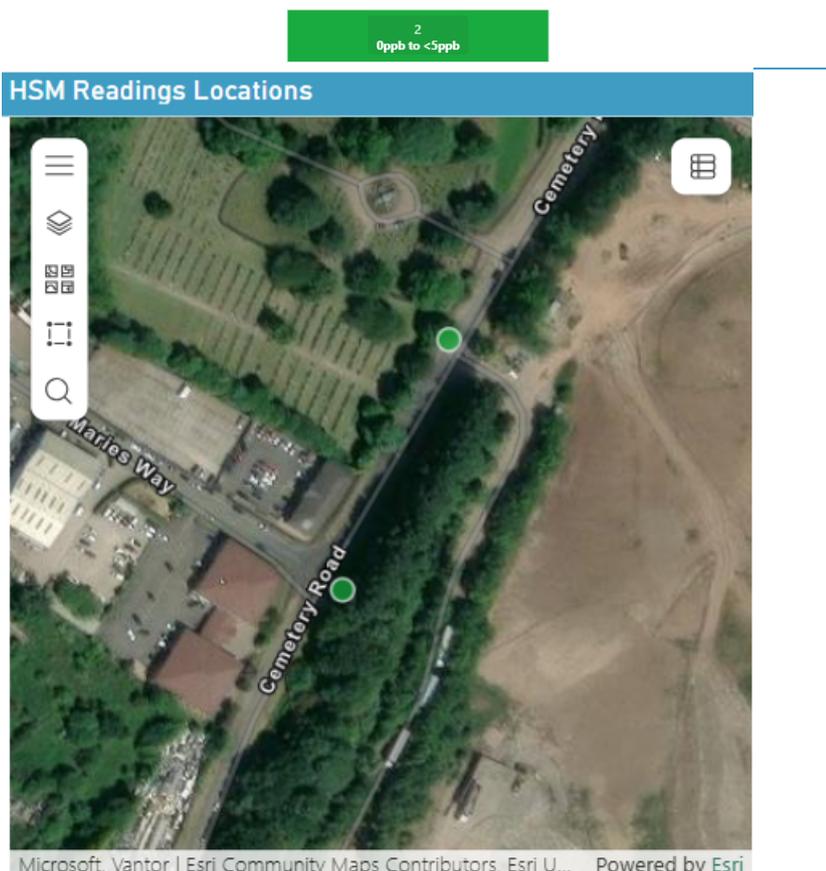
This shows the officer intensity rating of the odour assessments. The highest intensity was 4 [strong odour] monitored at Cemetery Road on 25 February 2026.



Hydrogen Sulphide Monitoring [HSM]

2.3 Fig 4. Officer Jerome hydrogen sulphide monitoring results – February 2026

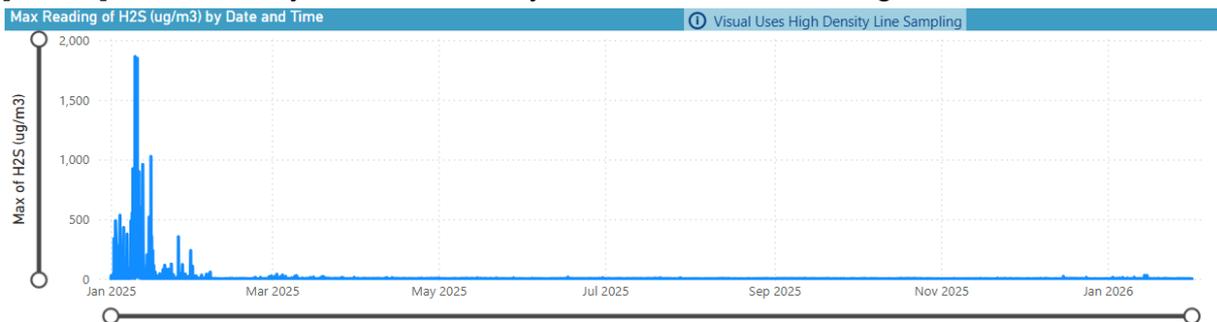
Number of Readings per RAG Rating (Hover for RAG Description)



Hydrogen sulphide was not detected at either location.

Environment Agency Air Quality Data

- 2.4** The Council, Staffordshire County Council, and the Environment Agency have jointly funded a campaign of air quality monitoring utilising static air monitoring stations. The Environment Agency manage and operate these air quality monitoring stations. Data from these stations is routinely published by the Environment Agency.
- 2.5** In the period 12-18 January 2026 the raw data from MMF Maries Way reported 3.9% as the percentage of time the location recorded hydrogen sulphide above the WHO odour annoyance guideline level. The weekly exceedance for the following week 19-25 January 2026 was 0% at both air quality monitoring stations. The weekly exceedance has remained at 0% at both stations up to the latest published data - 16-22 February 2026.
- 2.6** The maximum hydrogen sulphide recorded across the monitoring stations [MMFs] from January 2025 to January 2026 is set out in the figure below.



Environment Agency Regulatory and Enforcement Action

- 2.7** The Environment Agency provide updates on its activity on the Walleys Quarry Landfill which can be accessed here:
<https://engageenvironmentagency.uk.engagementhq.com/hub-page/walleys-quarry-landfill>

NULBC Update

- 2.8** The Council is providing both the Environment Agency and liquidator any support we can within our powers to keep this landfill under control, as it is currently.
- 2.9** We will continue to monitor the data in relation to the landfill.
- 2.10** We will continue to undertake odour monitoring and assessments in the community.

- 2.11 We would ask that should the community be adversely affected by odour that complaints are logged to the EA or ourselves via Report a problem or concern about Walleys Quarry – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council.

Multi-Agency Working

- 2.12 We are working with partners to review:
- the ongoing work by the Environment Agency to minimise emissions off site;
 - the future of the site considering the availability of any funding and the potential routes to delivery
- 2.13 Further details of this work will be provided in a future report following the establishment of working groups.

UK Health Security Agency [UKHSA]

- 2.14 The UKHSA health update for Walleys Quarry landfill site is published monthly on the Environment Agency engagement webpage [Air Quality Monitoring | Engage Environment Agency](#)

The UKHSA Position Statement for January 2026 is:

Whilst the risk to long-term (lifetime) health cannot be excluded, currently this risk is likely to be small and will continue to be so while hydrogen sulphide concentrations remain around the current level. Reductions in hydrogen sulphide are anticipated to continue to improve.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
- Note the contents of this update report.

4. Reasons

- 4.1 To ensure Cabinet is kept updated of the ongoing work to address the issues associated with the odours from Walleys Quarry landfill.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 To ensure Cabinet is kept updated of the ongoing work to address the issues associated with the odours from Walleys Quarry landfill.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 is the legislation concerned with statutory nuisances in law. This is the principal piece of legislation covering the Council's duties and responsibilities in respect of issues relating to odour nuisance.

- The relevant part of Section 79 defines a statutory nuisance as any smell or other effluvia arising on industrial, trade or business premises which is prejudicial to health or a nuisance. The Council is responsible for undertaking inspections and responding to complaints to determine whether a statutory nuisance exists.
- Where a statutory nuisance is identified or considered likely to arise or recur, section 80 of the Act requires that an abatement notice is served on those responsible for the nuisance. The abatement notice can either prohibit or restrict the nuisance and may require works to be undertaken by a specified date(s).
- It is then a criminal offence to breach the terms of the abatement notice. Because the site is regulated by the Environment Agency under an Environmental Permit, the council would need to obtain the consent of the Secretary of State before it is able to prosecute any offence of breaching the abatement notice.
- The Act provides powers in respect of a breach. If a person on whom an abatement notice is served, without reasonable excuse, contravenes or fails to comply with any requirement or prohibition imposed by the notice, they shall be guilty of an offence. If this is on industrial, trade or business premises shall be liable on conviction to an unlimited fine. It is a defence that the best practicable means were used to prevent, or to counteract the effects of, the nuisance.

6.2 Walleys Quarry Ltd in February 2025 entered voluntary liquidation. 12 months on, the company status is 'Liquidation' on Companies House.

6.3 Upon the liquidation of Walleys Quarry Ltd, the abatement notice and the legal requirements in respect of odours, will cease to be enforceable. As a result, those legal proceedings will not continue. The Council will keep this under review.

6.4 The Council also continues to engage with the Crown Estate and the Environment Agency regarding any future plans for the site.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 The work of the Council in this regard recognises that the problematic odours in the area may impact on some groups more than others.

7.2 The work has been focussed on minimising this impact and is now on maintaining the improvements made.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

8.1 Dedicated officer resource has been allocated to continue the Council's work regarding Walleys Quarry Landfill.

8.2 On 25 February 2025, the Council was listed as a creditor in the 'Notice of Statement of Affairs' signed by a Director of Walleys Quarry Ltd. The amount owed to the Council is £132,097.20. This outstanding debt is made up of £102,000 in respect of the legal fees agreed through the mediated settlement

in court back in October 2022 relating to the Abatement Notice. The remaining amount relates to outstanding Business Rates.

8.3 The Council is now in correspondence with Walleys Quarry liquidators in order to seek recovery of these outstanding monies. Updates on this situation will be provided as and when available.

9. **Major Risks & Mitigation**

9.1 A GRACE risk assessment has been completed including the following main risks:

- Failure to maintain the reduction in odour levels;
- Community dissatisfaction at odour levels;
- Failure to ensure suitable restoration of Walleys Quarry

9.2 Controls have been identified and implemented in order to control these risks; the main controls include:

- Dedicated officer resource for Walleys Quarry work has been secured;
- Continued air quality monitoring provision;
- Robust procedure for investigating complaints with experienced officers;
- Specialist expert advice maintained;
- Multi-Agency partnership working continues.

UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



10. **One Council**

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Digital Council

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

The Council will use all available monitoring data and digital tools in making strategic and operational decisions in relation to Walleys Quarry.

One Sustainable Council

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle

The Council will further develop the Walleys Quarry landfill webpage to make it easier for residents and businesses to be kept up to date with the works being undertaken onsite.

11. Key Decision Information

11.1 As an update report, this is not a Key Decision.

12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

12.1 This matter has been variously considered previously by Economy, Environment & Place and Health, Wellbeing & Environment Scrutiny Committee, Council and Cabinet on 21st April 2021, 9th June 2021, 7th July 2021, 21st July 2021, 8th September 2021, 13th October 2021, 3rd November 2021, 17th November, 1st December 2021, 12th January 2022, 2nd February 2022, 23rd February 2022, 23rd March 2022, 20th April 2022, 7th June 2022, 19th July 2022, 6th September 2022, 18th October 2022, 8th November 2022, 6th December 2022, 10th January 2023, 7th February 2023, 13th March 2023, 5th April 2023, 6th June 2023, 18th July 2023, 19th September 2023, 17th October 2023, 7th November 2023, 5th December 2023, 16th January 2024, 6th February 2024, 14th February 2024, 19th March 2024, 10th April 2024, 4th June 2024, 16th July 2024, 10th September 2024, 25th September 2024, 15th October 2024, 5th November 2024, 25th November 2024, 3rd December 2024, 9th January 2025, 4th February 2025, 18th March 2025, 6th May 2025, 3rd June 2025, 8th July 2025, 2nd September 2025, 15th September 2025 and 14th October 2025, 4th November 2025, 24th November 2025, 2nd December 2025, 13th January 2026, 3rd February 2026.

13. List of Appendices

13.1 None

14. Background Papers

14.1 None

This page is intentionally left blank

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO
CABINET

17th March 2026

Report Title: Implementation of the Renters Right Act 2025 and associated policies

Submitted by: Service Director – Regulatory Services

Portfolios: Community Safety & Wellbeing

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
This report provides an overview of the new legal provisions introduced by the Renters Rights Act 2025 and introduces new polices to facilitate the implementation of the Act.	
<u>Recommendation</u>	
That Cabinet:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the contents of this report and approves the proposed Civil Penalty and Housing Enforcement policies. 2. Authorises the Service Director for Regulatory Services and the Service Director for Legal and Governance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety & Wellbeing to finalise and implement any further policies or amendments required by subsequent parliamentary order or statutory instrument in order to give effect to the Renters’ Rights Act (RRA) 2025. 	
<u>Reasons</u>	
The Renters Right Act 2025 has recently received royal assent, which comes with a wide range of new responsibilities and attendant new burden funding.	

1. Background

1.1 On 27 October 2025, the Renters’ Rights Act (RRA) 2025 received Royal Assent, marking a key milestone in proposals to transform the private rented sector.

1.2 The Renters’ Rights Act will:

1.2.1 Abolish section 21 evictions and move to a simpler tenancy structure where all assured tenancies are periodic – providing more security for tenants and empowering them to challenge poor practice and unfair rent increases without fear of eviction.

- 1.2.2 Ensure possession grounds are fair to both parties**, giving tenants more security, while ensuring landlords can recover their property when reasonable. The Act introduces new safeguards for tenants, giving them more time to find a home if landlords evict to move in or sell, and ensuring unscrupulous landlords cannot misuse grounds.
- 1.2.3 Provide stronger protections against backdoor eviction** by ensuring tenants are able to appeal excessive above-market rents which are purely designed to force them out. As now, landlords will still be able to increase rents to market price for their properties and an independent tribunal will make a judgement on this, if needed.
- 1.2.4 Introduce a new Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman** that will provide quick, fair, impartial and binding resolution for tenants' complaints about their landlord. This will bring tenant-landlord complaint resolution in line with established redress practices for tenants in social housing and consumers of property agent services.
- 1.2.5 Create a Private Rented Sector Database** to help landlords understand their legal obligations and demonstrate compliance (giving good landlords confidence in their position), alongside providing better information to tenants to make informed decisions when entering into a tenancy agreement. It will also support local councils – helping them target enforcement activity where it is needed most. Landlords will need to be registered on the database in order to use certain possession grounds.
- 1.2.6 Give tenants strengthened rights to request a pet** in the property, which the landlord must consider and cannot unreasonably refuse.
- 1.2.7 Apply the Decent Homes Standard** to the private rented sector to give renters safer, better value homes and remove the blight of poor-quality homes in local communities.
- 1.2.8 Apply 'Awaab's Law'** to the sector, setting clear legal expectations about the timeframes within which landlords in the private rented sector must take action to make homes safe where they contain serious hazards.
- 1.2.9 Make it illegal for landlords and agents to discriminate** against prospective tenants in receipt of benefits or with children – helping to ensure everyone is treated fairly when looking for a place to live.
- 1.2.10 End the practice of rental bidding** by prohibiting landlords and agents from asking for or accepting offers above the advertised rent. Landlords and agents will be required to publish an asking rent for their property and it will be illegal to accept offers made above this rate.
- 1.2.11 Strengthen local authority enforcement** by expanding civil penalties, introducing a package of investigatory powers and bringing in a new requirement for local authorities to report on enforcement activity.

1.2.12 Strengthen rent repayment orders by extending them to superior landlords, doubling the maximum penalty and ensuring repeat offenders have to repay the maximum amount.

1.3 The first phase of these measures was implemented on 27th December 2025, followed by the main legal provisions and responsibilities to be implemented on 1st May 2026. There will be a further phase of implementation, which will be later in 2026.

2. Issues

2.1 The enactment and implementation of the Act, places new burdens, powers duties and offences. To be prepared for the implementation of the provisions, there requires the amendment or revision of a number of different constitution documents, policies and procedures including:

2.1.1 Amendments and updates the council's scheme of delegation, to authorise officers to use the new powers and duties in the Act and associated legislation which the Act amends.

2.1.2 A Housing Standards enforcement policy - To provide clarity on the duty to enforce within the Renters' Rights Act and other legislation. Recognise the fact that most of the Landlord legislation is outside of the Regulators' Code and therefore cannot be enforced under the Corporate Enforcement Policy. The aim being to enable enforcement decisions to be taken in line with the statutory guidance. The proposed policy is in Appendix 1.

2.1.3 A Civil Penalty Policy under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation - To create a consistent approach to making enforcement decisions in line with the statutory guidance and to reflect the new penalties and fines that the Act introduces. The proposed policy is in Appendix 2.

2.1.4 A Housing 'debt recovery' policy or potential update to Debt Recovery Policy - With the introduction of new Civil Penalties, there is a need for successful debt recovery arrangements. A clear, published policy that is visibly enforced will act as a deterrent.

2.2 This report addresses two of these policy requirements. With the remainder being requested to have delegated authority to approve.

2.3 Both proposed policies have been developed for Local Authority implementation, representing best practice and consistency across all Authorities. It is hoped that the majority of Local Authorities will adopt the policies, therefore providing the consistency in approach and delivery of the new legal requirements and subsequent enforcement.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That Council notes the contents of this report and approves the proposed Civil Penalty and Housing Enforcement policies.
- 3.2 Authorises the Service Director for Regulatory Services and the Service Director for Legal and Governance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety & Wellbeing to finalise and implement any further policies or amendments required by subsequent parliamentary order or statutory instrument in order to give effect to the Renters' Rights Act (RRA) 2025.

4. **Reasons**

- 4.1 The Renters Right Act places new duties and powers to be delivered by the Local Authority. Without the necessary policies in place to provide the necessary detail as to how the Act will be implemented, the council will not be able to legally enforce the new powers and provisions.
- 4.2 Such policies need to be in place for implementation on 1st May 2026.

5. **Options Considered**

- 5.1 There are the following options considered:
 - 5.1.1 To approve the proposed new policies, therefore enabling the council and officers to deliver the new statutory functions from implementation.
 - 5.1.2 Provide no amendment and continue to the existing policies. This would be a failing in the councils duty and would also put our residents in the private rented sector at a disadvantage.
 - 5.1.3 Update NBC existing policies rather than utilising the nationally developed policies, providing consistency in approach.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The Renters Right Act is new legislation which places significant powers and duties on the Council.
- 6.2 A summary of the changes is provided in section 1 of this report.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 There are none arising from this report.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 Notification of New Burden funding for 2025/26 to 2028/29 has been received equating to £101,252.

8.2 The Act is designed to be enforcement focussed with the expectation that it will be financially sustainable in 3 years, aligning with Local Government Reorganisation.

8.3 On 14 November 2025, MHCLG wrote to the Chief Executive. Part of this letter refers to new burden funding and states (emphasis added):

‘In line with legislation, we are undertaking a new burdens assessment and are committed to funding the net cost to local councils of our reforms. For this financial year 2025/26, local housing authorities will receive an additional £18.2 million, **to fund familiarisation and preparation costs and staff recruitment**. Funding allocations are based on the number of private rented sector properties in each local authority area using 2021 census data. We expect to confirm the new burdens funding allocation for 2026/27 in early 2026, ahead of the first phase of our measures being implemented.’

8.4 In order to ensure that the Council accommodates the new Renters Rights Act 2025 appointment to officer roles to undertake the delivery will utilise the new burden funding.

8.5 As the Renters Rights Act is enforcement focussed and there is the expectation of self-funding (within 3 years) there will be income to off-set the officer costs.

8.6 There will be a requirement for training for both existing and new staff. There are a number of free training resources available at present, however further bespoke training may be required as and when further clarity regarding the new regime is received.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

9.1 The main risks arising from this report are:

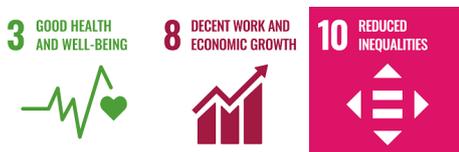
9.1.1 Inability to recruit into posts - all Councils have received funding for recruitment, which will inevitably lead to a shortage of supply of available officers in an already challenging recruitment sector.

9.1.2 The proposed resources do not match the demand for services.

9.1.3 The new burden funding received in 2026/27 and future years is insufficient to meet the legal duties, powers and demands for service.

9.1.4 The proposed self-funding financial model is not realised.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Digital Council

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

One Sustainable Council

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 This is a key decision as it will affect all wards.

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 None.

14. List of Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 – Housing Authority Enforcement Policy 2026

14.2 Appendix 2 – Civil Financial Penalty Policy 2026

15. Background Papers

15.1 Renters Rights Act 2025 and associated guidance.

Newcastle-under-Lyme



Housing Authority Enforcement Policy 2026



This policy sets out the Council's principles for enforcing and executing its duties as a Housing Authority under the relevant statute.

S3 Housing Act 2004 imposes a duty on Councils to keep housing conditions in their district under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken by them.

S107 Renters' Rights Act 2025 imposes a duty on the Council to enforce the Landlord Legislation. The Landlord Legislation is comprised of the following:

- Chapters 3 and 6 of Part 1 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025,
- Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025,
- Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977, and
- Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988.

S110 Renters' Rights Act 2025 imposes a duty on the Council to report to the Secretary of State on the exercise of its functions under the Landlord Legislation.

In this policy, the term 'landlord' should be read as including letting agents, managing agents, licensors, property owners, directors of corporate landlords and any other person involved in the letting or management of privately rented accommodation.

In this policy, the terms 'House of Multiple Occupation' or 'HMO' are defined by the Housing Act 2004.

Aims of the Policy

The purpose of this enforcement policy is to provide guidance for Housing Authority officers to ensure enforcement action is taken in line with the provisions of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and mandatory guidance to local authorities.

The Act and the 'Landlord Legislation' (as defined by S107) sit outside of the Regulators' Code, and its provisions do not apply.

Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 is also outside of the code's scope.

Notwithstanding this, the following legislation and its enforcement does come within the Legislative and Regulatory Reform (Regulatory Functions) Order 2007 and is therefore within the scope of the Regulators Code and the principles of good regulation:

- Parts 8, 9 and 10 of the Housing Act 1985
- Part 8 of the Housing Act 1996
- Parts 2 to 5 of the Housing Act 2004

This policy document sets out what owners, landlords, their agents or any other person involved in the letting or management of privately rented accommodation, and tenants of private rented sector properties, can expect from officers when dealing with non-compliance.

All enforcement action taken will be in accordance with relevant statutory Codes of Practice, Council procedures and protocols, and official guidance from central and local government bodies.

As a public body under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Council will apply the principles of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Approach to Enforcement

The Council wants to support responsible landlords to raise housing standards. However, the Council expects landlords to have a good understanding of the housing standards and management issues that should be met in privately rented accommodation.

S5 Housing Act 2004 places a duty on Councils to take appropriate enforcement action where a Category 1 hazard exists.

S7 Housing Act 2004 gives Councils a discretionary duty to take action where a Category 2 hazard exists. The Council will usually take action where a Category 2 hazard exists.

In addition, Council officers will often investigate and identify the need to take enforcement action through a range of routes, including (but not limited to): proactive inspections of dwellings through licensing provisions; in response to a complaint or request for assistance; and referrals from other public bodies. All investigations will be carried out in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. The Council will ensure that appropriate governance is in place to ensure that action is taken in accordance with appropriate policies.

The Council may commence enforcement with formal action instead of informal action in the first instance. In deciding whether to do so, the circumstances of the case will be taken into account. Relevant factors may include, but are not limited to:

- Where there is a risk to public health
- Where there is a blatant or deliberate contravention of the law
- Where there is history of non-compliance

The Council will usually take formal action in the first instance if there has been:

- Non-compliance with previous formal or informal action
- Offences in relation to the licensing of HMOs

The Council will take formal enforcement action in the first instance for breaches of the Landlord Legislation.

Investigatory powers

In addition to the Council's informal and formal powers of enforcement, there are investigatory powers relating to the collection of information and relating to the entry of premises including, but not limited to, the powers detailed below.

Power to Investigate

S114 Renters' Rights Act 2025 gives the Council power to issue a notice to a relevant person to require the person to provide specified information to the Council.

This notice may be given to any person with an estate or interest in the land; the licensor; their agents; or a marketer of a property. It may be given in regard to any offence under the following Legislation:

- Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977;
- Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988;
- Section 83(1) or 84(1) of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013;
- Sections 21 to 23 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016;
- Chapter 3 of Part 1 and Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

Failure to comply with a s114 notice is an offence under s131 Renters' Rights Act 2025, as is being obstructive and intentionally or recklessly making false or misleading statements in response to a s.113 notice.

S115 Renters' Rights Act 2025 permits the Council when it reasonably suspects a breach of the Rented Accommodation Legislation to issue a notice to any person requiring them to provide the information specified. This may only be done to investigate whether a breach has occurred under the Rented Accommodation Legislation, or to determine the amount of a penalty. For the purposes of this section, the Rented Accommodation Legislation means:

- Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977;
- Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988;
- Parts 1 to 4 and 7 of the Housing Act 2004 ;
- Section 83(1) or 84(1) of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013;
- Sections 21 to 23 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016;
- Chapter 3 of Part 1 and Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

Where an individual has not complied with a s115 notice, s116 Renters' Rights Act 2025 enables the Council to make an application to the Court to enforce the provisions of the notice and seek reimbursement for the costs of the application.

S131 Renters' Rights Act provides that, in addition to the offence of non-compliance with a s114 notice, it is an offence for an individual to obstruct a Council officer seeking to exercise their powers without reasonable excuse. It is also an offence to fail to give an officer any additional assistance or information which they reasonably require without reasonable excuse.

S235 Housing Act 2004 allows the Council to issue a notice to relevant individuals, including occupiers, directing them to provide specified documents under their control for the purpose of

investigating whether an offence has been committed under Parts 1 to 4 of the Housing Act 2004 or exercising the Council's functions under Parts 1 to 4 of the Housing Act 2004.

S16 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 also permits the Council to issue a notice to an occupier, manager, or individual with an interest in the land to compel them to provide the Council with information on the nature of their interest and the names and addresses of current occupiers and of any others with an interest in the land.

Entry to Premises

S118 Renters' Rights Act 2025 permits Council officers to enter business premises of relevant people (including landlords, letting agents, and marketers) if it is necessary for the production or seizure of documents under s122-s123 Renters' Rights Act 2025. This power will be exercised without a warrant.

S121 Renters' Rights Act 2025 allows a Council officer named in a warrant to enter premises used for a rental sector business which is not mainly accommodation if there are documents on the premises which the officer could require under s122 or seize under s123. In addition, for this power to be exercised, one of the following conditions must be met:

- That access to the premises has been or is likely to be refused, and the Council has provided notice of their intention to apply for a warrant to the occupier;
- Those documents on the premises would likely be concealed or interfered with if notice of entry were to be given;
- That no occupier is present, and waiting for their return might defeat the purpose of the entry.

Following a s118 or s121 Renters' Rights Act 2025 entry, s122 allows an officer at any reasonable time to require a relevant person on the premises to produce any documents relating to the business and to take copies of them. This may only be exercised to ascertain whether there has been a breach of the Rented Accommodation Legislation where an officer reasonably suspects there has been a breach or an offence; or to ascertain whether the documents may be required in evidence for proceedings regarding a breach or offence.

Following a s118 or s121 Renters' Rights Act 2025 entry, s123 authorises Council officers to seize and detain documents that the officer reasonably suspects may be required as evidence in proceedings relating to a breach of, or an offence under, the Rented Accommodation Legislation. When doing so, the officer will provide evidence of the officer's identity and authority if reasonably practicable. The officer will take reasonable steps to inform the person from whom documents have been seized that they have been seized, and will provide that person with a written record of what has been taken.

S126 Renters' Rights Act 2025 permits the Council to enter residential premises used for a tenancy at a reasonable time if the officer considers it necessary as part of an investigation into potential offences specified in subsection 1(b). Where required, the Council will give at least 24 hours' notice of this to the occupier and individuals with an interest in the property as per subsection 1(c), detailing in writing why the entry is necessary and the suspected offences. Where there are occupiers found on the premises, the officer will provide evidence of the officer's identity and authority to at least one of the occupiers if reasonably practicable.

In addition, s239 Housing Act 2004 permits Council officers to enter, if necessary and at a reasonable time, a property in order to carry out a survey or examination. This may be done if any one of the following is met:

- to determine if any Part 1-4 enforcement functions should be exercised;
- the premises are part of an Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order;
- a management order is in force under Chapter 1 or 2 of Part 4 on the premises.

In certain circumstance the Council may obtain a warrant to enter, by force if necessary, under s240 Housing Act 2004.

Informal action

Informal action taken by the Council may be written or verbal advice. Additionally, a visit may be made at the outset by Council Officers in cases where the initial complaint or contact indicates that an immediate investigation by a Council officer is warranted.

In cases where officers visit an address, whether this is a result of a landlord's failure to adequately resolve a highlighted issue or as part of an audit or other investigation, written or verbal advice may be deemed sufficient should the inspection highlight only very minor deficiencies.

Where written advice is deemed appropriate by the Council and is provided, timescales will normally be included to undertake any specified work or actions.

While the Council will use its discretion on whether to carry out informal action for a Category 2 hazard, it does not need to provide written or verbal advice before commencing formal action.

Formal action

If formal action is considered appropriate, the following options are available to the Council.

