

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2022</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>CORPORATE PLAN AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION REFRESH AND YEAR END POSITION 2021/22</b>
<b>Executive Lead Member:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR JASON ZADROZNY, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>YES</b>

### **Purpose of Report**

This report presents to Cabinet the progress updates in regard to delivery of the Corporate Plan and our Corporate Priorities and the 2021/22 year-end out-turn performance position against the associated Corporate Performance Scorecard. The report also presents the proposed refresh of the Corporate Plan and Strategic Direction for approval.

### **Recommendation(s)**

- 1. For Cabinet to consider and proactively review the levels of delivery achieved against the Corporate Plan Priorities.**
- 2. For Cabinet to consider and proactively review the levels of performance achieved against the Corporate Scorecard as at year-end, 2021/22.**
- 3. For Cabinet to approve the Corporate Plan Refresh and revised Strategic Direction**
- 4. To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to review and revise the Corporate and Place Scorecards, aligned to the Corporate Plan.**

### **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

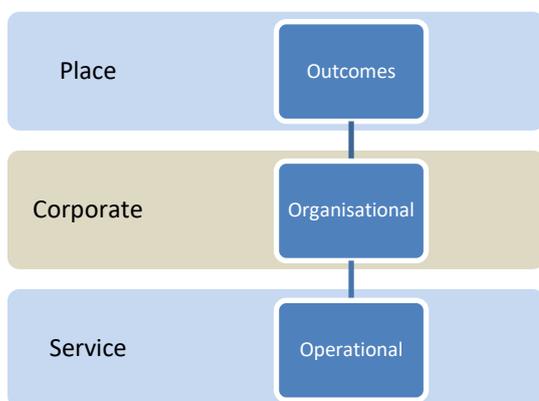
The Council's ambitions for the period 2019 – 2023 are clearly identified in a set of revised and updated Corporate Priorities which are presented in our Corporate Plan. These were developed by Cabinet in 2019 and have since been reviewed and updated, with consideration of the impact of the pandemic and our intended recovery activity.

Our priorities for the future and the key projects and initiatives we intend to deliver, are then translated and cascaded, through our Performance and Strategic Planning Framework, into specific Service Plans to facilitate focussed delivery.

The Corporate Plan sits above a wider strategic context which includes the Corporate Project Management Framework, Corporate Performance Indicators and a range of strategic documents relating to the Council and its services, including the Strategic Direction.

The Strategic Direction outlines the Council's principles and statements providing a vision and strategic direction of how the Council will function and operate. It also gives a clear indication of what the 'future state' of the Council will look like regarding its size, how it delivers services whilst calling for a fresh set of expectations, skills and competencies among employees, to build a common understanding. The Strategic Direction provides a clear statement and direction to help shape the Council's Corporate Plan.

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



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. The Corporate Scorecard is aligned to our Corporate Priorities and key initiatives identified in the refreshed Corporate Plan 2019-2023.

The Council regularly engages with the Local Government Association sector led improvement offer, for independent evaluation of the organisation, most recently peer reviews undertaken on a Financial Health Check and the Councils approach to Covid Response and Recovery. Currently the LGA are sponsoring a review and refresh of a Place Based Branding and narrative project. Key recommendations from the LGA support work have been integrated into the refresh of the Corporate Plan and Strategic Direction.

We are a Values based organisation whose purpose is to create a future where everyone has the chance of a better quality of life, as such we have also successfully developed our approach to measuring and understanding social value, and this has been incorporated into our Performance Management, Project Management and Procurement frameworks. A Social Value Policy was approved by Cabinet in 2020.

## **Alternative Options Considered**

To consider and adopt different key priorities and themes within the review of the Corporate Plan and Strategic Direction. The proposed priorities, themes and actions best capture and reflect the future strategic direction of the Council.

## **Detailed Information**

The Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023 was approved by Cabinet and endorsed by Full Council in September 2019. Subsequent iterations of the Corporate Plan set out our revised 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 the Corporate Project Management Framework, Corporate Performance Framework and a range of strategic documents relating to the organisation and its services, including the Strategic Direction. The Corporate Plan Refresh, and Strategic Direction 2022-2027, are appended to this report.

