

ASHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL



Council Offices,
Urban Road,
Kirkby in Ashfield
Nottingham
NG17 8DA

Agenda

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Wednesday, 30th March, 2022**

Time: **7.00 pm**

Venue: **Committee Room, Council Offices, Urban Road,
Kirkby-in-Ashfield**

For any further information please contact:

Lynn Cain

lynn.cain@ashfield.gov.uk

01623 457317

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chairman: Councillor Andrew Harding

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Dale Grounds

Councillors:

Chris Baron

Will Bostock

Lee Waters

Jim Blagden

David Walters

FILMING/AUDIO RECORDING NOTICE

This meeting may be subject to filming or audio recording. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Members' Services on 01623 457317.

SUMMONS

You are hereby requested to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held at the time/place and on the date mentioned above for the purpose of transacting the business set out below.



Theresa Hodgkinson
Chief Executive

AGENDA

Page

1. **To receive apologies for absence, if any.**
2. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests and/or Non-Registrable Interests.**
3. **To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 February 2022.** 5 - 10
4. **Social Value.** 11 - 22
5. **Scrutiny Workplan Update.**

This page is intentionally left blank

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held in the Committee Room, Council Offices, Urban Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield,
on Thursday, 17th February, 2022 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Andrew Harding in the Chair;
Councillors Chris Baron, Jim Blagden,
Will Bostock, David Walters and Lee Waters.

Apology for Absence: Councillor Dale Grounds.

Officers Present: Lynn Cain, Joanne Froggatt, Peter Hudson,
Mike Joy and Shane Wright.

OS.7 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests and/or Non-Registrable Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.8 Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 December 2021,
be received and approved as a correct record.

OS.9 Annual Budget Update

The Corporate Finance Manager (and Section 151 Officer) attended the meeting to provide a presentation on the 2022/23 Annual Budget and an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Members were advised that the 2022/23 Annual Budget would be fully considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 22 February 2022 in readiness for its final approval at the Extraordinary Council (Tax Setting) meeting on 3 March 2022.

General Fund

In relation to the General Fund, £805k of savings had been identified from the following areas:

Base Budget Review
Neighbourhood Services – deletion of post
Place & Wellbeing – net saving on staffing review
ICT – renegotiation of printing contract
Assets – office rental income
Transformation Team staffing efficiencies
Community and Infrastructure Grants.

Investments

The Council had made investments in two areas namely, Community Safety in relation to a Public Space Protection Order and Legal Services to facilitate a revised staffing structure following dissolution of the Shared Legal Service.

Investment Properties

The investment property portfolio had allowed the Council to achieve a net income in excess of £2 million.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Strategy covered the next 3 financial years and it had estimated a funding gap of £2.3 million for 2023/24 following a series of annual assumptions as presented.

A raft of measures would be considered to assist with closing the funding gap as follows:

Service Reviews

Annual Review of Fees and Charges

Review of Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Procurement Savings

Consideration of alternative Service Delivery models

Council Tax base and inflation increases

Rationalisation of Council owned properties

Digital Service Transformation efficiencies

Potential use of reserves.

Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked reserves stood at £15.8 million made up from the Business Rates Equalisation Reserve and the Commercial Property Investment Reserve.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The January 2022 Cabinet had agreed a 2022/23 rent increase of 4.1% and Members acknowledged that the 30 Year HRA Business Plan was currently sustainable but did not factor in potential use of reserves to meet decarbonisation costs. (Carbon Net Zero).

Budget savings had amounted to £271k and investments had reached £76k to recruit to Consumer Standards Lead Officer and Maintenance Operative posts.

Following the presentation, Members discussed the value of the Council's commercial property portfolio and the reasons for market fluctuations in property values. Procurement savings and the preferred use of local companies/contractors was also considered including how organisations could provide social value to the Ashfield District (as part of any contract) in relation to local apprenticeships, employment and community investment. It was agreed that an overview of social value methodology would be helpful for Members going forward.

