



Ashfield

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Corporate Plan 2019-2023



Ashfield District Council continues to successfully deliver against its Corporate Plan and our positive flight path. Throughout the pandemic we have sustained excellent standards of delivery across all of our services, maximising resources and working effectively together as one council, re-deploying staff into important roles outside of their normal duties to ensure continuance of service, whilst also delivering humanitarian services across the District. Significant challenges remain but these are balanced against our excellent track record and our ambition for the future. It should also be noted that, despite the pandemic, the organisation has also delivered additional services, above and beyond, continuing to support residents and businesses in Ashfield.

The Council remains clear on its purpose and wishes to sustain its valued services, while helping to shape a better future for the District by working in partnership with other public agencies, residents and local businesses.

During the last four years significant improvements in the Council's partnership working have been achieved with a much greater focus on Ashfield as a place and how the Council can support communities and businesses. This will be maintained and developed through this Corporate Plan.

A major feature of this Corporate Plan will be the drive to improve customer experience and satisfaction through increased use of digital technologies thereby allowing customers to access services when and where they want to.

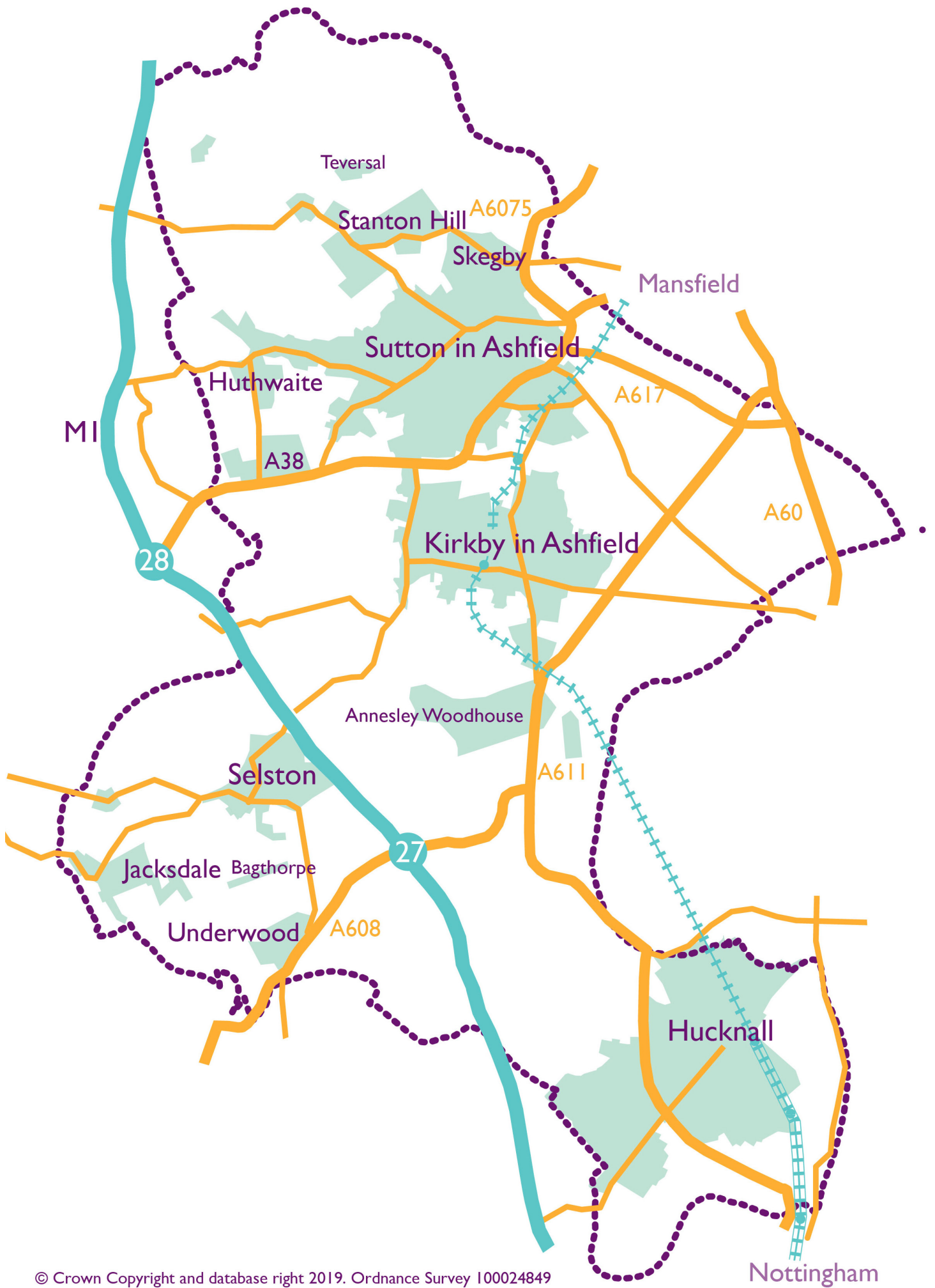
A further key element of this plan is to maximise opportunity and concentrate on the many positive characteristics of Ashfield as a place and to support individuals and communities to achieve a better quality of life.