In March 2016, Cabinet agreed the use of a balanced scorecard methodology to enhance the organisation's performance framework and ability to understand how successfully the Corporate Priorities are being delivered, the approach providing a more rounded view on performance with a greater emphasis on customer satisfaction and quality.

The Corporate Plan has been reviewed in light of the third year's progress and performance outturn, and also external factors impacting upon the Council such as recovery from the pandemic and responding to new legislation. The plan was refreshed in May 2022 to ensure alignment to the Council's future ambitions and Corporate Priorities for the four-year period of the plan (2019-2023).

Corporate Plan progress is monitored through both the effectiveness of successful delivery of key projects and initiatives and performance achieved against the Corporate Scorecard.

This report details progress against delivery of the Corporate Plan, for the period April 2021 to March 2022, as measured through our Corporate Scorecard and Corporate Performance Framework.

It should be noted that Ashfield was the only local authority in Nottinghamshire that delivered all tier 1 and 2 critical services without interruption throughout the whole pandemic. The whole organisation worked effectively together as one Council, re-deploying staff into important roles outside of their normal duties to ensure continuance of service.

It should also be noted that, despite the pandemic, the organisation has also delivered additional services, above and beyond standard service levels, continuing to support residents and businesses in Ashfield.

Despite the impacts of the pandemic, overall, the corporate scorecard position for April 2021 to March 2022 indicates the following positive position: -

- 85% of measures achieving or exceeding target, or within 10% variance of target.
- 65% of measures indicating an improved position compared to the same period in the previous year, or within 5% of previous year's performance levels.

We are pleased with Corporate Plan key successes delivered within the 2021/22 year and to date: -

### **Health and Happiness**

- Four cinema events were delivered over the summer on the main parks which were well attended with afternoon and evening shows. Remembrance events supported in the three

town centres, Christmas festivals delivered successfully in Kirkby and Hucknall, with c.3,000 in attendance in Hucknall. Sutton switch-on was a small event due to the inclement weather.

- Two Food and Drink festivals took place in Hucknall in August and November with over 3,000 in attendance at each.
- Ashfield Arts Festival supported - online event this year, with expansion planned for next year. Working in partnership with First Art and educational partnership Captivate.
- A very successful Night Light event was delivered in February by First Art with the Council's support.
- Better Care Fund (BCF) expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) has remained on track throughout the year. Good flow of referrals and DFG Team catching up on backlog post lockdown.
- Aids and Adaptations Policy review complete to improve opportunities to retain independence.
- Leisure Transformation Programme – 2021/22 saw significant investment at Hucknall and Lammas Leisure Centres. Both have refurbished gyms, exercise studios, front of house areas and wellbeing hubs. The wet change facility at Hucknall was completed and contracts were signed for works to begin in April for the new learner pool. The ice rink saw significant investment at Lammas and a new soft play and TAG Active arena were installed at the Lammas Leisure Centre.
- During 2021/22 there were over 1 million attendances at our leisure centres, returning to pre-pandemic levels, with 7,550 fitness members and 3,622 children and young people accessing swimming lessons.
- A new Active Communities Plan has been developed in line with the Be Healthy, Be Happy Strategy objectives. The Health Hubs at Lammas and Hucknall Leisure Centre are open, with a variety of sessions running for people living with Dementia, Parkinson's and Autism for example. Nottinghamshire Independent Domestic Abuse Service (NIDAS) and the Social Prescribers are also using these spaces to support their user groups. Everyone Active are supporting the Holiday Activities and Food programme and Feel-Good Families. 22 Care Leavers and 32 sporting champions are accessing free memberships (gym, swim and classes). 700 young people accessed free swimming through the Star Foundation scheme.
- We are now able to assess the rolling value of the leisure facilities in terms of meeting social value objectives such as GP reduced visits, hospital admissions, cancer, diabetes, education attainment and crime prevention. During 2021-22 the social value across the sites and active communities programme totalled £3,274,186.
- The Council co-ordinated 2,148 attendances through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme during the Summer, Winter and Easter holidays.
- £66,000 of funding was secured through work with Mid and South Notts Place Based Partnership to increase capacity to reduce health inequalities in the Coxmoor and Broomhill/Butler's Hill priority places, and £35,000 was secured through Nottinghamshire County Council to recruit a 12-month fixed term Food Co-ordinator to accelerate work to address food insecurities. This work will commence in May 2022.
- The Council achieved the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Gold Award.
- The Volunteering Policy continues to be reviewed annually. Both individual and group volunteering has recommenced since a pause for Covid, and inductions with new volunteers continue to take place. There are currently 85 active volunteers.