Housing Act 2004 Part 1

- issue an Improvement Notice in respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards on the property. This requires the person to whom it is served to undertake the remedial action specified on the Notice within a given timeframe. The mandated work and the timeframe will be determined by the Council depending on the nature and scale of the work.
- issue a Prohibition Order in respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards on the property. This prevents occupation of whole or part of the property, or can be used to limit occupant numbers, within a specified time frame.
- issue a Hazard Awareness Notice in respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards on the property. This makes the owner and occupiers aware of the hazards identified; however, it does not require remedial action. As a result, and because it does not secure risk-reducing works within a specified timeframe, a Hazard Awareness Notice will not usually be the most appropriate course of action where remedial works are necessary to reduce the risk of harm to occupiers or potential occupiers.
- make an Emergency Prohibition Order. This immediately prohibits the use of all or part of a dwelling if there is an imminent risk of serious harm to the health or safety of the occupants or others.
- Where there is a Category 1 hazard present, S40 Housing Act 2004 allows the Council to undertake Emergency Remedial Action on the Category 1 hazard without prior notice.
- The Council also has the power to suspend action taken under Part 1 Housing Act 2004 in situations where it has the power or duty to take enforcement action through the service of an

Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order. This will be at the Council's discretion and will normally be considered for the purpose of minimising inconvenience to the current occupiers.

- Demolition and Clearance are options for both Category One or Category Two hazards.
- S30 Housing Act 2004 provides that failure to comply with a Improvement Notice is a criminal offence, which will normally be followed by prosecution or the issuing of a civil penalty.
- S32 Housing Act 2004 provides that failure to comply with a Prohibition Order is a criminal offence, which will normally be followed by prosecution.
- Other formal notices served by the Council may not relate to the landlord undertaking remedial works but may cover a range of other matters including, but not limited to, exercising a right of entry under s.239 of the Housing Act 2004 and a request to provide information or the need to abate or avoid overcrowding.

Work in default

The enforcement options for non-compliance with formal Notices or breach of licence conditions include the carrying out of works specified in the Notice. This power may be exercised in addition to other enforcement proceedings taken for non-compliance. The Council has no duty to undertake works in default and it will be at its discretion.

Emergency or suspended enforcement action

Where there is a Category 1 hazard present, s43 Housing Act 2004 permits the Council to issue an Emergency Prohibition Order. This immediately prohibits the use of all or part of a dwelling if there is an imminent risk of serious harm to the health or safety of the occupants or others.

S40 Housing Act 2004 allows the Council to undertake Emergency Remedial Action on the Category 1 hazard without prior notice. The Council may then seek reimbursement of costs incurred on the work and the administration of the scheme.

The Council also has the power to suspend action taken under Part 1 Housing Act 2004 in situations where it has the power or duty to take enforcement action through the service of an Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order. This will be at the Council's discretion and will normally be considered for the purpose of minimising inconvenience to the current occupiers.

HMO Licence Conditions

Conditions can be added to HMO licences to require work to meet specified standards or to address HMO Management Regulation requirements. In general, authorities should seek to identify, remove or reduce category 1 or category 2 hazards in the house by the exercise of Part 1 functions and not by means of licence conditions however this does not prevent the authority from imposing licence conditions relating to the installation or maintenance of facilities or equipment even if the same result could be achieved by the exercise of Part 1 functions;

Failure to comply with these conditions is a criminal offence, which may result in prosecution or the issuing of a civil penalty

Other Legislative alternatives

There may be other legislative alternatives available to remedy deficiencies that cause Category Two hazards which an authority may choose as a more appropriate enforcement approach.

Prosecution

Where a Civil Financial Penalty is an available alternative to prosecution, the Council will only consider using its power to prosecute under Part 1 Housing Act 2004 in more serious cases.

The decision to prosecute will be determined by the evidential strength of the Council's case and the relevant public interest factors set down by the Director of Public Prosecutions in the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

In many circumstances, where an offence is committed by a body corporate, legislation enables local authorities to pursue persons involved with the body corporate in addition to, or instead of, the body corporate. These include company officers and, where applicable, company members.

The Council will determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether to take enforcement action against any person or persons that they consider fall within the scope of this category in addition to prosecuting the body corporate.

Civil Financial Penalties for specified offences

This section relates exclusively to Civil Financial Penalties issued by the Council for breaches of the below housing law.

The Council has the power to impose a Civil Financial Penalty for the following:

- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier as defined under the Protection from Eviction Act 1997
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [s30 Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) [s72 Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to the Selective Licensing of 'houses' [s95 Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with an Overcrowding Notice [s139 Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with a management regulation in respect of an HMO [s234 Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to Regulation 3 of the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
- Failure to comply with a banning order [s21 Housing and Planning Act 2016]
- Failure to give a written statement of terms under section 16D of the Housing Act 1988
- Failure to give an existing tenant information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act under paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Attempting to let a property for a fixed term under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Attempting to end a tenancy orally or by service of a notice to quit under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Serving an eviction notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section 8 process under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Relying on a ground where the person does not reasonably believe that the landlord is/will be able to obtain possession under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Relying on a ground knowing the landlord would not be able to obtain possession or being reckless as to whether they would under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988

- Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Reletting or remarketing a property before expiry of the 12 month no-let period after using the moving and selling grounds under sections 16E and 16J of the Housing Act 1988
- Discriminating against prospective tenants during the letting process on the grounds that those tenants are in receipt of benefits or have children under sections 33 and 34 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Marketing a letting without stating the proposed rent under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Inviting or encouraging any person to offer to pay an amount of rent under the proposed letting that exceeds the stated rent under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Accepting an offer from any person to pay an amount of rent under the proposed letting that exceeds the stated rent under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025

Civil Financial Penalties in respect of these offences operate according to their own independent standalone policy.

Rent Repayment Orders

Part 2 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 permits the Council to seek a Rent Repayment Order at the First Tier Tribunal Property Chamber to require the landlord of the property where the offence(s) has been committed to refund rent to the tenants or the Council. S48 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 places a duty on the Council to consider applying for Rent Repayment Orders.

Where a landlord has been convicted or received a Civil Financial Penalty in respect of the offence, the Tribunal must award the maximum applicable amount, except in exceptional circumstances.

This power will be considered in response to all qualifying offences and where there is sufficient evidence for a successful application to the First Tier Tribunal.

The qualifying offences are:

- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier as defined under the Protection from Eviction Act 1997
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [s30 Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to unlicensed HMOs [s72(1) Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to unlicensed houses [s95(1) Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [s30(1) Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with a Prohibition Order [s32(1) Housing Act 2004]
- Breach of a Banning Order [s21 Housing and Planning Act 2016]
- Using Violence to secure entry [s6(1) Criminal Law Act 1977]
- Knowingly or recklessly misusing a possession ground [s16J(1) Housing Act 1988]
- Letting or marketing of a property within twelve months of using the 'moving in' or 'selling' ground of eviction [s16J(2) Housing Act 1988]
- Continuous breach of certain tenancy reform requirements [s16J(3) Housing Act 1988]

An application for an RRO may be in addition to other formal action, such as prosecution proceedings or the imposition of a Civil Penalty. Where the Council has issued a Civil Financial Penalty or pursued prosecution, it will usually apply for a Rent Repayment Order where public funds have been paid to a landlord who has committed a qualifying offence.

S49 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 enables the Council to assist tenants in applying for Rent Repayment Orders. The Council will usually assist tenants by referring or signposting them to a relevant organisation.

Banning Orders

Part 2, Chapter 2 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 permits a Council to apply for a Banning Order against a person who has been convicted of one or more of the relevant offences. This would prevent the landlord from:

- Letting housing in England;
- Engaging in English letting agency work;
- Engaging in English property management work; or
- Doing two or more of those things.

The Council may consider a Banning Order for the more serious offenders. It will take into account the seriousness of the offence(s), whether the landlord has committed other offences (or received any Civil Penalty in relation to a Banning Order offence) and any history of failing to comply with their obligations or legal responsibilities. It will also take into account other relevant factors, including but not limited to:

- The harm, or potential harm, caused to the tenant;
- The need to punish the offender;
- The need to deter the offender from repeating the offence;
- The need to deter others from committing similar offences.

Costs and Charges

The Council incurs costs in carrying out its functions. Where legislation allows, the Council will seek to recover reasonable costs and expenses associated with its enforcement, licensing and wider regulatory activity. This may include (non-exhaustively) costs arising from inspections, investigation, evidence gathering, notices and other statutory documentation, follow-up action, compliance monitoring, and works or other interventions.

Recovery may be pursued using all available lawful routes, which may include civil action, local land charges, and enforcement against the property.

Where permitted, interest may be applied to outstanding sums until paid.

Complaints

Contact may be made with the Council about any matters listed here by email at HousingMailbox@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk or by post at:

Regulatory Services
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
Castle House
Barracks Road

Newcastle-under-Lyme

Staffordshire

ST5 1BL

A service user can still make a complaint in cases where the Council has instigated legal proceedings. However, making a complaint will not stop any impending legal action.

Where statutory notices have been served, making a complaint does not replace the statutory rights of appeal or the right to make representations. It also does not allow extra time to comply with any notice or order.

If a service user disagrees with a statutory notice, they should take action as specified in the notice or order to make an appeal, if any exists. Reference should be made to any notes that may accompany the notice or order for more detail.

Appendix 1 – Statement of principles to determine the amount of a penalty charge under Part 4 of The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 as amended by The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 (“the Regulations”)

Section 13 of the Regulations requires local housing authorities to prepare and publish a statement of principles which they propose to follow in determining the amount of a penalty charge.

The Regulations introduced legal requirements on relevant landlords to:

1. Equip a smoke alarm on each storey of the premises on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation.
2. During any period when the premises were occupied under the tenancy, to ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room of the premises which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and which contains fixed combustion appliance other than a gas cooker.
3. Carry out checks by or on behalf of the landlord to ensure that each prescribed alarm is in proper working order on the day the tenancy begins if it is a new tenancy.
4. Where, following a report made on or after 1st October 2022 by a tenant or by their nominated representative to the landlord, a prescribed alarm is found not to be in proper working order, the alarm is repaired or replaced.

For the purposes of the legislation, living accommodation includes a bathroom or lavatory.

Where the Council believe that a landlord is in breach of one or more of the above duties, the Council must serve a remedial notice on the landlord. The remedial notice is a notice served under Regulation 5 of the Regulations.

If the landlord then fails to take the remedial action specified in the notice within the specified timescale, the Council can require a landlord to pay a penalty charge and can arrange for remedial action to be taken under certain circumstances. The power to charge a penalty arises from Regulation 8 of the Regulations. Failure to comply with each remedial notice can lead to a fine of up to £5,000. Fines will be applied per breach, rather than per landlord or property.

The Council will impose a penalty charge where it is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the landlord has not complied with the action specified in the remedial notice within the required timescale.

A landlord will not be considered to be in breach of their duty to comply with the remedial notice if they can demonstrate they have taken all reasonable steps to comply. Where there is evidence, including written correspondence, of repeated and consistent efforts to obtain access to the property, with access repeatedly being prevented by the occupant(s) of the property, a landlord will

not be considered to be in breach of their duty to comply with the remedial notice. A landlord will be expected to have:

- Communicated the risk of harm that the lack of functioning alarms posed to all occupants in writing on multiple occasions
- Requested access to comply with the remedial notice on a regular basis of no longer than every seven days in writing

In considering the imposition of a penalty, the Council may look at the evidence concerning the breach of the requirement of the notice. A non-exhaustive list of methods that may be used to obtain relevant evidence includes, but is not limited to:

- Evidence obtained from a property inspection
- Evidence provided by the tenant or agent
- Evidence provided by the landlord demonstrating compliance with the Regulations by supplying dated photographs of alarms, together with installation records
- That all detector heads have not passed their expiration or replacement date

Landlords need to take steps to demonstrate that they have met the testing requirements at the start of the tenancy requirements. A non-exhaustive list of methods that may be used to evidence compliance with these testing requirements includes, but is not limited to:

- Tenants signing an inventory form which states that they observed the alarms being tested and confirming that the alarms were in working order at the start of the tenancy

Where a landlord is in breach, the local housing authority may serve a remedial notice. Failure to comply with each remedial notice can lead to a fine of up to £5,000. Fines will be applied per breach, rather than per landlord or property

When determining the amount of the penalty charge, regard will be had to whether this is a first breach under the Regulations.

Determining the amount of the penalty charge for a first breach

The minimum amount of a penalty charge for a first breach of the Regulations will be £2500. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this statement of principles and issue a penalty charge for less than £2500. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors

The starting level of a penalty charge for a first breach of the Regulations will be £3000. The penalty charge amount will then be varied depending on aggravating and mitigating factors.

Aggravating factors include, but are not limited to:

- The number of alarms not working or missing (the Regulations state there should be one per storey)
- Other fire safety concerns/defects in the property which increase the risk posed to the occupants
- The length of time the offence is believed to have been on-going
- The frequency of complaints by the occupiers to the landlord about the non-working or missing alarms

- The costs of any remedial work the Council have carried out in response to the breach
- Whether the property is let as a HMO (which increases the overall risk)
- The number of occupants living in the property
- Presence of vulnerable occupiers such as elderly, children or disabled people
- Any history of previous enforcement or non-compliance of the landlord
- Attempts to obstruct the investigation

Mitigating factors include, but are not limited to:

- The property being small and low-risk (for example a one-bedroom ground floor flat with a large number of fire escapes including large windows)
- A single occupant living in the property
- Evidence that all required alarms were checked and in working order at the start of the tenancy
- Written evidence that some efforts to gain access and comply with the remedial notice were made and access was prevented by the occupant

Determining the amount of the penalty charge for a subsequent breach

The penalty for subsequent breaches by the same landlord will be £5000. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this statement of principles and issue a penalty charge for less than £5000. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors.

Appendix 2: Statement of principles to determine the amount of a penalty charge for a breach of minimum energy efficiency standards (MEEs) with respect to domestic privately rented property

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) make it unlawful to rent out a domestic property if it has an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) rating of F or G (unless a valid exemption has been registered on the PRS Exemptions register).

The Regulations make it unlawful to fail to comply with a compliance notice served by the Council.

The Regulations cover all relevant properties, even where there has been no change of tenancy.

The Regulations were introduced to improve the energy efficiency of housing in the private rented sector and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change. They should help make tenants’ homes more thermally efficient.

An energy performance certificate (EPC) gives the property an energy efficiency rating – A rated properties are the most energy efficient and G rated are the least efficient. It’s valid for 10 years and must be provided by the owner of a property, when it is rented or sold.

If you are a landlord and you fail, when requested, to provide an EPC for the start of a tenancy, you will be in breach of the Regulations.

An EPC contains information about the type of heating system and typical energy costs. It also gives recommendations about how the energy use could be reduced, lowering running costs. You can find the recommended energy efficiency improvements on the current EPC.

If you’re a private landlord, you must either:

- ensure your rented properties have an EPC with a minimum ‘E’ rating
- register a valid PRS exemption on the PRS exemptions register

Failure to do either of these is a breach of the Regulations.

The Council investigates any potential breaches of the regulations. If the Council is satisfied that you are, or have at any time in the 18 months preceding the date of service of the penalty notice, breached the Regulations, you may be subject to a penalty notice imposing a financial penalty. The Council may also impose a publication penalty.

The “publication penalty” means publication, for a minimum period of 12 months, or such longer period as the Council may decide, on the PRS Exemptions Register of such of the following information in relation to a penalty notice as the Council decides:

- Where the landlord is not an individual, the landlord’s name
- Details of the breach of these Regulations in respect of which the penalty notice has been issued
- The address of the property in relation to which the breach has occurred, and
- The amount of any financial penalty imposed.

The Council will impose the following financial penalties:

- (a) letting a property with an F or G rating for less than 3 months: £2,000
- (b) letting a property with an F or G rating for more than 3 months: £4,000
- (c) registering false or misleading information on the PRS exemptions register: £1,000
- (d) failing to provide information to the Council demanded by a compliance notice: £2,000

The Council may not impose a financial penalty under both subsections (a) and (b) above in relation to the same breach of the Regulations. But they may impose a financial penalty under either paragraph (a) or paragraph (b), together with financial penalties under paragraphs (c) and (d), in relation to the same breach. Where penalties are imposed under more than one of these paragraphs, the total amount of the financial penalty may not be more than £5,000.



This page is intentionally left blank

Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation

This policy applies once the Council has made a decision to commence civil penalty proceedings.

In this policy, the term 'landlord' should be read as including letting agents, managing agents, licensors, property owners, corporate landlords, directors of corporate landlords, registered providers of social housing and any other person involved in the letting or management of accommodation.

In this policy, the term 'corporate landlord' should be read as referring to a body corporate that meets the definition of 'landlord' above.

In this policy, the terms 'House in Multiple Occupation' or 'HMO' are defined by the Housing Act 2004.

The following breaches are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £7,000:

- Failure to give a written statement of terms and any other prescribed information under section 16D of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to let a property for a fixed term under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to end a tenancy orally or requiring that it is ended orally under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Serving an eviction notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section 8 process under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Relying on a ground where the landlord does not reasonably believe that the landlord is/will be able to obtain possession under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Failure to give an existing tenant prescribed information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act 2025 in the prescribed form and timeframe under paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Discrimination relating to children in the lettings process under section 33 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Discrimination relating to benefits in the lettings process under section 34 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Failure to specify proposed rent within a written advertisement or offer under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the stated rate under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

The following breaches are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £40,000:

- Breach of duty under Regulation 3, 3B, 3C, and 3D of The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020.

The following offences are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £40,000:

- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier under section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977.
- Continuation of conduct subject to a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) after the 28-day period (or, if appealed, after conclusion of the appeal) where the final notice has not been withdrawn under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988
- Conduct giving rise to liability under s.16I, where within the preceding five years the landlord has either (i) had a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) imposed for different conduct and the final notice has not been withdrawn, or (ii) been convicted under s.16J for different conduct under section 16(J) of the Housing Act 1988.
- Relying on a ground knowing the landlord would not be able to obtain possession or being reckless as to whether they would under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988.
- Breach of restrictions relating to reletting (s16(E)(2) Housing Act 1988) or remarketing (s16(E)(3) Housing Act 1988) a property within restricted period after using Grounds 1 or 1A of Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988 under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988.
- Breach of a banning order under section 21 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice under section 30 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Contravention of an overcrowding notice under section 139 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to obtain a selective licence under section 95 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to obtain an HMO licence under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Knowingly permitting over-occupation of an HMO under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to comply with management regulations in respect of HMOs under section 234 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to comply with HMO licence conditions under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to comply with selective licence conditions under section 95 of the Housing Act 2004.

If a landlord has committed multiple breaches or offences, a separate civil penalty can, and usually will, be imposed for each breach and offence. In each case, the level of any civil penalty imposed will be determined in accordance with this policy.

If multiple landlords have committed the same breach or offence at the same property, a separate civil penalty can, and usually will, be imposed on each offender. In each case, the level of civil penalty imposed on each offender will be in accordance with this policy.

This policy outlines the Council's methodology and mechanism for assessing and setting the level of a civil penalty at all stages where a civil penalty is under consideration, including the preparation of a notice of intent, and where a final decision has been made to impose a civil penalty.

When applying the civil penalties matrix, interim calculations at individual stages may result in figures that exceed the statutory maximum. Where the final amount reached following application of all relevant steps exceeds the statutory maximum, the civil penalty will be reduced to the applicable statutory maximum.

The Council considers the need for transparency and consistency to be of primary importance to ensure fairness in the discharge of its functions. The general objective of this policy is, therefore, to promote both transparency and consistency in the imposition of financial penalties so that those

involved in the letting or management of accommodation (a) know how the Council will generally penalise relevant breaches and offences and (b) are assured that, generally, like cases will be penalised similarly, and different cases penalised differently.

The Council recognises that, despite its best efforts, landlords may operate unlawfully for a significant period without detection, and that only a proportion of those committing relevant breaches and offences will be identified. Accordingly, the Council seeks to ensure that civil penalties are set at a level that makes it clear to the landlord concerned and to others that operating unlawfully as a landlord is financially disadvantageous when compared to operating lawfully.

The Council has a duty to act fairly, transparently and consistently when assessing civil penalties. To maintain fairness between all landlords, the Council will not give weight to claims advanced as factors that might reduce the amount of a civil penalty unless those claims are supported by evidence that the Council reasonably considers to be relevant, reliable, credible, and sufficient in scope and detail to enable proper assessment of the claim, having regard to the nature of the claim, the information ordinarily available to the landlord, and the need for consistent and fair decision-making. Allowing inadequately evidenced assertions to influence outcomes would risk rewarding those who provide incomplete or misleading information and would create an unfair advantage over landlords who provide a full and properly evidenced account. Accordingly, the Council expects landlords against whom a civil penalty is being considered to provide all documents and records that would ordinarily exist if their account were accurate. Where such evidence is not provided, and no explanation that the Council considers adequate is given, the Council may draw an adverse inference.

Where claims are advanced without sufficient supporting evidence, the Council may request specified supporting material before determining whether to issue a final notice or whether any mitigation has been sufficiently evidenced so as to justify a lower civil penalty.

The further objectives of using financial penalties in particular as a means of enforcing the above breaches and offences are explained below.

Statutory Guidance

The Government has issued statutory guidance entitled “Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation”. The Council has regard to this guidance in the exercise of their functions in respect of civil penalties.

The Council has considered the following factors in developing this civil penalty policy to help ensure that the civil penalty is set at an appropriate level.

Severity of the breach or offence. The more serious the breach or offence, the higher the penalty should be.

Culpability and track record of the offender. A higher penalty will be appropriate where the offender has a history of failing to comply with their obligations and/or their actions were deliberate and/or they knew, or ought to have known, that they were in breach of their legal responsibilities.

The harm caused to the tenant. This is a very important factor when determining the level of penalty. The greater the actual harm or the potential for harm, principally to the tenant but also potentially the local community, the higher the penalty should be.

Punishment of the offender. The penalty should, in a way that is fair, both punish the offender and demonstrate the consequences of not complying with their responsibilities.

Deter the offender from repeating breaches or offences. The ultimate goal is to prevent any further offending and help ensure that the offender fully complies with all of their legal responsibilities in future. The level of the penalty should therefore be set at a level that it is likely to have a very significant deterrent effect.

Deter others from committing similar breaches or offences. While the fact that someone has received a civil penalty may not be in the public domain, the civil penalty policy itself will be and local authorities should consider how their formal enforcement activity can be effectively publicised.

An important part of deterrence is the realisation on the part of landlords that the local housing authority is proactive in levying civil penalties where the need to do so exists and the civil penalty will be set at a high enough level such that operating lawfully will be the sensible financial choice.

Remove any financial benefit the offender may have obtained as a result of committing the breach or offence. The principle here is that it should not be in the offender's financial interest to commit a breach or offence rather than comply, for example that the penalty for breaching licensing conditions in respect of occupancy of a property is less than the additional rent received as a result of the over-crowding. The absence of any financial benefit to the landlord does not mean though that the penalty should be reduced.

Civil Penalties Matrix

In determining the level of a civil penalty, officers will have regard to the matrix set out below. The matrix consists of the following sequential steps:

1. Determining the starting point based on the seriousness of the breach or offence.
2. Adjustment for factors relating to the type of landlord; size and type of portfolio controlled, owned or managed; experience of the landlord ("Landlord Type")
3. Mitigating and aggravating factors the Council deems significant including, but not limited to, factors relating to the track record and culpability of the landlord and the actual or potential harm to the occupants.
4. Financial considerations.
5. Applying the totality principle.

Starting point based of seriousness of the breach or offence

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government has provided statutory guidance that prescribes starting points for all breaches and offences based on the seriousness of the breach or offence. The exception to this prescription is for breaches of licensing conditions under sections 72(3) and 95(2) of the Housing Act 2004, where the Council has determined its own starting levels based on the seriousness of the specific licence condition or type of licence condition that has not be complied with.

Adjustment for factors relating to the type of landlord; size and type of portfolio controlled, owned or managed; experience of the landlord (“Landlord Type”)

While all landlords are expected to comply fully with their legal obligations, the Council considers that a higher standard of professionalism and regulatory awareness is reasonably expected of landlords who operate at greater scale, who have greater experience, or who are involved in more complex forms of letting. Where such landlords fail to comply with their obligations, this will ordinarily justify a higher civil penalty.

In particular, a higher degree of professionalism is expected of landlords who:

- Control, own, or manage a significant portfolio of properties;
- Have significant experience in the letting or management of property;
- Are or have been involved in the letting or management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs);
- Are corporate landlords; or
- Are or have been directors of corporate landlords.

An upward adjustment of 20% of the applicable starting point will be applied where the landlord meets any one or more of the following criteria:

- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed six or more properties. These properties need not have been held concurrently or at the time civil penalty proceedings are brought.
- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed three or more properties that operated as HMOs, whether or not concurrently.
- The landlord is, or has previously been, a director of a corporate landlord.
- The landlord is a corporate landlord.
- The landlord has, in the Council’s assessment and by reference to the available evidence, significant experience in the letting or management of property.

A downward adjustment of 20% of the applicable starting point will be applied only where all of the following criteria are met:

- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed no more than two properties.
- The landlord has controlled, owned, or managed no more than one property that has operated as an HMO, at any point in time.
- The landlord has, in the Council’s assessment and by reference to the available evidence, very limited experience in the letting or management of property.

Mitigating and aggravating factors the Council deems significant including, but not limited to, factors relating to the track record and culpability of the landlord and the actual or potential harm to the occupants

To promote fairness and consistency in the administration of civil penalties, the Council will apply a structured and consistent framework when determining the extent to which mitigating and aggravating factors affect the quantum of any civil penalty.

General approach

Each breach or offence may have offence-specific mitigating and/or aggravating factors, which will be considered alongside the generic factors set out below.

Where multiple civil penalties are issued under this policy against the same landlord at the same time, and except where expressly stated otherwise, mitigating and aggravating factors will be considered and applied separately to each civil penalty when determining the quantum of each penalty.

Mitigating factors

The Council may reduce the level of a civil penalty by up to 20% of the applicable starting point to reflect the presence of mitigating factors.

Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this policy in respect of mitigating factors and apply a reduction in excess of 20%. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors.

Within the framework of this policy, the Council has not sought to provide an exhaustive list of mitigating factors, recognising that a wide range of circumstances may potentially give rise to mitigation. However, the following generic mitigating factors will be considered in respect of each breach or offence:

Steps taken to remedy the basis of the breach or offence

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Promptly remedying all elements of the breach or offence after receiving communication from the Council.
- Promptly remedying all the significant elements of the breach or offence leaving only less significant elements of the breach or offence.

A high level of cooperation

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Proactive provision of significant information the Council reasonably considers relevant beyond that required by statutory notice.

Acceptance of liability

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Accepting liability before or within the period for representations.

Where a landlord relies on a reasonable excuse defence or otherwise contests liability, this mitigating factor will not usually apply.

Health circumstances

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- A serious health condition or medical incident experienced by the landlord during, or in the period immediately preceding, the breach or offence, where there is clear and reliable evidence that the condition had a direct and material impact on the landlord's ability to comply with the relevant legal obligation. Examples may include, but are not limited to, a

heart attack, stroke, cancer diagnosis, or other acute or serious medical event causing significant incapacity or impairment.

Diminished culpability (limited responsibility)

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- A joint landlord who has evidenced that compliance arrangements for the subject property were directed and controlled by another joint landlord, and not by them.
- A landlord who became involved only after an unforeseen change in circumstances (such as the death of the previous landlord) and who committed the breach or offence only for a limited period while putting their affairs in order.

The instruction of a managing or letting agent, or reliance on an agent's actions or omissions, will not of itself constitute diminished culpability.

Aggravating factors

The Council may increase the level of a civil penalty by up to 20% of the applicable starting point to reflect the presence of aggravating factors.

Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this policy in respect of aggravating factors and apply an increase in excess of 20%. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple aggravating factors.

The following generic aggravating factors will be considered in respect of each breach or offence:

Previous history of non-compliance.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Previous successful prosecutions (including relevant spent convictions), previous civil penalties, previous rent repayment orders, previous works in default, previous simple cautions.

Concurrent investigations or proceedings relating to other civil penalties, prosecutions, or rent repayment orders will not be treated as previous non-compliance.

Non-cooperation with the Council.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Failure to comply with notices issued under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 235 of the Housing Act 2004, or section 114 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Failing to provide a substantive response to a letter of alleged offence.
- Failing to attend previously agreed meetings.

Where the Council has prosecuted, or is pursuing a prosecution, in respect of the same act or omission involving failure to provide legally required information (including failure to comply with a statutory notice), that conduct will not also be treated as an aggravating factor for the purposes of setting the civil penalty, in order to avoid double counting.

Where multiple civil penalties are imposed against the same landlord at the same time, this aggravating factor will be applied only to the civil penalty with the highest starting point, unless there is a clear and reasoned basis for applying it differently.