Carol Cooper-Smith
Chief Executive Officer

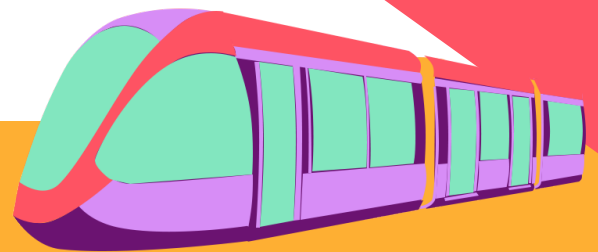
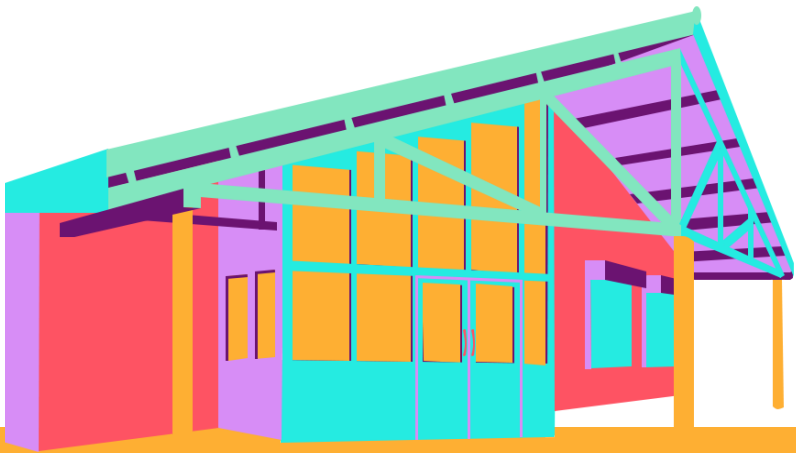


Cllr Jason Zadrozny
Leader of Ashfield District Council



Ashfield -The Place

Ashfield is ideally situated in the heart of the country, situated on the M1 directly between the cities of Nottingham, Derby and Sheffield. Nestled on the edge of beautiful countryside, with three towns and a number of rural villages it is renowned for its welcoming, supportive and passionate communities. The area is complemented by a wide variety of award winning parks and outdoor spaces, a range of sporting facilities, educational activities, cafes and natural environments to relax and enjoy.

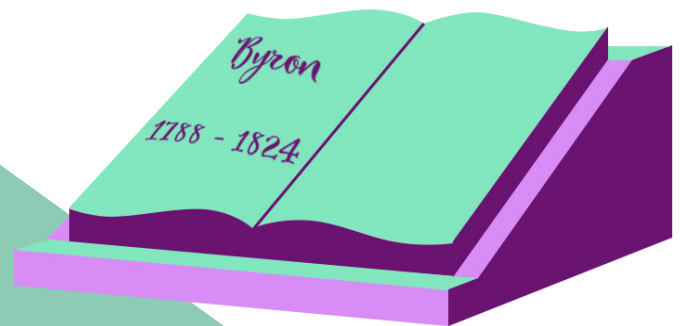


The three town centres in Ashfield; Hucknall, Kirkby and Sutton provide a great variety of shops and services. With low cost, easy to access parking and well served by public transport links. Hucknall is on the NET Nottingham tram network and is the most northerly stop on the green line.

There are three railway stations in the district, along the Robin Hood line, connecting with Worksop (to the North) and Nottingham (to the South).

Rich in natural, cultural and industrial heritage, Ashfield is the home of a number of historical and cultural/literary figures, most notably Lord Byron and his daughter Ada Lovelace, regarded as being the first ever computer programmer.

The area has miles of way-marked rural walks, cycle paths and bridleways nestled amongst wooded areas and open countryside. Areas of countryside within the district are much of what D. H. Lawrence referred to as "The country of my heart" and based many of his novels around the places and families of the area. The villages of Jacksdale, Underwood, Bagthorpe, Lower Bagthorpe, Selston, Annesley, Ravenshead, Newstead, Linby and Papplewick are set within the Hidden Valleys landscape.



We are committed to making Ashfield a location and destination of choice for business and visitors and a desirable place to live for all residents. Enhancing the identity and brand for Ashfield so it is cherished by those who live or work here, desirable to those who visit, and attractive to those who bring jobs and investment; whilst also raising the profile of Ashfield as a place where people want to visit and spend their time enjoying themselves.

We have established an independent Ashfield Place Board to:-

- promote Ashfield in a positive manner;
- create pride and aspirations in our communities;
- improve the vibrancy of the town centres within Ashfield;
- encourage and promote inward investment;
- support tourism and the visitor economy in the Ashfield area.



A wide range of stakeholders and partners have been involved in developing our new place brand Discover Ashfield, which incorporates key activities that are focussed on the themes of; Visitors and Tourism 'More to Discover'; Residents 'Love where you live'; Fitness & Wellbeing 'Be Happy Be Healthy'; and Business and investment 'Succeed in Ashfield'.

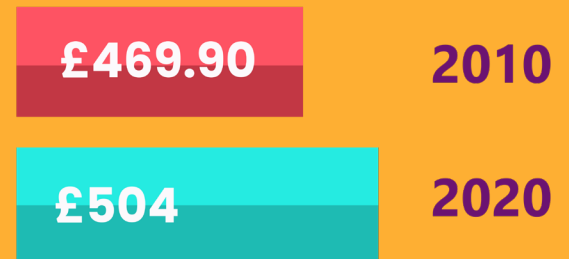
Working in Ashfield



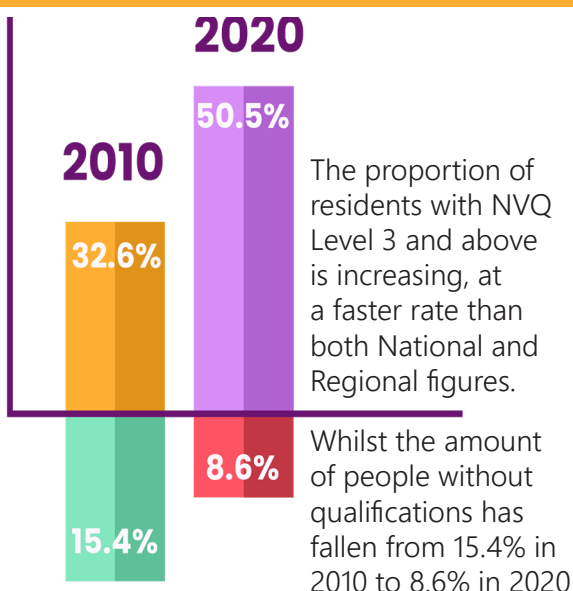
20 businesses that employ more than 250 people