RESOLVED that

- a) the presentation from the Corporate Finance Manager (and Section 151 Officer) on the 2022/23 Annual Budget and the update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, be received and noted;
- b) as a result of (a) above, the following Member comments/observations be forwarded to Cabinet/Council for consideration as part of their budget deliberations for 2022/23:-
 - a recognition that the income generated from investment properties had enabled the Council to maintain delivery of some of its discretionary services
 - whilst the Committee did not have any objections or changes to the Council's investment portfolio, the fluctuation of investment property prices was discussed. It was acknowledged that fluctuation in property prices was to be expected and due to the properties being income generators and not buy to sell, the Committee were satisfied that the income generated was assisting in the delivery of services
 - the ongoing development work being undertaken in procurement and the local business directory was welcomed and the Committee is keen that local businesses and buying local wherever possible should continue to be a priority
 - as part of Scrutiny's ongoing role in budget considerations, the Committee would be receiving an overview of how social value is taken into account to consider how the Council's current contracts have incorporated this within their recent procurement activity
 - overall, the Committee welcomed the details contained within the budget update and MTFS and recognised the ongoing challenges for the Council.

OS.10 Corporate Plan 2021/22 - Progress Update

The Assistant Director, Corporate Services and Transformation presented the Quarter 2 Corporate Scorecard for April to September 2021 to enable Members to review the levels of performance achieved and further consider the impact of the pandemic on the Council's performance.

Members were reminded that the Corporate Plan sat above a wider strategic context which included the Corporate Project Management Framework, the Corporate Performance Framework and a range of strategic documents relating to the organisation and its services.

The Council used many different tools to assess how well they were performing and these included:

- The Corporate Plan
- Performance Scorecards
- Place Survey/Star Survey
- LGA Peer Challenge (last challenge was January 2020).

It had been recognised that Ashfield District Council was the only local authority in Nottinghamshire that has continued to deliver their Tier 1 and Tier 2 critical services without interruption throughout the pandemic and had also gone above and beyond with additional services including the Spring Clean and Bulky Waste collections.

As at the end of September 2021, 75% of Corporate Scorecard measures were achieving or exceeding target or were within 10% variance of their targets. 81% of measures were also indicating an improved position compared to the same period in the previous year or were within 5% of the previous year's performance levels.

The key highlights regarding performance were as follows:

Health and Happiness

- Delivery of Kirkby Leisure Centre is on track and budget
- Investment in the Lammas and Hucknall Leisure Centres
- 2 Food festivals and 4 cinema events to reinvigorate town centres

Homes and Housing

- Void relets continuing to show improved performance
- Progress had continued on developing agile ways of working for Housing staff
- Affordable housing development programme now in place and progressing with 46 new properties

Economic Growth and Place

- Delivery of the Towns Fund and Future High Streets programmes is progressing well
- A bid for Hucknall to the Levelling Up Fund is at the application stage
- The Maid Marian Line Restoring Your Railways Bid was submitted on time with the outcome awaited
- Planning performance remained above national standards for major and minor applications in the second quarter

Cleaner and Greener

- The Council is breaking the trend with a 20% reduction in fly tipping reports received this year compared with 2020

- Recycling rates for the period April to September 2021, were well above target with a 9% increase compared to the same period last year
- The Council had successfully bid for funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund, the Green Homes Grant Phase 1B, the Green Homes Grant Phase 2, and was currently awaiting the outcome of a bid for funding under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

Safer and Stronger

- The Council responded to 4,215 reports of anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood nuisance and environmental crime reports between April 2021 and 1st December 2021
- A number of environmental crime action days have been undertaken to address fly tipping and waste on land resulting in 88 fines being issued, the highest recorded amount in the Council's history
- The Council, alongside partners, was successful in securing £550,000 in October as part of the Safer Streets Quarter 3 Funding programme
- Funding was secured in April to deliver domestic abuse awareness sessions across 20 primary schools.

Innovate and Improve

- changes to call handling has seen a further significant 22% reduction in the level of abandoned calls for the period April to September 2021, compared to the previous year
- Over 33,000 payments have been made online from April to September 2021, a significant increase of 9% compared to the same period last year and a third higher over the last 2 years since the Council implemented its new 'e-store', exceeding channel shift predictions
- The new Customer Portal is due to be launched imminently, supported by a comprehensive publicity campaign, to facilitate further channel shift, and raise awareness of the Council's modern digital online features.

Members also considered areas for improvement and these included homelessness preventions, a reduction in direct debit payments, an increase in staff sickness levels and a decrease in young people as a proportion of the workforce.