Deliberate intent or negligence when committing the offence.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Knowledge that the breach or offence was occurring.
- Continuation of offending after communication from the Council.
- Premeditation or planning, including steps taken to prevent detection or effective investigation.
- Providing false or misleading information to the Council.
- Applying pressure to occupants to deter cooperation with the Council.

The number of occupants affected.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- 3-5 occupants affected.

Duration of non-compliance.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- The offence or breach occurred over a 3–6 month period.

Vulnerability of occupants

Non-exhaustive examples include children and young adults, persons vulnerable by reason of age, disability or sensory impairment, persons with drug or alcohol dependency, victims of domestic abuse, children in care, persons with complex health needs, persons who do not speak English as a first language, victims of trafficking or sexual exploitation, refugees, asylum seekers, and pregnant women.

Financial considerations

The Council will review the quantum of the civil penalty and consider whether it is sufficient to act as an effective deterrent to future non-compliance. Where the Council has evidence that it considers to be sufficiently reliable regarding rental income and/or asset value from the landlord's, it may determine that an increase in the level of the penalty is appropriate in order to achieve effective deterrence.

It is essential that, as an absolute minimum, landlords do not financially benefit from their offending behaviour.

Financial circumstances will ordinarily be considered after any written representations have been received and as part of the determination of any final notice.

Where a landlord seeks to rely on a strained or limited financial position as a basis for reducing the level of a civil penalty, that position must be supported by appropriate and verifiable evidence sufficient to enable the Council to assess the landlord's financial position consistently, objectively, and transparently. Unsupported assertions, partial disclosure, or selective provision of information will not be given weight.

At a minimum, and where such information exists, the following should be provided as part of any written representations:

- The last three full tax years full self-assessment tax returns filed with HMRC, including all additional and supplemental pages;
- The last three full tax years' SA302 documents & tax year overviews;
- The last three months' payslips;
- The last three years P60 certificates;
- The last twelve months' Universal Credit payment statements;
- A list of all property assets owned or jointly owned (not limited to rental properties), together with corresponding Land Registry title documents;
- A list of all property assets owned, or held on a long lease, by any corporate entity in which the landlord has a beneficial interest, together with corresponding Land Registry documentation;
- The most recent annual mortgage statement for each property, or the last twelve months' mortgage statements where the mortgage has been in place for less than twelve months;
- Valuation statements for all ISAs held;
- Statements from any cryptoasset exchange accounts showing balances and valuations;
- A list of all shareholdings;
- Recent bank statements for any account holding a balance in excess of £5,000;
- Recent statements for all secured and unsecured loans;
- Bankruptcy orders and official notifications of bankruptcy.

Where the Council is not satisfied that it has been provided with sufficiently reliable, complete, and accurate information to assess the landlord's financial position, the Council may draw the inference that the landlord is able to pay the civil penalty as imposed.

A claimed inability to pay will not, of itself, outweigh the need to ensure effective deterrence or to remove any financial benefit obtained as a result of the breach or offence.

The totality principle

The Council will have regard to the totality principle to ensure that the overall outcome of its enforcement action is just and proportionate. In exceptional cases, and having regard to the particular circumstances of the case, the Council may take account of totality at an earlier stage by deciding not to pursue a civil penalty in respect of a specific breach or offence where doing so would render the overall outcome disproportionate.

In general, however, the application of the totality principle will form the final step in the Council's decision-making process, undertaken after any written representations have been considered and before final notices are issued, once the level of each individual civil penalty has been assessed in accordance with this policy.

As a final step before issuing final notices, the Council will consider whether multiple civil penalties being imposed under this policy against the same landlord at the same time result in an aggregate amount that is just and proportionate. Where the Council concludes that the aggregate amount would not be just and proportionate, it will consider whether a proportionate reduction of the penalties is appropriate.

The totality principle does not operate across different legal persons who are separately liable in law, nor does it operate across civil penalties imposed at different times. In general, it applies only to

multiple civil penalties imposed under this policy on the same person at the same time. Where, however, legislation provides that an officer of a body corporate, or a person concerned in its management, may be separately liable in relation to the same conduct as the body corporate, and that officer also holds a shareholding interest in the body corporate, the Council will, where civil penalties are imposed at the same time on both the body corporate and the officer arising from that same conduct, consider whether the combined outcome results in punitive duplication and is therefore not just and proportionate.

Where a reduction is applied under the totality principle, the Council will ordinarily do so by applying a uniform percentage reduction across all relevant civil penalties being issued at the same time, being those civil penalties that form part of the same totality assessment. Where, however, the application of the totality principle is required to address punitive duplication arising from a shared economic interest between a body corporate and an officer, the Council may apply a differential adjustment to ensure that the overall outcome is just and proportionate.

This approach reflects the statutory guidance on the application of the totality principle and is intended to promote consistency, transparency, and proportionality, while avoiding arbitrary or selective adjustment of individual penalties.

In accordance with the statutory guidance, any rent repayment orders made in respect of the same breach or offence will be disregarded for the purposes of assessing the totality of civil penalties under this policy.

Offences and breaches where a civil penalty may be levied and relevant considerations as to the level of that penalty

Protection from Eviction Act 1977 offences

Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier - section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£35,000	£40,000	£28,000	£35,000	£42,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Violence or threats of violence.
- Disposal of possessions or threats to dispose of possessions.
- Breach or evasion of an injunction or undertaking.
- Loss of home.

Housing Act 1988 breaches and offences

Failure to give a written statement of terms and any other prescribed information - section 16D of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- Provision of some of the required terms and prescribed information within the required period.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Attempting to let a property for a fixed term - section 16E(1)(a) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Attempting to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit - section 16E(1)(b) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.

Attempting to end a tenancy orally or requiring that it is ended orally - section 16E(1)(c) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.

Serving a possession notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section 8 process - section 16E(1)(d) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.

Relying on a ground where the person does not reasonably believe that the landlord is, will, or may be able to obtain possession on that ground and the tenant(s) surrendered the tenancy within the period of four months beginning with the date of the contravention, without an order for possession of the dwelling-house being made - section 16E(1)(e) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used - section 16E(1)(f) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£7,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Failure to give an existing tenant prescribed information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act 2025 in the prescribed form and timeframe - paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- Provision of some of the required prescribed information within the required period.
- Provision of prescribed information but not in the prescribed form.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Continuation of conduct subject to a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) after the 28-day period (or, if appealed, after conclusion of the appeal) where the final notice has not been withdrawn — section 16J(3) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Double the starting level for the two constituent breaches added together	£40,000	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Conduct giving rise to liability under s.16I, where within the preceding five years the person has either (i) had a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) imposed for different conduct and the final notice has not been withdrawn, or (ii) been convicted under s.16J for different conduct – section 16(J)(4) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Double the starting level for the two constituent breaches added together	£40,000	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- Dependent on the most recent conduct giving rise to liability to a civil penalty under section 16I of the Housing Act 1988.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Dependent on the most recent conduct giving rise to liability to a civil penalty under section 16I of the Housing Act 1988.

Relying on a ground where the person knows that the landlord would not be able to obtain an order for possession on that ground, or being reckless as to whether the landlord would be able to do so and the tenant(s) surrendered the tenancy within the period of four months beginning with the date the ground was relied on, without an order for possession of the dwelling-house being made – section 16J(1) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£30,000	£40,000	£24,000	£30,000	£36,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Breach of restrictions relating to reletting (s16(E)(2) Housing Act 1988) or remarketing (s16(E)(3) Housing Act 1988) a property within restricted period after using Grounds 1 or 1A of Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988 - section 16J(2) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Housing and Planning Act 2016 offences

Breach of a banning order - section 21(1) of the Housing and Planning Act 2016

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£35,000	£40,000	£28,000	£35,000	£42,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- A single, isolated incident.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Concealment or evasion.

Renters Rights Act 2025 breaches

Discrimination relating to children in the lettings process – section 33(1) of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Discrimination relating to benefits in the lettings process – section 34(1) of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Failure to specify proposed rent within a written advertisement or offer – section 56(2) of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£7,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the stated rate – section 56(3) of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 breach of duties

Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (3)(b), (3)(d), (3)(e). Regulation 3D: (a), (b), (c), (f)

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£5,000	£40,000	£4,000	£5,000	£6,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The report or record evidences that the electrical installations were compliant at all points.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.

Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c), (3)(a), (3)(c), (3)(ca), (5)(b), (5)(c). Regulation 3B: (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c). Regulation 3C: (1), (2)(a). Regulation 3D: (d), (e)

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,500	£40,000	£10,000	£12,500	£15,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The report or record evidences that the electrical installations were compliant at all points.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.

Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (4), (5a), (6). Regulation 3C: (2)(b), (4)

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.

Housing Act 2004 offences

Failure to comply with an improvement notice - section 30(1) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of hazard(s) that are present once the deadline for compliance has passed.
- Whether the property is unoccupied once the deadline for compliance has passed.
- Access to the property was prevented by the actions or refusal of the occupant(s) and a landlord can evidence that they took steps to obtain access to the property for the purpose of carrying out the required works, but those steps fell short of establishing a reasonable excuse for non-compliance.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of hazard(s) that are present once the deadline for compliance has passed.

Failure to comply with an overcrowding notice - section 139(7) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The level of overcrowding present.

Failure to obtain a selective licence - section 95(1) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,000	£40,000	£9,600	£12,000	£14,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The landlord has knowledge or experience of licensing requirements.

Failure to obtain an HMO licence - section 72(1) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£17,000	£40,000	£13,600	£17,000	£20,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The landlord has knowledge or experience of licensing requirements.
- The condition of the unlicensed property.

Knowingly permitting over-occupation of an HMO - section 72(2) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- There are suitable amenity and space provisions in the HMO.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The level of over-occupation present.

Failure to Comply with The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation [England] Regulations 2006 and The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 – section 234(3) of the Housing Act 2004

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 impose duties on the persons managing HMOs in respect of:

- Providing information to occupiers [Regulation 3]
- Taking safety measures, including fire safety measures [Regulation 4]
- Maintaining the water supply and drainage [Regulation 5]
- Supplying and maintaining gas and electricity, including having these services/appliances regularly inspected [Regulation 6]
- Maintaining common parts [Regulation 7]
- Maintaining living accommodation [Regulation 8]
- Providing sufficient waste disposal facilities [Regulation 9]

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 impose duties on the persons managing HMOs as defined by Section 257 Housing Act 2004 in respect of:

- Providing information to occupiers [regulation 4]
- Taking safety measures, including fire safety measures [regulation 5]
- Maintaining the water supply and drainage [regulation 6]
- Supplying and maintaining gas and electricity, including having these services/appliances regularly inspected [regulation 7]
- Maintaining common parts [regulation 8]
- Maintaining living accommodation [regulation 9]
- Providing sufficient waste disposal facilities [regulation 10]

Where there are multiple breaches of a single Management Regulation at a single HMO, a single civil penalty will be imposed which will cover all the breaches of that Management Regulation.

Where multiple Management Regulations have been breached at a single HMO, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each Management Regulation that has been breached.

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to provide information to occupier	£3,000	£40,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
- The landlord has refused to provide any outstanding contact information more than 48 hours after it has been requested by an occupant or on behalf of an occupant.

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to take safety measures	£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain water supply and drainage	£10,000	£40,000	£8,000	£10,000	£12,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to supply and maintain gas and electricity	£12,000	£40,000	£9,600	£12,000	£14,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain common parts, fixtures, fittings and appliances	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain living accommodation	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty to provide waste disposal facilities	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
- The lack of sufficient refuse and/or litter containers either inside and/or outside the property has been previously reported
- The refuse and/or litter that requires disposal includes hazardous materials

Breach of licence conditions – Section 72(3) Housing Act 2004

All granted HMO licences impose a set of conditions on the licence holder. It is important that the licence holder of a licensed property complies with all imposed conditions, but the Council recognises that a failure to comply with certain licence conditions is likely to have a much bigger impact on the safety and comfort of residents than others.

The starting levels for each different type of licence condition breach is set out below based on the seriousness of the offence. Where a licence condition could be interpreted to fall within two different potential starting levels, the higher starting level will be chosen.

Where multiple licence conditions have been breached at a single property, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each licence condition that has been breached.

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***Signage or the provision of information for tenants***
- ***Provision of written terms of occupancy for tenants***
- ***Procedures regarding complaints***
- ***Procedures regarding vetting of incoming tenants***
- ***Compliance with deposit protection legislation***
- ***The recording and provision of information regarding rent payments***
- ***Procedures relating to rent collection***
- ***The provision of information regarding occupancy of the property***
- ***The provision of information regarding change of managers or licence holder details***
- ***The provision of information related to changes in the property***
- ***Requirements relating to the sale of the property***
- ***Attending training courses***
- ***Requirements to hold insurance***
- ***The provision of insurance documentation***
- ***The provision of or obtaining of suitable references***

- *The provision of keys and alarm codes*
- *Security provisions for access to the property*
- *The provision of suitable means for occupiers to regulate temperature*
- *Carrying out items on a schedule of works not otherwise mentioned in the HMO licence conditions section of this policy, relating to non-compliance with items on a schedule of works*

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£40,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- *Procedures and actions regarding Inspections*
- *Procedures regarding Repair issues*
- *Maintenance and use of common parts (including gardens, outbuildings and property exterior) and living areas*
- *Safeguarding occupiers and minimising disruption during works*
- *The provision of information regarding alterations and construction works*
- *Procedures regarding emergency issues*
- *Waste and waste receptacles, pests, minor repairs, alterations or decoration.*
- *Giving written notice prior to entry*
- *Allowing access for inspections*
- *Minimising risk of water contamination*
- *The compliance of furnishings or furniture with fire safety regulations*
- *Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to provision of mechanical extraction or electrical sockets*

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- *The provision of documentation regarding energy performance certificates, fire detection and prevention, emergency lighting, carbon monoxide detection, fire risk assessments, gas installations, electric installations and appliances*
- *Notification of legal proceedings, contraventions and other relevant information that may affect a fit and proper person status*
- *Procedures and actions regarding ASB*
- *Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to the provision of personal hygiene facilities, kitchen facilities or heating*

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,500	£40,000	£10,000	£12,500	£15,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- **Minimum floor areas**
- **Occupancy rates**
- **Occupancy of rooms or areas that are not to be used as sleeping accommodation**
- **Limits on number of households allowed to occupy the property or part of the property**

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- **The condition or existence of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, emergency lighting, gas installations, electric installations and appliances, fire detection or other fire safety features or requirements**
- **The provision and maintenance of safe means of escape, including requirements to keep escape routes and exits free from obstruction**
- **Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to fire safety or the provision of a Carbon Monoxide detector**

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Breach of licence conditions – Section 95(2) Housing Act 2004

All granted selective licences impose a set of conditions on the licence holder. It is important that the licence holder of a licensed property complies with all imposed conditions, but the Council recognises that a failure to comply with certain licence conditions is likely to have a much bigger impact on the safety and comfort of residents than others.

The starting levels for each different type of licence condition breach is set out below based on the seriousness of the offence. Where a licence condition could be interpreted to fall within two different potential starting levels, the higher starting level will be chosen.

Where multiple licence conditions have been breached at a single property, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each licence condition that has been breached.

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- **Signage or the provision of information for tenants**
- **Provision of written terms of occupancy for tenants**
- **Procedures regarding complaints**
- **Procedures regarding vetting of incoming tenants**
- **Compliance with deposit protection legislation**
- **The recording and provision of information regarding rent payments**
- **Procedures relating to rent collection**
- **The provision of information regarding occupancy of the property**
- **The provision of information regarding change of managers or licence holder details**
- **The provision of information related to changes in the property**
- **Requirements relating to the sale of the property**
- **Attending training courses**
- **Requirements to hold insurance**
- **The provision of insurance documentation**
- **The provision of keys and alarm codes**
- **Security provisions for access to the property**
- **The provision of suitable means for occupiers to regulate temperature**
- **Carrying out items on a schedule of works not otherwise mentioned in the selective licence conditions section of this policy, relating to non-compliance with items on a schedule of works**

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£40,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- **Procedures and actions regarding Inspections**
- **Procedures regarding Repair issues**
- **Maintenance and use of common parts (including gardens, outbuildings and property exterior) and living areas**
- **Safeguarding occupiers and minimising disruption during works**
- **The provision of information regarding alterations and construction works,**
- **Procedures regarding emergency issues**
- **Waste and waste receptacles, pests, minor repairs, alterations or decoration.**
- **Giving written notice prior to entry**
- **Allowing access for inspections**
- **Minimising risk of water contamination**

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£5,250	£40,000	£4,200	£5,250	£6,300

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***The provision of documentation regarding energy performance certificates, fire detection and prevention, emergency lighting, carbon monoxide detection, fire risk assessments, gas installations, electric installations and appliances***
- ***Notification of legal proceedings, contraventions and other relevant information that may affect a fit and proper person status***
- ***Procedures and actions regarding ASB***
- ***Minimum floor areas***
- ***Occupancy rates***
- ***Occupancy of rooms that are not to be used as sleeping accommodation***
- ***Limits on number of households allowed to occupy the property or part of the property***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£9,375	£40,000	£7,500	£9,375	£11,250

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***The condition or existence of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, emergency lighting, gas installations, electric installations and appliances, fire detection or other fire safety features or requirements***
- ***The provision and maintenance of safe means of escape, including requirements to keep escape routes and exits free from obstruction***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£15,000	£40,000	£12,000	£15,000	£18,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Process for imposing a civil penalty and the right to make written representations

Notice of intent

Before imposing a civil penalty on a landlord, the Council will give the landlord a notice of intent. The notice of intent will set out:

- The amount of the proposed civil penalty
- The reasons for proposing to impose the civil penalty
- Information about their right to make written representations

Right to make written representations

A landlord who is given a notice of intent may make written representations to the Council about the proposal to impose a civil penalty. Any representations must be made within a period of 28 days beginning with the day after the date on which the notice of intent was given.

Decision after the representations period

After the end of the period for representations the Council will:

- Decide whether to impose a civil penalty on the landlord; and
- If it decides to impose a civil penalty, decide the amount of the penalty. This amount can be higher or lower than the amount stated in the notice of intent.

A landlord's rectification of the identified breach or offence during the representations period will rarely, of itself, lead the Council to conclude that the imposition of a civil penalty is inappropriate. However, compliance at that stage will usually be relevant to the assessment of mitigating factors that may reduce the level of any civil penalty imposed.

Similarly, an admission of liability will rarely, of itself, lead the Council to conclude that the imposition of a civil penalty is inappropriate. An admission of liability will, however, usually be relevant to the assessment of mitigating factors that may reduce the level of any civil penalty imposed.

Final notice

If, following the receipt of written representations and/or the expiry of the time period to make written representations, the Council decides to impose a civil penalty on the landlord, it will give the landlord a final notice imposing that penalty.

The final notice will set out:

- The amount of the civil penalty
- The reasons for imposing the penalty
- Information about how to pay the penalty
- The period for payment of the penalty
- Information about rights of appeal
- The consequences of failure to comply with the notice

Discount for prompt payment

Where a civil penalty imposed by a final notice is paid in full within the period specified in that notice (normally 28 days beginning with the day after the final notice is given), the Council will apply a discount of 15% to the amount of the civil penalty.

The availability of the discount is conditional upon full payment being received within the specified period. The discount period will not be extended or suspended by the bringing of an appeal. A landlord who chooses to appeal may still benefit from the discount by paying the civil penalty in full within the specified period; however, where payment is not made within that period, the discount will not apply.

Illustrative example of the application of the discount

The landlord of an HMO property fails to obtain a licence. They only operate two HMO properties and there are no other relevant factors or aggravating features. The starting point for the offence under the Council's civil penalties matrix is £17,000.

Following the issue of a notice of intent proposing a civil penalty of £17,000, the landlord makes written representations. Having considered those representations, the Council determines to impose a civil penalty of £16,000, as set out in the final notice.

If the landlord pays the civil penalty in full within the payment period specified in the final notice, a 15% prompt payment discount is applied, resulting in a discounted payment of £13,600.

Appeals

A landlord who is given a final notice may appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) against the decision to impose a civil penalty and/or the amount of the civil penalty. Any appeal must be made within 28 days beginning with the day after the date on which the final notice was given.

Where an appeal is brought, the final notice is suspended until the appeal is finally determined or withdrawn.

An appeal to the First-tier Tribunal is by way of a re-hearing of the Council's decision. In determining an appeal, the Tribunal may have regard to matters of which the Council was unaware at the time the decision to impose the civil penalty was made.

The Tribunal may dismiss an appeal if it is satisfied that the appeal is frivolous, vexatious, an abuse of process, or has no reasonable prospect of success.

The First-tier Tribunal may invite the parties to consider mediation or another form of alternative dispute resolution. The Council will not generally agree to mediation in relation to the level of a civil penalty, as civil penalties are determined by reference to this Policy to promote fair, consistent, and proportionate outcomes. Agreeing reductions outside the Policy framework would risk undermining consistency and the Council's enforcement objectives.

On determination of an appeal, the Tribunal may:

- Confirm the civil penalty
- Vary the amount of the civil penalty (whether by increase or reduction)
- Cancel the civil penalty

Where the Tribunal varies a civil penalty by increasing its amount, it may do so only up to the applicable statutory maximum for the relevant breach or offence (£7,000 or £40,000, as applicable).

A party to the appeal may apply for permission to appeal the decision of the First-tier Tribunal to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).



NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

17th March 2026

Report Title: UK Shared Prosperity Update

Submitted by: Deputy Chief Executive

Portfolios: One Council, People and Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To update Cabinet on the successful report on the Newcastle under Lyme UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme undertaken by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Recommendation

That Cabinet:

- 1. Acknowledges the content of the report.**
- 2. Notes that the funding for the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) ceases in March 2026 and that no further funding has been made available by MHCLG for future projects.**
- 3. Receives further updates if any subsequent funding programme beyond March 2026 is announced.**

Reasons

It is appropriate that the Cabinet receives the feedback from MHCLG assessment on the UKSPF programme in Newcastle under Lyme. The Fund has previously been reported to Cabinet and Cabinet noted that further update reports would be made.

1. **Background**

1.1 The Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in April 2022 inviting Council's to submit Investment Plans to meet three investment priorities:

- Community and place
- Supporting Local Business; and
- People and Skills

1.2 In 2025, the Government agreed an interim extension of funding, but the funding was based on 60% of the previous year's allocation.

1.3 In 2025 MHCLG commenced an evaluation the UKSPF programme. This evaluation included 34 place level case studies across the UK focusing of specific localities. These aimed to understand local delivery and impacts, and to generate robust evidence on how effective combinations of UKSPF-supported interventions (and other publicly funded projects) within a locality work together to enhance community pride, life chances and other government missions, including local economic growth. Newcastle-under-Lyme (NUL) was selected as a place level case study as it offered an opportunity to examine implementation of UKSPF in a small local authority, with a relatively low per capita UKSPF funding, but which had previously received of a high level of EU Structural Funds such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

2. **Issues**

2.1 The highlights reported to Cabinet in its UKSPF Update Report in October 2025 were reflected in the MHCLG report. The evaluation report listed out the following as key enablers to support effective delivery:-

- The development of strong relationships during the delivery of the commissioned interventions
- New collaborative relationships with academic institutions
- Engagement with local organisations
- The UKSPF's flexible and adaptive approach

2.2 The evaluation report further listed out the challenges faced to deliver the programme which were successfully overcome:-

- The uncertainty associated with the transition from ERDF funding to UKSPF funding

- The identification of suitable locations for capital spend (homelessness hub for example) and procurement processes
- Securing resident 'buy-in' for capital projects

2.3 The project oversight, governance, data collection and monitoring of the overall programme was considered to be fit for purpose and acceptable.

3.0 UKSPF Impact Evaluation

3.1 Evaluation Overview

The MHCLG Evaluation review looked at the three main themes and objectives of the UKSPF programme and found that the outcomes delivered by Newcastle under Lyme were satisfactory or 'contribution claim supported' as noted in the body of the report. The key outcomes were as follows:-

Communities and Place

- Improved facilities
- Increased footfall and usage of key locations / town centres
- Increased volunteering

Supporting Local Businesses

- Local business births increased
- Increased innovation and productivity
- Increased job creation

People and Skills

- Addressing economic inactivity
- Improved confidence in labour market participation

3.2 Economic Evaluation

3.2.1 A Value for Money assessment was undertaken as part of the assessment which was conducted using the National Audit Office's 4E's framework which focused on the economy, efficiency, effectiveness and the equity of the

programme. Of the twelve measures ten were reported as having High – Strong Evidence whilst two had Adequate evidence.

- 3.2.2 The report concluded that the UKSPF investment in Newcastle under Lyme demonstrated a high level of value for money. The interventions were well-targeted to the most appropriate beneficiary groups and areas, and the outcomes achieved were highly relevant to the local needs.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 4.1 As lead authority for the disbursement and accountability of UKSPF monies, the Council is required to complete monitoring returns and financial statements and engage with this evaluation.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 The Fund seeks to invest in community, business and people. Part of the development of the Investment Plan sought investment to improve any inequalities within our communities. The evaluation report highlighted the UKSPF investment was effectively managed and delivered, providing high value for money in terms of equity

6. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 6.1 As previously reported Newcastle's allocation for 2025/26 is £1,582,136 this includes the capital allocation of £292,112 and revenue allocation of £1,290,024. Project spend is projected to meet these allocations.

7. **Major Risks**

- 7.1 The Shared Prosperity Fund is a significant opportunity to support our local community without the effective commissioning of services in line with the Investment Plan and Government priorities there is a risk of the locality missing this funding opportunity. Without a follow on investment by Government the success of the programme will be lost.

8. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

- 8.1 The fund seeks to support the delivery of projects to support economic growth and sustainable development.



9. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council x

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Digital Council x

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

One Sustainable Council x

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle

- 9.1 The UKSPF funding allocated for Newcastle delivered against all three objectives, as set out in this report.

10. Key Decision Information

- 10.1 This is not a key decision as this report is an update.

11. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

- 11.1 19th July 2022, Cabinet report
14th October 2025, Cabinet report

12. List of Appendices

12.1 UKSPF Place-Level Evaluation, Newcastle under Lyme – Final Report, November 2025

13. Background Papers

13.1 Information on the fund is available at:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

UKSPF Place-Level Evaluation

Newcastle-under-Lyme - Final report

November 2025





© Crown copyright, 2025

Copyright in the typographical arrangement rests with the Crown.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/dluhc

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, complete the form at <http://forms.communities.gov.uk/> or write to us at:

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

November 2025

Contents

Contents	i
1 Introduction	6
1.1 UKSPF programme	6
1.2 UKSPF place level evaluation	6
1.3 Summary of place	6
1.4 Summary of interventions to be evaluated	9
1.5 Methodology	10
1.6 Structure of the report	11
2 Process Evaluation	13
2.1 Fund Design	13
2.2 Fund Implementation	13
2.3 Delivery of Activities	14
2.4 Data Collection and Monitoring	17
2.5 Programme Oversight and Governance	17
3 Impact Evaluation – Communities and Place	18
3.1 Improved Facilities	18
3.2 Increased Footfall and Usage	21
3.3 Increased Volunteering	23
4 Impact evaluation – Supporting Local Businesses	25
4.1 Local Business Births	25
4.2 Increased Innovation and Productivity	27
4.3 Job Creation	31
5 Impact Evaluation – People and Skills	35
5.1 Employment: Addressing Economic Inactivity	35
5.2 Improved Confidence in Labour Market Participation	39

6	Economic evaluation	42
6.1	Economy	42
6.2	Efficiency	43
6.3	Effectiveness	45
6.4	Equity	47
7	Conclusions	50
7.1	Process review	50
7.2	Impact of UKSPF	50
7.3	Value for money	53
	Appendix A: Theories of Change	54
	Appendix B: Process map	55
	Appendix C – NUL UKSPF Intervention Projects	56
	Appendix D: Outputs, outcomes and expenditure tables	60
	Appendix E – Evaluation Methodology	68
	Appendix F – Contribution Analysis Framework	72

1 Introduction

1.1 UKSPF programme

The Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) in April 2022. It provided £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025, with an additional £900 million available for the transition year 2025-26. Local decision-makers worked with their local communities and partners to deliver interventions under three investment priorities: Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills. Places were empowered to identify and build on their own strengths and needs at a local level, focused on enhancing community pride and increasing life chances.

1.2 UKSPF place level evaluation

The UKSPF evaluation included 34 place level case studies across the UK focusing on specific localities. These aimed to understand local delivery and impacts, and to generate robust evidence on how effective combinations of UKSPF-supported interventions (and other publicly funded projects) within a locality work together to enhance community pride, life chances and other government missions, including local economic growth. Newcastle-under-Lyme (NUL) was selected as a place level case study as it offered an opportunity to examine implementation of UKSPF in a small local authority, with a relatively low per capita UKSPF funding, but which had previously received a high level of EU Structural Funds such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

1.3 Summary of place

The borough of NUL is a local government district situated in North Staffordshire, bordering Stoke-on-Trent to the East. It is predominantly urban, but there are several parks and green spaces throughout the borough. NUL has a population of 128,060.¹ Staffordshire also includes the Tamworth; another location selected for a UKSPF place level case study. The M6 motorway, which provides key transport links, runs through the centre of the borough, bordering the market town of NUL.