Ashfield has the greatest number of large enterprises in the area (20) that employ in excess of 250 people and 75 medium sized businesses with between 50 and 250 employees.
(Office of National Statistics)

Gross weekly pay has risen since 2010



There are a number of indicators that show the economy of Ashfield is improving; wages are rising; job density is improving; all at a faster rate than both National and Regional figures.



The number of enterprises in Ashfield has risen from 2,530 in 2010 to 2,985 in 2020, including an increasing number of small and micro enterprises.



Our Purpose

One.

The Council exists to serve the communities and residents of Ashfield.

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. We are committed to engaging more effectively with our communities and working more closely together to deliver the changes we all want to see in Ashfield.

Two.

We will provide good quality, value for money services.

We want to deliver good quality council services, consistently and reliably, putting the customer at the heart of everything we do. We are focussed on delivering an improved customer experience, simplifying and standardising basic transactional processes. Enabled by digital technology we will transform the way we do things, encouraging people who can access services online to do so. This will create capacity for us to better support in person the people who need us the most.

Three.

We will act strategically and plan for the future, working with others to bring about sustainable improvements in people's lives.

Whether it's making our communities safe, our town centres more vibrant or our environment cleaner we need strong and effective partnership working to achieve our goals. We recognise that, with fewer resources, the Council, along with other public sector organisations, cannot work in isolation to effectively deliver what matters for Ashfield.

Our Values

To ensure we deliver high-quality public services we have adopted a set of corporate values which underpin the successful delivery of our priorities. How we work is as important as what we do.

People Focussed.

Putting people at the heart of what we do

Honest.

Being honest with people in an open and professional way

Proud.

Being proud that Ashfield is a positive place to live, work and visit

Ambitious.

We are ambitious about Ashfield's future

COVID-19 Impact and Recovery

Ashfield District Council is the only local authority in Nottinghamshire that has continued to deliver all tier 1 and 2 services without interruption during the pandemic. The whole organisation has worked effectively together as one council, re-deploying staff into important roles outside of their normal duties to ensure continuance of service, whilst also delivering humanitarian services across the district.

Our local recovery plans align with both national and regional plans.

National recovery themes are focussed on:-

Health Recovery

Considering overall health outcomes, not just those directly caused by COVID-19.

Economic Recovery

Protecting and restoring people's livelihoods and improving people's living standards.

Social or Community Recovery

Considering the wider effect of the social distancing measures on how the public live their daily lives.

Regional Local Resilience Forum Recovery Aims are to support the whole of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, including its communities, businesses and public services, to recover following COVID-19.

As well as addressing the very real adverse impacts – the global scale of which have likely not been seen for decades - this will also mean striving to advance long term opportunities for better physical and mental health, tackling climate change, better health outcomes and supporting a sustainable, fast growing local economy.

Recovery planning and impact assessment is focussed on the following:-

- Humanitarian Assistance (including Health)
- Economic
- Environmental
- Infrastructure

Our Local Recovery Aims

To support and coordinate the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing of the community, businesses and the Council's employees.

Recovery will cover two main strands:

Ashfield as a Place – Community and Economic Recovery

- Supporting the community and businesses in achieving stability and a new normality following COVID-19, assisting in rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community's emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing; and

The Council – Organisational Recovery

- Assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Council services, finances and employees and planning for its future financial resilience and how it will need to operate differently.

The following table indicates the alignment of our local recovery planning with corporate priorities:-