RESOLVED

that the level of performance achieved against the Quarter 2 Corporate Scorecard for 2021/22, as presented, be received and noted.

OS.11 Scrutiny Workplan Update

The Scrutiny Research Officer advised that the Scrutiny Workplan was progressing well to date and asked Members to note that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting scheduled for 10 March 2022 would be moving

back to 24 March 2022. This was to enable Scrutiny Panel A to meet on 10 March to finalise the Tenancy Support review recommendations for submission to Cabinet.

The Service Manager, Scrutiny and Democratic Services also advised that consultation on the Scrutiny Workplan for 2022/23 would be commencing soon and Members would be contacted for their suggestions/ideas in the next few weeks.

The meeting closed at 8.58 pm

Chairman.

Report To:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date:	30 MARCH 2022
Heading:	SOCIAL VALUE
Portfolio Holder:	NOT APPLICABLE
Ward/s:	ALL
Key Decision:	NO
Subject to Call-In:	NO

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information regarding how the Council utilises social value, following a resolution at the February 2022 meeting of the Committee that Members wish to receive further information regarding how social value is embedded at the Council.

Recommendation(s)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members are recommended to:

- a. Note the information contained within this report.
- b. Note the presentation on social value.
- c. Consider any comments/recommendations to be made to Cabinet.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

At the February 2022 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Members resolved that they wished to receive further information regarding social value.

Alternative Options Considered

No alternative options have been considered.

Detailed Information

BACKGROUND

At the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 February 2022, Members discussed the annual budget update and the corporate plan 2021/22 progress update. As part of these discussions, the following actions were resolved by Members:

- a. *the ongoing development work being undertaken in procurement and the local business directory was welcomed and the Committee is keen that local businesses and buying local wherever possible should continue to be a priority*
- b. *as part of Scrutiny's ongoing role in budget considerations, the Committee would be receiving an overview of how social value is taken into account to consider how the Council's current contracts have incorporated this within their recent procurement activity*

As a result of these resolutions, the Council's Procurement and Project Officer has been invited to attend a meeting of the Committee to provide Members with an overview of how the Council utilises social value through procurement, and any future plans to develop the embedding of social value.

LEGISLATION

The Public Services (Social Value) Act came into force on 31 January 2013. It requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic, and environmental benefits.¹

Before starting any procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the service they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure those benefits for their area or stakeholders.

CABINET – MARCH 2020

At the Cabinet meeting held in March 2020, a report titled *Social Value Policy and Initiatives* was presented to Cabinet for approval.

The report set out the rationale for implementing a Social Value Policy into all activity that the Council undertakes. The 2020 report set out the methodology used for introducing social value reporting to measure activities that are not covered by traditional return on investment analysis.

Cabinet was recommended to:

- a. Consider and approve the Council's Social Value Policy.

As stated in the report, social value relates to the additional benefits that can be achieved beyond the direct scope of a project or contract. The Social Value Policy sets out the Council's commitment to social value and the added societal benefits that can be gained from projects and public procurement.

The Council's Social Value Policy was formally approved by Cabinet at this meeting. The Policy is appended to this report as **Appendix A**.

¹ *Social Value Act: Information and Resources*, March 2021.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

Social value is incorporated in the following:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Homes and Housing
- Economic Growth and Place
- Cleaner and Greener
- Safer and Stronger
- Innovate and Improve

Legal:

There are no direct legal implications resulting from this report.

Finance:

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None.
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	

Risk:

None identified at this stage.

Risk	Mitigation

Human Resources:

There are no direct HR implications resulting from this report.

Environmental/Sustainability

There are no direct environmental/sustainability implications resulting from this report.

Equalities:

There are no direct equalities implications resulting from this report.

Other Implications:

There are no other implications resulting from this report.

Reason(s) for Urgency

None.

Reason(s) for Exemption

None.

Background Papers

- *Social Value Act and Resources*, March 2021
- *Social Value Policy and Initiatives*, 23 March 2020.

Report Author and Contact Officer

Shane Wright
Scrutiny Research Officer
shane.wright@ashfield.gov.uk
01623 457318

Sponsoring Director

Ruth Dennis
Director of Legal and Governance
ruth.dennis@ashfield.gov.uk
01623 457009



Ashfield

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Social Value Policy

This policy summarises Ashfield District Council's approach to Social Value. It covers:

- What Ashfield District Council means by the term Social Value
- Priority Social Value outcomes for Ashfield District Council
- The scope of Ashfield District Council's approach



Social Value

Social Value is defined in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 as economic, social and environmental wellbeing.

A social value approach gives greater thought about how we can best use limited resources more strategically, to produce a wider benefit than would otherwise have been achieved.

*The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 came into force on 31 January 2013. It requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

Before they start the procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

The Act is a tool to help commissioners get more value for money out of procurement. It also encourages commissioners to talk to their local provider market or community to design better services, often finding new and innovative solutions to difficult problems.

*Source Cabinet Office guidance.

Social Value in Ashfield

Ashfield District Council is faced with having to deliver services that local people need with fewer resources. The delivery of services will need to be targeted, innovative and focused on improving the quality of life in Ashfield.

Maximising social value through the commissioning and procurement of public services will help the Council in achieving this goal.

We are working with Social Value Portal who will undertake social value evaluation of tenders over £25k. Social Value Portal will assist in managing the delivery of social value and assisting staff involved in the contract management, according to the principles of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

The relevant documents and links can be found on our **Procurement web page**. In working with Social Value Portal, Ashfield will be using the National TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) and this will be used to measure the return of social value through procurement with values in excess of £25k.

The themes relate to the overarching themes that Ashfield is looking to deliver on. The outcomes are our objectives and goals that the Council aim to achieve that will contribute to the theme.

The measures will be used to assess whether these outcomes have been achieved such as job retention, job creation, the creation of apprenticeship opportunities, environmental achievements such as the reduction of carbons through energy efficiency measures or renewables. These are just some of the measures that will be applied in delivering social value from procurement activities.

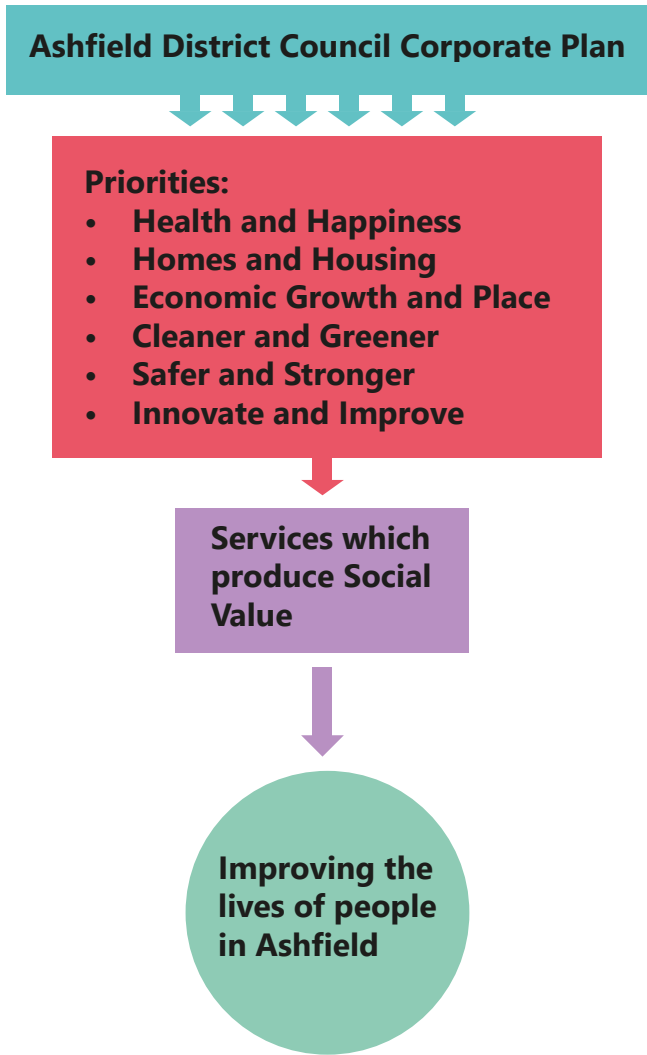
Our Goal

For every pound that Ashfield spends, we will aim to deliver at least the same value of return in social value



As part of our Corporate Plan, we measure certain tangible outcomes however those which have no immediate monetary value have been harder to value and report on. It is important for Ashfield District Council to know and understand what is being delivered so that we can understand where we need to concentrate improvement on.

Our priority is to understand the needs and desires of Ashfield residents, communities and businesses. The Council has a unique role, leading and enabling delivery of improvements for Ashfield as a place. Our Corporate Plan outlines our themes to which we will report on outcomes and measures achieved.



Some examples of delivering social value

- Creating a healthier community
- More working with the community
- Vulnerable people are helped to live independently
- Tackling homelessness
- Building Social Value into planning services
- More opportunities for SME's
- More local people in employment
- Improved skills for local people
- More opportunities for disadvantaged people
- Climate impacts are reduced (reduction in CO2 emissions)
- Air pollution is reduced
- Crime is reduced
- Reduction in number of ASB cases
- Reduction in vulnerability ensuring people feel safe and are safe



Our Aims and Priorities

For Ashfield to achieve the maximum benefits of a social value approach, the Council needs to formally and consistently take social value into consideration for decisions we make in procuring goods and services. Whilst balancing the Council's financial position and increasing demands for services it is more important than ever to ensure that whatever is spent returns as much value as possible for the people of Ashfield. We use a social value scorecard to sit alongside our Place and Corporate Scorecards and embed this in our performance management framework with regular reporting to senior leadership as well as the Leader of the Council.

Our data and reporting will be transparent and available for scrutiny. We will champion the principles of social value through our strong leadership and ensure that this is embedded at every level within the Council. We will work with partner agencies to build and foster a shared understanding. We will continue to build and promote our social value framework and ensure that this is implemented in the Council's commissioning and procurement processes.

How we will achieve these

- Ensure there is clear vision and direction for implementing our social value strategy
- Paying suppliers promptly
- Engage with Elected Members to ensure a clear and consistent vision is supported at all levels
- Ensure that the principles of social value is taken into consideration at all levels of decision making
- Ensure that social value principles are used for the development of strategies, plans and service development
- Ensure that social value is included in corporate procurement activities
- Work with the voluntary and community sectors to further develop our approach

- Promote social value activity taking place across the Council and celebrate success through promoting achievements and outcomes
- Establish mechanisms to coordinate and monitor information on Council contracts and to build this into our performance system for reporting.
- Promote social value with suppliers and ensure consultation within the market place at pre-market stage
- Provide more opportunities with SME's, social enterprises and voluntary and community organisations to network with larger companies to better develop local supply chains
- Promote good sustainable behaviours
- Working with suppliers to ensure the maximum delivery of Social Value
- Delivering at a community level and support the Council's Health and Happiness aspirations
- Support the local economy by working with new and established businesses
- To support individuals and communities to achieve a better quality of life
- Supporting local businesses
- Ensuring a good standard of housing is available to the community
- Create a cleaner and greener environment
- Ensure a direct link between the Council's social value policies, planning policies and procurement
- Design initiatives taken to ensure developments are designed to maximise the opportunities for social interaction and value creation

Measuring the impact of Social Value

The impact of social value activities on the local community and on people's wellbeing will be measured to ascertain the extent to which this policy is supporting the delivery of improved outcomes.

Social value measurement and evaluation is an evolving field we will continue to work with Social Value Portal in this area. We will continue to work with partners locally and regionally to further build our understanding of measurement and evaluation of Social Value, and to share expertise and best practice.

When measuring Social Value, the council will consider both soft and hard outcomes. Soft outcomes are things that cannot be directly measured e.g. well-being. Hard Outcomes can be clearly defined, are tangible and more easily measured in figures.

Monitoring and reporting internally will be managed through the current performance management framework and reported to the Corporate Leadership Team periodically and then included to members annually.

We will use a balanced scorecard to measure and monitor the social value rate of return as well as through benefits realisation tracking for project delivery.

Review of this policy

Ashfield District Council has just embarked on the journey to understand and measure social value and its return to the people of Ashfield. There will be many things for us to learn and we will be reviewing our policy annually to ensure that we are achieving our aims of delivering social value. The next review of this policy will occur in 2022.





Ashfield

DISTRICT COUNCIL

This page is intentionally left blank