¹ NOMIS Population estimates - small area based by single year of age (2023)

Figure 1 Map of Newcastle-under-Lyme



Key population areas include NUL town, the village of Silverdale, the suburban area of Kidsgrove to the north, and Chesterton, which is a mix of residential and industrial zones. These towns are connected by a strong local economy, primarily driven by manufacturing, retail, and education, with Keele University being a notable institution in the borough, alongside the University of Staffordshire, both of which have received UKSPF funding for upskilling programmes.

The area contains several assets which offer potential for growth. NUL is rich in cultural and historical assets, reflecting its heritage as a historic market town. The Guildhall, a landmark since 1713,² has served as a civic and community hub, while St. Giles Parish Church and Holy Trinity Church showcase the town's religious history and stunning architecture. The Apedale Heritage Centre preserves the area's industrial past with a museum and former coal mine tours.

NUL's economic growth is driven by a combination of academic excellence at Keele University – attracting science and innovation enterprises at the science park, thriving retail and leisure sectors, strategic regeneration projects, and a growing focus on high-tech industries and sustainability. The area's economy has also seen recent opportunities for growth in the high-tech and science and innovation sectors, in line with national priorities around renewable energy and decarbonisation of local infrastructure.

The town's historic appeal, strategic location, and community-oriented events also play an important role in boosting tourism, attracting investment, and supporting local businesses. Initiatives have also

² Source: <https://www.search.staffspasttrack.org.uk/Details.aspx?&ResourceID=23370&SearchType=2&ThemeID=769#:~:text=Description:The%20Guildhall%20in%20Newcastle,on%20a%20bicycle%20to%20left.>

supported the social sector such as through volunteering at Kidsgrove or the development of the Homeless Hub for individuals impacted by homelessness in the local area.

NUL is a place with deep roots in culture and heritage, with attractions such as Queen's Gardens offering cultural value. The council hoped that interventions funded through UKSPF would increase footfall and spending from both residents and those from out of the region so that the area is increasingly recognised as a destination to visit and stay. The council also hoped that UKSPF would improve the local area for the community and support local VCSEs.

NUL's unemployment rate (for individuals aged 16 and over) was slightly lower (3.0%³) than the Great Britain average (3.7%⁴). The unemployment rate for NUL was also lower than the average across the West Midlands (4.7%⁵). However, NUL was also ranked in the bottom 20% for output per hour worked in the UK.

Income deprivation statistics highlight disparity in the borough. Nine of the 80 neighbourhoods in NUL were amongst the 20% most deprived areas across England and 16 of the 80 neighbourhoods were amongst the top 20% of least deprived areas across England⁶. Both the most and least deprived neighbourhoods were clustered around the larger towns within the borough, namely NUL and Kidsgrove.

Businesses in NUL are predominantly of "micro" size⁷ (88%⁸). This aligns with the average across Great Britain, where 89% of enterprises are classed as "micro". NUL's strategic location and transport links makes the borough attractive for larger enterprises to develop sites that help to connect their businesses across the country.

Just after the launch of UKSPF, NUL Borough Council (NULBC) launched its Council Plan for 2022-2026⁹ which identified four primary priorities:

- 1. One Council Delivering for Local People** which aims to enhance the efficiency and responsiveness of council services to better serve residents.
- 2. A Successful and Sustainable Growing borough** which promotes economic growth while ensuring environmental sustainability.
- 3. Healthy, Active, and Safe Communities** which encourage health, wellbeing, and safety among residents.
- 4. Town Centres for All** which prioritises revitalising town centres to be inclusive and vibrant spaces for the community.

The delivery and successful achievement of the four priorities rely on clear actions and interventions to improve NUL as a place and economic hub. The objectives of the UKSPF align well with the Council Plan 2022-2026.¹⁰ Both focused on boosting economic growth, improving local

³ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157176/report.aspx?town=newcastle%20under%20lyme#tabempunemp>, October 2023 to September 2024

⁴ ibid

⁵ ibid

⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc1371/#!/E07000195>

⁷ The definition for an enterprise of micro size is given by employment of 0 to 9 employees. Small is 10 to 49 employees, Medium is 50 to 249 employees. Large is 250+ employees.

⁸ https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157176/subreports/idbr_time_series/report.aspx?

⁹ NUL Borough Council (2022) Council plan 2022 to 2026. Available at: <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/policies-1/council-plan-2022-2026>

¹⁰ NUL Borough Council (2022) Council plan 2022 to 2026. Available at: <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/policies-1/council-plan-2022-2026>

infrastructure, and fostering community well-being (**Communities and Place**). The council's emphasis on revitalising town centres, promoting sustainable growth, and enhancing community safety mirrors the UKSPF's goals of reducing economic disparity, increasing employment opportunities (**People and Skills**), and supporting place-level investment (**Supporting Local Businesses**). Additionally, the council's plan to improve local services aligned with the UKSPF's ambition to empower local authorities to address specific regional challenges.

NUL has also invested resources and built upon previous funding streams, including the Towns Fund¹¹ (£23 million) and Future High Streets Fund¹² (£11 million). These additional sources of funding have supported programmes which aimed to deliver similar outcomes as UKSPF funded interventions but have not directly funded the UKSPF interventions. The only UKSPF interventions that have identified additional funding streams are Keele University projects ("Moving Ahead" and "Flourish") and Staffordshire County Council "Growth hub". These initiatives have secured match funding from other sources. NUL did not receive funding from either the Multiply programme or the Rural England Prosperity Fund.

NUL has been relatively stable in its parliamentary representation and overall Council governance in recent years. However, the general election in July 2024, saw a new Member of Parliament (MP) elected from the Labour party, previously a Conservative seat. Traditionally, NUL has been a consistent Labour led constituency, with the borough having Labour representation since the early 1900s. A town ward by-election in January 2025, saw a Labour hold for the control of the council. This did not directly affect delivery of UKSPF as plans were already established.

1.4 Summary of interventions to be evaluated

NUL had just over £4.8 million of core UKSPF budget in the first three years of funding, which was allocated across the three investment priorities: Communities and Place (£3.0m), Supporting Local Businesses (£1.4m), and People and Skills (£0.2m). An additional allocation of £0.3m was directed to general administration and management of the UKSPF funding, bringing the total budget to £4.9m (rounded). An additional £1.6m has been provided for 2025/26 which has been split by £0.3m for capital expenditure and £1.3m for revenue expenditure¹³. The full list of the intervention projects funded in NUL is provided in Appendix A.

Interventions under the '**Communities and Place**' investment priority had interlinked goals: supporting place, tourism and heritage; and supporting voluntary and community groups. The interventions included:

- Enhancements/refurbishments to cultural, historic and heritage institutions (local library, museums, etc.).
- Support and engagement with groups providing local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities (e.g., Honey Box).

¹¹ A £3.6 billion fund investing in towns as part of the government's plan to level up our regions. For more details on the complimentary funding see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/towns-fund> (Accessed 20.03.2025)

¹² A £675 million fund for UK High Streets. The Future High Streets Fund aimed to support and fund local areas' plans to make their high streets and town centres fit for the future. For more details on the complimentary funding see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/future-high-streets-fund> (Accessed 20.03.2025)

¹³ See link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/ukspf-2025-26-allocations>

- Improvements to local green spaces to enhance the aesthetic of the borough in the rural regions, including parks, and upgrading the infrastructure for improvements in environment and sustainability (e.g., Clough Hall Park enhancements).

Interventions under the '**Supporting Local Businesses**' investment priority are primarily related to entrepreneurial support. These included workshops and coaching, especially for sole traders. There was also funding for a range of business support offers, including training hubs, 'incubators' and 'accelerators' for local enterprise. The interventions also helped match local skills to employment opportunities, funded sustainability projects, and provided resources to boost innovation and productivity.

The **People and Skills** interventions aimed to support people to move towards employment, especially those that were economically inactive. The package of interventions covered employment experience and training to address local skills gaps, skills and training aimed at reducing worklessness, improving digital skills in the population, and developing green skills.

1.5 Methodology

Unit of analysis

The place level evaluation in NUL focused on the whole local authority area due to the predominance of local authority-wide delivery of interventions and the small size of NUL. However, the majority of interventions were concentrated in NUL's town centres, with limited delivery in rural and other urban areas. The evaluation looked at the processes and achievements of the initial three years of funding up to March 2025. Due to the timing of the evaluation's reporting period, full observation of the programme's transition year was out of scope.

In line with the borough council's interests, the following interventions were selected for in-depth exploration:

- **Communities and Skills:** Clough Hall Park Enhancements, Homeless Hub, Honey Box Programme, Volunteering for All, Community Connector Programme, and CML Community Hubs.
- **Supporting Local Businesses:** Growth Hub, BES Enterprise Coaching, University of Staffordshire: Business Support (ADTIA), Keele University: Moving Ahead, Keele University: Flourish, and Newcastle College Technical Innovation.
- **People and Skills:** Technical Innovation Upskilling Support; both interventions (Flourish and Moving Ahead) delivered by Keele University also fell under the People and Skills investment priority.

Other intervention projects were subject to local evaluation activity, the findings of which have been incorporated in this evaluation exercise.

Methodological approach

To guide the development of the evaluation approach, a Theory of Change (ToC) (see Appendix B) was developed. The ToC was informed, in part, through a ToC workshop that included representatives from the NUL UKSPF team, representatives from the local authority, and

contracted delivery partners. The evaluation activity in NUL included **process, impact and economic evaluation**. To provide evidence for these evaluation themes, a programme of 21 qualitative stakeholder interviews was undertaken across two rounds involving 19 individuals. These participants included local authority officers with oversight of the UKSPF, representatives of the local authority and contracted delivery partners. An additional, 13 interviews were conducted with beneficiaries of the Communities and Place and Supporting Local Businesses interventions. The evaluation also included a review of key programme documents, management information data and locally commissioned evaluation reports. Secondary data sources including results from the Community Life Survey were also reviewed and relevant results extracted. The impact evaluation employed a contribution analysis approach, a theory-based method that helps explain how different factors contributed to achievements of UKSPF in NUL. A Value for Money (VfM) assessment was conducted using the National Audit Office's (NAO) 4E's framework, focusing on the economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of the programme. Further information on the evaluation methodology is provided in Appendix C and the contribution analysis approach and framework is provided in Appendix D.

1.6 Structure of the report

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides the process evaluation findings, focused on the design, implementation and oversight of the UKSPF investment in Newcastle-under-Lyme.
- Sections 3-5 present the impact evaluation findings, reporting in turn for each of the investment priorities.
- Section 6 summarises the economic evaluation findings, reporting on the economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of the programme.
- Section 7 provides conclusions from the evaluation.

A series of appendices are included:

- Appendix A – Newcastle-under-Lyme UKSPF Theory of Change.
- Appendix B – Newcastle-under-Lyme UKSPF Process map.
- Appendix C – Newcastle-under-Lyme UKSPF Intervention Projects.
- Appendix D – Outputs, outcomes and expenditure data.
- Appendix E – Evaluation Methodology.
- Appendix F – Contribution Analysis Framework.

2 Process Evaluation

This section presents the process evaluation findings, drawing on the stakeholder interviews and a review of local documentation.

2.1 Fund Design

An internal group of NULBC officers and members of the Newcastle Shared Prosperity Board (NSPB) co-developed the original investment plan. This process included selecting the initial set of interventions to be delivered and appointing an external consultancy to help with the assessment of intervention applications and intervention design. External consultants were commissioned to support due to a lack of internal resources and capacity.

Following submission to NULBC, a total of 46 intervention Expression of Interests (EOIs) were eligible for consideration. The appointed external consultancy developed “prioritisation criteria” aligned with UKSPF eligibility criteria and the NULBC Council Plan 2022-2025¹⁴ to assess the EOIs. Following an initial review based on these criteria some EOI applicants were asked to submit full applications. The NSPB made the final selection of suppliers, reviewing the consultants’ evaluations and making decisions based on detailed discussions and further reviews. Weight was also given to organisations that NULBC had existing partnerships with, as it was felt likely that they would provide an effective ongoing service. Although this did not prevent some new partners being engaged. A total of 16 final intervention projects were selected to progress.

All the delivery partners interviewed reported that the process for submitting a funding proposal was straightforward. There were a few partners that had some minor difficulties with the application process, however, they noted that the NULBC were supportive of their application and provided advice and guidance when needed.

One of the main challenges in identifying interventions was the time scales associated with designing the fund, including when the funding was released. Local authority stakeholders felt that a start-up and mobilisation period would have allowed the borough council enough time to recruit and pull together resources to assess potential intervention quality and relevance to the UKSPF investment priorities themselves.

2.2 Fund Implementation

All the delivery partners interviewed, including those internal to NULBC, noted the straightforward approach to pulling together a proposal for consideration of UKSPF funding. There were a few partners that had some minor difficulties with the application process, however, they noted that the NULBC were supportive of their application and provided advice and guidance when needed. External partners also noted that the two-step EOI, followed by the full application was straightforward. NULBC were again noted as being supportive with applications.

¹⁴ NUL Borough Council (2022) Council plan 2022 to 2026. Available at: <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/policies-1/council-plan-2022-2026>

“If there were any questions during the application process, the [Local Authority stakeholders] were available to provide clarification.”

Delivery partner

Effective grant agreements were required to manage the newly established relationships with delivery partners. Legal teams drafted comprehensive grant agreement contracts that outlined financial commitments, deliverables, and timelines. These contracts held delivery partners to account for meeting their obligations. Developing these contracts was a challenge in NUL due to the NULBC's under-resourced legal service. A local authority stakeholder emphasised the importance of quickly developing and signing contracts to mitigate risks for both the council and delivery partners. Despite NULBC having all the agreements in place on time, concerns remained about the capacity of the council's legal team to manage the contracting workload effectively.

2.2.1 Profile of suppliers engaged

Through the EOI process, NULBC commissioned a mix of existing and new delivery partners. In some cases, the council engaged suppliers who had not previously worked directly with them.

One significant area of new engagement involved Keele and Staffordshire Universities. These institutions were selected as they could deliver location-specific business support, due to their strong local presence and this was the first time they had been financially supported by NULBC to provide business engagement and training.

2.3 Delivery of Activities

In NUL, the intervention projects were delivered either internally by local authority teams or externally through contracted delivery partners. Strong relationships were fostered with local businesses, academic institutions, and public sector organisations, such as the job centre plus. Regular informal feedback meetings, helped to facilitate discussions between various delivery organisations. These meetings enabled the transfer of learning between delivery organisations and fostered a supportive environment for the delivery of UKSPF.

The level of expertise of those delivering the interventions was mixed. Those delivering business support interventions typically had greater resource, capability, and capacity. This was because, for the academic institutions especially, the delivery partners had extensive experience and knowledge related to entrepreneurship, as well as pre-established networks within NUL's business ecosystems that were leveraged to source relevant experts. These established networks also meant that these delivery partners had an established pipeline of businesses to work with and an understanding of the needs of these businesses.

“... so [the business advisor] talks the same language as the people that he's advising, which does help. the other skills are to be a bit creative, so I think certainly as a [business related delivery partner], I'm in a really advantageous position that I can swap and change things dependent on the need of the people we're helping.”

Delivery partner

Some of the staff needed to deliver the interventions required very specific skill sets, such as the Mental Health Liaison officer role supported as a Communities and Place intervention. Another volunteering related intervention had pre-existing networks which meant the delivery teams were experienced in managing and supporting volunteers, including recruitment, placement, and ongoing support. This highlighted how organisations with pre-existing networks were at an advantage for rapid delivery.

2.3.1 Delivery enablers

Several key enablers supported the effective delivery of the UKSPF in NUL. Including:

- **The development of strong relationships during the delivery of the commissioned interventions:** intervention delivery teams frequently made use of the networks and relationships of one or more other interventions in NUL. Regular informal meetings and debriefs between delivery teams allowed for cross-project learning. These meetings fostered the opportunity to directly refer the beneficiaries of one programme to another, demonstrating a holistic package of interventions in NUL, aligned with the needs of the community.

"We have liked quarterly meetings in terms of bringing all those who have had funding together and being able to feedback on our projects and what's going on and it's through that that I've been able to network and link in with other providers."

Delivery partner

- **New collaborative relationships with academic institutions:** the collaborations with universities supported the delivery of multiple interventions, as the institutions were able to organise larger networking events and a week-long business festival.
- **Engagement with local organisations:** some delivery partners benefitted from engagement with local organisations to ensure their services reached specific target audiences. The collaboration of delivery partners with the Job Centre, for example, was particularly beneficial, as it allowed for direct referrals of individuals who would benefit from volunteering experience.
- **The UKSPF's flexible and adaptive approach:** Interviewees reported that UKSPF allowed for flexibility and adaptation, enabling a majority of delivery partners to adjust their plans to

meet the expected levels of intervention activity. This included, for example, changes in the shift patterns for students, who were then able to fit their volunteering commitments around their academic timetables.

"One of the benefits of the scheme is the diversity of things that you can fund, which is quite unusual with most funding streams."

Delivery partner

"One key thing has been the flexibility of the programme and how great that's been in terms of being able to evolve projects."

Delivery partner

2.3.2 Delivery challenges

The delivery of the UKSPF in NUL faced the following challenges:

- **Uncertainty associated with the transition from ERDF funding to UKSPF funding:** A few delivery partners reported that they were unsure how UKSPF funding would act as a substitute source of funding. The release of funding being delayed to January 2023, as opposed to the planned release in April 2022, further exacerbated these concerns and delayed the council's ability to plan and then implement the selected interventions. However, some delivery partners appreciated that funding was paid in advance once it came through.

"... it was a welcome relief to not have the same bureaucracy for making the claims as there was for ERDF. So, it gave us a bit more flexibility to respond to local needs."

Delivery partner

- **Suitable locations and procurement processes:** Capital projects, such as the acquisition and refurbishment of properties for homelessness interventions, experienced delays as it took time to find suitable locations and to complete procurement processes, this in turn posed challenges in meeting delivery deadlines.
- **Securing resident buy-in for capital projects:** Obtaining planning permission for some buildings was a significant hurdle, requiring efforts to get residents and local authorities on board with the project. This required plans to be tweaked and adjusted, though this did not cause too much of a delay in achieving wider project objectives.

2.4 Data Collection and Monitoring

Delivery partners were required to submit monitoring information on outputs and outcomes to NULBC, and subsequently Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for each intervention funded through the UKSPF. A pre-defined set of outputs and outcomes were used to help measure and track intervention progress. These categories for reporting on UKSPF themes aimed to monitor and track all UKSPF interventions in a consistent and comparable manner. Most delivery partners interviewed viewed this as a useful and successful way of tracking progress, due to the transparency of data being shared across other interventions.

NULBC also monitored the progress of delivery partners through a mix of monthly informal reviews and quarterly formal reviews. This helped identify any deviations from expected levels of activity and allowed for timely remedial activity when required.

Comprehensive monthly reports were requested from each project which detailed the progress and outcomes of the interventions, including information about other funded projects managed by the delivery partner, key performance indicators, attendance figures, and summarised feedback from participant evaluation forms. The reports also identified any challenges to delivery and detailed the strategies used to resolve these challenges. NULBC also monitored the progress of all delivery partners through a mix of monthly informal reviews and quarterly formal reviews.

2.5 Programme Oversight and Governance

Oversight and management of the UKSPF in NUL operated at multiple levels including the establishment of a Partnership Board and a dedicated UKSPF Programme Team. The NSPB included MPs, representatives from the country and borough council, an education provider and local businesses. This board oversaw the management and decision-making processes for the UKSPF interventions and was appointed initially to support with decisions on which interventions were to be funded. Day-to-day programme management was the responsibility of the council's UKSPF Programme Team.

The Towns Deal Fund and university match funding was used to compliment the delivery of UKSPF interventions. For example, Keele University and the University of Staffordshire contributed their own resources or used Innovate UK streams to provide match funding for UKSPF interventions. Some of the UKSPF interventions were designed to complement other funding streams. For example, the Towns Deal Fund and Future High Streets Fund were already in place and UKSPF funding was used to enhance impact of these funds by running complementary schemes. The Towns Fund was used for capital investments in town centres, such as property acquisition, demolition, and refurbishment and UKSPF funding was used to support revenue projects that complemented these capital investments.

3 Impact Evaluation – Communities and Place

This section highlights the key outcomes that have been achieved by UKSPF funding for the Communities and Place investment priority in NUL, and how and why these have been achieved.

The Communities and Place interventions in NUL were designed to target improvements to the town centre and public green spaces, and fund arts, cultural and heritage events to attract visitors and tourists to key locations. Other interventions focused on refurbishing facilities and improving infrastructure, with the intended aim of improving public perception of the local area; and capacity building to create opportunities for community engagement and volunteering.

The evaluation used contribution analysis, which involved developing of a series of hypotheses about the expected outcomes from the UKSPF investment and testing available evidence to assess whether these claims could be supported. The evidence for evaluating the outcomes/claims included qualitative evidence from interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Quantitative evidence was drawn from data from the Community Life Survey (CLS)¹⁵ and MI data on outcomes achieved across the investment priority. Full tables of output and outcomes are provided in Appendix E.

The following sections detail the assessment of each contribution claim in turn, presenting the evidence which supports or refutes the claims. The full contribution analysis framework is provided in Appendix D.

3.1 Improved Facilities

Communities and Place hypothesis 3.1: Refurbishing facilities and improving infrastructure leads to better public perception of specific local areas/facilities.

Public spaces, including green spaces and infrastructure in NUL town centre, were refurbished to improve the local area's aesthetic, accessibility, and functionality. This was expected to encourage greater use and positive experiences, leading to improved public perception.

Evidence overview and contribution assessment

Evidence about this claim draws on the MI data and qualitative interview insights. In summary, we found that:

- The MI data showed many individuals (3,617) reported an improved perception of facilities/ amenities.

¹⁵ The Community Life Survey is an annual, nationally representative survey of adults in England, commissioned by the UK government. It explores key themes such as social cohesion, volunteering, civic engagement, and well-being. The survey provides valuable longitudinal data that helps policymakers and local authorities understand how communities are changing over time.

- NUL UKSPF investment in Communities and Place funded improvements to a range of public places, in particular green spaces such as Clough Hall Park and canal area improvements. Positive feedback was captured through interviews with local authority stakeholders and delivery partners directly involved in the management of these projects.

Contribution assessment 3.1: Contribution claim supported.

NUL's UKSPF investment in Communities and Place activity funded improvements to a range of local infrastructure and facilities. The MI data showed positive sentiment amongst residents in terms of improved perceptions. Specifically, 3,617 people reported an improved perception of facilities/ amenities. This was good evidence of changed perceptions but it was not possible to draw any further conclusions on which improved facilities specifically were underlying these results.

Qualitative evidence from interviews with local council delivery stakeholders, however, provided more depth in terms of the improvements to greenspaces. Nature and greenspace enhancements were funded by UKSPF which improved the aesthetic across public greenspaces in NUL, leading to positive anecdotal comments from residents. Some of the refurbishments, such as those to Clough Hall Park, included the removal of overgrown hedging around the unused bowling greens and tennis courts. Other improvement included creating new play facilities. Overall, these refurbishments were reported by interviewed stakeholders as having created a more inviting and visually accessible space and provided an opportunity for future developments. The local council delivery partner reported generally positive feedback from residents:

"I think they [residents] appreciate the fact that the Bowling Greens weren't used, and it now looks a lot better than it did previously."

Delivery partner

The park also had new CCTV cameras installed, which local authority stakeholders perceived would help to improve the security amidst the ongoing fluctuations in antisocial behaviour in the town. On one occasion, the CCTV evidence was able to capture images of a person vandalising the area, which was shared with the police. The increased security was reported by stakeholders as expected to support an increased uptake and usage of the park, helping to reduce crime and improve the overall perception of the area. However, there was an isolated incident of vandalism to the CCTV facilities. Other green space enhancements across the park covered the canal area. Enhancements here were reported by local authority stakeholders to have included improved footpaths and tidier surroundings:

"We've got a canal, and we've increased that footpath, and vegetation has been moved. It's a more attractive place to go and do some visits."

Local Authority stakeholder

Data from the Community Life Survey showed a relatively high level of satisfaction with green spaces in NUL, although it should be noted that sample sizes were relatively small. In the 2023/24 survey, 71% (of 338 respondents) reported they were satisfied with green and natural spaces in the local areas. This level of satisfaction was maintained, with 72% (of 512 respondents) reporting the same opinion in the 2024/25 survey. It is not possible to directly attribute the UKSPF funded improvements to this result but it likely was a factor in maintaining this level of perceived satisfaction with green space.

UKSPF also funded some capital projects which aimed to improve local facilities beyond green spaces. This included a strong focus on refurbishing the borough's infrastructure in NUL town centre. For example, the CML Community Hubs initiative refurbished library spaces to transform them into multifunctional spaces. The renovation of the Philip Ashley Centre, a creative and educational facility, was reported by stakeholders to have helped to add aesthetically pleasing infrastructure within NUL town centre. Local authority stakeholders, however, reported some delays to other projects. The acquisition and refurbishment of properties for homelessness interventions, took time to find suitable locations and complete procurement processes, which posed challenges in meeting deadlines. This has pushed out the completion date of the Homeless Hub to December 2025, after which facilities will be enhanced and capacity for supporting rough sleepers will increase. As a result, any further improvement to perceptions of local facilities will not be evident until completion of projects at the end of the transition year.

Combining UKSPF funding with other public funding streams (such as the Towns Deal and Future High Streets Fund) was effective in supporting both capital developments and the necessary revenue activities to sustain and maximise the impact of interventions. The complementary use of funds allowed for a more holistic and sustainable delivery, with each funding stream addressing different needs (e.g., capital¹⁶ vs. revenue¹⁷ funding), and minimised duplication of funds. An example of this complementarity can be seen in the development of the Keele in Town building. In collaboration with Keele University, an empty 19th century building in the heart of NUL town centre has been refurbished into a mixed-use facility. The building is a space where Staffordshire businesses and non-profit organisations can host meetings and business events, along with areas for Keele students and staff to get together, to study, and to connect with the community. The Towns Deal is one of the primary funding sources, with UKSPF having an indirect impact by bringing relevant stakeholders together.

Evidence on public perceptions of these refurbished facilities specifically was not readily available. Stakeholders involved in delivering the projects reported increased usage of the facilities (see section 3.2) and perceived this to be an indicator of a positive view of them by users. Results from the Community Life Survey showed 74% of respondents were satisfied with local services and amenities but it was not possible to directly attribute these findings to these UKSPF supported improvements. It also wasn't possible to assess change in this perception as data from earlier CLS surveys did not have this result available at local authority level. Nonetheless this was a strong result in terms of facilities. More widely, the Community Life survey results from 2024/25 illustrated wider perceptions of the local area. Specifically, it showed 66% of survey participants agreed that they would recommend NUL to others as a good place to live and the same percentage would still

¹⁶ Capital: Funding for large-scale, long-term projects that create or enhance assets.

¹⁷ Revenue: Funding for ongoing operational costs and day-to-day running of services.

want to live in NUL in five years' from responding to the survey. Some 58% agreed that they were proud to live in the local area. A comparison with 2023/24 data showed minimal change across these measures. Again, attribution to UKSPF-funded improvements is not possible, so these results cannot substantiate the claim specifically

Alternative explanations

The evidence collected does not suggest that observed outcomes were the result of other programmes. Where available, MI data and interviews consistently attributed this outcome to the UKSPF interventions and support delivered during the initial three-year funding period. The existence of alternative explanations was unlikely.

Evidence gaps and limitations

As already reported, the Community Life survey results cannot be linked directly with UKSPF activity given the generalisability of results to an England context, rather than NUL specific. Assessing the full impact was limited by the ongoing delivery work in terms of improvements to the homelessness facilities and would need a longer period of measurement of perceptions.

3.2 Increased Footfall and Usage

Communities and Place hypothesis 3.2: Arts/cultural/heritage events attract more people to key locations/town centres. Events increase footfall by creating unique attractions and experiences that draw both residents and visitors to key locations.

Evidence overview and contribution assessment

Evidence was sourced from MI data, qualitative interviews and locally produced evaluation outputs. In summary, we found that:

- MI data signals positive uptake in the number of arts/ culture and heritage events as well as the quality of the events that had taken place.
- Locally produced data following events showed good levels of attendance such as 3,200 attending a living history medieval event and a Limelight Festival weekend, which saw a 220% increase in footfall in the town centre compared to a normal weekend.

Contribution assessment 3.2: Contribution claim supported.