Local Recovery Theme External Housing and Communities

Corporate Priority

COVID-19 Recovery Considerations

Health and Happiness	<p>Build on humanitarian work with the community and voluntary sector</p> <p>Re-introduction of events when safe to do so</p> <p>Ensure workplace health</p>	<p>Distributed over £40,000 distributed to the Community and Voluntary sector in Ashfield, to help them support residents negatively impacted by Covid</p> <p>Responded to 117 community support requests</p> <p>£70,000 Infrastructure grants distributed to Our Centre, Under one Roof, and Ashfield Citizen's Advice</p> <p>Engaged over 650 families engaged in Feel Good Families activities</p> <p>Co-ordinated over £120,000 of Covid Winter Grants (food vouchers) to vulnerable residents</p> <p>Number of resident engagement events have taken place in the priority areas</p>	<p>Continue to support the Community and Voluntary Sector to help residents' recovery from the impact of Covid-19</p> <p>Deliver an annual programme of events in town centres and green spaces</p> <p>Engage at all levels to improve support for health and wellbeing</p> <p>Aligned with regeneration and skills, continue to provide advice regarding education and interventions</p>
Homes and Housing	<p>Review of homeless strategy to understand covid impact</p>	<p>Successfully and positively adapting our practices to reflect the change in the working environment and in the nature of residents' housing needs and issues. Despite the increasing complexity of cases and limited move on options, set in the context of COVID 19, a significant number of residents have had their housing issues resolved.</p> <p>Secured £1m Rough Sleeper Initiative to improvement opportunities and support for rough sleepers across the County</p> <p>In partnership with Framework we secured Next Steps Accommodation Programme funding to fund 3 additional units of specialist accommodation for rough sleepers with complex needs</p>	<p>Work with partners to identify sustainable housing solutions for individuals continuing to rough sleep following accommodation offers made during Covid</p>
Cleaner and Greener	<p>Delivery of 'Bag it' campaign</p> <p>Safe re-opening of park buildings</p>	<p>Successful delivery of 'Bag it' and 'Spring Clean' campaigns</p> <p>Safe re-opening of our parks and open spaces with investment in improvements completed at 19 sites</p> <p>A review of the standard of all of our parks, open spaces, play areas and sports facilities has been completed which will inform a rolling programme of improvements and investment, including the aim to extend our six green flag awards to seven in 2021/22</p>	<p>Support community and business volunteers to enhance their local area</p>
Safer and Stronger	<p>Provide refuge accommodation for people in abusive relationships</p> <p>Raise awareness of domestic abuse and ensure support is provided to survivors</p>	<p>Appointed a new Domestic Abuse and Vulnerability Officer in October 2020, providing key support across the District</p> <p>Complex Case Team delivered the White Ribbon Campaign and 16 Days of Activism</p>	<p>Continue to support for high risk survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Provide refuge accommodation for people in abusive relationships</p> <p>Raise awareness of domestic abuse and ensure support provided to survivors</p> <p>Aim to extend our white ribbon accreditation to a Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation in next 12 months</p>

External Economy and Place | Finance - External

Corporate Priority

Economic Growth and Place

COVID-19 Recovery Considerations

Open up our town centres safely in response to the recovery from Covid-19 implementing appropriate measures

Ensure that eligible businesses receive COVID-19 grant support funding to help their future sustainability

Ensuring transport is safe (social distancing)

Permitting processes and safe practices

In 2020/21 we have

Employed Covid Information Officers to help support high street businesses through the pandemic

Installed hand-sanitising units in town centre car parks to help give confidence and reassurance to shoppers

Worked closely with the market retailers, ensuring that traders selling essential goods and services could trade throughout the lockdowns, including click and collect and home deliveries

Set up a new local skills partnership to help us focus what training provisions partners deliver in our area and ensure they meet employer needs

From September 2020 to March 2021, the regeneration team responded to 3,209 business support enquiries

Circa 7,300 grant payments have been made to businesses, with a total value of around £30m

Processed 1286 test and trace claims, enabling £191,000 to be paid in test and trace grants

In 2021/22 we will

Support businesses through implementation of the Economic Recovery Plan

Deliver the Future High Streets and Towns Fund programmes

Support employment through inclusion of social value in our key contracts

Offer eligible businesses start up grants

Local Recovery Theme

Council Services | Legal and Governance | Finance - Internal

Innovate and Improve

Fast tracking our digital transformation delivery to improve accessibility and online capability centred on the customer

Support employees to increase digital skills
Work in partnership to increase digital inclusion across the District

Enabling employees, where appropriate and relevant, to work from home, having adequate digital tools and equipment, and a safe working environment

Ensuring employee wellbeing at home or when returning to the work environment

At the end of September, 2020, we launched a brand new, modern, user friendly website, which was accredited by the Shaw Trust as fully meeting accessibility standards

Expedient implementation of online forms enabling residents and business to be able to apply for benefits, 24/7. We have received over 2,600 online benefits related applications or notifications of changing circumstances

Over 100 forms now available online

Expanded our payment channels further introducing the ability for debtors to more easily make repayments through 'recurring card payments' functionality, enabling the collection of over £126,000 of debt over the year

Successful rollout of O365 collaboration tools, facilitating a blended approach to working throughout the pandemic and business continuity. Combined with a significant reduction of files and storage space, this has enabled the successful rationalisation of assets through the expedient decant of our Brook Street office, realising circa £200k efficiencies

Putting in place a safe working environment, enabling employees the opportunity to work either in the office or from home, throughout the pandemic

Continue to fast track delivery of significant digital change, increasing the availability of online services

Support employees and members to increase digital skills

Review and refresh the People Strategy, including consideration of new ways of working being embedded as a result of the pandemic

Continuing to ensure employee wellbeing at home or the work environment

Delivery of services during the pandemic



4,500,000

bins emptied with no services interrupted (14k per day)

136,000

visits to our Covid-19 webpages



£70m

in grant payments to eligible businesses



15,147

welfare letters sent to vulnerable residents (+ 1,396 welfare calls to Lifeline customers)





4,742

visits to businesses by our Covid Information Officers

350

activity packs distributed to families and those living with dementia and their carers

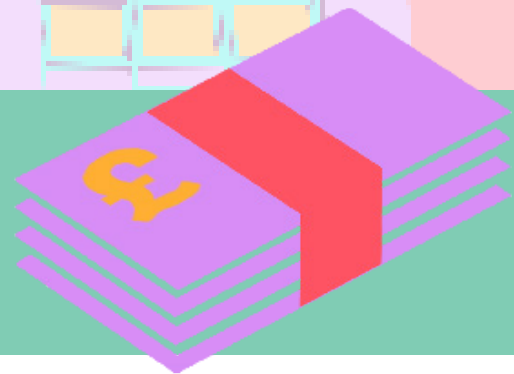


956

Pest Control appointments

£100,000

distributed in grant funding to the voluntary sector



49,000

repairs and gas services completed

Financial Strategy

There is significant uncertainty about the level of Government funding the Council will receive beyond 2021/22 pending the outcome of the:

- Impact of, and recovery from, COVID-19 pandemic
- The next Spending Round
- Fair Funding Review
- Business Rates - future levels of retention and clarification of what will happen around the baseline re-set; and the
- Future of New Homes Bonus and distribution methodology

The Council currently estimates that from 2022/23 to 2025/26 it has a cumulative estimated funding gap of £3m with the largest proportion of this (£2.46m) front-loaded into 2022/23. Once the outcome of the above factors has been determined this will provide greater clarity on the true extent of our financial challenge.