**There has been significant investment in Hucknall and Lammas Leisure Centres.**

**Delivery of Kirkby Leisure Centre is on track to open in the Summer of 2022, with a community weekend planned for September 2022.**

- Welfare and money management advice/support for residents – the Council has assisted Nottinghamshire County Council with referrals to the Household Support Fund , ensuring that vulnerable residents could access support to food, utility vouchers and other essential household items. From 1st October 2021 – 31 March 2022, a total of 15,514 food and energy vouchers for Ashfield were issued, an allocation of £814,927. Over the same period, the total spend on Free School Meals in Ashfield was £475,629.15 (approximately 5,300 pupils per holiday period).

## Homes and Housing

- After a difficult start to the year, void relets are continuing to show improved performance, following the impact of the pandemic, reducing from 32.4 days (April to September 2020) to 29.8 days (April 2021 to March 2022). High level of repairs on void properties alongside a lack of trades operatives has been problematic. Covid concerns and difficult to let sheltered bedsits have hindered the lettings team.
- Progress has continued to be made this year on developing agile ways of working (Housing Management and Tenancy Services Section). The number of visits undertaken by officers is increasing. Work is underway on introducing case management on the Total Mobile system for the Tenancy/Estates team to enable them to record incoming work and manage cases more effectively. This will enable the team to respond to customers much more effectively. Laptops and tablets are being fully utilised for real time updates whilst working out on site.
  - Review of land and assets complete and pipeline affordable housing development programme in place. There is an ongoing review of garage sites in readiness for disposal.
  - Review of the Council's Disabled Facilities Grant and Aids and Adaptations policy is now complete
  - Agreed Homelessness Strategy Action plan for next 2 years. Work and interventions ongoing
  - The pre-tenancy process now provided by the Money Management Advice Team has been reviewed to strengthen affordability checks and encourage a 'rent first' culture.
- Homes made available under the Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) are now occupied and we are working with Framework to deliver the next batch of homes for former rough sleepers. In addition, extra units of supported housing have been made available this year through the YMCA via Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding.
- New property standards have been implemented to meet new electrical regulations.
- Following the introduction of the Social Housing White Paper, multiple sections of the Council are working to ensure that the necessary compliance is in place to meet the new standards and regulations coming into force for the Council's social housing stock.
- Housing Options, Complex Case and Tenancy Sustainment Teams continue to successfully support homeless households, against a backdrop of increasing demand and complexity of cases. Over 350 individuals were prevented from becoming homeless in 2021/22, a significant number relating to rent arrears where proactive support has been offered, providing financial assistance for rent in advance/deposits for alternative accommodation in the private rented sector.
- Nearly 1,000 tenants have been assisted with welfare and money management advice throughout the year, and all tenancy support cases have been able to successfully remain in their tenancy following targeted support.

**Affordable housing development programme now in place in respect of properties to rent. 8 sites now in progress - total of 46 properties. Cabinet approval has also been given to develop a further circa 70 units over 3 further sites**

- Housing's Money Advice and Tenancy Sustainment teams secured £129,377 of additional income for tenants.
- The Council facilitated 411 additional homes across the district throughout 2021/22 through new build, conversions and change of use
- The Land Charges service has been maintained through a very challenging period of increased activity and training of new staff.