In total, there were 74 community led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes delivered across the initial three years of UKSPF funding. Some 1027 individuals reported improved perceptions of the events that were held. There were good levels of engagement at these cultural and heritage events based on the MI data. Specifically, it suggested that there was an increased number of visitors as a result, with a figure of 65,475 visitors reported. It was not possible for the research team to verify this result but qualitative insights from interviews and locally produced evidence on individual events further supported the UKSPF's likely contribution to the increase in the number of individuals engaging in events and associated footfall to the town.

A NULBC brochure showing the outcomes and achievements of UKSPF, produced towards the end of the initial funding period, collated a range of evidence relating to events. The brochure highlighted the importance of a series of events held to mark the 850th anniversary of NUL. At the refurbished Philip Astley centre, the New Vic Theatre hosted a four week series of shows; celebrating the life of Philip Astley in NUL, which drew in over 7,500 visitors. The celebration both showcased the deep cultural heritage in NUL as well as bringing the community together. Similarly, the Celebrate Newcastle event showcased a living history medieval event, which featured three UKSPF supported dance performances and was attended by 3,200 people. Stakeholders involved in delivering these cultural and heritage events were positive that they generated visitor footfall through the town. For example, the Limelight Festival weekend saw a direct 220% increase in footfall in the town centre compared to a normal weekend. However, this event was only an indirect outcome of the UKSPF where shows at the event were delivered by the UKSPF funded Honey Box. A community-wide initiative, the “Beat the Street”, encouraged physical activity through interactive challenges and getting to learn more about NUL’s heritage through games and health competitions. Over 4 weeks, 1,441 players travelled more than 4,200 miles as they played games throughout NUL, resulting in 0.4 point increase in life satisfaction and equating to a social and economic value of £400 per adult participant¹⁸. The games promoted walking and cycling through the town. This provides strong evidence of the UKSPF’s contribution to increased footfall in the town centre, raising awareness of NUL’s history, and indirectly supporting health and wellbeing outcomes.

Stakeholders interviewed that were involved in delivering these cultural and heritage events were mostly positive that they generated visitor footfall through the town.

Alternative explanations

The evidence collected does suggest that observed outcomes were partially supported by the UKSPF. However, there is a likely attribution with other programmes due to some events being partially funded by the UKSPF. Nonetheless, the existence of alternative explanations was unlikely. However, external factors such as weather conditions, may have facilitated or impeded people attending the local events.

Evidence gaps and limitations

Whilst overall figures for footfall have increased, the contextual information on the local events is incomplete. A longer term assessment of visitor numbers is required to fully assess the impact of UKSPF on footfall and events having a lasting impact of generating town centre visits.

3.3 Increased Volunteering

Communities and Place hypothesis 3.3: Capacity building support creates more volunteering opportunities. By supporting organisations with resources, training, and systems this enables them to recruit, match, and sustain more volunteers effectively.

¹⁸ The data from the “Beat the Street” initiative was taken from the NUL phase 1 evaluation brochure.

Evidence overview and contribution assessment

Evidence drew on the MI data, evaluation brochure and qualitative insights. In summary, we found that:

- 250 volunteering roles were created because of UKSPF support, exceeding the target set.
- Providing in-depth support to volunteers, which was not possible before the UKSPF funding, led to better matching of volunteers with suitable opportunities.

Contribution assessment 3.3: Contribution claim supported.

Evidence strongly indicates that volunteer opportunities were created by NUL's UKSPF investment. MI data up to March 2025 showed 250 volunteering opportunities were created, significantly overachieving against the target of 18.

Several projects were key to this achievement. The "Volunteering for All" project in NUL was a new initiative funded through UKSPF. Prior to receiving the UKSPF funding, Support Staffordshire did not have a dedicated, on-the-ground volunteering service in NUL. The project successfully placed nearly 50 volunteers into roles, meeting their target despite challenges with staffing. These were direct additional volunteering opportunities that were created through the UKSPF funded project.

Other notable projects that supported volunteering in NUL included "Wild about Brampton" that focused on nature and wellbeing. 31 additional volunteering opportunities were created equating to 169 additional volunteering hours. This project helped to restore and enhance the wildlife pond in Brampton Park. Volunteers were recognised by project delivery stakeholders in supporting the development of a new community space. Families with young children were able to partake in nature-based activities, including seasonal story-times, and Nature Tots sessions, which introduced them to the importance of protecting wildlife. Community engagement activities were made possible through the efforts of the volunteers, helping the community come together.

Cross intervention collaboration also created awareness of additional volunteering opportunities. For example, students from some of the business projects were signposted to other UKSPF projects running local events and business festivals. These opportunities enabled students to gain experience and skills in event management through volunteering and helped increase event capacity.

An increase in volunteering opportunities supported by UKSPF was potentially a factor underlying data from the Community Life Survey where the proportion of respondents in NUL stating they participated in any form of volunteering in the last month increased from 27% in 2023/24 to 36% in 2024/25. This latter figure is above the result for the England average of 33%. It is not possible to directly attribute this to UKSPF.

Alternative explanations

The evidence collected in NUL does not suggest that observed outcomes were the result of other programmes. While volunteering was already established across Support Staffordshire and other

projects, MI data and interviews consistently attributed UKSPF to the expansion and continuation of volunteering opportunities. The existence of alternative explanations is unlikely.

Evidence gaps and limitations

The evidence to support this claim is somewhat limited, and it is largely dependent on output and outcome data provided to MHCLG, triangulated through interview insights. Longer term evaluation is needed to assess whether these volunteering opportunities are sustained over the longer term.

4 Impact evaluation – Supporting Local Businesses

This section highlights the key outcomes achieved through NUL’s UKSPF funding for the Supporting Local Businesses investment priority and how and why these have been achieved. The Supporting Local Businesses interventions designed to help businesses, to set up, innovate, expand, and create new job opportunities with the aim of boosting the local economy, improving business resilience, and contributing to the overall prosperity of the NUL community.

The evaluation used contribution analysis, which involved developing of a series of hypotheses about the expected outcomes from the UKSPF investment and testing available evidence to assess whether these claims could be supported. The evidence for evaluating the outcomes/claims in this investment priority included qualitative evidence from interviews with local council and business programme delivery partners and participants of case studies obtained from a number of the funded projects. Quantitative evidence was drawn from the locally produced phase 1 evaluation brochure and MI data on outcomes achieved by different projects and the investment priority as a whole. Full tables containing the output and outcomes delivered are provided in Appendix E.

The following sections detail the assessment of each claim in turn, presenting the evidence which supports or refutes the claims. The full contribution analysis framework is provided in Appendix D.

4.1 Local Business Births

Supporting Local Businesses hypothesis 4.1: Business support programmes support the establishment of new businesses. Engagement with enterprise coaching and various other support programmes increased the number of businesses developed in NUL as a result of UKSPF

Evidence overview and contribution assessment

Evidence was sourced from MI data, stakeholder interviews, the phase 1 evaluation brochure and case studies. In summary, we found that:

- NUL’s UKSPF Supporting Local Businesses activity supported the creation of 44 new enterprises across the borough of NUL.
- Delivery partners interviewed also noted how the business festivals helped facilitate business-to-business relationships and, subsequently, enabled innovative ideas to be developed.

Contribution assessment 4.1: Contribution claim supported.

The MI data showed that NUL’s UKSPF Supporting Local Businesses activity supported the creation of 44 new enterprises. Of these 44, 25% were through strengthening local entrepreneurial

ecosystems and networking with organisations in the area. This suggests that the projects helped to bring businesses together to benefit from synergies (e.g., helping with contractor and supplier introductions) and minimise costs. These simple adjustments across the business ecosystem have led to business births, growing the number of enterprises across the area.

Local council and business programme delivery partner interviews also highlighted the success of attracting new business to NUL. One project delivery lead, for example, reported that they were able to provide support to new entrepreneurs that would not typically access support through the usual routes, such as seed funding or angel investment, for example. Some of the local businesses were much smaller in scale, and the Supporting Local Businesses projects were seen to fill a gap in support:

"They're not the type, they're not a big, high-growth business, so then they're not the type of people who would go to a university or a Chamber of Commerce. They like somebody to talk to as opposed to reading something on the internet"

Delivery partner

Local authority stakeholders also commented that initiatives have engaged a wide range of businesses, particularly micro-businesses with no more than 10 employees. Although, this is not so surprising as micro firms make up 88% (see 1.3 above) of the business population in NUL. These businesses have shown increased interest in the support provided and have joined various networks and now considered NUL as a viable area to either set up their business operations or expand into the area. Stakeholders and beneficiaries reported that a wider benefit of business festivals and relationship development was that it helped local entrepreneurs running small businesses to maintain their growth trajectory, and some found new markets for their products through discussions with the intervention's support coaches. For example, one beneficiary was able to expand their product's reach into the UK and internationally (UAE).

In conclusion, some businesses that accessed support, particularly through the coaching programmes and festival relationship development, were able to set up new operations within NUL. Most businesses that engaged with the UKSPF support seemed to be micro-sized (less than 10 staff) and therefore, the full impact of the UKSPF across the business population should not be generalised; albeit micro businesses make up most of the business population in NUL. Specific organic growth¹⁹ themes are discussed in more detail below.

Alternative explanations

The evidence collected in NUL does not suggest that observed outcomes were the result of other programmes. The interviews with delivery partners consistently attribute this outcome to the UKSPF interventions and support, often stating that interventions would not have taken place

¹⁹ Organic growth is a company's ability to increase its revenue, sales, and market share by using its own internal resources and capabilities, rather than through external means like mergers or acquisitions.

without UKSPF funding or not at the same scale. The existence of alternative explanations is unlikely. However, a few delivery partners did acknowledge the existence of other business support programmes which may have also contributed to business births indirectly – through coaching programmes. Other possible explanations for the increased business births included market demand and consumer trends driving business growth, or an improving local economy.

Evidence gaps and limitations

The evidence collected is focused on the micro-sized businesses across NUL. To understand the full extent of the support's impact on new and sustainable business births requires further data collection on the wider population of businesses supported. Business growth is a broad outcome that could be achieved through various organic²⁰ and inorganic²¹ methods. Further exploration of the types of growth should be considered over a longer-term horizon.

4.2 Increased Innovation and Productivity

Supporting Local Businesses hypothesis 4.2: Business support is associated with businesses developing and launching new products, technology, or processes, as a result of financial support, training, or advice. By providing training, advice, student interns and academic expertise, projects were able to provide additional delivery and research capabilities to local businesses, especially in terms of digital skills and product development. Business festivals provided networking and advisory services to help local businesses forge relationships across NUL.

Evidence overview and contribution assessment

Evidence was sourced from MI data, stakeholder interviews and case study insights. In summary, we found that:

- NUL's UKSPF Supporting Local Businesses provision overachieved its target on the number of businesses recorded as having adopted new or improved products or services; the number of organisations engaged in knowledge transfer activity following support, the number of research and development active enterprises, and the number of innovation active SMEs.
- Qualitative interview evidence points to positive outcomes from projects delivered by the local universities, particularly in digital innovation and app development.

Contribution assessment 4.2: Contribution claim supported.

Several programmes were introduced, such as the additional matched support through the Staffordshire Growth Hub, Newcastle Borough Business Connects, and BES Enterprise Coaching.

²⁰ Organic growth refers to “the expansion of a company's operations and revenue using its own internal resources and capabilities”. [Link](#)

²¹ Inorganic growth refers to “...a merger or takeover. A merger occurs when two businesses join to form a new (but larger) business. A takeover occurs when an existing business expands by buying more than half the shares of another business.” [Link](#)

New projects, that were not a continuation of previous funding streams, included engagement with local academic institutions, such as Keele University (Moving Ahead and Flourish) and the University of Staffordshire (ADTIA). Each project had a specific purpose to fill gaps in current support being offered across the borough, with business development being a key theme across all the projects.

4.2.1 Product development

UKSPF in NUL supported enterprises and entrepreneurs through a range of business support programmes that led to enhancements in terms of new products, or processes and tools that positively supported business operations. This was illustrated in the MI data where 51 organisations reported that they had adopted new or improved products or services, against a target of 12. Similarly, 154 enterprises that engaged in research and development (R&D) activity were supported in NUL against a target of 12. Both outcomes exceeded targets substantially, providing strong evidence of the programme's contribution to local product development and innovation.

Business beneficiary case studies also highlighted additional/ sped up product development and/ or fast-tracked delivery of new products. One business beneficiary reported that an app-based product had stalled due to a £15k funding gap. Through the Flourish programme, they hired a graduate who completed the app and sourced a server, enabling the product to be brought fully in-house. This saved the business beneficiary rental fees and gave them full autonomy in marketing the app. This beneficiary organisation reported how the project support enabled the business to have the intellectual freedom that they wouldn't have had otherwise (i.e., their app would have remained on a server with an external provider).

A business beneficiary of the ADTIA project received student support to transform their concept into a marketable product. Their idea was to develop a weight management app based on their sports-related expertise. They commented that:

"We've generally got the ideas, but we haven't got the know-how. So, the [ADTIA] project allowed us to bring in a student and academic support to allow us to move that project from an idea into an actual product "

Business beneficiary

These businesses highlighted that the programme support enabled them to improve their growth trajectories and grow more quickly than they expected. Without the UKSPF support, business beneficiaries have noted that it would have taken longer to develop their products, likely at a higher cost.

Business beneficiary case study – Digital product development and scale

Project: University of Staffordshire: ADTIA

The business beneficiary was a sole trader who planned to develop an AI-based platform for recruitment. This platform would allow the process to become more automated and cost-effective and enable the business to scale globally using the internet. This business operated internationally, with entry points into the UAE and potentially Saudi Arabia.

They had the concept of their recruitment product but needed the technical expertise of students and academics to develop the tool and bring it in-house. The beneficiary had previously worked with universities and a consultancy, but they did not have the resources to hire external consultants to develop the AI platform and host the app on an in-house server. For the initial proof of concept, the business used an external company to help develop the product AI; however, the handover required re-contracting for further development. The ADTIA project enabled the company to bring this work in-house through collaboration with an academically mentored student internship.

"The academic has quite a lot of resource, data and networks; with a background in launching tech products as well. So, it was great to understand in terms of what comes next."

"... ADTIA has helped me develop my own skills, my own expertise, and introduced me to some great people who I think are have a lifelong relationship with and potentially somebody who I'll employ in the business for the long term."

Business beneficiary

The business beneficiary noted that the project grew in scope during delivery and exceeded their expectations. The student developed the AI app and sourced the server to bring the product in-house, something the business beneficiary expected to have established much later in their growth plans.

In the 5-month follow up with the business, growth was notable with the business seeking investment to finish the software development for a commercial launch in October 2025 in UK and UAE. Another 6 AI models, as at the end of the ADTIA project, were developed and they have been initially approached by a Recruitment Technology investor.

4.2.2 Technological advancement

ADTIA was also successful in boosting productivity. A delivery partner interviewed highlighted a case where a business beneficiary received support to develop a feasibility study for streamlining the business. This led to investment in new technology, which increased productivity by 40%. This

demonstrates the ADTIA project's positive contribution to productivity through the adoption of new technologies.

4.2.3 Business festivals foster business collaborations

The business festivals, delivered by Keele University as part of the Flourish and Moving Ahead projects, were designed to boost innovation. The Work Innovation programme was highly successful in matching local businesses together through networking. It featured five days of entrepreneurship, innovation, women in business, and community networking, attracting nearly 100 people a day. Networking activities helped the business community to share learnings, this was echoed within the MI data with increased product development and R&D.

"We've got the business festival, which was the work Innovation programme, which we did this year. It was highly successful in terms of how we tried to demonstrate the five days of entrepreneurship, innovation, women in business and networking with community."

Delivery partner

Other initiatives at Keele University included Moving Ahead that supported business advancements and transitions which included Innovation Network events. These events aimed to connect academics and businesses across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth. These have been successful in helping to support 10 SMEs (as of FY 24/25 Q2, likely exceeded by end of project) in funding applications for R&D projects. This was predominantly to Innovate UK funding schemes.

Alternative explanations

The evidence collected in NUL does not suggest that observed outcomes were the result of other programmes. The interviews and MI evidence consistently attribute this outcome to the UKSPF interventions and support, often stating that interventions would not have taken place without UKSPF funding, or not at the same scale. The existence of alternative explanations is unlikely. Other possible contributing factors included increased demand for businesses, improving local economic conditions, other national business support programmes, or informal business support (such as through friends or family).

Evidence gaps and limitations

With the exception of the evidence from MI data, much of the evidence is self-reported by individual businesses and qualitative in nature and therefore is illustrative of the impacts achieved and could carry a degree of optimism bias. It is likely that more new processes and tools may have been adopted by businesses, but this won't be seen in MI data until the end of the transition period due to the timescales in implementing and evidencing the changes.

4.3 Job Creation

Supporting Local Businesses hypothesis 4.3: Business support enables businesses to hire new staff.

Business support programmes, particularly university based support projects, provided student interns the opportunity to undertake short-term projects within local businesses. This led to a few student hires, post-graduation, and an increased capacity/ appetite for local businesses to hire graduates in the future.

Evidence overview and contribution assessment

Evidence was sourced from MI data and stakeholder interviews. In summary, we found that:

- MI Data highlights business growth through additional job creation following business support: 115 roles (FTE).
- Flourish student and business feedback forms highlight success in graduate recruitment and matching labour supply and demand across the local area.
- Qualitative evidence gathered signalled some businesses reporting increased employment opportunities as a result of the support received. This includes both temporary and permanent positions, contributing to the overall employment rate in the area.
- Broader economic challenges, including deprivation in certain wards and the national economic situation, affected employment rates and the impact of interventions.

Contribution assessment 4.3: Contribution claim supported.

Business support programmes, such as the ADTIA project, have delivered strong outcomes for both students and businesses. Student interns reported feeling significantly more employable after their placements, and a few converted internships into paid roles. In cases where businesses accessed private funding, short-term jobs were created, and some students successfully negotiated full-time positions. One notable example is a student who remained with their host company as a business improvement consultant.

Businesses also highlighted the value of recruiting graduates who had gained practical, job-ready skills through these internships. This demonstrates that the programmes are not only improving individual career prospects but also strengthening the local talent pipeline for businesses. Early evidence suggests these collaborations are generating positive outcomes across multiple investment priorities. While multiplier effects have not yet been measured, the emerging trends indicate potential for wider economic impact.

Business beneficiary case study – Digital product development and scale (employment opportunities)

Project: University of Staffordshire: ADTIA

This business beneficiary had provided feedback at the interim stage of the evaluation and the insights below highlight the progress 5-months post initial engagement. The business beneficiary had given a student a work placement opportunity to support the development of a product. The beneficiary highlighted that they were keen in employing the student who supported the product development in a permanent position at their organisation.

The student, however, had secured another full-time role in the UK. However, the impact the student had on the business resulted in a continued desire by the beneficiary to employ them and support their long-term Sponsorship for a full-time technical role in the business, if they could secure investment (so that the student could remain in the UK).

The business beneficiary noted they would be interested in offering the student other opportunities in a new business venture as a tech co-founder. Based on the student's expertise and the amazing work they undertook with the ADTIA project, there would be a role to onboard them into the business.

An example of knowledge exchange came through the Flourish project where the university facilitated 25 fully funded projects, with students or recent graduates working with eligible businesses for up to 75 hours per project. Local businesses working across digital society and economy, sustainability, culture and creativity, etc. were able to recruit students for short-term internships funded through UKSPF. This exposed students to a working culture, whilst allowing local businesses to experience some of the local graduate talent expertise in areas they may not have had any experience in (computing, app development, etc.).

“Flourish is a great way of supporting local businesses whilst providing students a great opportunity to gain experience in a workplace setting. The student was professional and delivered an effective project that should help our business to grow”

Business beneficiary – Flourish case study extract

Looking across the feedback forms²² submitted to Flourish by business beneficiaries highlighted the strong benefits of hiring student interns/ graduates to support specific projects for their businesses:

²² The feedback form insights were provided by Flourish delivery partners for the evaluation only.

- All businesses either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the student had left their business in a stronger position. And almost all the businesses reported that they would be more likely to consider employing a graduate as a result of programme participation.
- 82% of businesses reported that the funding either made it possible to support a student or made the opportunity to fund a student more possible.

In terms of new hires, local businesses have been more open to considering recruiting graduates, which may not have been on their radar without the UKSPF funded projects. Graduates were paid via the projects which removed the cost for local businesses that may not have been able to fund graduate recruitment. This, in turn, gave graduates a salary and opportunity to apply their academic studies to real-life innovations, in turn supporting businesses looking to innovate.

The MI data reported that 115 roles (FTE) were created as a direct result of UKSPF funded business support projects. Just under 50% of these roles were created/ matched through enterprise infrastructure and employment/ innovation sites (i.e., enterprise networks set up by Moving Ahead and business festivals such as the Work Innovation Programme). This echoes the impact from the networking events and the business festivals described above in 4.2, where academics and students (interns supplied to businesses) were matched with local businesses, particularly around collaboration of digital skills and app-based development.

Qualitative insights from local authority stakeholders suggest that UKSPF-funded projects have likely increased employment among participating businesses, even though the borough’s overall employment rate has remained unchanged. One interviewee reported that some businesses created new positions, both temporary and permanent, as a direct result of the support received. These opportunities are contributing to job growth in targeted areas across the borough. However, due to time-lag issues, the study team could not verify these findings through secondary data sources.

Alternative explanations

The evidence collected in NUL does not suggest that observed outcomes were the result of other programmes. The interviews and evaluation report consistently attribute this outcome to the UKSPF interventions and support, often stating that interventions would not have taken place without UKSPF funding, or not at the same scale. The existence of alternative explanations is unlikely. Alternative explanations could include other business or employment support programmes, business establishment or growth due to other factors like market demand and improvements in the economy.

Evidence gaps and limitations

The primary gap in the evidence related to generalisability as job creation was mainly developed through business programmes, particularly university collaborations. The geographic coverage of jobs created is also unknown. No evidence was provided as to whether this was a lasting impact for local businesses.

5 Impact Evaluation – People and Skills

This section highlights the key outcomes that have been achieved by UKSPF funding for the People and Skills investment priority in NUL, and how and why these have been achieved. The People and Skills interventions in NUL were designed to enhance employability support and economic activity. These initiatives focused on providing tailored support to economically inactive individuals, marginalised communities, and those facing multiple barriers to employment, with the goal of fostering skills development, job readiness, and community integration.

The evaluation used contribution analysis, which involved developing a series of hypotheses about the expected outcomes from UKSPF investment and testing available evidence to assess whether these claims could be supported. The evidence for evaluating the outcomes/claims in this investment priority was primarily qualitative, consisting of interviews with delivery partners focused on employment projects and local council leads, participants and detailed case studies obtained from a number of the funded projects. This provided insights into beneficiary journeys and causal links between intervention and outcomes, and the extent to which targets were achieved. MI data on outcomes achieved by different projects and the investment priority as a whole was also used as a key evidence source. Full tables containing the output and outcomes are provided in Appendix E.

The following sections detail the assessment of each claim in turn, presenting the evidence which supports or refutes the claims. The full contribution analysis framework is provided in Appendix D.

5.1 Employment: Addressing Economic Inactivity

People and Skills hypothesis 5.1: Employability and skills-based learning programmes help individuals/beneficiaries become economically active.

The tailored training, practical experience, and support provided by employment programmes equipped individuals with the competencies and confidence needed to access and sustain employment opportunities.

People and Skills contribution hypothesis 5.2: Upskilling and qualification programs improve career prospects and lead to progress towards employment (e.g., job interviews).

By providing individuals with new qualifications and practical skills, upskilling and qualification programmes increase their competitiveness and readiness for job opportunities, enabling progress towards employment such as securing job interviews.

Evidence overview and contribution assessment

Evidence was sourced from stakeholder interviews, project feedback forms, case studies and MI data. In summary, we found that:

- The number of people reporting increased employability through interpersonal skills development was 539 as of March 2025. Just under 30% of these individuals participated in employment support projects for economically inactive individuals.
- All of those who gained basic skills following support (78) participated in projects for economically inactive individuals. This highlights the value of the People and Skills projects in helping those furthest from the labour market acquire essential skills to access employment opportunities.
- The Community Connector, Volunteer for All and Aspire Housing were key projects supporting economically inactive individuals. These projects offered bespoke services to support beneficiaries re-enter the jobs market. Support was provided for CV writing, interview skills, job search strategies and volunteering opportunities. Qualitative evidence from delivery partners interviewed and case studies illustrated how these helped to upskill economically inactive individuals to prepare for job interviews and working culture. This helped to boost confidence amongst economically inactive beneficiaries, that received support, to enter the jobs market.

Contribution assessment 5.1: Contribution claim supported.

Contribution assessment 5.2: Contribution claim supported.

Programme MI showed the number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills was 539 with just under 30% of these individuals supported through employment support projects for economically inactive individuals. Another example was captured through student feedback upon completion of the Flourish project. Just over 93%²³ of students either “agreed” or “somewhat agreed” that Flourish had left them feeling more confident in their communication/ interpersonal skills.

Delivery partners interviewed highlighted that volunteers built soft skills through their voluntary work. This helped some volunteers find permanent employment across the borough. This was somewhat echoed through the MI data with 78 individuals reporting improved basic skills from project support, all stemming from projects targeting those that are economically inactive (including volunteers). Projects such as Aspire Housing and the Community Connector offered support for CV writing, interview skills, and job search strategies, as well as specific upskilling opportunities such as forklift truck driving and construction qualifications. Delivery partners interviewed reported some participants finding employment and staying in jobs for over 12 weeks, which was their key measurement of success.

The specific case study below demonstrates how an individual who accessed volunteering opportunities, built softer skills that helped them to secure permanent employment at an NHS hospital.

²³ Flourish student feedback results to the question: “As a result of my Flourish experience I feel more confident in my communication/interpersonal skills.” Students ranked on a Likert scale of 1 = Don’t agree, 5 = Agree.

Beneficiary case study – Volunteering & CV assistance helped a beneficiary to secure permanent employment

Projects: Volunteer for All & Aspire

The beneficiary was struggling with securing employment in IT, despite having an IT educational background. They often had to accept short-term roles outside their field to ensure financial stability. The main challenge was an outdated CV, which limited job opportunities at an application stage. Through the UKSPF cross project collaboration, the team at Volunteer for All put the beneficiary in touch with Aspire Housing. They were able to support the individual with an updated and professional CV refresh, helping the beneficiary with basic skills to support job applications.

The Volunteer for All representative discussed available IT-related volunteering roles and matched the beneficiary with the "Computers for Seniors" program, where they began volunteering. They started volunteering in January 2025, assisting seniors with basic computer skills, including Excel, Microsoft Word, setting tables, writing letters, and copy-pasting.

The volunteering role helped the beneficiary to improve their communication and teaching skills, especially in IT basics, by working directly with seniors and library visitors. The softer skills learnt helped the beneficiary secure a new job at a hospital as support staff, mainly cleaning, while they continue to look for a role directly in IT. The beneficiary is hopeful that future opportunities will allow them to secure an IT role in the UK.

The practical experience and confidence gained through volunteering has helped with job interviews and increased their ability to interact with others. Other benefits included personal wellbeing, avoiding isolation and maintaining motivation during a period of unemployment.

The beneficiary attributed their willingness to engage with the job market in part to the skills and confidence developed during volunteering and the CV support received from Aspire.

Other skills development projects provided technical training for niche sectors such as music. A delivery partner at the Honey Box project highlighted that four individuals who attended the technical workshops were now working as sound engineers in local venues, and two of them were employed by their team. Technical skills projects have allowed some participants benefit from technical job opportunities. As well as supporting economically inactive individuals, UKSPF provided support for projects that upskilled the local workforce and increased the quality of the labour supply across the borough.

"What I can say for fact is that at least four people who came through those courses, who were looking at possibly a technical career choice are now working in local venues as sound engineers."

Delivery partner

University-led projects, such as Flourish, reported improvements in students' confidence in core employability skills. Feedback from end-of-project surveys showed that students felt more capable in areas such as presentations, networking, digital skills, problem-solving, leadership, teamwork, motivation, creativity, and planning and organisation. Over 75% of respondents agreed or

somewhat agreed that their confidence in these skills had improved, and in most cases, more than 90% reported gains across these areas. These findings highlight the strong contribution of the Flourish university project in preparing students for the labour market.

The targeted student outcome of improved employment prospects, however, is overshadowed by the broader economic challenges facing the local area. Income deprivation persists across certain wards as mentioned above, and the national economic situation which had affected employment rates and the impact of interventions, noted by a local authority stakeholder highlight the limited impact the programme had across the area.

"Our employment rate has remained steady apart from a couple of wards that are recognised as highly deprived wards, where it's sort of dropped again [...] It's a bit of a challenge in terms of if you associate that with some of the work that we're doing and obviously just the national state of the economy."