The Council has a strong track record in both setting robust annual budgets and consistently delivering within those budgets and is working hard to address the estimated financial pressures going forward.

The Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team continue to meet frequently to discuss options for addressing the estimated funding gaps going forward.

The areas of focus to address the financial challenge include:

- Income generation opportunities and a review of fees and charges.
- Benefits realisation from our investment in technology through our Digital Services Transformation Programme which will continue to bring about both further cashable efficiencies, and improved ways of working for our employees, and also improve services to residents and businesses.
- Progress at a pace, the development and delivery, of our Local Plan clearly setting out our aspirations for the District in terms of where we want to see both business and homes growth and attract developers to help deliver that vision.
- Work with our Procurement Partner (Nottingham City Council) to review and renegotiate our contracts to reduce costs.
- Ongoing review of our services ensuring they are aligned to the delivery of our Corporate Plan priorities.

The aim of the Council is to ensure that we continue to remain financially sustainable, whilst at the same time ensuring that we continue to provide the key services on which our residents and businesses rely.

Our Priorities

Our priorities have been developed based on knowledge and understanding of the needs of Ashfield residents and businesses, using a comprehensive evidence base from various key sources such as the Community Safety Strategy, Joint Economic Masterplan and community consultation through our Citizens Panel.

**Health and
Happiness**

**Homes and
Housing**

**Economic Growth
and Place**

**Cleaner and
Greener**

**Safer and
Stronger**

**Innovate and
Improve**



The health and happiness of our residents is a major contributing factor to ensuring:-

- That Ashfield is a vibrant and healthy place to live
- That the local workforce is skilled, productive and employable
- Children have the best chance for health throughout life.

As people live longer and have increasing expectations upon public services, there is a recognised increase in demand for health and social care related provision.

The picture of the health of Ashfield is not overall positive, but trends of life expectancy, adult obesity, children in poverty, and smoking prevalence have improved over recent years.

The District and our communities are changing and we recognise the need to build stronger, more resilient communities that can come together to provide help and support to each other. It also means focusing on some of our most deprived neighbourhoods to make sure that everyone has the same opportunities to achieve their goals and lead happy and healthy lives.

Health and Happiness

Vision

Our vision for 2023 is to help people improve their health and happiness by developing pride and aspiration in our communities, developing and strengthening partnerships, focussing on prevention, and improving health service provision.

Key Projects, Programmes and Initiatives

Arts, Culture and Events

We will:-

1. Support partners to develop Ashfield's arts and cultural offer
2. Deliver an annual programme of events in town centres and green spaces
3. Facilitate community-led events: summer galas, sports events etc

Community Engagement

We will:-

1. Deliver our Community Engagement Strategy, toolkit, and statement of community involvement
2. Continue to support the Community and Voluntary Sector to help residents' recovery from the impact of Covid-19
3. Review and manage the Volunteering Policy, enhancing volunteer skills and experience

Health and Wellbeing

We will:-

1. Engage with and influence Health and Wellbeing Partnerships to help improve health equalities through integration and system change
2. Focus on delivering outcomes to enable residents to have the best start in life; make healthy choices; age well; be physically active and live and work in environments that foster positive mental wellbeing
3. Engage with and influence Health Commissioners and Providers
4. Review Aids and Adaptations Policy to improve opportunities to retain independence

Strategic Leisure

We will:-

1. Deliver the Leisure Transformation Programme, maximising the wellbeing benefits whilst reducing costs
2. Deliver a new leisure destination in Kirkby
3. Deliver the capital investment programme for Hucknall and Lammas Leisure Centres
4. Maximise wellbeing outcomes in the new Leisure Operating Contract

Outcomes we want to achieve

In partnership, to narrow the gap between Ashfield and our comparator groups (Nottinghamshire and Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Family Benchmark Group) for the following health measures:-

- Increase participation in physical activity
- Reduce adult obesity
- Reduce child obesity
- Reduce children in poverty
- Reduce smoking prevalence
- Reduce economic inactivity due to long term sickness
- Reduce excess winter deaths
- Support partners new approaches with elderly care and supported living
- Maximise attendance at our leisure centres
- Achieve the Workplace Health Platinum Award
- Increase levels of community engagement and volunteering
- Deliver social value from new leisure management contract

Targeted Health Activities

We will:-

Work towards achieving the vision that 'Everyone who lives in Ashfield leads a healthy and happy life' through targeted work in priority places and with priority groups

Regulatory Services

We will:-

Engage at all levels to improve support for health and wellbeing

Homes and Housing

By 2023 we will have successfully delivered further improvements to housing services and housing provision for those either in need of affordable housing, or living in properties which need adapting or improving, as well as for residents needing to find new accommodation and those living within our own Council housing stock.