## Economic Growth and Place

- A brief has been issued to consultants to develop and prepare a bid for Hucknall to the Levelling Up Fund which is due to open for applications in Spring 2022. A Members engagement event was completed early 2022 to inform the bid.
- The draft Hucknall Town Centre Masterplan has been consulted on and is now being finalised. It is intended that the masterplan will be brought to Cabinet in July. The masterplan supports the Round 2 Levelling Up Fund Bid.
- The four Future High Street projects progressed well:
  - The High Pavement building, and Low Street retail repurposing projects have completed the design development stage and are on schedule for completion early 2023.
  - The Fox Street public realm project is in the initial stakeholder engagement and design planning stage.
- The latest Winter business support directory has been developed; this contains further improvements including a business news section.
- A business ambassador and business leaders networking event has been developed with Discover Ashfield and the first event was successfully held on 30th November 2021 followed by a second successful event held in February 2022. The business support team continue to make business referrals and signposting.
- Most of the Economic Recovery Plan has now been successfully implemented. The Council will continue to promote business growth in line with the final stages of the plan. We have achieved a great deal of intelligence gathering. Monitoring the evolving effects of covid and economic change is taking place, we are engaging with partners at regular catch-up meetings, and we are accelerating key projects.
- We are continuing to promote and increase knowledge of Discover Ashfield. All events and initiatives through the Welcome Back Fund were promoted in conjunction with Discover Ashfield.
- Work continues to progress with some significant interest in proposals around Junction 27 and Sutton Parkway. M1 corridor, Maid Marian Line and other key transport nodes a clear part of the emerging vision for Ashfield.
- Planning performance has remained well above national standards for major applications, with 95% of major planning applications processed within 13 weeks.
- Licensing is also continuing as business as usual. New fees have been introduced and they will be reviewed to assess success at the end of the financial year. The Gambling policy has been reviewed and a new one-year taxi license also introduced.

**Delivery of the Towns Fund and Future High Streets programmes is progressing with the Enterprising Ashfield scheme, Portland Square and Visitor digital schemes approved by Government for delivery. The Business cases for the Civils Engineering, Kings Mill Reservoir, Green Ashfield, Construction Centre, Walking and Cycling and West Kirkby Gateway projects are undergoing the local assurance process and will be submitted to government in mid-July.**

- The Local Plan has been consulted on and achieved some very successful engagement with the community with over 1,000 letters covering many aspects. The consultation responses are being assessed but the plan is on hold awaiting clarity from the Government as to their future approach on the standard housing methodology and the approach to green field sites. An exploratory meeting with the Planning Inspectorate was held in January. Work has progressed on evidence base for highways and additional study on warehousing and distribution. In response to representations, a Local Plan Panel has been established.
- The Skills strategy has been adopted. Many organisations have signed up to the memorandum of understanding. Actions are being implemented. The Council has participated in an open doors programme. It is working with partners to deliver multi-functional facilities in our town centres and key hubs through the Towns Fund and Levelling Up Funds. Primary and Secondary school partnerships are firmly established.
- The Maid Marian Line Restoring Your Railways Bid was submitted on time. A visit by some of the panel members was facilitated. Currently awaiting the outcome of the bid.
- Good progress has been made this year on dealing with dilapidated buildings. The roof is on Annesley Hall. Successful prosecution on land adjacent to Albert Street. The Romans site in Hucknall is now cleared. The team continue to respond to reports of forced entry into unoccupied buildings and a number have been boarded up with the agreement of landowners or a charge has been placed on the land.
- The team has delivered to the Government's risk-based assessment targets for food hygiene inspections throughout this year. They have worked with many new food premises to improve standards which had slipped during the pandemic.
- The 2021 assessment of the district in relation to Prosperity, which includes detailed data on levels of institutional, economic, and social wellbeing, indicated a significant leap of 114 places, compared nationally out of 379 local authorities, comparative to our 2020 assessed position.