Local Authority stakeholder

Alternative explanations

The evidence collected in NUL does not suggest that observed outcomes were the result of other programmes. The interviews and evaluation report consistently attribute this outcome to the UKSPF interventions and support, often stating that interventions would not have taken place without UKSPF funding, or not at the same scale. The existence of alternative explanations is unlikely. However, selection bias may have influenced the outcomes, as individuals who engaged with support services may have been more motivated or closer to job-readiness than those who did not.

Evidence gaps and limitations

Initial low engagement with some of the skills and training projects, especially online courses, that required additional engagement efforts to increase participation may have delayed/ continuing to delay initial impacts. The broader economic situation in NUL raises questions about the generalisability and sustainability of the outcomes described by these project delivery partners and beneficiaries. Quantitative data issues included the possible time lag associated with sustaining employment, and data covering the number of beneficiaries who secured job interviews following the UKSPF-funded support.

5.2 Improved Confidence in Labour Market Participation

People and Skills hypothesis 5.3: Interventions increase individuals/beneficiaries' confidence in entering the labour market.

Student internships and local training opportunities provided beneficiaries with greater confidence in pursuing career opportunities as they enhanced soft and technical skills through UKSPF funded support projects.

Evidence overview and contribution assessment

Evidence was sourced from stakeholder interviews and case studies. In summary, we found that:

- Projects supported individuals in developing confidence in applying for jobs. Confidence and skills (see 5.1 above) developed through volunteering opportunities had a further impact, helping individuals to sustain their employment and integrate into the workforce more effectively.
- Students who participated in the Flourish project reported a strong sense of confidence about entering the labour market after graduation. This confidence was reinforced by the development of key employability skills gained through the programme.

Contribution assessment 5.3: Contribution claim supported.

Building confidence among the local residents of NUL went hand in hand with the engagement of the economically inactive population across the borough. Confidence building has occurred through developing skills, support networks (sense of community) and in some cases friendships through the project engagement. A delivery partner at the Volunteering for All explained that volunteering helps build confidence, especially for individuals who have never been in work, by providing them with a sense of purpose and improving their well-being. For some participants, volunteering led to improved social skills and additional benefits to their mental and physical wellbeing.

"There's always wellbeing outcomes which often leans into the confidence side."

Delivery partner

The Honey Box project is an example of a volunteering support project that developed and improved soft/ technical skills. This led to a boost in confidence for beneficiaries to pursue a career in music. They highlighted that their increased knowledge of social media and regular use of high-quality videos produced by Honey Box, as part of their applications to gigs, acted as a confidence

booster and a valuable marketing asset of their personal skill set. They cited that the professional standard of these materials gave them the confidence to apply to showcase their music.

Honey Box also provided additional opportunities, as described in the case study below, for a beneficiary to showcase their music at live events. This experience helped the beneficiary to overcome stage fright and be open to receiving constructive feedback, without a feeling of judgement. In turn, this helped them to be more confident in actively pursuing a career in the music industry.

Beneficiary case study – Upskilling supports employment transition and confidence

Project: Honey Box

This case study follows a beneficiary's employment transition towards the music industry.

Honey Box organised educational sessions to address artists' struggles, including marketing-specific talks, that the beneficiary attended. These sessions were free and provided valuable insights into marketing strategies. The beneficiary attended three marketing workshops where practical advice on presenting oneself as an artist, creating impactful content, and budgeting for marketing efforts were discussed. Honey Box provided the beneficiary with footage from their performances, which the beneficiary used in applications to venues and promoters outside Stoke, aiding their expanding reach as an artist.

"It gives me that confidence to go out and say, yeah, OK, I'm an artist. Here's what I've got. You know, here's why I deserve to be given an opportunity. And I think it just makes you look a bit more serious."

Beneficiary

There was difficulty in balancing a full-time job with creative projects, leading to a lack of energy and effort for the beneficiaries' artistic endeavours. Alongside coaching sessions, Honey Box provided additional bespoke opportunities to help the artist progress their career through invitations to perform at a local event. The Honeycomb event was a live, ticketed gathering for artists to share their creative processes, songwriting methods, and to network for potential collaborations, providing a platform for both performance and peer learning.

The professional experience gained from being interviewed and engaging with other artists, prompted reflection on their own songwriting process and fostered new connections within the local music scene. This helped develop friendships and confidence for the beneficiary to continue to persevere and pursue a career in the music industry.

"It made me think differently and more about my songwriting process, (...) at the moment I'm trying to write songs differently than I have done before, and so it's really helpful."

Beneficiary

The beneficiary emphasised that while there are other forms of support available, nothing else offers the same level of comprehensive assistance and community as Honey Box.

In other projects, building confidence amongst students was the direct result of the Flourish project where student feedback highlighted both increased skills and confidence in securing employment opportunities post-graduation (see 5.1). 97% of student respondents that either “agreed” or “somewhat agreed” that the Flourish experience had left them feeling more confident that they could match their skill set to their desired role after university. They also felt more confident in speaking with employers and other professionals. This can be an initial hurdle for individuals entering the labour market for the first time.

Alternative explanations

The evidence collected in NUL does not suggest that observed outcomes were the result of other programmes. The interviews and evaluation report consistently attribute this outcome to the UKSPF interventions and support. The existence of alternative explanations is unlikely. However, selection bias may have influenced outcomes, as individuals who engaged with support services may have been more motivated or confident than those who did not.

Evidence gaps and limitations

Much of the evidence is self-reported by individual beneficiaries and qualitative in nature and therefore is illustrative of the impacts achieved and could carry a degree of optimism bias.

6 Economic evaluation

This section highlights the findings from the economic evaluation of NUL UKSPF investment. A Value for Money (VfM) assessment was conducted using the National Audit Office's (NAO) 4E's framework, focusing on the economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of the programme. For each element, specific evaluation questions were developed and these were assessed using evidence from the process and impact evaluations. An overall assessment was then made as to whether the evidence demonstrated offering high, adequate or low value for money against the different evaluation questions and in turn the NAO framework. The conclusions and evidence are summarised in the following sections.

6.1 Economy

How far did the UKSPF interventions attract sufficient volumes of potential suppliers to ensure value for money?

The assessment of economy considered the total volume of potential suppliers and the capacity of the procurement and awards process to deliver interventions at the required quality in the required budgets. NUL actively reached out to existing partners and new suppliers to ensure they were aware of the open call and encouraged them to apply. 16 applicants were selected from 46 eligible expressions of interest. The minimum combined financial ask of submissions (6 applications did not submit costings) was: £9.39m from the 46 eligible submissions. Following the prioritisation exercise the combined ask was still £232k over the NUL UKSPF allocation. A further round of qualitative prioritisation was required by NULBC, implying a surplus of potential suppliers.

VfM assessment: High – strong evidence NUL reached appropriate numbers of suppliers through an open call process

To what extent did the procurement and award processes used ensured delivery of interventions to the required quality and value for money?

There was strong evidence from stakeholder interviews that the procurement process was robust and proactive. As a result of the interest in the open calls, a formal assessment process was used, in which consultants assessed tenders against prioritisation criteria including deliverability, cost-effectiveness and alignment with the borough's priorities. This included value-for-money assessments and prioritisation of projects delivering the greatest outcomes for the investment. The governance board made the final selection of suppliers through a review of the consultants' evaluations.

VfM assessment: High – good qualitative evidence that bids were scored against robust criteria and successful bids scored highly

How well were target timelines for the launch and delivery of interventions met and did this support delivery on budget?

Some challenges were experienced in terms of timescales for launch and delivery of UKSPF interventions with delays from the release of funds causing knock-on impacts to start-up and mobilisation. There was strong evidence from stakeholders of proactive management of UKSPF, with local council delivery partners that were interviewed highlighting the flexibility of funding mechanisms to account for adjustment in project scope and budget to accommodate changes to timelines. Additionally, formal and informal reviews helped identify potential deviations from expected timelines and allowed for correction. As a result, very few projects had not completed delivery of expected outputs. Due to a shorter period of delivery however, some outcomes have not yet been realised.

VfM assessment: High - qualitative evidence of proactive management by NUL to effectively manage UKSPF investment to budget and timescales, despite delays in funding flowing down from government

To what extent did the delivery of interventions meet initial expenditure expectations?

The final total expenditure of UKSPF in NUL at the end of March 2025 was in line with the total budget available, indicating effective **budget management** (see Table 11 in Appendix E). Some underspend in the People and Skills and Supporting Local Businesses investment priorities was appropriately reprofiled within the investment priorities and across the Communities and Place investment priority. This represented acceptable changes to the expenditure of the UKSPF allocation without overall budget implications.

VfM assessment: High - cost data indicated NUL's total expenditure was in line with the budget available.

Overall, this evidence collectively supports the conclusion that the project has been managed economically, ensuring that the funds were used efficiently to deliver high-quality interventions. The management of funds using a structured tender award process and proactive management by the external funding officers has ensured that the interventions delivered were of high quality and provided on balance high value for money in terms of economy. Local Authority stakeholders noted that the lack of capacity within a small local authority required the use of consultants to deliver a large suite of projects through the UKSPF.

6.2 Efficiency

Our assessment of efficiency focused on how the UKSPF investment in NUL converted inputs and activities into outputs.

To what extent did the interventions deliver the number of outputs initially expected and within the expected budget?

Our assessment focused on how well the interventions delivered the expected number of outputs within the allocated budget (see Appendix E). Evidence indicated that the UKSPF investment in NUL largely met or exceeded the initial output targets. Specifically, for the Communities and Place investment priority, all 9 output categories met or exceeded 100% of the initial expectations. Similarly, the Supporting Local Businesses investment priority saw all five output categories exceed 100% of their targets. However, the People and Skills priority only had 9 out of 11 output

categories which exceeded 100% of their targets. These results are also mirrored within the qualitative interviews, with stakeholders praising UKSPF projects for achieving what they set out to do. The People and Skills investment priority started in 2023/24 (year 2), therefore was expected to be less advanced than projects funded under the other two investment priorities.

VfM assessment: High - output data indicated NUL exceeded the expected number of outputs in many of the categories with few projects underachieving

How did the interventions secure the maximum number of outputs given the budget allocation?

The UKSPF interventions secured a maximum number of outputs given the budget allocation, achieving output targets and maintaining cost efficiency. This was assessed by calculating unit costs for a small number of key outputs. For example, the UKSPF unit cost in NUL per business supported with non-financial support and/or grants under the Supporting Local Businesses investment priority was £1,757²⁴. Comparatively, this is below benchmarks from the ERDF programme, on which much UKSPF provision was based, which ranged from just under £2,000 up to over £80,000 per enterprise supported. The median was around £9,400 based on assessment across 392 projects²⁵. Similarly, the UKSPF unit cost per economically inactive participant supported under the People and Skills investment priority was £2,633²⁶, which is comparable to other employment support programmes. Specifically, a National Audit Office report from 2022²⁷, presented a unit cost of £2,429 per participant supported by the Restart Scheme which was introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to support long-term unemployed people. This is the most comparable estimate given this programme covered the same time horizon as UKSPF (between 2022 and 2025). In the same report, unit costs were also presented for the Work and Health Programme (£1,560) and the earlier Work Programme (£1,760) the former being more comparable to UKSPF as it focused on economically inactive disabled people. Caution must be taken when interpreting these estimates given these figures have not been adjusted for inflation.

Whilst the UKSPF unit cost is higher, it can be assessed as offering good value for money, when acknowledging the other comparable programmes are significantly larger in terms of the scale, which would offer some efficiencies. No unit costs were calculated or compared for the Communities and Place investment priority outputs given the variety of activity and the absence of readily available and comparable benchmarks.

VfM assessment: High – NUL's output unit costs were in line with expected level and comparators

²⁴ Calculated for NUL using the total UKSPF budget spent all projects which aimed to support businesses and dividing this by the number of businesses supported.

²⁵ Wavehill (2023) National Evaluation of English ERDF Programme 2014-20 - Unit Cost Analysis Paper. Available at : https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6761ae7426a2d1ff182534de/European_Regional_Development_Fund_2014-2020_Unit_Cost_Analysis.pdf

²⁶ Calculated for NUL using the total UKSPF budget spent by the one project under this priority funded as E33 interventions which focused on supporting people, including those who are economically inactive, to progress towards and into sustained employment and the outputs associated with these projects.

²⁷ National Audit Office (2022) The Restart scheme for long-term unemployed people. Available at: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/the-restart-scheme-for-longterm-unemployed-people.pdf>

How effectively did the interventions combine UKSPF with other funds to achieve outputs?

The efficiency assessment also considered how effectively the interventions combined UKSPF with other funds to achieve outputs. Several of the UKSPF intervention projects in NUL attracted significant amounts of match funding. Two projects garnered match funding from Keele University attracting £346k in total for staffing and in-kind funding. No other parallel funding programmes were received by NUL other than through a supporting capacity for existing funds (Future High Streets and Towns Deal Funds).

VfM assessment: Adequate – evidence indicated some success in combining funds, but with limited examples.

On balance, looking across all aspects of the efficiency assessment of the UKSPF investment in NUL, it demonstrates a **high level of value for money in respect of efficiency**. The interventions largely met or exceeded their output targets within the allocated budget, achieved cost efficiency in delivering outputs, and in some cases successfully combined funds to somewhat enhance output achievements.

6.3 Effectiveness

Our assessment of effectiveness is determined by how well outputs are converted into outcomes and impacts.

To what extent did the interventions deliver the number of outcomes / is expected to deliver the number of outcomes initially expected and within the expected budget?

The assessment of effectiveness focused firstly on how well the **interventions delivered the expected number of outcomes within the allocated budget**. Evidence indicated outcome measures met or exceeded all but one initial outcome expectation across the three pillars. The Supporting Local Businesses investment priority saw 6 out of 7 outcome categories meet or exceed 100% of their targets, with only one outcome related to the number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies not aligning with expectations.

VfM assessment: High – NUL UKSPF investment broadly achieved or exceeded their outcomes targets/initial expectations.

How did the interventions achieve the maximum number of outcomes given the budget?

Effectiveness was also assessed by considering unit costs for key outcomes achieved by the UKSPF investment and comparing them with other interventions. However, due to the wide variety of outcomes achieved, and the lack of disaggregated expenditure data linked to each outcome, it was not possible to calculate a unit cost for outcomes achieved for any of the investment priorities. However, qualitative evidence indicates that businesses receiving support through the Supporting Local Businesses investment priority and beneficiaries of the People and Skills interventions reported significant progress and positive outcomes, underscoring the wider value of the intervention.

VfM assessment: High - NUL's outcome unit costs were in line with expected levels.

To what extent did the outcomes achieved meet the needs of the local area?

The assessment also considered how well the outcomes achieved **met the needs of the local area**. Stakeholders were broadly positive on the ability of UKSPF to meet local needs. Local stakeholders highlighted early engagement with local partners, particularly those who had previously received EU funding, as important in ensuring interventions aligned with local needs. A robust consultation process allowed for incorporating community feedback into the design and delivery of projects ensuring they were targeted at community priorities. Reduced bureaucracy was also praised for bringing greater flexibility and therefore the opportunity for the investment planning process to tailor provision to local needs. Beneficiaries cited projects focused on reducing homelessness as serving to support local needs as they were targeted on the most vulnerable local populations, such as the Mental Health Liaison and the Discharge Officer funded through the UKSPF, and support received to transition into permanent accommodation from UKSPF interventions.

VfM assessment: High – qualitative evidence from stakeholders that UKSPF provision met local needs

Overall, the effectiveness assessment of the UKSPF investment in NUL demonstrates **value for money**. The interventions largely met or exceeded their outcome targets within the allocated budget, achieved cost efficiency in delivering outcomes in line with other interventions and successfully addressed local needs.

6.4 Equity

The assessment of equity focused on whether the initial target beneficiary groups and areas were the most appropriate to receive UKSPF support and were reached over the course of delivery.

Have the interventions been delivered to the target beneficiary groups set out in the initial plans?

The investment plan for UKSPF in NUL was designed to support those most disadvantaged or at risk of being left behind, with a strong focus on reducing homelessness, supporting economic growth, those individuals currently economically inactive, and improving health and wellbeing across the borough. A review of the various documents that made up NUL's investment priorities identified the main target groups for the different investment priorities:

Table 1: Investment plan target groups

Investment priority	Target groups
Communities and Place	Vulnerable/deprived communities, homeless people, artists/musicians, voluntary and community groups.
Supporting Local Businesses	SMEs, potential start-ups, sole traders, key sector business e.g. immersive technologies, social enterprises.
People and Skills	Unemployed/economically inactive, young people, low-skilled, marginalised

There was extensive qualitative evidence that the interventions had delivered outputs and outcomes for these target groups. Local stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries, highlighted their engagement with interventions and the impact of these interventions, noting that the majority successfully reached their intended target groups. However, targets for these groups were not specified upon inception of the implementation of the UKSPF in NUL and so comparison of achievement against expectations is not possible.

VfM assessment: High - Strong qualitative evidence that support was delivered to target beneficiary groups.

To what extent were the initial target beneficiary groups / areas the most appropriate to receive UKSPF support?

The open call process used across all investment priorities in NUL specifically sought to generate a diverse range of projects that covered many of the target beneficiary groups (economically inactive, homeless locals, local businesses etc.). Targets were defined quite broadly from the start of UKSPF. Stakeholders confirmed this assessment, praising the broad reach of interventions, though noting a lack of projects that engaged with multiple barriers to employment, such as health issues, including mental health, and economic challenges.

VfM assessment: Adequate - qualitative evidence that initial target beneficiary groups were the appropriate to receive UKSPF support though some contradictory evidence that the most appropriate groups benefitted.

Overall, the equity assessment of the UKSPF investment in NUL demonstrates a high level of value for money. The interventions were well-targeted to the most appropriate beneficiary groups and areas, and the outcomes achieved were highly relevant to the local needs. This indicates that the UKSPF investment was effectively managed and delivered, providing high value for money in terms of equity.

7 Conclusions

The UKSPF has been a significant initiative aimed at enhancing local investment and community development. In NUL, the fund has been instrumental in driving various projects under the three investment priorities: Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses, and People and Skills. This section summarises the key impact findings about each investment priority and provides an overall assessment of the programme's success in NUL, along with key lessons learned from the process evaluation.

7.1 Process review

Several key lessons have emerged from the implementation of the UKSPF in NUL:

- **Flexibility and adaptability:** NUL demonstrated proactive management, and autonomy over spending. Interventions were shaped based on ongoing demand and local needs. The ability to reallocate funds and adapt to changing circumstances was crucial in addressing challenges in timescales.
- **Adoption of a commissioning approach:** The adoption of an open prospectus approach brought greater transparency to the commissioning process and enabled UKSPF funding in Tamworth to reach a wider range of local organisations, including smaller VCSE groups.
- **Funding cycles and contracting:** Across all priorities, funding cycles and short-term contracting were regarded as a source of inefficiency, particularly from a knowledge transfer perspective.
- **Strong partnership working was a key enabler:** The establishment of a dedicated UKSPF Partnership Board, building on the strong partnership working that existed in NUL, and proactive management by funding officers and NULBC ensured effective governance and high-quality delivery across all investment priorities.
- **Collaboration and networking:** The opportunity for delivery partner organisations to interact and collaborate with other UKSPF projects was beneficial in enhancing the support available to participants and fostering a sense of community. For Supporting Local Businesses in particular, collaboration meant that the local authority could refer businesses to complementary services and academic partnerships creating a more holistic support package.

7.2 Impact of UKSPF

Communities and Place

To what extent did the UKSPF interventions achieve the outputs and outcomes set out in the Investment Plan and what factors contributed to this achievement?

NUL's Communities and Place investment priority delivered a range of interventions focused on town centre improvements, cultural and heritage events, and capacity-building for voluntary and community organisations. The programme delivered physical improvements, including the restoration of green space areas such as Clough Hall Park and the refurbishment of town centre buildings like the Philip Astley Centre, canal refurbishment and tree planting. The Communities and Place interventions largely met or exceeded the outputs and outcomes established in the Investment Plan. The programme delivered 74 community-led arts, cultural, and heritage events, and the creation of 250 volunteering opportunities—significantly surpassing original targets. NUL's Communities and Place investment priority delivered a range of interventions focused on town centre improvements, cultural and heritage events, and capacity-building for voluntary and community organisations. There were also refurbishments to town centre buildings such as the Philip Astley Centre, CML and the Keele in Town mixed use space. These building refurbishments contributed to marginal increases in visitor numbers and improved engagement with local heritage assets. While the Community Life Survey data indicated a modest rise in community pride and satisfaction among residents, the overall impact on public perception was difficult to attribute solely to UKSPF due to concurrent larger-scale regeneration projects through other funding streams, such as the Future High Streets Fund. Key factors contributing to this achievement included strong partnership working between the council, delivery partners, and local organisations; the flexibility and adaptability of the UKSPF funding, which allowed for responsive adjustments to local needs; and the leveraging of existing networks and collaborative relationships.

Over what timescales have impacts been achieved, will they be sustained and are longer term impacts expected?

Impacts for Communities and Place have been achieved primarily over the initial three-year funding period (2022–2025), with many outputs, such as facility refurbishments, community events, and volunteering opportunities, delivered and evidenced within this timeframe. Some outcomes, like improved public perception of local facilities and increased community engagement, have already been observed through management information and survey data. However, certain impacts, particularly those linked to capital projects (e.g., the Homeless Hub), will only become fully apparent after project completion in late 2025 or beyond.

Supporting Local Businesses

To what extent did the UKSPF interventions achieve the outputs and outcomes set out in the Investment Plan and what factors contributed to this achievement?

The Supporting Local Businesses projects largely achieved or exceeded the outputs and outcomes established in the Investment Plan. The programme supported the creation of 115 full-time jobs and the development of 44 new enterprises, surpassing original targets. Projects funded through UKSPF enabled local businesses to access tailored support, including training, advice, student internships, and academic expertise, particularly through partnerships with Keele University and the University of Staffordshire. The university projects (Moving Ahead (KU), Flourish (KU) and ADTIA (SU)) helped to develop strong relationships amongst academics, students and local enterprise who were able to access expertise to develop products and source local talent. These interventions led to increased business growth, innovation, and productivity, with 51 organisations adopting new or improved products or services and 154 research and development active

enterprises reported, both well above target. Key factors contributing to this achievement included strong collaboration between the council, academic institutions, and delivery partners and the leveraging of established networks to reach micro and small businesses.

Over what timescales have impacts been achieved, will they be sustained and are longer term impacts expected?

Key outputs such as job creation, new enterprise development, and increased innovation were evidenced within the initial three year funding period. Longer-term impacts are expected, particularly as businesses continue to benefit from improved skills, ongoing partnerships, and access to new markets and support networks established through UKSPF interventions. However, continued monitoring and further measurement will be needed to fully assess the durability and wider legacy of these outcomes beyond the funding period.

People and Skills

To what extent did the UKSPF interventions achieve the outputs and outcomes set out in the Investment Plan and what factors contributed to this achievement?

The People and Skills strand of the UKSPF in NUL delivered strong progress against its intended outputs and outcomes, particularly in supporting individuals facing barriers to employment and those who were economically inactive. The programme enabled a significant number of residents to access tailored employability support, skills development, and volunteering opportunities, with 539 people reporting increased employability through interpersonal skills development and 78 individuals gaining basic skills as of March 2025. Projects such as Community Connector, Volunteer for All, and Aspire Housing provided bespoke, person-centred support, including CV writing, interview preparation, and sector-specific upskilling, which helped participants move closer to or into employment. The success of these interventions was underpinned by strong collaboration between delivery partners, the flexibility to adapt support to local needs, and the integration of volunteering as a pathway to build confidence and work-readiness. Additionally, partnerships with local employers and educational institutions ensured that training was relevant and responsive to labour market demands. While some challenges were noted, such as initial low engagement with certain skills projects and the broader economic context, the evidence indicates that the People and Skills interventions made a meaningful contribution to improving employability, confidence, and labour market participation among target groups.

Over what timescales have impacts been achieved, will they be sustained and are longer term impacts expected?

The impacts from People and Skills projects have been realised primarily during the three-year funding period (2022–2025), with notable progress in employability, skills development, and labour market participation among target groups. Many immediate outcomes—such as increased confidence, acquisition of basic and interpersonal skills, and successful transitions into employment or volunteering—were observed within this timeframe. While some benefits, such as improved confidence and skills, are likely to persist, continued engagement, adaptive support, and monitoring will be essential to ensure that gains are maintained and that longer-term impacts, such as sustained employment and reduced economic inactivity, are fully realised beyond the funding period.

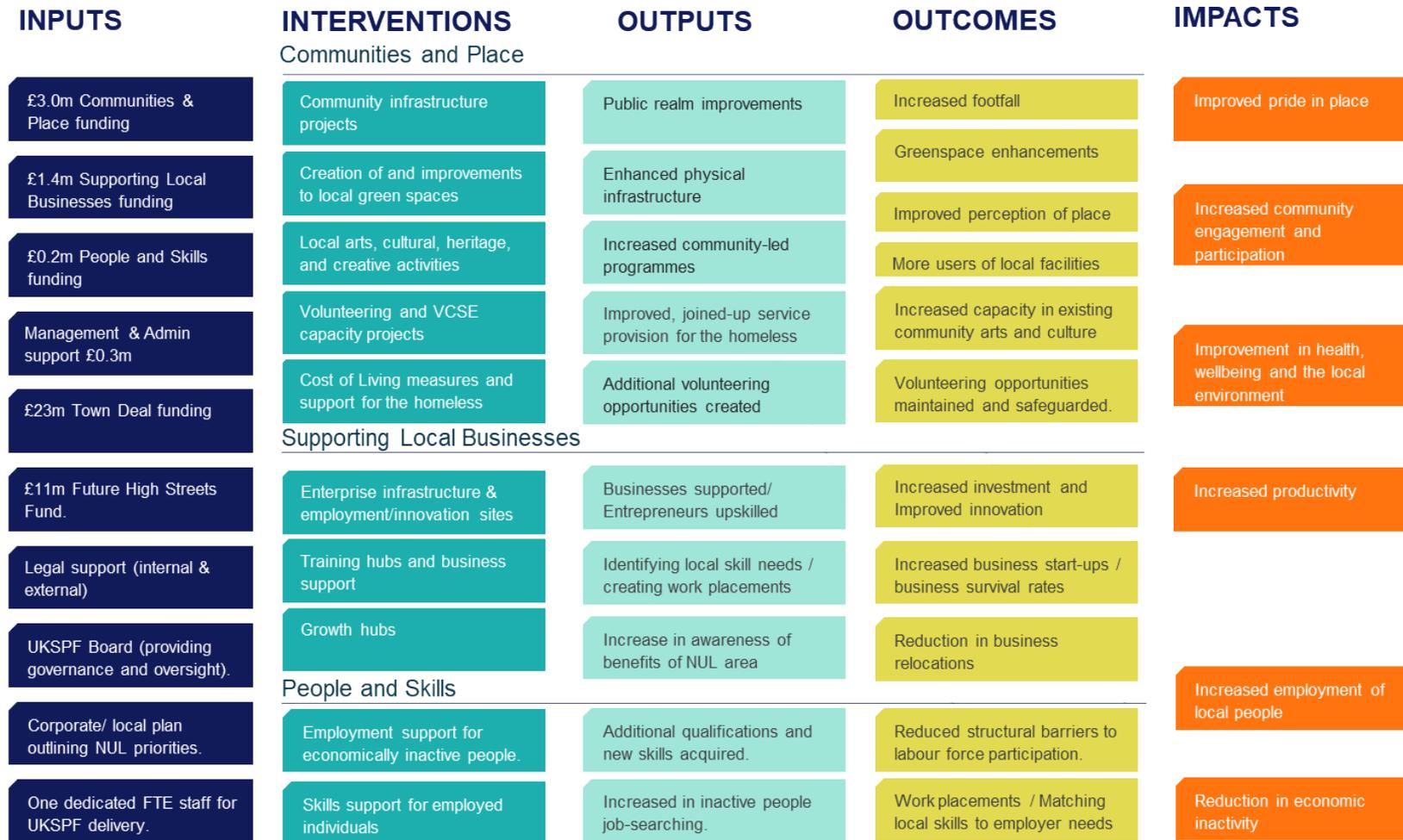
7.3 Value for money

A VfM assessment was conducted using the NAO 4E's framework, focusing on the economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of the programme. The evidence collectively supports the conclusion that the UKSPF investment in NUL has been managed economically, ensuring that the funds were used efficiently to deliver high-quality interventions, however it is important to note that some of these conclusions are based on incomplete evidence and so some assumptions were made. There are also portions of outcomes data for which the window of observation has not been long enough to see their full realisation. As such, for these elements it is too early to draw robust conclusions on value-for-money. However, despite this, the assessment has found that the management of funds using a structured tender award process and proactive management by the external funding officers has ensured that the interventions delivered were of high quality and provided **on balance high value for money in terms of economy**. Looking across all aspects, the efficiency assessment of the UKSPF investment in NUL demonstrated a **high level of value for money in respect to efficiency**. The interventions met or exceeded their output targets within the allocated budget, achieved cost efficiency in delivering outputs, and in some cases combined funds to enhance output achievements. Overall, the effectiveness assessment of the UKSPF investment in NUL demonstrated a **high level of value for money**. The interventions largely met or exceeded their outcome targets within the allocated budget, achieved cost efficiency in delivering outcomes in line with other interventions and adequately addressed local needs. Finally, the **equity assessment** of the UKSPF investment in NUL demonstrated a high level of value for money. The interventions were successfully delivered to beneficiary groups and areas, and the outcomes achieved were at least adequately relevant to the local needs.