Affordable, warm, safe housing contributes to making Ashfield a great place to live. The proportion of social rented sector stock is however lower than average, and we strive to work with developers for the provision of additional affordable homes. Housing standards are good within the social rented sector and the Council is working with landlords to improve homes within the private rented sector as well as providing advice and support to tenants.

The majority of homes in the district are owner occupied and in good condition. The Council is proactive in supporting owners to return empty properties back to occupation and fixing signs of disrepair.

For those with additional housing needs the Council continues to improve its homelessness service and provide adaptations, efficient heating systems and lifeline services for those potentially vulnerable residents who wish to remain independent in their own homes.



Key Projects, Programmes and Initiatives

Housing Development

We will:-

1. Review land and assets held by the Council to determine potential development opportunities and options for future use
2. Explore opportunities manage and private market rent properties through the Council's Housing Company
3. Review the Council's new homes specification to ensure homes are thermally efficient and that we are minimising the carbon footprint in line with government targets

Tackling Disrepair and Poor Housing Conditions

We will:-

1. Utilise additional enforcement powers and review the current property licensing arrangements to improve housing conditions in the private rented stock
2. Review the Council's Aids and Adaptations Policy to ensure we are maximising opportunities to help any resident remain independent in their home

Customer Focus

We will:-

1. Further enhance tenant co-regulation, engagement and scrutiny in line with the regulatory framework for social housing in England and any new regulatory standards that are introduced
2. Deliver a fully agile housing service which will enable tenants to interact with the service in a way which suits them (aligned with our digital transformation programme)
3. Continue to redesign our Housing Repairs Service to improve customer service and save over £0.5m within three years

Reduce and Prevent Homelessness

We will:-

1. Enhance the pre-tenancy offer to ensure new tenants have the skills and understanding needed to successfully manage their tenancy
2. Improve the accommodation offer to rough sleepers, increasing the type, number and accessibility of supported housing places
3. Improve levels of homelessness prevention through better early detection and a focus on key trigger points

Suitable and appropriate housing

We will:-

1. Continually refine the Housing Revenue Account to ensure sufficient funds are available over the next 30 years to maintain, enhance and add to our housing stock
2. Acquire and/or build over 100 new social housing properties over the next five years (affordable housing delivery strategy)
3. Create additional housing stock through empty spaces above shops
4. Implement new property standards as and when introduced, including installing carbon monoxide alarms in all properties and achieving Decent Homes 2
5. Work with partners to identify sustainable housing solutions for individuals continuing to rough sleep following accommodation offers made during Covid

Compliance with Social Housing White Paper 2021

We will:-

Develop plans to meet the requirements set out in the Social Housing White Paper 2020 (The Charter for Social Housing Residents) to cover the following themes:

- Safety
- Landlord Performance
- Complaint Handling
- Consumer Regulation
- Tenant Voice
- Quality Home and Neighbourhood
- Home Ownership

Outcomes we want to achieve

- Increase the overall supply of affordable and appropriate homes in the District
- Increase thermal comfort of properties and reduce levels of fuel poverty
- Assist tenants with welfare and monetary advice to increase tenancy sustainment (i.e. prevent evictions)
- Maintain and increase positive and preventative action, to minimise homelessness
- Support landlords and tenants in ensuring private rented properties are well maintained and in line with safety regulations
- Ensure Ashfield's share of the Government's Better Care Funding is fully utilised within the District year on year in an effective and appropriate manner
- Ensure best use of stock through prompt relets
- As a minimum, maintain and surpass the Government's Decent Homes Standard in all Council owned stock
- Maximise income collection levels



Economic Growth and Place

Vision

By 2023 we will have supported sustainable housing and economic growth and developed a greater sense of place maximising the areas assets to support business growth and investment.

We are committed to making Ashfield a location and destination of choice for business and visitors and a desirable place to live for all residents.

The Council will work with local communities and other public, private and voluntary organisations to enhance the perception of Ashfield as a great place; cherished by those who live here, desirable to those who visit and enabling to those who bring jobs and investment.

With Ashfield's advantageous geographical location; close to a range of strategic road, rail and airport links, the District has successfully attracted many inward investors, who now play an important part in our local and regional economy and sustain local supply chains and employment.

Ashfield District Council and its partners are committed to increasing the number of higher skilled/higher paid jobs in Ashfield. Doing this will benefit the local economy, as people spend their greater disposable income in shops and with other local services, and will also assist the reputation of Ashfield as a location of choice for investors, where all of their employment and supply chain needs can be met. The funding secured from the Towns Fund and Future High Streets, as well as future funding opportunities, will facilitate major investment across the District and help to realise this vision.

Key Projects, Programmes and Initiatives

Discover Ashfield

Discover Ashfield celebrates all that is best about living, visiting, working and doing business in Ashfield.