## Cleaner and Greener

**The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs reported that there has been a 16% increase nationwide in reported fly tipping during the COVID pandemic. Ashfield District Council broke that trend, with a 4% reduction in fly tipping reports received this year compared with 2020/21.**

- The six Green Flag Awards for the main parks were retained this year and small flag-raising ceremonies held at each of the sites.
- Implementation of the Green Spaces Programme has progressed well with works completed on the play provision and brook restoration at Titchfield Park, Hucknall.
- We have successfully delivered our 5<sup>th</sup> Big Ashfield Spring Clean campaign, collecting over 175 tonnes of waste from across the

District through flying skips. In 2022 the campaign was revised with the free bulky collections offer now expanded across 12 months rather than within a limited 3-week period. 25 litter picking packs and 8 wormery's have been provided to schools across the District, and we have seeded on our first super bee highway.

- Works to provide a new play area were completed at Hornbeam Park in Kirkby and at Nuncargate Recreation Ground improvements were undertaken to the play area, paths and entrances. A masterplan was developed for Selston Country Park following public consultation.
- Despite not meeting target, recycling rates have increased in 2021/22 at 38.5%, compared to 36.55% last year. Recycling amounts dipped from October 2021, due to a drop off in

compostable material. However, January to March 2022 has seen the highest amount of recycling material collected with the lowest amount of general waste collected all year. These improvements indicate that waste volumes are returning to normal after the spikes over the last 2 years due to the impact of COVID.

- There was a significant 20% decrease last year in the number of reported missed bin collections (4,551 missed in 2020/21 compared to 3,636 missed in 2021/22). The Council now investigates every complaint to understand whether the issue has been reported or the bin wasn't out for collection or was contaminated. On average year on year, missed collections equate to about 0.015% of all kerbside collections, meaning the Council has an annual record of 99.98% 'right first time' collections.
- Works at Kings Mill Reservoir were also completed which included new car parking and footpath improvements. Phase 1 works to Huthwaite Welfare Park which include a new play area were completed in late 2021.
- The Planning Department continues to increase scrutiny of the green credentials of all new planning applications and paid enquiries. Difficult to progress too far in the absence of clear legislation.
- The Council's Climate Change Strategy moved through its consultation stages having been reviewed by CLT, Service Managers and Overview and Scrutiny. The final strategy will be presented to Cabinet for approval in June. The targets remain challenging and reliant on external funding and technological development to achieve its full potential.
- The Council has successfully bid for funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund, the Green Homes Grant Phase 1B, the Green Homes Grant Phase 2, and is awaiting the outcome of a bid for funding under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. Following the successful bid for Phase 1B, this, and other projects, are now at various stages of delivery. Such works will improve the thermal efficiency of buildings and/or reduce energy demand requirements thus assisting in the reduction of the district's carbon footprint and assisting in the reduction of fuel poverty.
- 82 volunteers have been inducted or re-inducted this year, with the majority litter picking in our green spaces and communities.

### **Safer and Stronger**

- The Council responded to 5,745 reports of anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood nuisance and environmental crime reports between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
- The continued review and implementation of demand and vulnerability assessments at source has resulted in enhancing the triage process and resolving 56% of all demands at the initial point of contact.
- The Council and Police partnership initiative was implemented to provide high visibility reassurance in neighbourhoods, town centres and public spaces. Under Operation Springboard, targeted patrols take place every weekend which assists in obtaining local intelligence and taking positive action, resulting in the partnership successfully managing and tackling trends and emergency issues.
- A number of environmental crime action days have been undertaken to address fly tipping and waste on land resulting in 91 fines being issued, the highest recorded amount in the Council's history. This has

**The Council, alongside partners and the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, was successful in securing £550,000 in October as part of the Safer Streets Round 3 Funding programme. The bid was the joint highest nationally which is being used to address longstanding community concerns relating to women's and girls' safety, violence, and the perception of crime in public spaces throughout Sutton. The work has been commended by the Home Office and Safe Point Cameras have gained worldwide attention.**

contributed to a 20% reduction in fly tipping and a 23.85% reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour in comparison the previous year.

- Safeguarding Champions have been introduced within the Council. Their role is to be departmental and cross Council representatives assisting with providing advice and disseminating information across the Council.
- Community Safety made 144 referrals were made to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) to safeguard vulnerable adults and children and protect them from further harm/abuse.
- In September, the Council and Police launched a dedicated partnership vulnerability programme (VASS) with a primary aim of reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and vulnerability through person centred interventions. A cohort of up to 15 adults are managed at any one time. Individuals on the cohort often have complex support needs and will be diverted away from criminality/exploitation through providing wrap around support.
- In October, following a successful consultation, audit and review a new Public Spaces Protection Order was approved, enabling the continuation of powers to tackle localised problems. The order also included a gating requirement, restricting public access between Bentinck and Welbeck Street, Sutton, the first implemented in the District.
- Throughout October an early intervention Halloween and Bonfire initiative: Operation Safekeep was co-ordinated to create awareness on fire safety and reducing on street ASB. The operation was highly successful with over 50 shops and off-licences visited and over 40 incidents being responded to.
- The Council, Police, Fire Service and health services have been delivering engagement events across the super output areas of the District, building and fostering positive relationships to understand community need and assist them to become self-sustaining, through self-help and resident participation. Successful events have taken place in New Cross, Hucknall, and a Dog Awareness Event was held on Sutton Lawn and at a partnership LGBTQ event in Kirkby.
- A refreshed CCTV policy and strategy was adopted in November to support the continued identification of criminality and anti-social behaviour. This framework has helped establish funding for 10 upgraded CCTV Cameras for Kirkby and Hucknall which have now been installed.
- Complex Case Panels take place monthly in order to discuss escalating safeguarding scenarios. Through the development of risk management action plans, targeted interventions are undertaken to assist those who are vulnerable or considered at significant risk. The Complex Case Team and Panel have provided intensive support to 83 highly complex residents across five key life areas (Health, Housing, Community, Finances and Employment), 67 referrals have been reviewed at panel.
- Funding has been secured to deliver domestic abuse awareness sessions across 20 primary schools. The programme included a focus on healthy relationships and staff training. Feedback was positive and learners feel better informed.
- Between 25<sup>th</sup> November - 10<sup>th</sup> December, the White Ribbon Campaign and 16 days of activism were delivered, aimed at ending violence against women and girls, creating awareness and empowering survivors of domestic abuse to reach out and get support.

### **Innovate and Improve**

- The continued review and implementation of changes to call handling has seen a further significant 14% reduction in the level of abandoned calls for 2021/22, compared to the previous year, with the call abandoned rate out-turn at 3%, compared to 2020/21 which was 3.5%. Despite the overall average call waiting time across the organisation increasing slightly from 34 seconds to 43 seconds, this performance is still at much lower rates than pre pandemic.
- Over 64,000 payments have been made online from April to September 2021, a significant increase of 6.4% compared to last year and a third higher over the last 2 years since we

implemented our new 'e-store', exceeding channel shift predictions. We are also continuing to see reductions in the use of costly paypoint and post office transactions, with a further 6.6% reduction compared to the previous year, however, it should be noted that there have been 20% increases in paypoint and post office transaction costs, therefore, increasing the importance of nudging further channel shift to less costly channels.

- Council tax and business rates collection rates, at year-end, are improved compared to last year. Whilst the climate for the collection of rent continues to be challenging for the Income Team, due to the financial pressures being experienced by tenants, due to the removal of the £20 uplift in Universal Credit, utility bill rises, inflation, furlough and the impact of the pandemic. Despite this, rent collection rates have remained stable at year-end, compared to last year, and higher than pre-pandemic levels. Given the financial pressures being experienced by tenants, as a result of the financial climate, this is a particularly positive result.
- Digital transformation – Further successful channel shift has been achieved because of the digital developments being undertaken in-house, which have to date focussed mainly on waste and environment and revenues transactional processes. Telephone demands for waste and environment services in 2021/22, compared to 2020/21, have seen a significant 18% reduction. This relates to nearly 10,000 less calls throughout the year compared to last year.
- There has been a corresponding significant increase in the use of our online forms throughout 21/22, with nearly 37,000 online forms completed, over 21,000 of which were through use of our in-house built forms. The use of these online forms/ features, and corresponding reduction in telephone demand is a significant indication of the impact of our digital developments on shifting customer demand to less costly channels.
- Customer experience of the Council's website continues to improve with ongoing increase in page views and average time on a page, whilst use of the search engine and visitors resorting to the contact us page reducing by 28%.
- By the end of 2021/22, our Digital Transformation Programme has delivered a cumulative total of £2.2m in benefits realisation.

**We are now seeing initial signs of successful channel shift because of the digital developments being undertaken in-house**

**The new Customer Portal, Ashfield 24/7, was launched in February, offering modern, digital online features which will improve accessibility for customers. Over 1,200 residents have already signed up**

#### **Areas for improvement: -**

- A number of additional housing permissions have been granted through the year via different routes but insufficient to significantly improve 5-year housing land supply.
- As expected, there has been some slippage in processing of minor and other planning application types, by year-end. There have been additional pressures brought about by reduced staffing numbers, combined with an increase in planning applications received.
- This last year saw the first increase in litter reports since 2019/20 (460 reports in 2020/21 to 530 reports in 2021/22). There has also been an increase in the number of dog fouling reports (171 reports in 2020/21 to 247 reports on 2021/22). While the Covid-19 pandemic has seen a reduction in reports across the board due to residents being instructed to 'stay at home', the new web forms have made it easier for residents to report concerns. The numbers now also reflect reports from Councillors, previously these weren't recorded.

- Sickness absence levels out-turn for 2021/22 were above target, at an average of over 11 days per full time equivalent (FTE), a significant increase on 20/21. Long term absence is the main cause of absence, of the overall average, 7.78 FTE related to long term absence. Over the last 12 months the 3 main causes of absence have been due to; Stress, Depression, Fatigue and Mental Health; Operation; and Muscular Skeletal.

## **Implications**

### **Corporate Plan:**

The report relates to the delivery of the Corporate Plan Priorities. The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's proposed priorities for the period 2019 to 2023 and intended deliverables which will be monitored and managed through the Corporate Performance Framework.

It covers performance for the period April 2021 to March 2022 and where available includes more up to date performance/achievements. The Corporate Scorecard has been reviewed and refreshed to align with the refresh of the Corporate Plan and associated Corporate Priorities as a means of identifying their successful delivery.

### **Legal:**

The Council's new Corporate Priorities and strategic plans have been developed in consideration of current and forthcoming legislative requirements. [RLD 27/05/2022]

### **Finance:**

<b>Budget Area</b>	<b>Implication</b>
General Fund – Revenue Budget	The Corporate Plan has been developed in alignment with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the financial sustainability of the organisation. The 'Innovate and Improve' Priority proposes key programmes and projects which will be focussed on identifying and delivering efficiencies and more effective working practices to support financial sustainability, whilst concurrently delivering improved customer focussed services.
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	

### **Risk:**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Absence of a Corporate Plan would result in a lack of prioritisation and focus on delivering what matters	Agreed Corporate Plan every four years which is delivered via the organisation's project management framework and reviewed annually.

Poor performance would potentially result in inability to deliver the Corporate Priorities as specified in the Corporate Plan	Regular monitoring of performance and robust performance management through the authority's performance management framework.
---	---

## **Human Resources:**

The 'Innovate and Improve' Priority proposes key programmes and projects which will be focussed on delivering the People Strategy and developing employees.

High levels of performance can have a positive impact upon employee engagement and retention which in turn can enhance performance further.

## **Environmental/Sustainability**

The 'Cleaner and Greener' Priority proposes key programmes and projects which will be focussed on delivering environmental improvement.

## **Equalities:**

There are no direct implications on equality and diversity as a consequence of the proposals and recommendations outlined in this report.

## **Other Implications:**

Not applicable

## **Reason(s) for Urgency**

Not applicable

## **Reason(s) for Exemption applicable)**

Not applicable

## **Background Papers**

Not applicable

## **Report Author and Contact Officer**

Jo Froggatt, Assistant Director –Corporate Services and Transformation  
01623 457328  
[j.froggatt@ashfield-dc.gov.uk](mailto:j.froggatt@ashfield-dc.gov.uk)

## **Sponsoring Service Director (if report from others)**

Craig Bonar – Director, Resources and Business Transformation