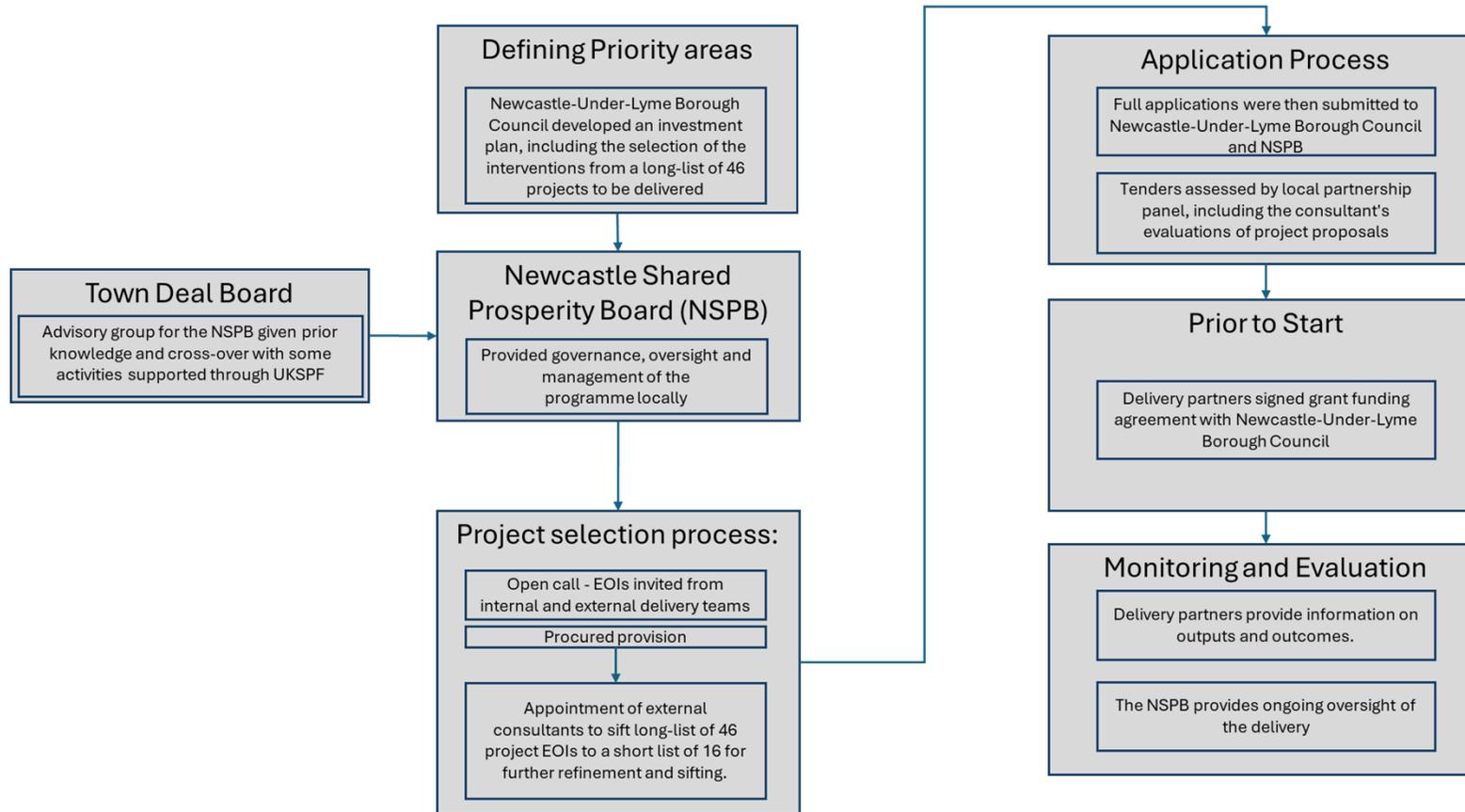
In conclusion, despite the challenges and due to these enablers, UKSPF in NUL has made a positive impact, achieving positive outcomes across all three investment priorities. This report captures the impacts up to March 2025; it is expected further positive outcomes and greater evidence of impact will be achieved by the end of the transition year in March 2026.

Appendix A: Theories of Change

Figure A 1 NUL Theory of Change



Appendix B: Process map



Appendix C – NUL UKSPF Intervention Projects

Table A 1 Intervention projects

Communities and Place		
Intervention project name	Project description	In scope for place level evaluation
CML Community Hubs	Establishment of community hubs to enhance local engagement and provide spaces for community activities.	Y
Newcastle 850th Anniversary	Celebration of Newcastle's 850th anniversary through various events and initiatives to boost community pride.	Y
Nature and Wellbeing	Initiatives promoting the benefits of nature on mental and physical health, encouraging outdoor activities.	Y
Canal Connectivity	Enhancements to canal areas to improve accessibility and recreational opportunities for residents.	Y
Clough Hall Park Enhancements	Upgrades to Clough Hall Park to provide better facilities and encourage community use.	Y
Outreach Mental Health Worker	Deployment of a mental health professional to support community members in need.	N
Nature Recovery in Urban Spaces	Projects aimed at restoring and preserving natural habitats within urban settings.	Y
Epicentre for Circus - Philip Astley Project	Development of a circus arts centre honouring Philip Astley, enhancing cultural offerings in the area.	Y

Homelessness Hub	Creation of a centralised facility to provide services and support for the homeless population.	Y
Beat The Street	Community-wide initiative encouraging physical activity through interactive challenges.	Y
New Vic Theatre – 850th Event	Special event at the New Vic Theatre celebrating the 850th anniversary of NUL.	Y
Kidsgrove Workshop	Establishment of workshops in Kidsgrove to promote skills development and community engagement.	N
Community Connector	Initiative to link community members with services and support networks.	Y
Promotional Videos & Photos	Creation of promotional materials to highlight community projects and initiatives.	N
Honey Box	The Honey Box project focuses on the support of musicians in the Staffordshire region, hosting monthly shows in front of an intimate audience and providing upskilling through trainings on audio/ sound engineering etc.	Y
Volunteering for All in Newcastle	Programmes to encourage volunteering, enhancing community involvement and skill development.	Y
Discharge Officer	Appointment of an officer to assist with patient discharge processes, improving healthcare efficiency.	N
BES Enterprise Coaching	Coaching services to support new and existing enterprises in business development.	N
Kidsgrove Town Hall Repurposing	Renovation of Kidsgrove Town Hall to serve new purposes, boosting local business opportunities.	N

Security Marshalls	Deployment of security personnel to ensure safe business environments.	N
Flourishing Keele (KU)	Collaboration with Keele University to promote business growth and innovation.	Y
Moving Ahead (KU)	Initiatives with Keele University to support business advancements and transitions.	Y
Advanced Digital Technologies Innovation Accelerator (SU)	Accelerator programmes in partnership with the University of Staffordshire to boost digital technology innovations.	Y
Chamber Growth Hub	Establishment of a hub to support business growth and networking opportunities.	Y
Brampton Wedding Venue	Development of a wedding venue at Brampton to attract events and boost local economy.	N
Work Innovation Conference	Organisation of conferences to promote innovative work practices among local businesses.	Y
Newcastle Community Connects	Initiatives to connect community members with local businesses and services.	Y
Feasted	Culinary project aimed at promoting local food businesses and culinary skills.	N
Newcastle Borough Business Connects	Programmes to link businesses within the borough for mutual support and growth.	Y
Brampton Business Development	Initiatives to support business development in the Brampton area.	

People and Skills

Project name	Project description	In scope for place
--------------	---------------------	--------------------

		level evaluation
NSCG Technical Innovation Upskilling Support	Programs to enhance technical skills and support innovation among residents.	Y
EEE4 Disadvantaged Upskill Project	Initiatives aimed at upskilling disadvantaged groups to improve employment opportunities.	N
NULBC Green Projects	Projects focused on environmental sustainability and green skills development.	N

Appendix D: Outputs, outcomes and expenditure tables

Table 2 Communities and Place Outputs Achieved

Intervention / Output	Amount of green or blue space created or improved (M2)	Amount of public realm created or improved (M2)	Number of amenities/facilities supported/created or improved	Number of events/participatory programmes	Number of local events or activities supported	Number of organisations receiving grants	Number of people attending training sessions	Number of trees planted	Number of volunteering opportunities supported	Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be business ready	Number of organisation receiving non-financial support	Number of commercial space completed or improved (M2)	Number of organisations receiving financial support other than grants	Number of People Reached	Number of projects successfully completed	Number of Tourism Culture or Heritage assets	Number of neighbourhood improvements undertaken
E01: Improvements to town centres & high streets						6				1	92				2		
E02: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects	820		15		114		41	19500	2	54	39	3	19		12		
E03: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces	600	500				15		12300			9				2		
E04: Enhancing existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions offer		195	6	98	112	6	46		45		256	6	59	23635	6	8	
E06: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities		60	7	95	75	9	145		36	98				58956	8	7	
E07: Support for active travel enhancements									3								
E09: Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects				52		3					16		65	38259	1	7	
E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups	460			45		10	168	19500		20			78	136		7	
E12: Community engagement schemes, local regeneration					19			19800	21	8	25				11		
Total	1880	755	28	290	320	49	400	71100	107	190	428	9	221	120986	42	29	0

Source: May 2025 programme monitoring data provided by NUL Borough Council²⁸

²⁸ Due to inconsistencies to the targets specified in MHCLG MI data targets and outputs data is based on NUL provided data and those data specified in the investment plans

Table 3 Supporting Local Businesses Outputs Achieved

Intervention/Outputs	Number of decarbonised plans developed as a result of support	Number of commercial buildings completed or improved	Number of enterprises receiving financial support other than grants	Number of enterprises receiving grants	Number of events/participatory programmes	Number of enterprises receiving non financial support	Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	Number of local events or activities supported	number of people attending training sessions	Number of people reached	Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	Number of Tourism or Culture of Heritage assets created or improved
E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy		1			21			37		258		7
E18: Supporting Made Smarter Adoption						38	8					
E19: Investment in research and development at the local level			112			26				29	21	
E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development				28	16	54		19			13	
E21: Development of innovation infrastructure at the local level				8	19	81		34			79	
E22: Enterprise infrastructure & employment / innovation sites		2				98		49		165	51	
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems						140		13		324	45	
E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators			98	12		62		205			9	
E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth	2		12	9	39	256		11		689	66	
E32: Investment in resilience infrastructure and nature based solutions				3		10		20	25	250	8	
Total		3	222	60	95	765	8	183	230	1715	292	7

Source: September 2024 programme monitoring data provided by NUL Borough Council²⁹

²⁹ Due to inconsistencies to the targets specified in MHCLG MI data targets and outputs data is based on NUL provided data and those data specified in the investment plans

Table 4 People and Skills Outputs Achieved

Intervention/Output	Effective working between keyworkers and additional services	Number of economically inactive people engaging with keyworker support services	Number of economically inactive people supported to engage with the benefits system	Number of people accessing mental and physical health support leading to employment	Number of people attending training sessions	Number of people receiving support to gain a vocational licence	Number of people receiving support to gain employment	Number of people receiving support to sustain employment	Number of people retraining	Number of people supported onto a course through providing financial support	Number of people supported to access basic skills courses	Number of socially excluded people accessing support	Number of people supported to gain a qualification	Number of people supported to participate in education	Number of people taking part in work experience programmes	Number of volunteering opportunities supported	People supported to engage in job-searching	Number of people in employment engaging with the skills system
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people	15	112	79	125	45		68	11	21	125	15	325			15		201	
E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills					212		78			5		5	98	112	4	31	46	
E35: Enrichment & volunteering activities	95	16	5	39			189	18					39	25		29		
E36: Increase levels of digital inclusion, essential digital skills		212																
E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses		10	8							29								22
E38: Local areas to fund local skills needs				42	25						11	22	12	12	15	15		56
Total	110	350	92	206	282	0	335	29	21	159	26	352	149	149	34	75	247	78

Source: September 2024 programme monitoring data provided by NUL Borough Council

Table 5 Communities and Place Outcomes Achieved

Intervention / Outcome	Improved engagement numbers (number of people)	Improved perceived/experienced accessibility (number of people reporting)	Improved perception of facilities/amenities (number of people reporting)	Increased footfall (number of people)	Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies (number of projects)	Increased number of web searches for a place (numerical value)	Increased users of facilities/amenities (number of users)	Jobs created as a result of support (FTE)	Number of volunteering opportunities created as a result of support (number of volunteering roles)	Increased use of cycleways or paths (number of users)	Increased users of facilities/amenities (number of users)	Number of community led arts cultural heritage and creative programmes	Increased visitor numbers (number of people)	Jobs safeguarded as a result of support (FTE)	Improved perception of events (number of people reporting)	Increased take up of energy efficiency measures (number of households)
E02: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects	1568	2580	1965					8		20	15695	11				1004
E03: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces		875				1256	11456	1	26			5	3566	3	12	
E04: Enhancing existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions offer	8658		1652	50252		235		2	19			5	5562	9		
E06: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities	1500	1620		48952			11000	21	49			26	17585	1		
E07: Support for active travel enhancements	10															
E08: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area						2										
E09: Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects	4256				3			3	86		45	27	10212	7		
E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups	115							9					28500			
E12: Community engagement schemes, local regeneration								5	68		110		50		11	
E14: Relevant feasibility studies					1				2							2
Total	16107	5075	3617	99204	4	1493	22456	49	250	20	15850	74	65475	20	1027	2

Source: September 2024 programme monitoring data provided by NUL Borough Council

Table 6 Supporting Local Businesses Outcomes Achieved

Intervention/Outcomes	Increased business sustainability	Increased number of enterprises supported	Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies	Jobs created as a result of support (FTE)	Number of enterprises adopting new or improved products or services	Number of organisations engaged in knowledge transfer activity following support	Number of Research and Development active enterprises	Increased footfall	Increased Visitor numbers	Increased number of innovation active SMEs	Number of new enterprises created as a result of support	Number of early stage enterprises which include EWS	increase in visitor spending
E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy				2				35400	12650				
E18: Supporting Made Smarter Adoption				7	19					8			20
E19: Investment in research and development at the local level	12	29			29		45						
E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development							20						
E21: Development of innovation infrastructure at the local level		5			3								
E22: Enterprise infrastructure & employment / innovation sites	11	31		53		10					16		20
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems		166		15		178					11		
E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators				22		4					8		22
E26: Growing the local social economy												59	
E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth		48		16		298	89				9	65	16
Total	23	279	0	115	51	490	154	35400	12650	8	44		78

Source: September 2024 programme monitoring data provided by NUL Borough Council

Table 7 People and Skills Outcomes Achieved

Intervention/Outcome	Number of people engaged in job searching following support	Number of people in education/training following support	Number of people in employment (including self employment) following support	Number of people reporting increased employability through interpersonal skills development	Number of people in supported employment	Number of people with basic skills following support	Number of economically inactive individuals engaging with benefits system following support	Number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services	Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services	Number of active or sustained participants in community groups as a result of support	People gaining a qualification or completing a course following support	Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people	358	168	11	158	78		245	10	78	9		
E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills						245						
E36: Increase levels of digital inclusion, essential digital skills				15					21			
E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses				165			46	12			159	5
E35: Enrichment & volunteering activities							242		84	15	11	
E38: Local areas to fund local skills needs			68	201					135			
Total	358	168	79	539	78	245	533	22	318	24	170	5

Source: September 2024 programme monitoring data provided by NUL Council

Table 11 Total Expenditure by UKSPF Priority³⁰

	UKSPF total spent (£)	UKSPF allocated (£)	% of total allocation spent
Communities and Place	2,984,018	2,954,190	101
Supporting Local Businesses	1,449,776	1,479,604	98
People and Skills	208,000	208,000	100
Admin	194,380	194,380	100
Total	4,836,174	4,836,174	100

³⁰ A small amount of funding was reallocated from Supporting Local Businesses investment priority to Communities and Place.

Appendix E – Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation activity in NUL included **process, impact and economic evaluation**. To provide evidence for these strands, the following data collection and analysis was completed.

Process evaluation

- **Context review:** An initial review of the evolution of the local context was conducted including consideration of the socio-economic conditions and associated local strategies. This was achieved through a review of NUL’s Council’s strategy documents and local socio-economic data sourced from a targeted online review.
- **Document review:** Local documentation related to UKSPF was reviewed to provide background information to the process evaluation e.g. UKSPF Governance Plan produced by NUL and intervention project performance reports.
- **Analysis of Management Information (MI):** Evidence on the progress of NUL’s delivery of the programme was compiled from monitoring information sourced both from the latest quarterly return sent to MHCLG in March 2025. The MHCLG return required reporting on the cumulative achievement of outputs and outcomes against the investment as a whole.
- **Stakeholder research and in-depth qualitative beneficiary research:** A programme of qualitative stakeholder interviews was undertaken directly by the place level evaluation team across two waves (November 2024- January 2025 and March 2025-Aug 2025). Across the two waves, some repeat interviews were conducted (principally with LA and delivery stakeholders) to capture ongoing perceptions of process or updates. In total, across both waves, qualitative data collection included 34 interviews with NULBC, delivery partners and beneficiaries

The interviews were guided by topic guides to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness in the data collection process. These guides helped structure the interviews and ensured that all relevant topics were covered. Interviews were predominantly conducted using MS Teams with a few in person visits. The analysis approach involved reviewing and synthesising the qualitative data to identify key themes and insights.

- **Local evaluation activity:** A locally commissioned phase 1 evaluation brochure was produced by NULBC. Specifically, this provided qualitative insights in terms of beneficiaries both with businesses supported by projects in the Supporting Local Businesses investment priority and beneficiaries of Communities and Place projects. In addition to these evaluations, other projects also produced a range of case studies/ student participant feedback from some of the activity delivered provided additional evidence of their achievements. These have been used in the place level evaluation to provide context and further evidence of the outcomes achieved by projects.

Impact evaluation

To deliver the impact evaluation a theory-based evaluation design, specifically contribution analysis approach³¹ was used. The potential for implementing Quasi Experimental Design (QED) approaches for impact evaluation of the NUL programme was carefully considered across each of the projects in scope for the evaluation. The conclusion of this was, however, that it was not feasible to deliver QED approaches during the case study delivery period due to challenges in developing appropriate counterfactual cases.

Standardised contribution outcomes and hypotheses were developed as part of the contribution analysis approach, to be applied across all place level evaluations to aid subsequent synthesis of evidence. Relevant outcomes and hypotheses were selected for NUL based on a review of the Theory of Change and evidence available. This was sense checked through a stakeholder workshop held on 2nd October 2024. A contribution analysis workshop was held on 15th July 2025 – to update the ToC and discuss contribution claims.

For each hypothesis, the contribution of UKSPF was assessed through three main criteria, using a 4-point scale will be to determine the strength of contribution claims:

- a. Attribution - whether the changes in outcomes were directly/indirectly linked to the intervention
- b. Evidence in support of hypothesis – desired change in observed outcomes
- c. Evidence to refute the hypothesis – no change or negative change in the observed outcomes

A system of rubrics was used to determine the quality and denote what is admissible evidence to be used for testing each hypothesis.

The impact evaluation drew on the following evidence:

- **Management information** provided evidence on the effectiveness of UKSPF, providing insight into the performance of the different investment priorities and intervention types.
- **Stakeholder and beneficiary research** as described above, provided data on the outcomes and contribution of UKSPF. Alongside questions on process, the interviews explored emerging outcomes from the perspectives of different stakeholder groups and how far any changes observed could be attributed to UKSPF funded activity.
- Similarly, the **locally commissioned evaluation brochure and case studies** provided evidence on the outcomes and impact of specific intervention projects, serving to gather evidence from a wider pool of beneficiaries.

³¹ Contribution Analysis is a theory-based method, which was used to help explain and understand the contribution of different factors to the achievements of the NUL UKSPF investment.

- **Secondary datasets** were accessed and analysed as a potential source of impact evidence. This included data from the 2024/25 Community Life Survey, an annual, nationally representative survey of adults in England, commissioned by the UK government. It explores key themes such as social cohesion, volunteering, civic engagement, and wellbeing. The survey provides valuable longitudinal data that helps policymakers and local authorities understand how communities are changing over time. For the purpose of this evaluation, the survey data for 2024/25 was available at local authority level and provided insights into local area satisfaction and community pride, key themes being addressed by UKSPF. However, its use was more limited in assessing the contribution of UKSPF as it was difficult to robustly attribute any observed changes or results to UKSPF activity specifically. Data from previous years (2023/24) was available for NUL specifically but only for a small number of questions. It also provided some insights into general trends in England.

Economic evaluation

The economic evaluation of NUL UKSPF was guided by the National Audit Office's (NAO) 4E's framework, focusing on the economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of the programme. Specifically, a Value for Money (VfM) assessment was conducted as the absence of a QED approach to impact, meant it was not possible to utilise a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). The VfM assessment drew on quantitative and quantitative data from the process and impact evaluation approaches to answer a series of questions across the 4Es as shown in Table A1 overleaf.

Table A 2 Value for money assessment - 4Es evaluation questions

Evaluation question	Management information	Secondary data sources	Stakeholder research	Beneficiary research	Wider literature
Economy					
How far did the UKSPF interventions attract sufficient volumes of potential suppliers to ensure VfM?	✓		✓		
To what extent did the procurement and award processes used ensure delivery of interventions to the required quality and value for money?	✓		✓		
How well were target timelines for the launch and delivery of interventions met and did this support delivery on budget?	✓		✓		✓
To what extent did the delivery of interventions meet initial expenditure expectations?	✓		✓		
Efficiency					
To what extent did the interventions deliver the number of outputs initially expected and within the expected budget?	✓		✓	✓	✓
How did the interventions secure the maximum number of outcomes given the budget allocation?	✓		✓	✓	
How effectively did the interventions combine UKSPF with other funds to achieve outputs?	✓		✓		
Effectiveness					
To what extent did the interventions deliver the number of outcomes / is expected to deliver the number of outcomes initially expected and within the expected budget?	✓		✓	✓	✓
How did the interventions achieve the maximum number of outcomes given the budget?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
To what extent did the outcomes achieved meet the needs of the local area?		✓	✓		✓
Equity					
Have the interventions been delivered to the target beneficiary groups set out in the initial plans?	✓		✓	✓	
To what extent were the initial target beneficiary groups / areas the most appropriate to receive UKSPF support?		✓	✓		✓

Appendix F – Contribution Analysis Framework

ToC element	Causal hypothesis	Evidence to strengthen hypothesis	Evidence to refute hypothesis	Tests to determine contribution
Improved perceptions of facilities and amenities	Increased usage of local facilities due to enhancements and programmes to engage the community to make use of facilities.	<p>Increase in related metrics on 'Your Community, Your Say' survey or the Community Life survey.</p> <p>Positive stakeholder perceptions of facilities and amenities.</p>	<p>No change in related metrics on 'Your Community, Your Say' survey or the Community Life survey</p> <p>Negative stakeholder perceptions of facilities and amenities.</p>	<p>Assessing perceptions of local facilities and amenities.</p> <p>Consideration of other contextual factors that may have resulted in observed change.</p>
Increased footfall	<p>Improvements to local businesses in the town centre attract more individuals to town centres, so there is an increase in footfall.</p> <p>Arts, cultural, heritage and creative events centred around historic Newcastle-under-Lyme sites attract visitors to the town and subsequently there is an increase in footfall.</p>	<p>Increased footfall in town centre.</p> <p>Increased visitor numbers to CML and NUL town during events.</p>	<p>No change in footfall in town centre.</p> <p>Low visitor numbers during events.</p>	<p>Assessing changes in footfall in town centres.</p> <p>Consideration of other contextual factors that may have resulted in observed change.</p>
Increased Volunteering opportunities	Capacity building support and the specific focus on increasing volunteer numbers offers more volunteering opportunities and	Increase in number of volunteers and local volunteering rate.	No change in number of volunteers or local volunteering rate.	Measuring change in volunteering numbers/rate.

ToC element	Causal hypothesis	Evidence to strengthen hypothesis	Evidence to refute hypothesis	Tests to determine contribution
	encourages individuals to get involved in volunteering opportunities.	Increase in related metrics on Community Life survey.	No change in related metrics on Community Life survey	Consideration of other contextual factors that may have resulted in observed change.
Increased business births	Business support programmes enable entrepreneurs to access business coaching and/ or networks to help establish themselves.	<p>Increase in the number of new businesses</p> <p>Positive findings in business consultations about business uptake of support and attendance at festivals.</p>	<p>No change in the number of new businesses</p> <p>Negative findings in business consultations about business uptake of support and attendance at festivals.</p>	<p>Measure the number of new businesses in NUL.</p> <p>Consideration of other contextual factors that may have resulted in observed change.</p>
Enhanced business productivity	Business support through grants, training or advice supported businesses to implement changes leading to higher productivity of the firm.	Positive insights from businesses about changes made and how these have led to improved productivity e.g. by reducing costs, increasing sales, increasing efficiency.	Insights from businesses indicate changes have not been made following support or that these changes did not lead to improved productivity e.g. by reducing costs, increasing sales, increasing efficiency.	<p>Capture evidence of enhanced business productivity in supported businesses.</p> <p>Consideration of other contextual factors that may have resulted in observed change</p>

ToC element	Causal hypothesis	Evidence to strengthen hypothesis	Evidence to refute hypothesis	Tests to determine contribution
Increased innovation and adoption of new technologies within local businesses	Business support enables businesses to take on new products, technology, or processes, as a result of financial support, training or advice.	<p>Positive findings in business consultations about adoption of new products, technology, or processes.</p> <p>Positive stakeholder perceptions of businesses adopting new products, technology, or processes.</p>	<p>Negative findings in business consultations about adoption of new products, technology, or processes.</p> <p>Negative stakeholder perceptions of businesses adopting new products, technology, or processes.</p>	<p>Measure number of businesses registered introducing new products, technology, or processes.</p> <p>Consideration of other contextual factors that may have resulted in observed change.</p>
Increased employability and reduction of barriers	Employability and support projects help individuals gain employment by providing life skills, volunteering, job search support, and other services.	<p>Positive local data on individuals who participated in employability projects.</p> <p>Positive stakeholder perceptions of employability and support programmes.</p>	<p>No change in local data on individuals who participated in employment and training projects.</p> <p>Negative stakeholder perceptions of programmes.</p>	<p>Assess change in skill and employment outcomes for individuals in receipt of related projects.</p> <p>Consideration of other contextual factors that may have resulted in observed change.</p>
Increased confidence around employment prospects.	Employment support helps individuals through soft and social skills development, networking opportunities	Positive stakeholder or beneficiary perceptions	Negative stakeholder or beneficiary perceptions	Assess change in skill, confidence and employment outcomes for individuals in receipt of related projects.

This page is intentionally left blank

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

17th March 2026

Report Title: **Approval for Award of Contract for Health & Safety Monitoring**

Submitted by: **Service Director, Sustainable Environment**

Portfolios: **Sustainable Environment**

Ward(s) affected: **N/A**

<p><u>Purpose of the Report</u></p> <p>For Cabinet to approve the award of a contract for the provision of Health & Safety Monitoring for the Councils Recycling and Waste collection service front line vehicles and staff.</p>	<p><u>Key Decision</u> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>Approves the award of contract for Health & Safety Monitoring on a 3-year contract with the option for 3 x 1-year extensions.</p>	
<p><u>Reasons</u></p> <p>The Council has operated remote Health & safety monitoring for the last 3 years, where it has proven beneficial in the Council being able to effectively manage Health & Safety and reduce hazards within the recycling and waste collection service, an area which nationally remains one of the most dangerous industry sectors, and has helped embed an improved culture for Health & Safety.</p>	

1. Background

- 1.1** The waste industry remains among the HSE's most dangerous industry sectors with significant levels of injuries, and unfortunately fatalities occurring each year. Although great strides have been made over the years, and the sector has improved, more work still needs to be done, and the sector remains a major focus for the HSE, and in particular local authority collections.
- 1.2** Following a successful trail with Lichfield District Council integrating a third-party monitoring system developed in collaboration with Biffa, using their monitoring control room infrastructure and vehicle CCTV system supplier (Contel) to provide independent monitoring of recycling and waste collection operations, the Council joined with Lichfield to roll the service out for 3 years.