We will:-

1. Support and promote Discover Ashfield, including the Ambassador programme
2. Work with partners to implement the themed delivery plan

Business Support and Recovery

We will:-

1. Implement the Economic Recovery Plan
2. Work with new and established businesses and encourage investment in order to aid improvements in productivity, innovation and growth
3. In partnership identify and facilitate routes to improve skills and employment
4. Offer eligible businesses grants, start-ups and premise improvements
5. Develop online technologies to support businesses and update supporting information, through the digital transformation programme

Outcomes we want to achieve

- Improved resident satisfaction with the area; people enjoy living and working here
- To narrow the gap between Ashfield and our East Midlands comparator group in respect of:-
 - average workplace earnings levels
 - employment levels and employment density
 - skills levels – NVQ level 3 and above
- Maximise the number of business start ups
- Maximise business survival rates
- Reduced vacancy rates of shops and commercial units, including a reduction in the number of dilapidated buildings
- Improving resident perception of our town centres, increasing footfall and spend
- Process planning applications in a timely manner
- Influence the repurposing of disused retail properties into housing
- Maximise the amount of external funding received into the District for economic regeneration projects
- Employment enhanced through social value in priority areas

Town Centres

We will:-

1. Deliver key masterplans, including town centres and railway stations
2. Revitalise and re-purpose town centres by:-
 - a. Bringing empty buildings back into use
 - b. Diversifying the town centre economy
 - c. Capitalising on external funding

Infrastructure and Economic Partnership

We will:-

1. Work with partners facilitating growth around transport in alignment with potential government funding and wider transport schemes
2. Build and develop M1 corridor and transport hubs to facilitate and enable development ie implementation of station masterplan
3. Continue to influence key economic partnerships

Strategic Planning

We will:-

1. Deliver our Local Plan to agreed timescales
2. Complete the Hucknall town centre masterplan
3. Facilitate planning of towns fund projects – such as advanced Manufacturing centre

District Wide Physical Regeneration

We will:-

Support economic growth by:-

1. Delivering the Future High Streets and Towns Fund programmes
2. Developing potential regeneration projects and maximising funding opportunities
3. Continue working with proprietors of dilapidated and empty buildings to help bring them back into use
4. Facilitate the speed of regeneration via our efficient planning application process

Cleaner and Greener

Vision

By 2023 we will create a cleaner and greener Ashfield, enabling communities and businesses to thrive in a clean and tidy district, minimising waste and recycling more.

Ashfield is pro-active in encouraging more recycling, tackling environmental crime and finding innovative ways of delivering services that are responsive to the needs of our residents, visitors and businesses.

By working with our communities and businesses the Council is better able to understand what matters and to shape services to help people enjoy living, visiting and working in Ashfield.



Key Projects, Programmes and Initiatives

Parks and Open Spaces

We will:-

1. Continue to review, improve and rationalise green space facilities
2. Work towards a seventh Green Flag Award for parks for Kingsmill Reservoir
3. Continue to deliver a rolling programme of restoration and adopt a community protocol to protect war memorials
4. Refresh the Council's Cemetery Strategy to include the wider approach to bereavement services and memorials

Waste and Recycling

We will:-

1. Refine the Council's approach, working in partnership with NCC, in response to the government's waste strategy
2. Review and deliver a programme of waste and recycling education in schools, businesses and communities in collaboration with Discover Ashfield's 'Love Where you Live' branding

Environmental Sustainability

We will:-

1. Finalise a Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Strategy, and action plan
2. Reduce the impact of CO2 emissions in Ashfield by our own activities whilst ensuring we increase tree coverage in the District to help reduce it further
3. Commence delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan and monitor impact

Street Cleanliness

We will:-

1. Review and deliver one Big Ashfield Spring Clean initiative annually
2. Tackle fly tipping and littering through targeted campaigns including educational campaigns in our schools, targeting those directly responsible through robust enforcement and sting operations
3. Deliver a number of targeted hard hitting campaigns to tackle littering, dog fouling and fly tipping

Environment

We will:-

1. Review and deliver our Environmental Charter
2. Refresh the Green Business Scheme to engage businesses and promote environmentally sustainable behaviours
3. Support community and business volunteers to enhance their local area

Outcomes we want to achieve

- Improved public perception that Ashfield is a cleaner and more attractive place
- Improved street cleanliness, reducing levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting, district wide with a particular focus in our town centres
- Encouraging improved recycling rates
- Improved public satisfaction with Ashfield's parks and open spaces
- Reduced carbon footprint from Council operations
- Increase tree coverage across the District, working with stakeholders
- Improved business and community engagement in the environment
- Maximise green homes/ carbon funding
- Deliver against key outputs of the Environmental Charter
- Improve air quality

Environmental Crime Enforcement

We will:-

1. Continue to develop effective patrol plans and priorities for the Community Protection team, targeting hotspot areas
2. Undertake targeted problem solving for environmental crime
3. Review the impact of the environmental crime pilot



Vision

By 2023 we will ensure the foundations for a good quality of life are in place; reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

This means we will ensure cleaner and attractive neighbourhoods prioritising both an effective response to issues but also working on prevention and behavioural change. We will work with our partners to ensure people feel safe and are safe by reducing levels of crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour.

Safer and Stronger

Key Projects, Programmes and Initiatives

Anti-social Behaviour and Hot Spots

We will:-

1. Increase identification and active targeting of offenders developing partnership patrol plans for hotspot locations
2. Work with partners to improve positive activity and tasking
3. Review mechanisms for supporting resident's understanding of Ashfield's offer to tackle ASB
4. Continue to develop effective patrol plans and priorities for the community protection team, targeting hotspot areas
5. Influence operational tasking through more effective use of council data to determine priorities and activity

Complex Cases and Safeguarding

We will:-

1. Safeguard our most vulnerable residents with robust safeguarding processes and the development of strong partnerships
2. Increase identification and support for vulnerable residents and victims

Domestic Abuse

We will:-

1. Provide support for high risk survivors of domestic abuse
2. Provide refuge accommodation for people in abusive relationships
3. Raise awareness of domestic abuse and ensure support provided to survivors

CCTV

We will:-

1. Develop and implement a CCTV strategy for the whole district to encompass both strategy and hotspot areas
2. Review the options for temporary CCTV in hotspot locations in the district

Working in Partnership to Deliver Outcomes

We will:-

1. Renew Ashfield's Community Safety Strategy and deliver key priorities from the partnership plan
2. Engage fully in county wide strategies, policies and working groups enabling better outcomes for the communities of Ashfield
3. Seek opportunities to integrate services within the Police and Community Safety integrated hub

Outcomes we want to achieve

- Reduce vulnerability ensuring people feel safe and are safe
- Improve perception that anti-social behaviour has reduced
- Respond promptly to all reports of ASB
- Respond promptly to all safeguarding/ complex cases
- Maintain and promote the White Ribbon accreditation
- Achieve the Domestic Abuse Housing standard
- Increase enforcement levels

Innovate and Improve

Vision

By 2023 we will be a financially sustainable, responsive, reshaped and transformed organisation; where the customer is at the heart of what we do and the services we provide.

We will deliver this as a learning organisation, with leaders at every level of the organisation, whom are highly skilled, innovative and passionate about responding effectively to local needs.

It is important that the Council has the most effective infrastructure and support to enable:-

- The delivery of the other priorities in this Corporate Plan
- Financial sustainability to continue to deliver key services
- A productive workforce that delivers services well

We will increase the pace of modernising the Council's development as an innovative, values led, pioneering organisation; one that is people centred and supported by an organisational culture that promotes creativity, quality over quantity, joined up and collaborative working with our key partners and constantly thinks in unique and different ways. We will achieve this through delivery of our People Strategy and comprehensive learning & development programmes.

It is important that the organisation continues to evolve and develop in order that we can effectively facilitate the Council's transformation vision and roadmap including maximising opportunities through developing technology, commercial enterprise ethos and different, more efficient and effective delivery models in the future.

The Council recognises that continued development of technology is an underpinning critical success factor to achieving the corporate priorities. The Council will continue to develop its ability to enable resident's greater choice in accessing the Council and obtaining key information in a method convenient to them including improving the Council's website and its functionality. The Council will equally support further productivity and work life balance of its employees through provision of technology that supports mobile, flexible and responsive working and delivery of an effective training programme.



Key Projects, Programmes and Initiatives

Procurement

We will:-

Maximise efficiencies and cost avoidance through delivery of outcomes of the strategic procurement review including scheduling of contract renewal and commissioning

Financial Sustainability

We will:-

1. Assess the impact of central government funding decisions on our medium term financial strategy, recognising the further impact of the COVID pandemic, we will ensure timely delivery of the annual savings strategy
2. Enhance our focus on identifying savings and income to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy

Future Workforce and Employer of Choice

We will:-

1. Review and refresh the People Strategy including the developed new ways of working being embedded as a result of the pandemic
2. Refocus recruitment and retention strategies promoting the wider employer of choice benefits
3. Enhance our focus on the targeted recruitment and development of young people (e.g. Kickstart, apprenticeships, graduate scheme)
4. Fast track the implementation of a digital skills programme tailored to employee's different needs
5. Streamline the job evaluation process and progress development of job families to simplify the grading process

Digital and Service Transformation

We will:-

Continue to fast track delivery of significant digital change which incorporates

- improved customer experience
- ongoing productivity gains and associated structure reviews
- innovative use of technology and digital product developments to support the business and facilitate agile working
- improving digital skills for residents and employees

Assets

We will:-

Continue to reduce the net cost of the Council's operational-land and property assets through rationalisation, third party rental/income generation and operating efficiencies

Outcomes we want to achieve

- Reduce employee sickness levels
- Increase recruitment and retention of young people
- Increase employee satisfaction
- Increase levels of online interaction, for example online payments
- Improve our availability and accessibility, answering calls faster
- Delivery of a balanced and sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Reduce the net cost of our assets
- Delivering savings and cost avoidance through contracts review
- Improve employee wellbeing
- Increase customer satisfaction
- Increase workflow/productivity

How will we deliver our priorities?

This Corporate Plan sets out our priorities for the future and the key projects and initiatives we intend to deliver.

The Corporate Plan sits above a wider strategic context which includes:



Corporate Project Management Framework



Corporate Performance Indicators



A range of strategic documents relating to the organisation and its services

Implementation of the Corporate Plan will be achieved through:-

Programme Management

Delivery of similar projects and initiatives under a priority theme

Project Management Framework

Delivery of all projects

Service Reviews

Rolling programme of reviews to inform the Savings Strategy

Service Plans

Annual review of each service in respect of added value improvement activity/ projects and service performance

Performance Management Framework

Using a balanced scorecard approach

People Strategy

Embedding desired organisational culture. Providing a motivated, flexible and skilled workforce

The Corporate Plan also aligns with relevant partnership strategies, providing a structured and consolidated approach to successful delivery.

How do we know we are performing well?

Our performance framework incorporates balanced performance scorecards on three separate levels as indicated below.

Place

Ashfield's Place Scorecard aligns directly with each of our outward facing corporate priorities. With each balanced scorecard perspective represented by a corporate priority and focused on relevant outcomes measures of Ashfield as a place.



Corporate

Our Corporate Scorecard measures organisational performance, and as such typical perspectives of a balanced scorecard have been adopted including Community and Customer, Funding the Future, Organisational Effectiveness and Our People.



Service

Each service area has a performance scorecard which measures performance for that particular service area.

Every four years we will undertake a Peer Challenge Review, engaging peers from across the sector through the Local Government Association sector led improvement offer, with an independent evaluation of the organisation focused on leadership, governance, corporate capacity and financial resilience.