- 1.3 The system effectively allows Biffa to audit individual vehicles for a period of around 20 minutes independently monitoring 7 defined areas of compliance such as reversing, use of lifting equipment, manual handling, uniform & PPE slips / trips/ falls and so on. The driver and crew of the vehicle don't know when the audits are taking place, and staff at the control centre have no knowledge of the individuals they are auditing.
- 1.4 The system has allowed the Recycling and Waste team further imbed health and safety compliance and has seen a marked improvement in compliance with risk assessments and safe systems of work, which in turn has reduced the risk of accidents and lost time through injury, effectively paying for itself.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The current contract with Biffa comes to an end on 31st March 2026 and needs to be reproced. There are now several other Waste Collection Authorities (WCA's) (2 in Staffordshire) and one outside of Staffordshire have current arrangements with Biffa that come to an end around the same time or wishing to implement the service. It was sensible therefore to undertake a joint procurement exercise for all 4 authorities, with this Council taking the lead.
- 2.2 Front-line staff are exposed to significant risk in terms of working on the highway, around moving vehicles including reversing, operating dangerous machinery and manual handling.
- 2.3 Task and finish for daily collections was implemented for a period during and following the Covid pandemic to support social distancing. This way of working is associated with a higher risk of shortcutting and lower compliance to safe systems of work (SSOW). When task and finish was ceased there was a risk that bad habits may have become embedded.
- 2.4 Alongside this a service change was implemented in 2020 which meant that the Risk Assessments (RA's) and SSOW for operations were refreshed.
- 2.5 As well as refresh of the RA's and SSOW, classroom-based training was rolled out to all staff, and in 2022 the remote monitoring service was implemented to ensure that staff were following the revised SSOW.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 Award of the contract will be for 3 years with 3 x 1-year options to extend.
- 3.2 The procurement documents stated evaluation would take place on a split between quality and price, with price being awarded 60% of the marks and quality 40%.
- 3.3 3 bidders in total put in tenders for the contract. The three bidders for the Council will be referred to as bidders A, B, & C.
- 3.4 These bids have been fully evaluated and moderated, with the outturn scores calculated.
- 3.5 Due to the commercial sensitivity of the contract, the evaluation results, and preferred bidder are not included on part 1 of the agenda and are exempt from publication by reasons of paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12a of the Local Page 107 6 Government Act 1972. The proposed charges can be found in appendix 1 in part 2 of the Cabinet agenda.

4. Reasons for Proposed Solution

- 4.1** A range of training methods are provided to the workforce from full sessions covering RA's and SSOW to Toolbox talk refreshers, written crib sheets and practical sessions (i.e. behind an RCV). Managers are mindful to the fact that staff learn in different ways and some staff have low levels of literacy.
- 4.2** The remote monitoring means that each team member has a weekly debrief based on the outcome of the audit. This was implemented in a supportive way that encouraged behaviour change. The default conversations were around further training needs and any reasons that may prevent safe / encourage poor behaviours or even poor habits.
- 4.3** Competence is not assessed at an individual level, but rather at a team level using the outcomes of the remote monitoring audits. Although the audits primarily measured compliance, levels of non-compliance are used as an indicator of competence. It is recognised that non-compliance could stem from a range of factors - including gaps in knowledge or understanding, training needs, or team dynamics - so audit findings are interpreted with this broader context in mind. Competence before and after the intervention was therefore assessed by comparing the number and nature of hazards identified during each audit, reflecting overall team performance rather than individual capability.
- 4.4** Audit scores and compliance with safe working methods have increased significantly since implementation, the number of hazards observed have decreased considerably. At implementation in 2022 there were approximately 4 hazards observed in every 10-minute audit. In 2023 the average was 1.78 and in 2025 this has decreased to less than 1.
- 4.5** Weekly debriefs mean that staff engagement in H&S is high (albeit not measured) and there is some healthy competitiveness between teams in terms who aspire to score 100%.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1** The Council could opt to cease remote monitoring and return to supervisors physically monitoring compliance of front-line crews. However, history tells us that this is not an effective way to monitor compliance, as human behaviour means people will tend to comply when they are aware they are being visibly monitored. With remote monitoring, no one knows exactly when they are being monitored, therefore this provides a reliable indication of compliance overall.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 The procurement process has been conducted to meet the requirements of the Procurement Regulations 2024. It also meets the Councils requirements to secure Best Value.
- 6.2 The contract will be awarded individually to each local authority lot and managed by those authorities individually. This is how the current contract arrangements operate and have proven to work very well.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 Awarding the contract for Health & Safety monitoring does not have any direct impact on equalities.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 The financial cost of the proposed contract for Health & Safety monitoring is within existing budgets at around £30k per year.
- 8.2 Resource implications in monitoring and use of the system are already covered in the Recycling & Waste service staffing.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 The risk of not awarding a contract under the procurement is that there is no effective way to manage H&S compliance within the RWS service.
- 9.2 The contract demonstrates that the Council is committed to proactively monitoring and improving health and safety reducing the risk of significant harm to employees and members of the public.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Digital Council

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

Procurement of remote Health & Safety monitoring supports the One Digital Council initiative, making use of the latest technology, and linking into existing digital systems operated by the Council

One Sustainable Council

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle.

Recycling and Waste is one of the key services in helping create a more sustainable borough for people to live and work.

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 The award of this contract is a key decision due to its overall value.

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 None

14. List of Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 is contained in part 2 of the Cabinet agenda.

15. Background Papers

15.1 None

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1

Approval for Award of Contract for H&S Monitoring

- 1.1 ?? bidders in total put in tenders for the contract. The three bidders for the Council will be referred to as bidders A, B, & C.
- 1.2 These bids have been fully evaluated and moderated, with the outturn scores given in the table below. –
- 1.3 Outcome table

	Compliance	Quality	Price	Total	RANK
Percentage Available	Pass / Fail	%	%	100%	
Bidder A					
Bidder B					
Bidder C					

- 1.4 From the full evaluation process **bidder C, ??** has the highest score and therefore it is recommended that they are awarded the contract for Health & Safety Monitoring April 2026.

This page is intentionally left blank

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO Cabinet

17th March 2026

Report Title: Renewal of Civica APP for Regulatory Services

Submitted by: Service Director, Information & Technology

Portfolios: One Council, People & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

<p><u>Purpose of the Report</u></p> <p>To renew the contract for Civica Authority Public Protection (APP) system, the case and licence management system used by Regulatory services.</p>	<p><u>Key Decision</u> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the proposal to renew the contract for Civica APP for a maximum period of four years (2+1+1). 2. Delegates to the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People & Partnerships, Chief Executive and Service Director – Information & Technology, authority to direct award the contract following a compliant procurement exercise. 	
<p><u>Reasons</u></p> <p>Civica APP is an essential tool for case and licence management, ensuring the Council's compliance with legislative obligations and the efficient delivery of key public services.</p> <p>The Council's current contract for the solution expires on 31st March 2026.</p>	

1. Background

- 1.1** The Council's regulatory services team is responsible for a wide range of statutory duties, including:
 - 1.1.1** Food & Safety
 - 1.1.2** Environmental Health
 - 1.1.3** Licensing (alcohol, taxis, premises, gambling etc).
 - 1.1.4** Housing
- 1.2** The duties performed by these teams are underpinned by an IT system, Civica APP. The Civica APP solution enables the Council's officers to manage complex casework and maintain accurate records of certifications and licences in accordance with statutory regulations and requirements.
- 1.3** The Civica APP system which is specifically developed for local authorities has been used by the Council for over 20 years. Over this period, a

significant amount of configuration, time, resources and data have been added to the system to support the effective delivery of key and statutory Council services.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The Council's current contract for the solution expires on 31st March 2026. After this date, Council officers will be unable to use the application.
- 2.2 The inability for Council officers to access this system would have significant impact on the delivery of services to residents and businesses across the Borough.
- 2.3 The Council is therefore required to renew the existing contract or explore alternative options. This is set out within Section 5 of this report.

3. Recommendation

That Cabinet:

- 3.1 Approves the proposal to renew the contract for Civica APP for a maximum period of four years (2+1+1).
- 3.2 Delegates to the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People & Partnerships, Chief Executive and Service Director – Information & Technology, authority to direct award the contract following a compliant procurement exercise.

4. Reasons

- 4.1 The Regulatory services team are familiar with the Civica APP solution and is used by officers daily.
- 4.2 The loss of access to the system could lead to the loss of historical case records and evidence, impacting investigations and legal proceedings.
- 4.3 The inability to effectively manage and track statutory casework could lead to potential breaches of legislation.
- 4.4 Failure to meet statutory duties could result in harm to the potential harm to the public, resulting in a possible litigation against the Authority.
- 4.5 The Regulatory Services team worked to implement the ability to apply and report issues online, as part of the One Council transformation programme. Whilst this work is continuing, operating without a suitable case management system would lead to reduced efficiency, with increased manual processing and the increased risk of error.
- 4.6 As part of the contract procedure, the supplier will also provide social value by supporting digital inclusion initiatives, ensuring that residents across the Borough have improved access to digital services and the skills needed to engage confidently online.

- 4.7 The renewal of the contract provides the Council with flexible options for future as it navigates through the complexities of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
- 4.8 The use of the Crown Commercial Services Vertical Application Solutions (VAS) framework provides public sector customers can access software focused solutions to meet the specific needs of their industry, business application or services.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 As part of the Council's contract review process, Council officers have undertaken a review of the solution and have identified the below options.

5.1.1 **Option 1 - Don't Renew Contract**

The non-renewal of the Civica APP contract would render the Regulatory Services team without access to the system and the data held within the system.

This would have a significant impact on the team's ability to effectively deliver services, as well as residents and businesses. For example, this would impact on the ability to issue alcohol/taxi/premises licences, food hygiene inspections and other types of legislative processes/requirements.

Given this, Option 1 has been discounted and is not recommended.

5.1.2 **Option 2 – Move to another Solution**

Due to the wide breadth and complex nature of a complete regulatory service solution, there are only a limited number of other suppliers who can provide this service/solution.

This option would also require significant investment of money, time, and staff resources to implement a new solution. Given the national shortage of regulatory service qualified officers, as well as the delivery of other key IT projects, it would not be possible to implement a replacement solution in the timeframe available.

This option is therefore not recommended.

5.1.3 **Option 3 - Renew Contract (Recommended)**

Despite a review of the Council's options, the renewal of Civica APP remains the recommended and preferred option.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 The system is critical for evidencing compliance with legislation such as the Food Safety Act, Environmental Protection Act, Licensing Act, and many other related statutory frameworks and laws.
- 6.2 The use of the Crown Commercial Services Vertical Application Solutions (VAS) framework ensures compliance with the Council's contract procedure rules and the Public Contract Regulation 2015.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 No adverse impact has been identified as a result of delivering this proposal.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

8.1 The contract is based upon an initial 2-year term, with the option to extended for 1 year and an option to extend for a further 1 year. Bringing the maximum contract length to 4 years (2+1+1).

8.2 Whilst the Council has implemented budgetary provision for this system, this renewal has been subject to a significant price increase compared to previous years. The supplier has advised that this is due to the Council being required to re-procure the relevant licences to utilise the software.

8.3 Details of costs and pricing are set out in the accompanying confidential report.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

9.1 The Council runs a risk to the delivery of operational services where it fails to invest in ICT and modern technologies.

9.1.1 This is an identified risk within the Corporate Risk Management system under the ICT Services and Corporate Risk profile.

9.1.2 The council have already taken steps to mitigate this risk with control measures, such as the implementation of a Technology Strategy, Consolidation of hardware and software and the One Council transformation programme.

9.1.3 The renewal of Civica APP, a key business system will ensure the Council is authorised and licensed to utilise the application. The contract will also provide the Council with direct support with Civica.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Digital Council

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

One Sustainable Council

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 The overall contract value will be a revenue commitment in excess of £100,000 and as such is considered as a key decision.

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 None.

14. List of Appendices

14.1 None.

15. Background Papers

15.1 None.

This page is intentionally left blank

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

17th March 2026

Report Title: Procurement of Microsoft Licensing

Submitted by: Service Director, Information & Technology

Portfolios: One Council, People & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

<p><u>Purpose of the Report</u></p> <p>To seek approval to undertake a procurement exercise and award a contract for the renewal of the Council's Microsoft licensing agreement.</p>	<p><u>Key Decision</u> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agrees to procure new Microsoft Enterprise licences 2. Delegates authority to the Service Director, Legal & Governance and Service Director, Information & Technology in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth & Town Centres, to undertake a compliant procurement exercise for the Council's Microsoft licences. 3. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People & Partnerships, to award and enter in a contract for the renewal of the Council's Microsoft licences for a period of three years. 	
<p><u>Reasons</u></p> <p>The Council's existing Microsoft Enterprise Subscription Agreement (ESA) expires in May 2026.</p> <p>The procurement exercise will help to ensure the Council achieves best value.</p> <p>Delegating authority to the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People & Partnerships will ensure the Council can react quickly to any opportunities which avoid increased costs, whilst still operating in a transparent and safeguarded way.</p>	

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Council has operated under a Microsoft Enterprise subscription agreement (ESA) for the past three years, providing access to a comprehensive suite of Microsoft products and services at discounted rates.

- 1.2** This arrangement has been fundamental to the Council's digital transformation programme, One Council by ensuring secure, reliable, and scalable IT solutions that support staff, members, and public services. With the current agreement due to expire, it is vital to consider renewal to avoid disruption.
- 1.3** The Council makes use of a wide range of products and services, including:
- 1.3.1 Windows 11** – The Council equips officers with laptops running Windows 11, providing a secure, user-friendly, and up-to-date operating environment. This consistency simplifies IT management, allows for timely security updates, and supports staff productivity regardless of location.
 - 1.3.2 Outlook** - Outlook is the Council's primary tool for email communication, supporting both internal collaboration and external correspondence. Its integration with other Microsoft services ensures seamless calendar management, scheduling, and document sharing, which are essential for efficient council operations.
 - 1.3.3 Teams** - Microsoft Teams has become integral to the Council's communication strategy. It enables instant messaging, video conferencing, and document collaboration. Teams also supports telephony, enabling calls to be made and received through a unified platform. Microsoft Teams also facilitates the live broadcasting and recording of Council meetings.
 - 1.3.4 SharePoint** – SharePoint is widely utilised across the Council for secure document management, collaboration, and sharing. The system facilitates teamwork on draft documents, enables version control, and ensures information is easily retrievable, enhancing transparency and efficiency in Council operations.
 - 1.3.5 Microsoft Azure** - The Council has transitioned its IT infrastructure to Microsoft Azure, moving away from reliance on physical datacentres. Adopting Microsoft Azure has allowed the Council to significantly reduce its physical datacentre footprint. This transition contributes to the Council's sustainability goals by lowering energy consumption, reducing hardware waste, and minimising the environmental impact associated with on-premises infrastructure.
 - 1.3.6 Dynamics CRM** – Microsoft Dynamics CRM will provide the Council with a single case management solution, streamlining processes and ensuring a consistent approach to handling enquiries, service requests, and casework. The platform will enable a unified view of interactions and case histories, more informed decision-making and improved service for residents via a new customer portal.
- 1.4** To legally use the Microsoft products, the Council must ensure that it has the correct types and number of licenses in place. To ensure compliance with licencing requirements, the Council purchases and maintains its Microsoft obligations through an Enterprise Subscription Agreement, provided by a certified Microsoft Reseller.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The Council's Microsoft Enterprise Subscription Agreement (ESA) is now due to expire on 31 May 2026.
- 2.2 Upon expiry of the current agreement expires, the Council will no longer be able to legally use the associated applications, systems and services as provided by Microsoft. This will include inability to access Microsoft Outlook, Teams, SharePoint and many other key business and communications systems.
- 2.3 Without access to such systems, the Council would be required to migrate away from Microsoft systems and services at pace. This would require significant financial investment, time and resources.
- 2.4 The inability to use Microsoft services would also have a significant impact on the delivery of services to our residents and businesses across the Borough.

3. Recommendation

That Cabinet:

- 3.1 **Agrees to procure new Microsoft Enterprise licences**
- 3.2 **Delegates authority to the Service Director, Legal & Governance and Service Director, Information & Technology in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth & Town Centres, to undertake a compliant procurement exercise for the Council's Microsoft licences.**
- 3.3 **Delegates authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People & Partnerships, to award and enter in a contract for the renewal of the Council's Microsoft licences for a period of three years.**

4. Reasons

- 4.1 The renewal of the Microsoft Enterprise agreement is strategically aligned with the Council's operational needs and sustainability objectives.
- 4.2 The renewal also ensures the Council, its staff and Councillors remain well-positioned to deliver high-quality services to residents, adapt to future challenges, and realise further efficiencies.
- 4.3 The Council propose to join an aggregated procurement exercise via the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) framework. This framework allows for the aggregation of Microsoft products across public sector organisations to obtain greater discounts from the standard RRP price.
- 4.4 Following the authority's latest renewal in 2023, the Council has undertaken significant steps in maximising the use of features which are already available as part of the Council's license.

- 4.5 The procurement will also support the implementation of the Council's new CRM, Microsoft Dynamics 365 as the aggregated procurement will enable a lower per-licence cost per user compared to other procurement routes.
- 4.6 The procurement and award will also provide stability to Council operations as it navigates through Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in the future.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 Renewing the Council's Microsoft Enterprise Subscription Agreement represents the most cost-effective and practical solution for the Council.

Open Source

Migrating to open-source alternatives would require significant investment in infrastructure, staff training, and system integration, while many core applications and services would still depend on Microsoft licences for compatibility. This would equate to a duplication of spend and lack of best value.

Not Renewing

Furthermore, choosing not to renew the agreement would render the Council unable to operate its existing IT systems, including email, collaboration tools, and critical business applications. This would lead to severe disruption of services to residents, businesses, and visitors.

Renewal of the agreement ensures continuity, compliance, and value for money by leveraging existing investments and avoiding the substantial costs and risks associated with alternative options.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 Data Protection Legislation requires the Council to take every reasonable technical precaution to protect the personal information that it processes. Keeping software up to date is a well-recognised and accepted method of reducing the risk of a cyber-related incident and a key activity identified by the National Centre for Cyber Security.
- 6.2 Having a valid ESA in place will ensure that the Council continues to have access to the latest Microsoft software and security updates, which is essential as part of the Council's cyber security defences.
- 6.3 The use of the CCS framework is a procurement solution that achieves best value for money and is compliant with the Council's procurement regulations.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 No adverse impact has been identified as a result of delivering this proposal.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 Renewing the Microsoft Enterprise agreement represents a significant, but necessary, investment in the Council's operational effectiveness. The consolidated licensing model delivers cost predictability and value for money,

eliminating the need for piecemeal procurement. Whilst also, providing access to essential IT services, supporting continued digital transformation, and reinforcing the Council’s commitment to sustainability.

- 8.2 The agreement ensures access to enterprise-grade support and ongoing product updates, reducing risks associated with security vulnerabilities and system obsolescence.
- 8.3 Working alongside our Microsoft Partner, the Council have reviewed the current licenced products to ensure they utilised and right sized for the Council’s needs and requirements.
- 8.4 The total contract value is £685,892.40 will be funded via the Technology Services main revenue budget.
- 8.5 Whilst the total contract value is derived from the number of licenced products at the time of this procurement, this is subject to change as additional licences are added. Any changes to the licence or product base will be added to the Council’s Microsoft agreement and an individual invoice issued on an annual basis – this is referred to as a ‘true-up’.
- 8.6 An ESA is a three-year commitment, however at each anniversary point (every 12 months) there is an opportunity to review the current licencing requirements in line with organisational requirements.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 The council runs a risk to the delivery of operational services where it fails to invest in ICT and modern technologies.
 - 9.1.1 This is an identified risk within the Corporate Risk Management system under the ICT Services and Corporate Risk profile.
 - 9.1.2 The council have already taken steps to mitigate this risk with control measures, such as the implementation of a Technology Strategy, Consolidation of hardware and software and the One Council transformation programme.
 - 9.1.3 The procurement of suitable Microsoft licences will ensure the Council is authorised and licensed to utilise key business applications, systems and services.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Digital Council

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

One Sustainable Council

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 The overall contract value will be a revenue commitment in excess of £100,000 and as such is considered as a key decision

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 [April 2023 – Cabinet](#) - Renewal of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement

13.2 [January 2019 – Cabinet](#) – Renewal of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement

13.3 [March 2017, Cabinet](#) – Renewal Options for Microsoft Enterprise Agreement

14. List of Appendices

14.1 None.

15. Background Papers

15.1 None

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO CABINET**

17th March 2026

Report Title: Irrecoverable Items 2025/26

Submitted by: Service Director for Finance (Section 151 Officer)

Portfolios: Finance, Town Centres and Growth

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
To consider items deemed irrecoverable.			
<u>Recommendation</u>			
That Cabinet:			
1. Approves the write-off of items detailed at Appendix 1 which are considered to be irrecoverable.			
<u>Reasons</u>			
For a variety of reasons, it is considered that certain items are unable to be recovered from debtors. When this occurs, it is necessary to write off these balances from the appropriate Council account records.			

1. Background

- 1.1 For a variety of reasons, following the issue of accounts for amounts due to the Council, it is considered the debt is no longer able to be collected. Normally, these reasons follow from the debtor having been subjected to insolvency proceedings or other legal processes in respect of their debts or even the death of a debtor. There is then no further redress to recover the outstanding amounts and it is necessary to write off the outstanding balances from the Council's records.
- 1.2 The direct financial implications of debtors' accounts proposed for write off amount to £102,222, formed of shares of debt as listed below.

- 1.3 The amount of National Non Domestic Rates accounts proposed for write off amounts to £102,426. It should be noted that the Council's share of these amounts to £40,971 as detailed in paragraph 8.2.
- 1.4 The amount of Council Tax accounts proposed for write off amounts to £85,378. It should be noted that the Council's share of these amounts to £8,563, as detailed in paragraph 8.3.
- 1.3 Financial Regulations require that any irrecoverable items in excess of £10,000 require Cabinet approval, balances below this amount are approved by the Section 151 Officer (below £5,000) and the Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer (£5,000 to £10,000).

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 Collection procedures in respect of business rates and council tax are operated in accordance with legislative guidelines. Other debts are collected by a variety of schemes, suitable to the type of account involved. Items are only ever considered for write-off when all avenues of recovery have been exhausted as per the debt recovery policy.
- 2.2 Irrecoverable amounts are considered to be of a confidential nature and in order to comply with data protection regulations the details of the irrecoverable items that are the subject of this report are set out in the confidential appendix. It would also obviously be inappropriate to disclose information for instance about deceased debtors, with the potential for causing further distress to bereaved family members.
- 2.3 Where debts are in respect of commercial organisations, there is the potential in cases such as administration that disclosure could jeopardise the potential recovery of the business in the long term.

3. **Proposal**

- 3.1 That the items listed at appendix 1 be considered irrecoverable for the reasons stated and that these balances be approved by Cabinet for written off.

4. **Reason for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 The debts itemised in the confidential appendix are no longer considered recoverable. Accounting regulations require that such items be periodically reviewed and written off.

5. **Options Considered**

- 5.1 None.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 Ultimately, sums of money owed to the Council can only be recovered through court proceedings. That requires bringing an action to prove the debt, so as to secure a judgement that the sum is owed. There are costs (court and legal fees and officer

time) associated with that process which usually increase in tiers depending on the amount claimed.

- 6.2 Once judgement is secured, further court proceedings (incurring further associated costs) will be required if the sum secured in the judgement is not paid by the debtor. There are various enforcement methodologies that may be ordered in successful enforcement proceedings, all of which will incur additional costs to execute. However, none of those methods will bear fruit unless the debtor can be traced and owns assets that can be easily liquidated for a sum in excess of the amount of the judgement debt and the associated costs.
- 6.3 Thus a primary consideration is one of proportionality in terms of an evaluation of the level of debt against the likely cost of recovery, and the likelihood of identifying a traceable debtor who owns assets of the requisite value and liquidity. That analysis has been undertaken in respect of the debts proposed to be written off here.
- 6.4 It is essential that the council has in place systems that enable it to spot and log any trends in the way in which bad debts are arising, and which identify repeat bad debtors, so that it can take any prudent steps that may be available to it to avoid further bad debts arising.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 The financial implications of debtors accounts proposed for write off fall on the Council only. The debtors with a balance in excess of £10,000 proposed for write off during the financial year 2025/26 total £102,222. The budgeted contribution to the bad debts provision (£30,000) can be used for this, the remainder would need to be funded from reserves.
- 8.2 The impact of National Non Domestic Rates accounts proposed for write off is shared between the Council (40%), Central Government (50%), Staffordshire County Council (9%) and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (1%). Those accounts with a balance in excess of £10,000 proposed for write off during the financial year 2025/26 total £102,426, the Council's share amounts to £40,971. This amount is within the estimated balance declared to preceptors regarding the National Non Domestic Rates Collection Fund for 2025/26.
- 8.3 The impact of Council Tax accounts proposed for write off is shared between the Council (10.02%), Staffordshire County Council (72.92%), Police and Crime Commissioner (12.93%) for Staffordshire and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (4.13%). Those accounts with a balance in excess of £10,000 proposed for write off during the financial year 2025/26 total £85,378, the Council's share amounts to £8,563.

9. **Major Risks**

- 9.1 Failure to write off irrecoverable debts in a timely manner could potentially lead to the Council overstating its income, leading to qualification of its annual accounts and associated reputational damage.

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

- 10.1 In shaping detailed budget proposals consideration will be given to the need for investment in order to deliver the Council's Sustainable Environment Action Plan.



11. **One Council**

One Commercial Council:

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Sustainable Council:

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle

One Digital Council:

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

12. **Key Decision Information**

This is not a key decision.

13. **Earlier Cabinet / Committee Resolutions**

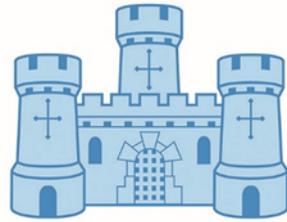
13.1 Not applicable.

14. **List of Appendices**

14.1 Appendix 1 – Irrecoverable Items 2025/26.

15. **Background Papers**

15.1 None.



NEWCASTLE·UNDER·LYME
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet Forward Plan: Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council

Notice of Key Decisions to be taken under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings & Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 between 1 March 2026 and 30 June 2026

This plan gives notice of decisions that [Cabinet](#) is expecting to take over the next few months. It also gives, except in cases of urgency, at least 28 days notice of all “Key Decisions” that will be taken “Key Decisions” are decisions about “executive” functions that will:-

- A) result in the Council incurring expenditure or making savings of an amount which is significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or the function to which the decision relates. (NB: The financial threshold above which expenditure or savings become significant has been set by the Council at £100,000 Revenue and £250,000 Capital Expenditure); and/or
- B) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough.

We have to take some Cabinet decisions in private because they deal with confidential or “exempt” information. That is information described in one or more of the following categories set out in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals an authority proposes;

- a. to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - b. to make an order or direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of a crime

If we intend to take a decision in private, we will tell you why in the plan below. If you disagree with our reasons, you can tell us why using the contact details below. We will respond to you directly and will publish our response in the meeting agenda. If we have published the meeting agenda before we can respond, we will respond verbally at the meeting and record the response in the minutes.

You can find more information about Cabinet, Cabinet Members and their portfolios, agendas, reports and minutes [here](#).

More information on Cabinet procedures, executive functions, Key Decisions, urgent decisions and access to information is available in our [Constitution](#).

For all enquiries, please contact Democratic Services, Castle House, Barracks Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 1BL.
Telephone – 01782 742222 / Email – DemocraticServices@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	Key Decision
Irrecoverable Items 2025/26	To consider a report on Irrecoverable Items 2025/26	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	Cabinet 17 March 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	Yes
Approval for Award of contract for	To consider a report for the approval for award of contract for	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Environment	Cabinet 17 March 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance,Healt	All Wards	N/A	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
H&S Monitoring	H&S Monitoring			h, Wellbeing and Environment			
Renewal of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement	To consider a report on the Renewal of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 17 March 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	No
Renewal of Civica App for Regulatory Services	To consider a report on the Renewal of Civica App for Regulatory Services	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 17 March 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Implementation of the Renters Right Act 2025 and associated policies	To consider a report on Implementation of the Renters Right Act 2025 and associated policies	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 17 March 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To consider a report on odour issues at Walleys Quarry	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 17 March 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Quarter Four Finance and Performance	To consider the Quarter Four Finance and Performance	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and	Cabinet 9 June 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	No

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
Report 2025/26	Report 2025/26	Partnerships					
Walleys Quarry Odour update	To consider a report on the Walleys Quarry odour update	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 9 June 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank