



**NORWICH**  
City Council

## Cabinet

**Date:** Wednesday, 15 November 2023

**Time:** 17:30

**Venue:** Council chamber, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH

### Committee members:

**For further information please contact:**

### Councillors:

Stonard (chair)  
Jones (vice chair)  
Giles  
Hampton  
Kendrick  
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## Agenda

### Page nos

- 1 Apologies**  
To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Declarations of interest**  
(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting).
- 3 Public questions/petitions**  
To receive questions / petitions from the public which have been submitted in accordance with the council's constitution.
- 4 Questions to cabinet members**  
(A copy of the questions and replies will be available on the council's website prior to the meeting).
- 5 Minutes** 5 - 12  
To agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2023.
- 6 Corporate Performance Report for Quarter 2, 2023-2024** 13 - 36  
**Purpose:** To report progress against the delivery of the corporate plan priorities and key performance indicators for quarter two of 2023/24.
- 7 Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 2, 2023/24 (Report to follow)**
- 8 Corporate Risk Register, Quarter 2 2023/24 (Report to follow)**
- 9 Rough Sleeping Strategy - Prevention, Intervention & Recovery 2023-2028** 37 - 62  
**Purpose:** The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the adoption of the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028.
- 10 The tenancy strategy, tenancy policy and tenancy agreement** 63 - 126  
**Purpose:** To consider the tenancy strategy, tenancy policy and tenancy agreement for approval.

**11 Procurement of Council Insurance Programme**

127 - 134

**Purpose:** The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet endorsement for the approach to the procurement of the Councils insurance cover and delegated authority to enter into the insurance contracts.

**12 Exclusion of the public**

Consideration of exclusion of the public.

**EXEMPT ITEMS:**

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and the public.)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, members are asked to decide whether, in all circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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**\*13 Corporate Risk Register, Quarter 2 2023/24 - (Exempt appendix)  
(Report to follow)**

**\*14 Disposal of Assets (Housing) (Exempt - Para 3)**

- This report is not for publication because it would disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as in para 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

Date of publication: **Tuesday, 07 November 2023**



**Cabinet**

**17:30 to 18:05**

**18 October 2023**

Present: Councillors Stonard (chair), Jones (vice chair), Kendrick and Oliver

Also present: Councillor Galvin, Green group leader

Apologies: Councillors Giles and Hampton

**1. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. Public questions/ petitions**

There were no public questions.

**3. Questions to cabinet members**

Councillor Stonard, leader of the council and cabinet member for inclusive development (the chair) said that two questions had been received from members of the council to cabinet members, for which notice had been given in accordance with the provisions of the council's constitution.

(Full details of the questions and responses were available on the council's website prior to the meeting and are appended to these minutes at Appendix A.)

Councillor Hoechner thanked Councillor Jones, the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety, for her response to question 1, regarding introduction of byelaws to tackle anti-social spitting, and confirmed that she did not have a supplementary question.

The chair said that as Councillor Catt was not present, his question, regarding temporary accommodation, would be noted together with the response from the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety.

The chair said that Councillor Hoechner had submitted an urgent question in accordance with the provisions of the council's constitution and that it had been accepted.

Councillor Hoechner then asked the question as follows:

“We have all been watching in horror the events unfolding in the Middle East.

I understand the council’s decision to illuminate City Hall in Israeli colours since 9 October was intended to show support for the people of Israel who have suffered terribly in the Hamas attack of 7 October. Councillor Stonard described the display of the Israeli flag as a politically neutral act of humanitarian support.

Whatever the intention, many Norwich residents, including members of the Palestinian community, have not experienced things this way. For them, the Israeli flag symbolises the war crimes committed under this flag in Gaza as we speak. Can the cabinet member please explain what the council will do to reassure residents that we condemn all acts of terror and that all innocent lives lost in this conflict, both Israeli and Palestinian, matter and deserve to be mourned?”

Councillor Stonard, leader of the council and cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable development’s response was as follows:

“In answer to your question, Councillor Hoechner, at the start of the most recent violent conflicts in Israel and Palestine, the government wrote to local council leaders across the UK encouraging them to light up UK buildings and monuments in blue and white up to 8 pm on 10 October, to show support for the people of Israel.

But of course, following acts of violence since that time, I would like to make it abundantly clear that Norwich City Council utterly condemns all acts of terror, along with all innocent lives lost in this conflict, regardless of faith.

I would like to provide a summary of what Keir Starmer said in his earlier statement in the House of Commons on this matter, which I fully endorse:

*“The murder of innocent men, women and children, hostage taking and unimaginably difficult stories and images emerging every hour. Families are grieving, across Israel and Gaza, and here in the UK. This is a terrifying and distressing time for everyone – Israeli, Palestinian, Muslim and Jew.*

*We are clear that Israel has the right to keep its people safe and bring hostages home. Israel’s defence must be conducted in accordance with international law.*

*We are also clear that the pain and suffering which has been unleashed is the responsibility of the terrorists of Hamas. Hamas are not the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian people are not Hamas.”*

And I would also like to add that Norwich has always been an open and progressive city; one which has provided a welcoming and safe sanctuary to those who have needed it. We are proud to continue that tradition today, as we are equally proud of the diverse communities and different faiths which make up our wonderful city.

To conclude, I plan that we will have a minute's silence at the full council meeting in November as a mark of respect to all those who have lost their lives or been injured in this conflict, irrespective of their faith or nationality."

Councillor Hoechner thanked the leader of the council for the response.

#### **4. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2023, subject to correcting the spelling of Councillor Kendrick's name in the list of those present; and regarding item 2, Public questions/petitions, second paragraph, correcting the name of the person asking the question to Mr Cena.

#### **5. Scrutiny Committee Recommendations**

Councillor Jones, deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety, thanked the scrutiny committee for its work on antisocial behaviour and the recommendations. She said that the antisocial behaviour (ASB) team had made exceptional progress to improve the service. The team had a good track record in sourcing funding, including the Safer Streets funding to improve community safety. She would be discussing the committee's recommendations with officers to see how best these could be progressed.

Councillor Jones replied to a question from Councillor Galvin and confirmed that the ASB team was adequately resourced and that this was kept under regular review. She said that she was not aware of any issues due to resourcing but, in her capacity as the cabinet member for housing and community safety, would be pleased to assist ward councillors who experienced this.

**RESOLVED** to receive the recommendations of the scrutiny committee.

#### **6. An Update on Health, Safety and Compliance in Council Homes**

Councillor Jones, deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety, presented the report. The council anticipated the imminent removal of the regulatory notice. Senior officers met monthly with the Regulator for Social Housing and an internal governance and assurance framework (as set out in paragraph 7) was in place, and included cabinet oversight. The tables (paragraph 24, pages 25 to 27) provided the position at the end of August and progress had continued. Members attention was drawn to the comments of the independent consultants, Campbell Tickell, reproduced in paragraphs 40 and 41 of the report. It was important that as the improvement project came to an end, there were measures in place to ensure continued compliance moving forward.

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources, said he had attended the Health, Safety and Compliance Board to oversee the General Fund Compliance Improvement Plan and praised the contribution made by Paul Cook, Interim Head of Building Safety and Compliance, and Mark Brown, Head of Property Services for their contribution to the quick turnaround. He also gave credit to Councillor Jones and former Councillor Harris for their contributions and congratulated all officers involved in this project.

During discussion, the Interim Head of Building Safety and Compliance assured Councillor Galvin of the arrangements to address the issues relating to the inconsistencies with data management and the use of NEC (as set out in paragraphs 5-8 to 5.11 of the consultant's report, on page 41 of the agenda papers). This was being addressed at senior level at Norwich and NEC. The most significant of these was the work to address inconsistencies in unique property reference numbers, and that there were not inbuilt forms to deal with risk assessments. He assured members that work was in progress to remedy this.

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

## **7. Disposal of Assets (Non-Housing) Acquired by the Revolving Fund**

Councillor Stonard, leader of the council and cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable development, presented the report. The Revolving Fund was good news as it allowed the council the acquisition of stalled sites and to sell them on for housing developments. The site was in Catton Grove ward which he represented and was north of Windmill Road. It had become vacant around 10 years ago when the Aldi Supermarket was developed and had become an eyesore. The council had acquired it under the Town Deal Revolving Fund and was now proposing to dispose of the freehold to bring it forward for development.

Councillor Kendrick said that, like his fellow Catton Grove ward councillors, he welcomed the proposal. One of the reasons for the housing crisis was that the private sector was not providing enough housing. He was proud of this council's work in building housing for social rent.

In reply to a question from Councillor Galvin, the Executive Director of Development and City Services explained that the reason for the recommendation to delegate authority was simply about speed so that sites could be purchased and placed on the market. The whole purpose of the fund was to bring forward development as quickly as possible. A report to cabinet would delay the process and take several weeks to make a decision.

The Head of Legal and Procurement assured members that appropriate governance systems were in place where officers made decisions, as set out in the council's constitution.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) delegate authority to the Executive Director of Development and City Services (in consultation with the leader of the council and cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable development) and the Section 151 Officer);
- (2) dispose of any subsequent sites acquired via the Revolving Fund ensuring the council's obligations to achieve best consideration for sites are fulfilled.



## **8. Managing Assets (Non Housing)**

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources introduced the report. He presented the section of the report on the disposal of land adjacent to the River Yare in Cooper Road.

(Members concurred that they did not wish to discuss the exempt appendix, attached to the agenda papers at Item 11\* (not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).)

The Head of Property Services presented the section of the report relating to 4a and 4b Guildhall, Norwich and explained that it was proposed to market the properties jointly as it would provide better value for the council. This would provide flexibility that had not previously been permitted.

In reply to a question from Councillor Galvin, the Head of Property Services said that none of the trees on the site at Cooper Lane were subject to tree preservation orders and were in a poor state. One of the reasons that the adjacent owner wanted to take over the site was to manage the trees and proactively enhance biodiversity net gain.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) approve the disposal of assets outlined in this report; and,
- (2) delegate acceptance of the most advantageous offer for 4a and 4b Guildhall to the Executive Director of Development and City Services in consultation with the cabinet member for resources and the Section 151 Officer.

CHAIR

## Appendix A

### Questions to Cabinet Members from Members of the Council

#### Question 1

**Councillor Hoechner to ask the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety the following question:**

“A resident who has been affected by anti-social spitting near their house has been told by the police that this was an issue for the council to deal with, but the information provided by the council is that it doesn’t currently hold powers for dealing with anti-social spitting. Will the cabinet member commit to looking into possibilities for adopting a byelaw tackling anti-social spitting, as for example the London Borough of Enfield has done?”

**Councillor Jones, the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety’s response:**

“I agree that spitting in public – whether that be directed at a person or not – is wholly unpleasant and not something anyone would wish to witness. Spitting directed at a person is classed as assault, could and should be dealt with by the police. Following Covid, I believe we are far more conscious of this now. The issue of spitting not directed at a person is not a simple one to resolve and an initial scan of how other areas attempt to deal with it suggests there are a variety of ways that it may be tackled - each with its own complications. I will instruct council officers to investigate how other areas approach the issue with a particular focus on the legal issues, the practicality of enforcement and resource implications.”

#### Question 2

**Councillor Catt to ask the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety the following question:**

“While numbers of residents in temporary accommodation is lower than other comparative councils, the bill to the taxpayer for this service has increased year-on-year for five years (discounting an outlier in 2020-21 as a result of the ‘Everybody In’ initiative during the pandemic), representing a 41% increase from 2019 to 2023. Lots of councils are investing in innovative solutions in the long term to improve standards while reducing the cost of this critically important service. A good example of this is in altering allocation rules to allow tenants to retain priority banding when accepting a private-sector offer, which has been seen to reduce the need for use of BnB’s in large councils like Manchester. While the average time spent in temporary accommodation is currently at the legal limit and some families recently being moved out as far as Ipswich, will the cabinet member investigate solutions such as these?”

**Councillor Jones, the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety's response:**

“We continue to intensively manage our use of temporary accommodation and the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation remains consistently under target, a remarkable achievement for a city of our size with the pressures we face.

We are working hard to improve the availability of temporary accommodation in our area to reduce the disruption to homeless households caused by placements outside of our area. We are in regular communication with the Department of Levelling Up Homes and Communities and other councils with a similar profile to ourselves to discuss best practice and are always open to new ideas that will benefit our residents.”





**Committee name:** Cabinet

**Committee date:** 15/11/2023

**Report title:** Corporate Performance Report for Quarter 2, 2023/24

**Portfolio:** Councillor Stonard, Leader of the council

**Report from:** Executive director of community services

**Wards:** All wards

**OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

**Purpose**

To report progress against the delivery of the corporate plan priorities and key performance indicators for quarter two of 2023/24.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that cabinet review progress on the key performance indicators for this quarter.

**Policy framework**

The Council has five corporate aims, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report meets the Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city corporate aim.

## **Report details**

### **Background**

1. Previously, a quarterly combined assurance report has been brought to Cabinet, providing information across corporate performance, finance, and risk. For the reporting period 2023-24, these elements will be presented quarterly to Cabinet as three individual reports.
2. The driver for this approach is the full review of our Corporate Plan 2022-2026 to ensure it is fully aligned with priorities, that these are communicated within and outside the Council, and are rooted in a clear understanding of the views of our communities and partners.
3. A new performance framework is being developed to reflect the new Corporate Plan 2024-2029, with greater support around data and intervention to ensure delivery of our priorities and rapid course correction.

### **Introduction**

4. The Corporate Plan 2022-26 describes the medium-term aims of the council, and how the organisation of the council needs to be structured to deliver these aims. It is also about how we use our limited resources, and how we maximise these resources by working with other partners outside of the council.
5. Each year the plan is reviewed to take account of changes at the local and national level. The budget that is debated and agreed each February, alongside the corporate plan, sets out what financial resources are available to deliver the council's corporate aims and political priorities.
6. There are five aims in the current corporate plan which collectively add up to building a more sustainable city: environmentally, socially, and economically:
  - a) People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
  - b) Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
  - c) Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
  - d) The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
  - e) Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.
7. The corporate performance framework that sits alongside the corporate plan helps us to measure progress against these aims. This is done through key performance indicators (KPIs) which are a set of measures that monitor delivery of services and activities which contribute to us achieving the five aims.
8. This report sets out progress of the Corporate Plan 2022-2026 and covers the period 1 July to 30 September 2023 (quarter two).




### **How to read this report**

9. Performance reporting for indicators in this report is based around a traffic light system, as set out below.

### KPIs by status

<b>Red</b>	Performance has reached a level where we will intervene & agree what action is required to bring it back on target.
<b>Amber</b>	Early warning that performance is not on target and action may be required.
<b>Green</b>	Performance is on or above target
<b>White</b>	Data is being monitored
<b>Blue</b>	Data is not currently recorded

### KPIs by direction of progress

	Performance has dropped compared with the last quarter/year.
	Performance has stayed the same compared with the last quarter/year.
	Performance has improved compared with the last quarter/year.

10. There is a total of 29 KPIs for which our three directorates have responsibility for:

- a) Community services are responsible for 15 KPIs covering all corporate aims except *'The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish'*.
- b) Development and city services are responsible for 10 KPIs predominantly covering *'Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city'*.
- c) Corporate and commercial services are responsible for four KPIs predominantly covering *'Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city'*.

11. There are 23 KPIs that are reported quarterly, and six KPIs that are reported annually (two in quarter two and four in quarter four).

12. Appendix B provides a detailed list of which directorate holds the reporting responsibility for each KPI, how it is calculated, how frequently it is reported and what the target and intervention levels are.

13. Appendix C provides a detailed list of all KPIs for this and the previous four reporting periods, showing the status and direction of progress.

### Overview for this reporting period

14. There are 23 quarterly and two annual KPIs reported for this period.

15. As highlighted in the quarter one performance report, changes have now been implemented for KPI 11 which measures *% of people responding as feeling safe in a local area survey*. The changes have been made to help increase the number of respondents and measure more robustly perceptions of community safety.

16. From the start of quarter two, the following changes have been put in place:

- a) double the sample size of SMS texts are now sent out, aiming to achieve 1,000 responses p/a (+/- 3% margin of error)
- b) response options have changed to a 1-5 descriptive scale, including a 'neither' option

- c) question to inform new *KPI 11a: % of residents responding as feeling safe in their local area during the day* – On a scale of 1-5 (1 = very unsafe, 2 = fairly unsafe 3 = neither safe nor unsafe 4 = fairly safe 5 = very safe) how safe do you feel in your local area during the day?
- d) question to inform new *KPI 11b: % of residents responding as feeling safe in their local area after dark* - On a scale of 1-5 (1 = very unsafe, 2 = fairly unsafe 3 = neither safe nor unsafe 4 = fairly safe 5 = very safe) how safe do you feel in your local area after dark?
- e) results will be reported on a rolling 12-month basis to increase responses and statistical accuracy.

17. The tables 1 and 2 below show a summary of the performance measures presented as a count of the KPIs by status as well as a total, for each corporate aim, for each quarter to date for 2023/2024. There are no KPIs that fall into this reporting period for the corporate aim ‘The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.’

**Table 1: Quarterly KPIs by status for Q1 2023/24**

Corporate priority	White	Red	Amber	Green
People live independently and well in a diverse, and safe city			1	4
Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city			1	1
Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city		2		3
Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city	1	2	2	5
<b>Total</b>	1	4	4	13

**Table 2: Quarterly KPIs by status for Q2 2023/24**

Corporate priority	White	Red	Amber	Green	Blue
People live independently and well in a diverse, and safe city	2			4	
Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city			1	1	1
Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city		3		3	
Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city	1	2	1	6	
<b>Total</b>	3	5	2	14	1

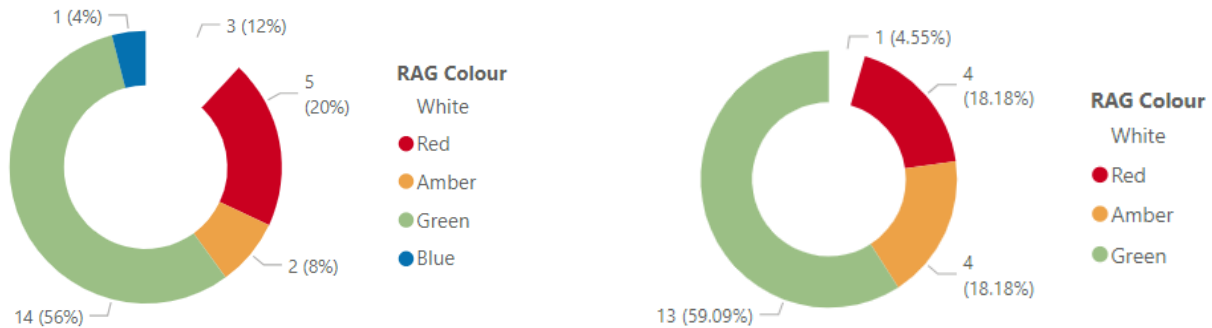
18. The two pie charts below shows that performance has remained steady this quarter compared with the last quarter, with signs of improvement, as detailed later in this report.



## Count of KPI performance status

Current quarter

Previous quarter



19. This quarter, across the seven **red** and **amber** KPIs, compared with last quarter, three have improved and four have declined. Details on these can be found in the main body of the report.

20. Appendix A provides additional information on notable successes for the reporting period, including:

- the near completion of the first phase of Microsoft tools development project, with our new SharePoint sites.
- our continued support for early careers with the recruitment to a growing number of apprenticeships and two more management trainees as part of the National Graduate Development Programme.
- the successful completion of the Energy Bills Support Schemes reconciliations and continued improvement on new claims performance.
- updates on development schemes at Windmill Road and Anglia Square.

### Organisation wide KPIs

21. All KPIs are service specific except for two KPIs which are organisation wide measures. The reporting responsibility sits with Community services, but the activity takes place across all three directorates for KPIs 25 and 26, and forms part of the KPI suite for *Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city*:

- KPI 25: % of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to within 20 working days*
- KPI 26: % of complaints responded to within 10 days.*

Indicator	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
% of FOI requests responded to within statutory timescales	80.12	92.36	91.40	98.50	97.20
% of corporate complaints responded to within stated timescales	62.06	58.00	58.74	68.00	58.00

22. As shown in the table above, the *KPI 25: % of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to within 20 working days* remains green so is not a concern. Compared with the same quarter last year, we are 17.1 percentage points higher despite a 28% increase in the number of requests.

23. Performance on *KPI 26: % of complaints responded to within 10 days*, however, has dropped by 10% this quarter. The total volume of complaints received has increased by 5% from Q1 and whilst a number of service areas have achieved their target, some services have had an increase in volume and a decline in the number completed on time which has adversely impacted on performance for the organisation overall. Work continues to improve the consistency of performance.

### People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city

24. There are six quarterly KPIs reported for this aim, including the two new KPIs measuring peoples' feeling of safety during the day and after dark. This replaces the previous KPI which didn't differentiate between the time of day. The new KPIs are being monitored to enable us to set a target in due course, and therefore are showing as a white RAG status. All the other KPIs remain green for this quarter, as show in the table below.

Indicator	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
% of households owed a homelessness prevention duty (in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act) where the duty was ended due to suitable accommodation being secured for them	68.00	87.00	88.00	89.00	81.00
% of people responding as feeling safe in local area survey	55.00	63.00	52.00	59.00	
% of residents responding as feeling safe in their local area after dark	New KPIs for Q2 2023/24 to replace KPI 11 above.				41.00
% of residents responding as feeling safe in their local area during the day					69.00
Average number of days taken to process new Housing Benefit claims from point of receipt to notification of entitlement	19.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	16.00
Number (of total) (%) of food premises rated 0,1 or 2 (non-broadly compliant), moving to a compliant rating of 3, 4 or 5 against the Food Hygiene Rating System following intervention by food safety officers	94.00	94.50	93.00	95.00	92.00
Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation	52.00	48.00	46.00	59.00	57.00

25. The homelessness prevention team continues to perform well in challenging times. This has been helped by changing some of the working practices to ensure effective and efficient case management. There is renewed focus on working with clients to ensure they meet their obligations set out in their personalised housing plans along with the optimisation of all available accommodation options.

26. We continue to intensively manage the use of temporary accommodation and the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation remains consistently under target despite high numbers of homelessness presentations. Figures have been affected by the high number of refugee households being discharged from

Home Office accommodation to whom the council then owes a duty. Void turnaround times also continues to affect performance.

27. Of those households in temporary accommodation, 12 have already been assessed and are awaiting the start of their council tenancy. Processes for prioritising void works to council properties which have been allocated to homeless clients are in place, as are measures to prioritise availability of one bedroom accommodation. These steps along with a reduction in void times will help to reduce our use of temporary accommodation.
28. Processing speeds for the assessment of new Housing Benefit claims have improved further during this quarter. A similar number of new claims have been processed as in the previous quarter (317 vs 318) while the average number of days taken to reach a decision reduced significantly from 18 in Q1 to 15.9 in Q2. This brings the year-to-date average to 16.9 days, which is well within the 19.5-day target. The Department for Work and Pensions also monitor this data nationally and has praised the service for excellent performance in this area.
29. New business registrations for food premises remain at a high level. The inspections of higher risk food premises largely continue in line with the Food Standards Agency guidelines, and we are now addressing the backlog of lower risk inspections with positive headway expected as the additional officers come into post during the next quarter.

### Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city

30. There are two quarterly KPIs reported for this aim, both of which have seen an improvement since the last reporting period, as show in the table below.

Indicator	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
% household waste sent for reuse, recycling, composting (reporting on previous quarter)	38.80	38.10	37.00	38.30	38.50
Total number of private sector insulation measures completed	50.00	0.00	34.00	60.00	62.00

31. As mentioned in the previous quarterly performance report, the recycling rate continues to have very minor fluctuations. Steady periods of weather over the summer months have meant garden waste tonnages have been consistent unlike last year. We have begun work on modelling various collection options for the waste and recycling service which will primarily help to increase the recycling rate.
32. A total of 62 measures were installed this quarter, all of which were via the central government funded Sustainable Warmth Competition. Most of these installations were loft insulation and solar PV, along with one cavity wall insulation and one hybrid heat pump. It's also worth noting that the 2022 Solar Together auction has had a particularly strong uptake with final installations currently taking place, however due to the nature of the scheme's reporting we do not find out Norwich-specific numbers until the scheme has concluded. The sign-up period for the 2023 Solar Together auction is also currently open, and we expect interest to be strong again.

33. A significant piece of work is currently underway to update the council's current NI185 reporting protocol. This is a comprehensive piece of work which will align the council's reporting methods with the internationally recognised Greenhouse Gas Protocol. Once the new protocol has been determined and agreed the council will be in a position to report the latest data for *KPI 21: % reduction of CO2 emissions from Local Authority operations*. This indicator is classed as blue this quarter and therefore is not included in the table above as there is no data.

### Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city

34. This quarter there are five quarterly KPIs and one annual KPI reported for this aim. Three quarterly KPIs remain green and two remain red, although the average re-let time has reduced significantly for the second quarter in a row. The annual KPI also remains red as shown in the table below. Intervention steps have been put in place with close monitoring taking place during the next quarter.

Indicator	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	
% of council homes with a valid gas safety certificate	99.82	99.92	99.99	100.00	100.00	
% of council housing rent collected (excluding arrears brought forward)	96.20	98.25	98.77	96.71	96.66	▼
% of planning applications determined within statutory time limits	87.00	87.00	88.00	93.00	93.00	
% of planning decisions upheld after appeal (where council has won)	91.00	88.00	88.00	100.00	77.00	
Average re-let time of council homes in calendar days (excluding major works)	49.00	95.00	101.00	69.00	55.00	▲
Number of new homes (both council and private) completed	316.00				221.00	▼

35. For the second quarter in a row, all our council homes have a valid gas safety certificate.

36. The continued cost of living and energy price impacts affect lower income households more than others. A 96.66% council housing rent collection rate is positive. and when compared with the same quarter of last year (96.2%). £35,407,902 has been collected up to week 26, which compares well with £33,003,019 for the same period last year. Projections indicate a collection performance of 99.3% at year end. According to Housemark<sup>1</sup>, this level of collection rate fits in with median performance when benchmarked against other local authorities. Some new initiatives for digital engagement are being trialed in the next quarter to help improve the collection rate.

37. For the second quarter in a row, the average re-let time of council homes has fallen, currently sitting at 55 days. Whilst this remains out of target, we are confident that the trend will continue throughout the rest of the year. The voids projects group

<sup>1</sup> [Housemark](#) – leading data and insight company for the UK housing sector.

continues to focus on further improving the re-let time, with the continued use of NCSL and subcontractors.

38. Across the 2022-23 monitoring period 221 new homes were completed within the Norwich City Council area, which is below the target of 477 homes per year required as set out in the [Greater Norwich Joint Core Strategy](#). This is the number of conventional dwellings. By comparison, including purpose-built student accommodation and other communal accommodation, 228 dwellings were completed in the 2022-23 monitoring period.
39. There has been a noticeable reduction in housing completions following two particularly successful years (2018-19 and 2019-20) where a significant amount of office to residential conversions were completed. The 2022-23 delivery figures are not that dissimilar from delivery figures preceding 2018-19 which varied between approximately 210 to 450 homes per annum.
40. Challenges in the housing market are not unique to Norwich, and national press and research articles indicate that factors such as uncertainty around planning reforms, increased build costs (associated with the war in Ukraine and Brexit), a tight labour market, and economic changes impacting the ability of people being able to access the housing market are all impacting on the number of new residential planning permissions being issued and the number of new homes being delivered. Nutrient Neutrality also compounds this issue by not being able to issue new planning permissions for residential units in the city and the additional level of uncertainty/risk this presents to developers.
41. Despite this, the city council is already taking actions to improve housing delivery such as continuing to progress delivery of housing on council-owned sites, preparation of the East Norwich Regeneration supplementary planning document, working with Broadland and South Norfolk councils to prepare the Greater Norwich Local Plan and working in partnership with other local and national agencies to access funding for housing.

### **Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city**

42. There are eight quarterly KPIs reported for this aim, one of which is new for this year and is being monitored to set an appropriate target in due course (marked as white below). Four KPIs are green, one of which has moved up from amber last quarter. We have also seen the previously red KPI on customer satisfaction with our customer contact team move from red to amber this quarter. Performance has declined for contact through digital channels, as shown in the table below.

Indicator	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
% of customer contact that takes place through digital channels	45.71	42.05	42.98	46.36	43.59
% of customer's responding as satisfied with customer contact team service	68.04	83.71	84.75	67.46	73.95
Business Rates Collection – the amount of in year business rates plus arrears from old years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	100.06	99.53	101.83	105.48	101.11
Council income from investment property portfolio expressed as % of target income	92.00	95.00	97.00	95.00	95.00
Council on track to remain within General Fund budget (£)	-1,397,000.00	-1,764,000.00	-1,796,000.00	-2,070,000.00	-3,260,000.00
Council Tax Collection – the amount of in year council tax plus arrears from old years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	100.64	99.67	100.26	102.93	101.60
Customer facing IT services availability expressed as a % of time (24/7 excluding scheduled downtime)	new KPI for 2023/24			99.93	99.82
IT System availability expressed as a percent of time available during core hours	99.85	99.94	99.95	96.60	99.94

43. There are challenges with channel shift and the volume of contact that is being generated. The percentage of channel shift is measured by counting online service requests alongside phone calls. As the number of phone calls currently are not reducing significantly, the overall percentage is below target.
44. There has been a 6.5% increase in customer satisfaction with the customer contact service this quarter compared with the last. This reflects the efforts made to reduce the average wait time, helped by the additional resource that has been out in place.
45. There has been an improvement in performance for *IT System availability expressed as a percent of time available during core hours* with good access across all systems and services during this quarter, achieving 99.94% availability. We also saw another good quarter with the *online customer facing IT services availability (24/7 and exclude scheduled downtime)* achieving 99.82% availability.
46. The data for *Council income from investment property portfolio expressed as % of target income* is reported in arrears and so relates to Q1 2022/23. Where we have not been able to collect income owed, this debt principally relates to common debtors with recovery action being discussed.
47. Overall Council Tax and Business Rates collection rates have been maintained. Council Tax in year collection is down slightly this quarter due to students moving into new accommodation for the next academic year and exemptions and discounts not yet having been applied. Students need to provide proof of their student status. Once applied the collection rate is likely to show an improvement. Business Rates in year collection is down largely due to the volume of changes in Ratable Value received from the Valuation Office Agency.
48. A detailed financial report to Cabinet in November 2023 will include progress against our Medium-Term Financial Strategy. However, we continue to exceed target when it comes to remaining within the General Fund Budget.



## Consultation

49. No consultation was required in creating this report.

## Implications

### Financial and resources

50. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2022-26 and budget.

51. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources.

## Legal

52. In considering its financial and non-financial performance, the Cabinet is supporting the Council to fulfil its duties under s.151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to ensure there are arrangements in place for the proper administration of its financial affairs, and under s.3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

## Statutory considerations

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:</b>
Equality and Diversity	This report does not have direct implications for equality and diversity; it reports on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the equality implications of which will have been considered as part of service planning or other decision-making processes.
Health, Social and Economic Impact	This report does not have direct health, social or economic implications; it provides an update on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the implications of which will have been considered elsewhere.
Crime and Disorder	This report does not have direct implications for crime and disorder; it provides an update on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the implications of which will have been considered elsewhere.
Children and Adults Safeguarding	This report does not have direct safeguarding implications; it provides an update on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the implications of which will have been considered elsewhere.
Environmental Impact	This report does not have direct environmental implications; it provides an update on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the implications of which will have been considered elsewhere.

## Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Specific risk management activities and detailed consideration of the corporate risk register are reported separately through the quarterly Risk Management Report.	Failure to manage risks appropriately could have financial reputational or other consequences	Risk owners are required to implement controls to mitigate risks and update these regularly.

## Other options

53. There are no alternative options to consider.

## Reasons for the decision/recommendation

54. It is recommended that cabinet review progress on the key performance indicators for this quarter.

## Appendices:


- **Appendix A Table of successes** provides details on notable successes from quarter one, aligning them to the relevant corporate aim, portfolio, and corporate risk, where appropriate.
- **Appendix B Table of KPIs** provides a detailed list of which directorate holds the reporting responsibility for each KPI, how it is calculated, how frequently it is reported and what the target and intervention levels are.
- **Appendix C Performance summary by KPI** provides a detailed list of all KPIs for this and previous reporting periods, showing the status and direction of progress.

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	<p>If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.</p>
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## Appendix A: Table of successes

Success	Corporate aim	Portfolio	Corporate risk
<p><b>SharePoint Project:</b> We have nearly completed the first phase of Microsoft tools development, with our new SharePoint sites. The next phase of the project will progress the use of Applications such as Microsoft Forms, Whiteboard and OneDrive which provide the tools for the organisation to work more efficiently, collaboratively, and creatively.</p>	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Resources	N/A
<p><b>Apprenticeships and National Graduate Development Programme:</b> Early careers are a very important part of the recruitment process into the organisation and supports our succession planning for the future. The number of apprentices has increased substantially in the last two years, and this trend is forecasted to continue. All apprentices that have completed their course have now obtained permanent roles within the organisation.</p> <p>In autumn 2021 through the National Graduate Development Programme we recruited two graduates, who completed the 2-year scheme and have since both successfully secured permanent roles within the organisation. To continue the success of the graduate scheme we recruited two more graduates in October 2023, who are spending their first placement with the strategy team.</p>	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Inclusive and sustainable development	N/A
<p><b>Energy Bill Grants:</b> We completed the Energy Bills Support Schemes reconciliations ahead of the deadline. In total we paid 418 claims totaling £161,000.</p> <p>We've continued to improve on new claims performance and the average days to process is lower (16 days) than the 18 days reported for Q1.</p> <p>The DWP Performance Team have confirmed they are happy with our current benefits performance in all areas.</p>	The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.	Inclusive and sustainable growth	CORP04: Further waves of COVID 19

<p><b>Windmill Road:</b> The council's Revolving Fund exists to acquire stalled sites and bring them forward for development. Sites may be acquired via compulsory purchase or (as in this case) via negotiation. Planning consent for 17 dwellings was issued in 2018 for a site to the north of Windmill Road, however this still remained undeveloped in 2022. The council acquired the site in July 2022 and as of October 2023 is in the process of bringing it to market.</p> <p>In line with the objectives of the Revolving Fund, the council intends to ensure the site is developed within a reasonable period. Its sale will be conditional upon its development within an agreed period to ensure that it is used to deliver much-needed housing.</p>	<p>Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.</p>	<p>Inclusive and sustainable growth</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Anglia Square:</b> Following planning applications committee in April 2023, the decision on the proposed redevelopment of Anglia Square was issued on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and the period for legal challenge passed on 1 September 2023. The previous scheme had been called in for determination by the Secretary of State and was ultimately effused. The new scheme will see significant regeneration benefits for this northern part of the city centre, and it is hoped in early 2024 that the development will start on site.</p>	<p>Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.</p>	<p>Inclusive and sustainable growth</p>	<p>CORP15: Failure to be able to draw down £15m of Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) money previously secured from Homes England (HE) and under contract to assist with the delivery of Anglia Square leading to failure for</p>

			successful redevelopment of this key city centre site.
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## Appendix B: Table of KPIs

All KPIs are service specific with exception of KPIs 25 and 26 which are organisation wide measures.

KPI	Indicator description	Methodology	Target	Intervention	Frequency	Corporate Aim	Directorate Responsible
KPI 01	Average number of days taken to process new Housing Benefit Claims from point of receipt to notification of entitlement	Data generated from Northgate system	19.5 days from 2023/24 (previously 21 days)	21.6 days from 2023/24 (previously 23.1 days)	Quarterly	People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.	Corporate and commercial services
KPI 02	Council Tax collection – the amount of in year council tax plus arrears from previous years collected (target set according to budget requirement).	The annual target is the Council Tax requirement set in the budget. The annual target is profiled across the year based on what we would expect to have collected by the end of each month. Each quarter, variance to the quarterly target is reported. Data is generated from the Northgate System	100%	99%	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Corporate and commercial services
KPI 03	Business Rates collection – the amount of in year business rates plus arrears from previous years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	The annual target is the National Non-Domestic Rata forecast rating income. The annual target is profiled across the year based on what we would expect to have collected by the end of each month. Each quarter, variance to the quarterly target is reported. Data is generated from the Northgate System	100%	99%	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Corporate and commercial services

KPI 04	Council on track to remain within General Fund budget (£)	Forecasts from all budget managers input into Collaborative Planning tool	£0.00	£500,000	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Corporate and commercial services
KPI 05	% of council housing rent collected (excluding arrears brought forward)	(A / B)*100 . Where A = the actual rent and service charges collected year-to-date on current & former General Needs (GN) & Housing for Older People (HfOP) (excluding garages) and where B = the actual rent and service charges due year-to-date for all tenanted GN & HfOP properties (excluding garages). Worked example - By the end of September £470,000 of rent and service charges had been received by the organisation from current & former tenants. The year-to-date actual rent and service charges due is £500,000. Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed =(£470,000 / £500,000)*100 = 94.0%	99.8%	98.8%	Quarterly	Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.	Community services
KPI 06	Average re-let time of council homes in calendar days (excluding major works)	Calculated by dividing the total number of days standard re-let properties were vacant in the period, by the number of standard re-lets in the period	21 days	25 days	Quarterly	Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.	Community services
KPI 07	% of council homes with a valid gas safety certificate	The denominator is the number of rented dwellings in ownership that have a connected gas supply. Calculation = Number of council homes with a valid gas safety certificate / Number of council homes requiring a gas safety certificate * 100	100%	99.8%	Quarterly	Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.	Community services

KPI 08	Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation	This measure of temporary accommodation is a snapshot at the end of the period. It is not a cumulative total of all households living in temporary accommodation across the period. Any households living in temporary accommodation in another local authority district are included where this has been provided by Norwich City Council	62	68	Quarterly	People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.	Community services
KPI 09	% of households owed a homelessness prevention duty (in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act) where the duty was ended due to suitable accommodation being secured for them	This KPI measures the proportion of households owed a prevention duty whose duty ended due to suitable accommodation being secured for at least six months. This can involve assisting them to stay in their current accommodation, or helping them to find a new place to live. Calculation = $(N / D) * 100$ N = Number of households secured accommodation for at least six months (where a prevention duty ended in the period) D = Number of households whose prevention duty ended in the period	66	60	Quarterly	People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.	Community services
KPI 10	% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, composting (reporting on previous quarter)	Using DEFRA methodology from <a href="#">WasteDataFlow</a>	40%	36%	Quarterly	Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.	Development and city services
KPI 11	% of people responding as feeling safe in a local area survey	% of people responding as feeling safe to a local area survey issued by text – <b>REPLACED BY KPIS 11a &amp; 11b from Q2 2023/24</b>	60%	54%	Quarterly	People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.	Community services

KPI 11a	% of residents responding as feeling safe in their local area during the day	% of people responding as feeling safe during the day to a local area survey issued by text	New KPI for Q2 2023/24		Quarterly	People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.	Community services
KPI 11b	% of residents responding as feeling safe in their local area after dark	% of people responding as feeling safe after dark to a local area survey issued by text	New KPI for Q2 2023/24		Quarterly	People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.	Community services
KPI 12	Number (of total) (%) of food premises rated 0,1 or 2 (not broadly compliant), moving to a compliant rating of 3, 4 or 5 against the Food Rating Hygiene System following intervention by food safety officers	Calculation run in Environmental Health systems	80	72	Quarterly	People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.	Development and city services
KPI 13	Number of private rented sector homes made safe	Report run in Uniform	100	90	Annually (Q4)	Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.	Development and city services
KPI 14	% of planning decisions upheld after appeal (where the council has won)	Trailing Twelve Month Data calculated after the end of each quarter based on planning appeal decisions	66%	59.4%	Quarterly	Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.	Development and city services
KPI 15	% of planning applications determined within statutory time limits	% of planning applications of development types Q1-Q21 (these being central government definitions) determined within statutory time periods or within an agreed extension of time	90%	51%	Quarterly	Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.	Development and city services
KPI 16	Council income from investment property portfolio expressed as a % of target income	Rental income collected (including agreed deferrals) as a % of budgeted income	95%	85.5%	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve	Development and city services

						the city.	
KPI 17	Area of underused council land brought into productive use (m2)	Measure the m2 of any sites allocated in the Site Allocations plan that are within council ownership and are brought into the use specified in the allocation policy within that monitoring year (excludes designated open space)	0%	0%	Annually (Q4)	The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish	Development and city services
KPI 18	Number of affordable homes built, purchased or enabled by the council	Collection of information from Registered Providers and in-house development	50	45	Annually (Q4)	Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.	Development and city services
KPI 19	Number of new homes (council & private) completed (built)	Sum of dwellings completed in financial year. the number of dwellings counted for this indicator refers only to standard dwellings that are counted against the Joint core strategy (JCS) target. Student and communal institutional accommodation are not counted against the JCS but are reported in the monitoring report for the Development Management Policies Local Plan	477	429	Annually (Q2)	Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.	Development and city services
KPI 20	Value of external funding leveraged to support council development and place shaping priorities (£).	Sum of £ leveraged	£250,000	£225,000	Annually (Q4)	The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish	Development and city services

KPI 21	% reduction of CO2 emissions from Local Authority operations	The Council's carbon reduction metric relates to the % of carbon dioxide emitted, in tonnes, compared to the previous year. Carbon emissions included in the scope of measurement and reporting include Scope 1, 2 and a subset of Scope 3 emissions (as defined by the International Greenhouse Gas protocol and according to the National Indicator 185). These include heating and fleet fuel for operational buildings* and vehicles, electricity for operational buildings and vehicles, business travel and contractor's emissions for significant contracts including waste and other city services. * Operational buildings include City Hall, Riverside Leisure Centre, The Halls, car parks and sheltered housing schemes.	3%	2.7%	Annual (Q2)	Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.	Community services
KPI 22	Total number of private sector insulation measures completes	Sum of measures	50	45	Quarterly	Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.	Community services
KPI 23	% of customers responding as satisfied with customer contact team service	% responding as satisfied with service via a text survey	76%	70%	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Community services
KPI 24	% of customer contact that takes place through digital channels	Sum of webforms divided into total telephone and face to face contacts	53% from 2022/23 (previously 45%)	45% from 2022/23 (previously 40%)	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Community services
KPI 25	% of FOI requests responded to within statutory timescales (organisation wide KPI)	% of FOI requests answered within 20 working days	90%	81%	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Community services
KPI 26	% of corporate complaints responded to within stated	% of complaints answered within 10 days	70%	62%	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good	Community



	timescales (organisation wide KPI)					shape to serve the city.	services
KPI 27	IT system availability expressed as a percent of time available during core hours	System availability data captured from various applications	99%	90%	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Community services
KPI 28	Customer facing IT services availability (24/7 excluding scheduled downtime)	System availability data captured from various applications	New KPI for 2023/24	New KPI for 2023/24	Quarterly	Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.	Community services

**Appendix C: Performance summary by KPI with the direction travel shown in the final column.**

Indicator	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	
% household waste sent for reuse, recycling, composting (reporting on previous quarter)	38.80	38.10	37.00	38.30	38.50	▲
% of council homes with a valid gas safety certificate	99.82	99.92	99.99	100.00	100.00	
% of council housing rent collected (excluding arrears brought forward)	96.20	98.25	98.77	96.71	96.66	▼
% of customer contact that takes place through digital channels	45.71	42.05	42.98	46.36	43.59	▼
% of customer's responding as satisfied with customer contact team service	68.04	83.71	84.75	67.46	73.95	▲
% of households owed a homelessness prevention duty (in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act) where the duty was ended due to suitable accommodation being secured for them	68.00	87.00	88.00	89.00	81.00	
% of people responding as feeling safe in local area survey	55.00	63.00	52.00	59.00		
% of planning applications determined within statutory time limits	87.00	87.00	88.00	93.00	93.00	
% of planning decisions upheld after appeal (where council has won)	91.00	88.00	88.00	100.00	77.00	
% of residents responding as feeling safe in their local area after dark					41.00	
% of residents responding as feeling safe in their local area during the day					69.00	
Area of underused council land brought into productive use (m2)			0.00			
Average number of days taken to process new Housing Benefit claims from point of receipt to notification of entitlement	19.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	16.00	
Average re-let time of council homes in calendar days (excluding major works)	49.00	95.00	101.00	69.00	55.00	▲
Business Rates Collection – the amount of in year business rates plus arrears from old years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	100.06	99.53	101.83	105.48	101.11	
Council income from investment property portfolio expressed as % of target income	92.00	95.00	97.00	95.00	95.00	
Council on track to remain within General Fund budget (£)	-1,397,000.00	-1,764,000.00	-1,796,000.00	-2,070,000.00	-3,260,000.00	
Council Tax Collection – the amount of in year council tax plus arrears from old years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	100.64	99.67	100.26	102.93	101.60	
Customer facing IT services availability expressed as a % of time (24/7 excluding scheduled downtime)				99.93	99.82	
IT System availability expressed as a percent of time available during core hours	99.85	99.94	99.95	96.60	99.94	▲
Number (of total) (%) of food premises rated 0,1 or 2 (non-broadly compliant), moving to a compliant rating of 3, 4 or 5 against the Food Hygiene Rating System following intervention by food safety officers	94.00	94.50	93.00	95.00	92.00	

Indicator	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
Number of affordable homes built, purchased or enabled by the council			39.00		
Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation	52.00	48.00	46.00	59.00	57.00
Number of new homes (both council and private) completed	316.00				221.00
Number of private rented sector homes made safe			26.00		
Total number of private sector insulation measures completed	50.00	0.00	34.00	60.00	62.00
Value of external funding leveraged to support council development and place-shaping priorities (£)			6,550,985.00		







**Committee name:** Cabinet

**Committee date:** 15/11/2023

**Report title:** Rough Sleeping Strategy: Prevention, Intervention & Recovery 2023-2028

**Portfolio:** Councillor Jones, Deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety

**Report from:** Interim executive director of housing and community safety

**Wards:** All wards

**OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the adoption of the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028.

The Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 granted provisions and powers for local authorities' work on relieving homelessness and prevention. The Act also carried a duty that local authorities had to periodically publish a strategy. As required by the Act a homelessness review will be carried out during the life of the strategy to make sure it remains relevant and informed.

Our strategy has also been influenced by the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy. The Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out the Government's strategy for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. It was published on 13 August 2018.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028.

**Policy framework**

This report helps to meet the 'People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city' and 'Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city' corporate priorities.

## Report details

1. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires Local Authorities to produce a homelessness strategy that applies to everyone at risk of homelessness, not just people who may fall within a priority need group for the purposes of the Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. There is also a specific requirement within the Ministry of Housing's Homelessness Code of Guidance to ensure that all homelessness strategies are compliant and refreshed to ensure compliance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
2. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) places additional duties on Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) that are designed to ensure all households at risk of homelessness receive earlier and more effective interventions. Introduced in April 2018, the act requires authorities to:
  - a. Provide advice and guidance for all households approaching the LA and for the guidance to meet the needs of certain listed groups including those leaving prison, hospital or care and those with mental health issues.
  - b. To prevent those threatened with homelessness from becoming homeless
  - c. To relieve homelessness for those who are homelessBoth the Prevention and Relief duties last for 56 days.
3. Preparatory work began in 2022 as services were beginning to return to normal after the COVID pandemic. Initial discussions with our partners in the Pathways consortium, including St Martin's as the lead agency, established that 'business as usual' had dramatically changed since the pandemic. Work was undertaken to review the key priorities from the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2017-2022 and establish what targets had been achieved. We also worked closely with the Norfolk Co-Production Alliance to ensure that we captured the voice of those with lived experience in the strategy.
4. We have produced a separate Rough Sleeping Strategy to our Homelessness Strategy since 2009. These are intended to complement each other. Rough sleeping is a significant issue while only being one facet of homelessness and the separate strategies make this distinction clear. In this strategy we wanted to look at the key challenges for our work with those rough sleeping going forwards. These include:
  - a. The COVID-19 pandemic (and its impact on homelessness)
  - b. The cost-of-living crisis
  - c. People with no recourse to public funds (NRPF)
  - d. Long-term and multiple disadvantage
5. In August 2018 the Government released their Rough Sleeping Strategy, followed in September 2022 by the 'Ending Rough Sleeping for Good' strategy. The first of these set out the Government's strategy for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. We have chosen to structure our strategy with the same four key priority areas: Prevention, Intervention, Recovery and Systems:

- a. Prevention – Understanding the issues that lead to rough sleeping and working to address them before people are forced to sleep on the street.
  - b. Intervention – Helping those already sleeping rough with swift support tailored to their individual circumstances.
  - c. Recovery – Supporting people in finding a new home and rebuilding their lives.
  - d. Systems – Look at blockages in the referral system and how we better connect the system to provide effective solutions faster.
6. The spread of COVID across the world brought unprecedented challenges and everyone was called upon to play their part to reduce its spread and save lives by responding to the coronavirus outbreak and support the most vulnerable. During lockdown, presentations of people sleeping on the streets kept happening.
  7. Between 2020-2022 this meant that services had to work flexibly around processes whilst working from home and home schooling. Front line outreach services in Norwich faced limited resources (such as bespoke accommodation or drug rehabilitation programmes), lack of face-to-face appointments, and many other obstacles that we had to overcome in one way or another. Other challenges during these times meant that the local authority, hotels and hostels have accommodated people who would normally and otherwise be ineligible for support (due to, for example, behaviour or risk to others) making judgements based on risk to life.
  8. The pandemic also brought an unprecedented number of ‘new-to-the-streets’ presentations for a variety of reasons outlined in the strategy.
  9. To inform the strategy, we looked at data gathered as part of the national annual streetcount, as well as data gathered by the Pathways service. We also worked closely with our partners in the supported accommodation sector and other stakeholders in the Pathways operational meeting and other multi-agency meetings. For example, while numbers seen on the annual streetcount have dropped, this is as a result of increased ‘direct access’ provision (such as the Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub funded by Norwich City Council through government grant-funding) and shows that Norwich is a ‘flow city’, receiving high amounts of new rough sleepers. This helped inform our Prevention priority.

## **Consultation**

10. Initial work with the Norwich Co-production Alliance (a group of people with lived experience of rough sleeping) helped to influence our strategy, and they were also invited to consult on the final document.
11. The Rough Sleeping Strategy went to the Portfolio Holder and Interim Executive Director of Housing and Community Safety before going out for external consultation and was amended with their changes. The Strategy went out for external consultation, including on the Council’s website, between Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September and Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October. The strategy was also presented to the Tenant Involvement Panel on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September to positive feedback.

Organisation	Suggestions	Changes made to Rough Sleeping Strategy	Reason
St Martins Housing Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of Move-On Accommodation</li> <li>• Mental Health support</li> </ul>	None	<p>Good work already goes on operationally around Move-On with the Norwich Accommodation Meeting, and the focus on long-term and revolving door cases will address blockages in the hostel system.</p> <p>As above, much existing work surrounds improving access to Mental Health support, particularly through the links to NSFT with the Pathways service. Again, the focus on long-term cases will include work around Mental Health support.</p>
YourOwnPlace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social housing tenants not knowing how to access support – publicization can be improved</li> <li>• NRPF clients struggle to access anything besides the precarious private rented market</li> </ul>	None	<p>While some prevention work will cross over with work with social housing tenants, the focus of this strategy must remain rough sleeping. The ‘no wrong door’ approach encapsulated by the Pathways service ensures that rough sleepers can access the appropriate services, and the outreach team can publicise services to rough sleepers.</p> <p>NRPF clients are an existing focus of this strategy.</p>
MAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The barriers faced by refugees exiting Home Office accommodation who do have</li> </ul>	None	Operational work is already ongoing to work with this cohort, but this remains more of an issue for wider homelessness services than for rough



	recourse to public funds.		sleeping services specifically. Many of the barriers faced are already addressed by intensive support from existing rough sleeping services when refugees are found rough sleeping.
Adult Safeguarding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlighting the risk and harm that rough sleeping exposes a person to.</li> </ul>	Yes	Changes made to slide 10 of the strategy to make the wording directly reference safeguarding.
Magdalene Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pathways for 'hidden homeless' people</li> <li>• Provision of gendered services</li> </ul>	None	<p>Pathways for the 'hidden homeless' are not the focus of this strategy, which focuses on rough sleepers. Work has been done operationally to ensure that services (including Pathways) are not missing the most vulnerable hidden homeless and are able to work with them.</p> <p>Gendered services exist in Norwich.</p>

## Implications

### Financial and resources

12. All proposals within this report will be met with existing resources.

### Legal

13. We are required to meet our statutory obligation to produce a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy.

### Statutory considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	As per the Equality Impact Assessment, equality and diversity implications will be positive for rough sleepers (see appendix B)

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:</b>
Health, social and economic impact	Rough sleeping is known to have a serious negative effect on the health of individuals, as shown by previous Health Needs audits. Rough sleeping is also known to create a significant cost to other statutory and voluntary agencies. By addressing Rough Sleeping the strategy will address these considerations.
Crime and disorder	We will continue to work with our partners in the Norfolk County Community Safety Partnership, particularly through the new Safer Norwich Board. A key focus of the Rough Sleeping Strategy is to work in partnership with multiple agencies, voluntary groups, and services to ensure we can support the most long-term disadvantaged individuals to address their multiple needs.
Children and adults safeguarding	Rough sleepers are disproportionately likely to be victims of harm or abuse, and by improving our interventions we can better safeguard them.
Environmental impact	N/A

## Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Operational –  Legal –  Reputational -	<p>As we commission the outreach service and direct access accommodation, it would leave the sector without a clear direction from Norwich City Council.</p> <p>We have a statutory duty to respond to homelessness and as such we could risk not meeting this duty by not responding to rough sleeping.</p> <p>If the council failed to follow a clear strategic direction it is likely that rough sleeping would increase. This would be clearly against the council's corporate and strategic priorities.</p>	By adopting the strategy these risks are mitigated.

### Other options considered

14. There are no other reasonable viable options.

### Reasons for the decision/recommendation

15. Cabinet is being recommended to adopt the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028 to mitigate the above risks and provide a framework for best practice and a clear strategic direction to tackle rough sleeping in Norwich.

**Background papers: None**

**Appendices:**

**Appendix A: Rough Sleeping Strategy: Prevention, Intervention & Recovery 2023-2028**

**Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment**

**Contact officer:**

**Name: Joe Morris**

**Telephone number: 01603 987787**

**Email address: joemorris@norwich.gov.uk**



If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.



# Rough Sleeping Strategy: Prevention, Intervention & Recovery 2023-2028

# Introduction

This Rough Sleeping Strategy aims to provide a high-level overview of the work Norwich City Council is doing in partnership with a broad range of national and local agencies to support people who are sleeping rough on our streets.

Our Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2023-28 was developed following the careful review of our previous strategy and the success and challenges we experienced through the pursuit of our previous targets.

Our priorities for the next 5 years are:

- **Prevention** – Understanding the issues that lead to rough sleeping and working to address them before people are forced to sleep on the street.
- **Intervention** – Helping those already sleeping rough with swift support tailored to their individual circumstances.
- **Recovery** – Supporting people in finding a new home and rebuilding their lives.
- **Systems** – Look at blockages in the referral system and how we better connect the system to provide effective solutions faster.

Despite the substantial progress we have made around the issue of rough sleeping in Norwich, a lot has changed since the publication of our previous strategy. The key challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, coupled with the continuation of the challenges faced by those with no recourse to public funds and individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage, mean we have had to re-evaluate our approach.

Our new Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2023-28 outlines the actions we will take to promote the prevention, early intervention and recovery of residents sleeping rough and how we will work with external partners to improve and better connect the systems we all use, to facilitate improved access to services for this particularly vulnerable group of people within Norwich.

# What is rough sleeping?

Rough sleeping is the most visible and personally damaging form of homelessness. It is an unfortunate reality within Norwich that simply cannot be ignored. We believe that, with the right support, it is possible for everyone sleeping rough to turn their lives around, even when they face multiple and deep-rooted problems, such as mental illness or addiction.

The damaging and long-lasting impacts of sleeping rough are well known. The longer someone sleeps rough on our streets, the more harmful and dangerous their situation becomes for them. Our understanding of the negative consequences of prolonged rough sleeping have led Norwich City Council to concentrate our efforts to prevent entrenched rough sleeping and where possible support individuals to avoid sleeping rough in the first place by assisting them to resolve the problems that can lead to destitution.

People often underestimate the risks and dangers of sleeping on the streets. Examples of such negative impacts include:

- Sleeping on the street is dangerous and severely impacts people's mental and physical health.
- People sleeping out are at significant risk of becoming victims of violence, anti-social behaviour and other crimes.
- The longer people spend without appropriate shelter, the longer it is likely to take them to recover from that situation.

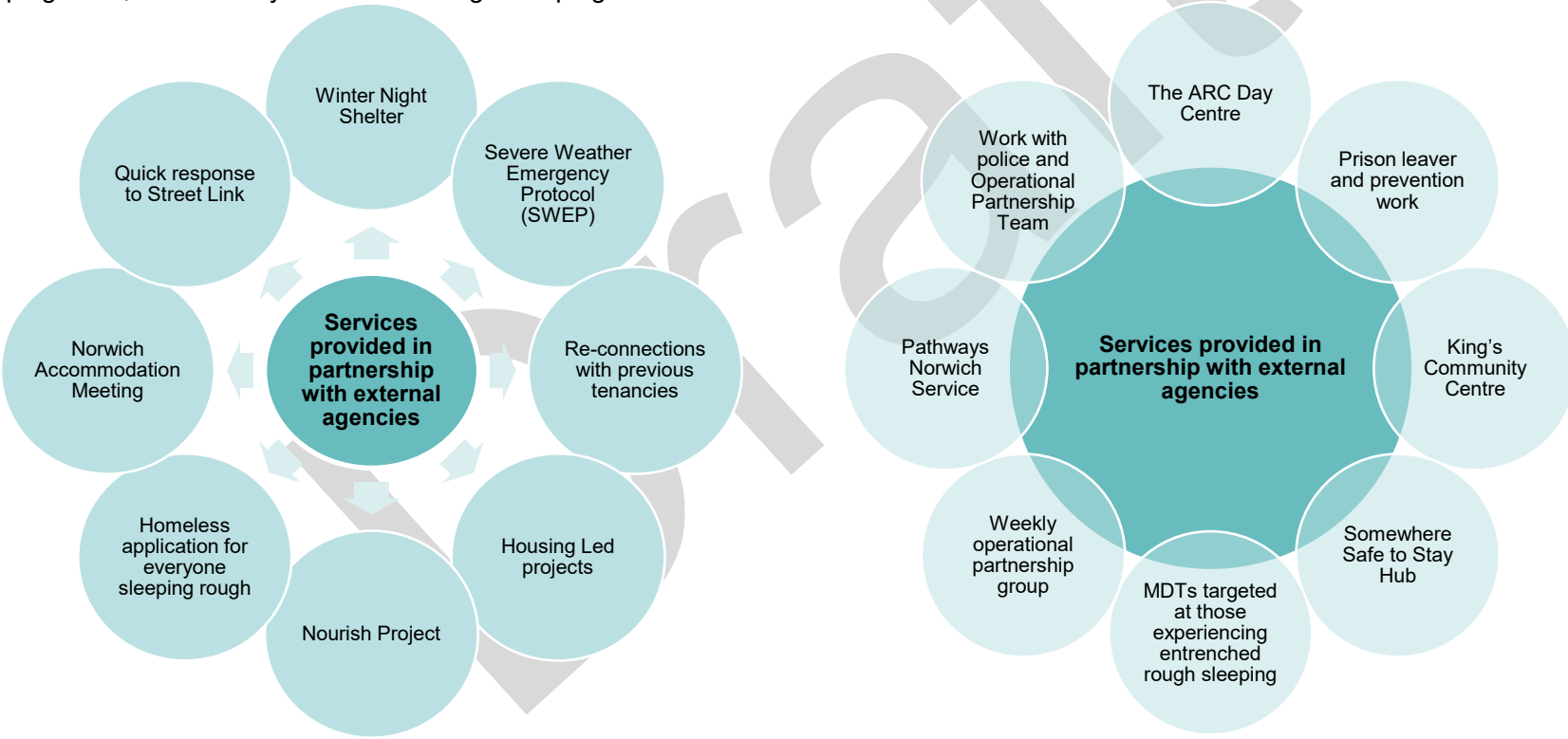
People who are sleeping on our streets should be provided with the appropriate options and support, so that they no longer remain in their perilous situations. In addition to the dangerous, frightening and isolating position which severely impacts the health of those sleeping rough, street homelessness can have a detrimental effect on local communities and should never be seen as a lifestyle choice. At Norwich City Council we believe everyone has the capacity to recover and sustain a life away from the streets.

# Local picture

Norwich City Council was recognised by the Government as a 'Gold Standard Authority' - One of only 14 gold standard homelessness and prevention services in the country. Norwich is described as a flow city which results in a constant presentation of individuals who end up sleeping rough. This results in services being stretched in order to meet the demand and standard that is expected in response to rough sleeping in the city. This position is recognised through the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding that we receive following a robust application process.



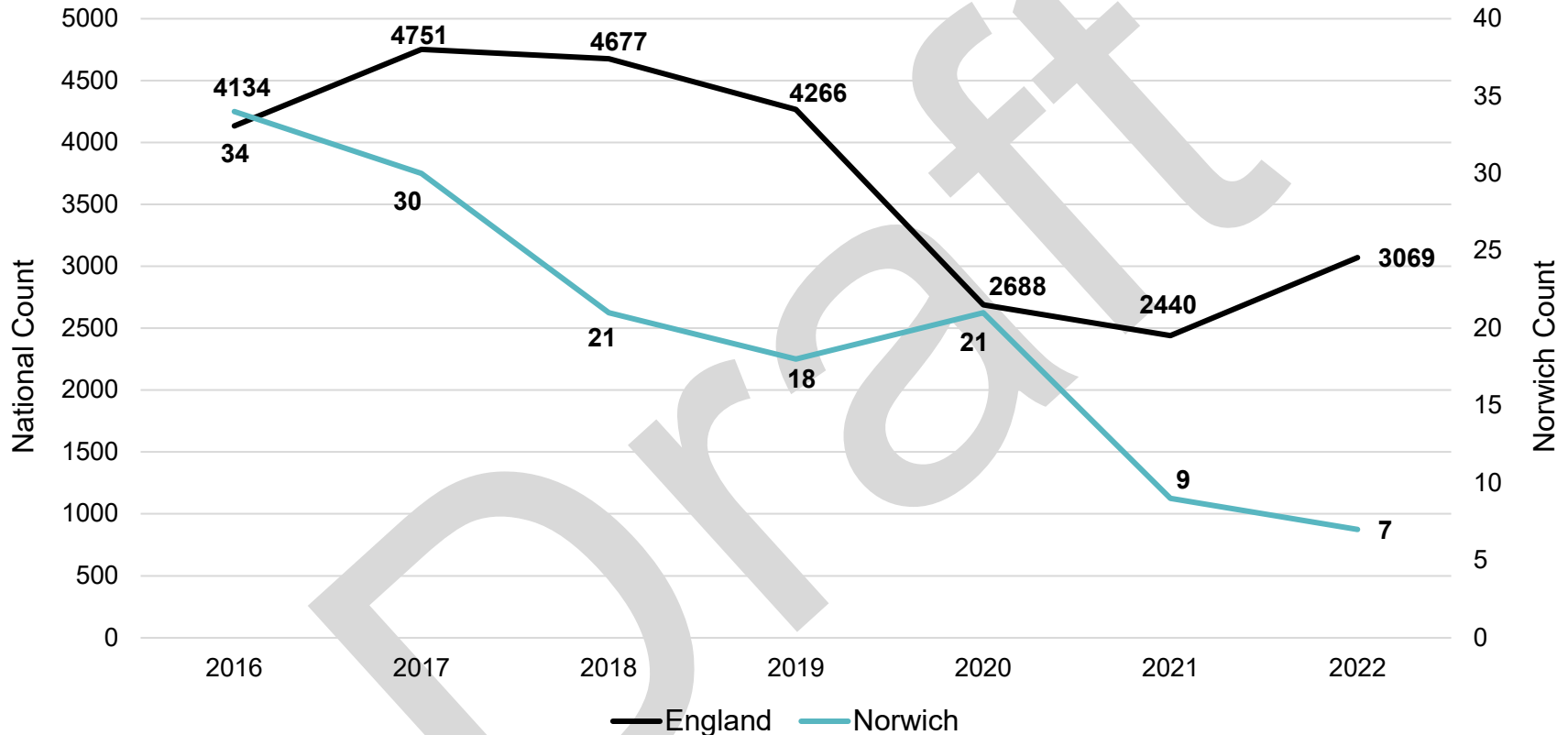
Within Norwich there are almost 600 beds in supported accommodation that are occupied by residents experiencing homelessness, including those who have slept rough. However, the offer in Norwich is not just about housing, there is strong focus on the support that individuals receive which is linked to their offer of accommodation. The council takes a proactive approach through the employment of a specialist rough-sleeping team, who actively co-ordinate rough sleeping and homeless services in Norwich.





# Annual Counts - National & Local

Number of people sleeping rough counted on annual street counts in England & Norwich



The annual count-based estimates above are the combined numbers of people seen sleeping rough within local authorities (including Norwich) across England on a 'typical night' (A single date chosen by the local authority between 1 October and 30 November each year).

# Key challenges

## **Pandemic:**

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic saw an unprecedented increase in first-time homelessness presentations. Such increase has been attributed to the impacts of the Government's furlough scheme, rising unemployment, relationship breakdowns (many involving domestic abuse) and people no longer having access to accommodation due to the lockdown and isolation / social distancing rules. This created additional pressure on the local authority and caused the demand for 1 bed social housing to rise to an unprecedented level.

## **No recourse to public funds (NRPF):**

In Norwich we are committed to reducing rough sleeping for those with limited eligibility. Many Migrants, including asylum seekers, are subject to the NRPF rule. This means they cannot access state benefits in the UK and makes it difficult for them to secure housing through the local authority. Norwich continues to see an increasing number of presentations that are destitute on our streets. There is a clear need to continue building our understanding of how our partners who work closely with Norwich City Council, can be supported to provide additional resources as a result of this demand.

## **Cost-of-living crisis:**

In the Summer of 2022, the UK saw the start of a cost-of-living crisis, which again has resulted in an increase in numbers of people sleeping rough for the first time. This number is expected to continue to rise as the cost of living in the UK remains high and local authorities and homelessness services across the country continue to report more first-time presentations of homelessness.

## **Long-term and multiple disadvantage:**

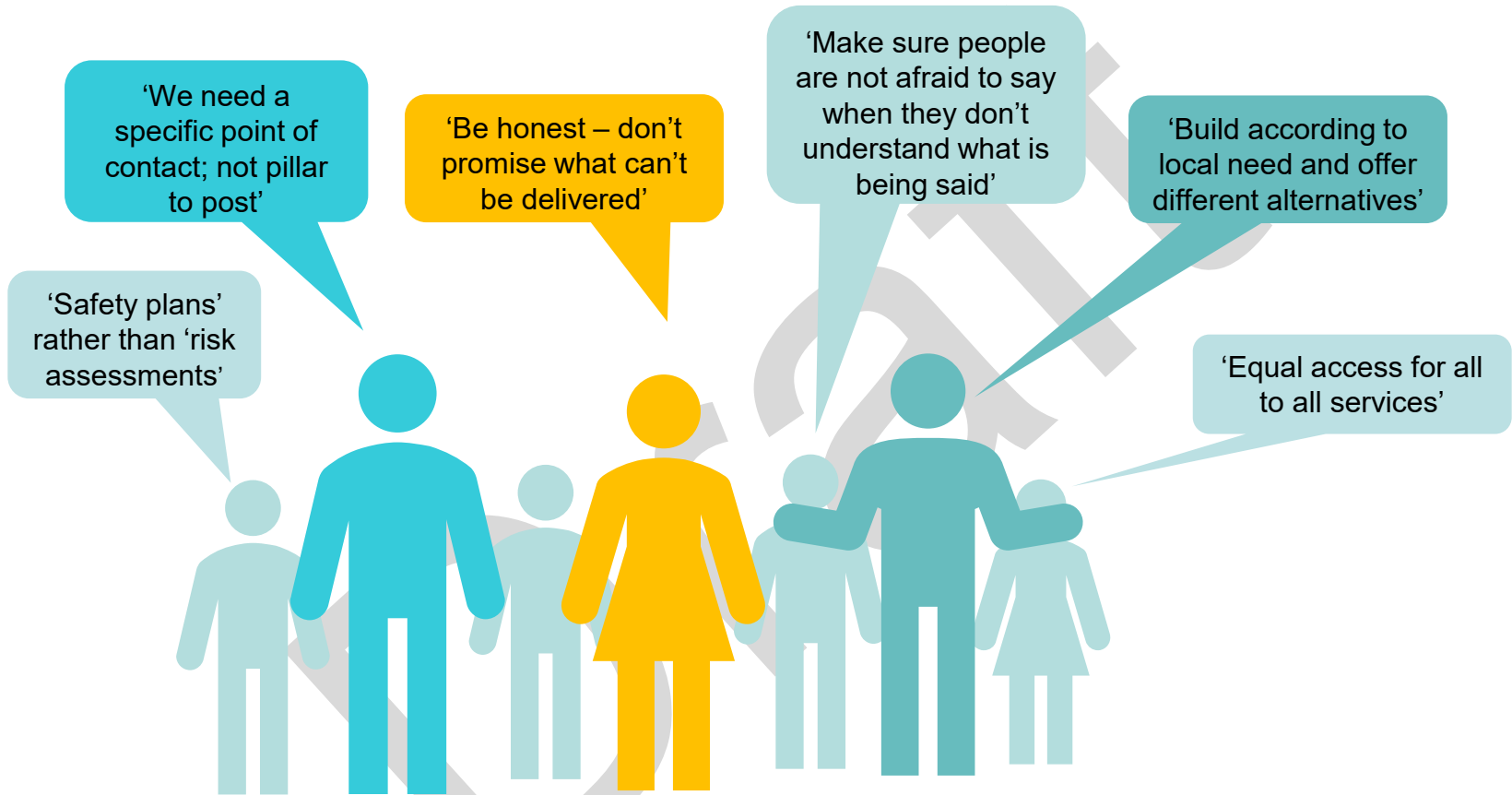
Homelessness is rarely just a housing need; some individuals who have been sleeping rough for a long time, the hidden homeless and those sofa surfing in unsafe accommodation, continue to struggle to engage with support to provide longer term accommodation.

These more complex cases require more help to move on from homelessness and rebuild their lives. Many of the individuals accommodated possessed care and support needs and had historically been in residential or supported housing due to their care needs. Increased cross-sector working is vital for the successful provision of support for those sleeping rough with additional or complex needs. Norwich City Council works in partnership with multiple agencies, voluntary groups, and services to ensure we can support individuals to address their multiple needs.

# Achievements of previous strategy








<b>1. Reduce the number of people sleeping rough on our streets and where possible develop interventions to stop it from happening in the first place</b>	Worked with our partners in the Operational Police Team to help prevent and reduce rough sleeping
	Created better links with faith and charitable organisations in the area
	Released several positive media releases during COVID and the 'Everyone In' programme
	Updated database of services that work with people who are street homeless
<b>2. Actively case manage people sleeping rough who are reluctant to engage (with help available) by using an assertive outreach model</b>	Increased holistic wrap-around support from specialist support providers into supported housing
	Work with commissioners to help provide a post detox (dry house) facility in Norwich
	Introduction of the Housing First model
<b>3. Make the best use of our supported housing system to help people move away from homelessness for good</b>	Created an evidence base with agencies and commissioners for supported housing requirements (including specialist needs)
	Reviewed the greater Norwich hostel move-on agreement
	Worked with commissioners and providers to help adopt the new funding scheme for supported housing
	MEAM evaluation conducted by Cordis Bright

# The voice of lived experience



The Norwich Coproduction Alliance was established to facilitate two-way dialogue with our homelessness service users, to ensure we are developing and improving our service offer in a way that benefits from hearing the voices and views of those with lived experience of homelessness and rough sleeping.

# Actions for the 2023-28 strategy

	<b>Publicise</b>	Publicise homelessness, housing advice and support services especially amongst hard-to-reach groups such as people sofa surfing and the wider public
	<b>Influence</b>	Influence future commissioning of services for people who are homeless so that we can improve their health and wellbeing outcomes
	<b>Identify</b>	Identify people at risk of rough sleeping earlier, especially those people who are sofa surfing through better monitoring of housing advice contacts
	<b>Connect</b>	Forge closer links with organisations who can provide humanitarian help to people who are destitute and have no recourse to public funds
	<b>Specialise</b>	Work with our partners who specialise in substance misuse and mental health services to increase engagement with people who are street homeless
	<b>Engage</b>	Work with our partners to develop a protocol for people who are difficult to engage due to complex needs
	<b>Develop</b>	Pool training opportunities for supported housing staff across providers

# Key success measures for 2023-28

Priority: <b>Prevention</b>	How will we know it's working and measure success:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the Norwich hostel eviction model</li> <li>• More support for marginalised / disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Improvements to discharge from institutions</li> <li>• Targeted prevention in relation to the cost-of-living crisis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease in number of people evicted from the hostel system.</li> <li>• Increased access to rights, resources, and opportunities to enable services to adequately deal with vulnerable groups.</li> <li>• Effective prevention that ensures that individuals staying in state institutions are supported into accommodation and not onto the streets should see this indicator reduce over time.</li> <li>• Emphasis on working with those in more vulnerable groups, to offer support to individuals in tenancies and shared accommodation.</li> </ul>
Priority: <b>Intervention</b>	How will we know it's working and measure success:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a post within NCC to work alongside partners to deliver targeted services for those with NRPF</li> <li>• Support the introduction of a more targeted outreach model and review the 'off the street offer'.</li> <li>• Introduce a Local connection protocol. To link into re-connection role.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain a deeper knowledge of the cultural matters that lead to rough sleeping for those with limited eligibility.</li> <li>• Reduction in number of people becoming entrenched in rough sleeping (this means that they have been seen sleeping rough for 31 nights or more in a 3-month period), thereby reducing risk of abuse and harm.</li> <li>• Reduction of congestion in the hostel system with individuals unable to evidence a 2-year local connection to enable Move-On.</li> </ul>

# Key success measures for 2023-28

Priority: <b>Recovery</b>	How will we know it's working and measure success:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a Trauma Informed approach for all frontline staff.</li> <li>• Encourage good representation from statutory partners and wider homelessness services at multi-disciplinary team meetings.</li> <li>• Increase the number of Housing Led projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an enhanced toolkit for staff working with complex clients and marginalised groups.</li> <li>• Establish a formal agreement with partners that requires statutory attendance similar to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference meetings (MARAC).</li> <li>• Continued provision of tailored outcomes to ensure individuals are provided with appropriate accommodation and support around complex needs.</li> </ul>
Priority: <b>Systems</b>	How will we know it's working and measure success:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an Encampment policy to effectively manage encampments in the City.</li> <li>• Panel to discuss 'most serious complex cases</li> <li>• Introduce a set of KPI's to better monitor the effectiveness of our efforts to prevent rough sleeping in Norwich.</li> <li>• Work more closely with hostels to reduce hostel silt up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a multi-agency approach to ensure there is a consistent and rapid response to dealing with tents and encampments in the city.</li> <li>• Source and offer bespoke accommodation options for individuals facing multiple disadvantage and barriers to homelessness and health services.</li> <li>• Effective reporting of numbers of those sleeping rough.</li> <li>• Reduction in hostel congestion as a result of effective management of the Hostel Move-on agreement and exploration of alternative Move- on options.</li> </ul>

# Governance

## Oversight

This strategy will be reviewed annually by the council's Portfolio Holder for housing and community safety and Head of Housing.



## Engagement

We will engage partners in the formulation and development of actions where relevant and gather their feedback post-implementation.  
We will engage with the Norwich Coproduction Alliance to ensure we include the voice of those with lived experience.



## Monitoring

Norwich City Council's Councillors and Leadership team will be appraised of progress regularly.  
Monitor the delivery of the Rough sleeping strategy and its key success measures.



## Review

We will review the Strategy every 3 years to ensure it remains fit for purpose.



# Relevant policies & legislation

Rough sleeping strategy: prevention, intervention, recovery:

[Rough sleeping strategy: prevention, intervention, recovery - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/rough-sleeping-strategy-prevention-intervention-recovery)

Ending rough sleeping for good

[Ending Rough Sleeping for Good \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/policies/ending-rough-sleeping-for-good)

Rough sleeping initiative funding allocations

[Rough Sleeping Initiative: 2022 to 2025 funding allocations - GOV.UK \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/policies/rough-sleeping-initiative-2022-to-2025-funding-allocations)

Rough sleeping accommodation programme

[Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme: Prospectus and guidance \(outside of Greater London\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/policies/rough-sleeping-accommodation-programme-prospectus-and-guidance-outside-of-greater-london)

Single homeless accommodation programme

[Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme: prospectus and guidance \(outside of Greater London\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/single-homelessness-accommodation-programme-prospectus-and-guidance-outside-of-greater-london)

Health matters: rough sleeping

[Health matters: rough sleeping - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/health-matters-rough-sleeping)

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>What is being assessed</b>	Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028	<b>Status</b>	First assessment of new proposal
<b>Officer completing</b>	Joe Morris	<b>Role</b>	Business Support Officer
<b>Team</b>	Housing and Community Safety	<b>Directorate</b>	Communities
<b>Senior leadership team sponsor</b>	Chris Hancock	<b>Role</b>	Acting Head of Housing and Community Safety

**What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function?** *(include links to project briefs, cabinet reports etc)*

The aim of the refreshed Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2023-28 is to provide a high-level overview of the work Norwich City Council is doing in partnership with a broad range of national and local agencies to support people who are sleeping rough on our streets.

**How does it fit with other services and policies, and how does it support our [corporate objectives](#) and [City Vision](#)?**

The Rough Sleeping Strategy runs alongside our statutory duty to relieve and prevent homelessness. The strategy helps to meet the ‘People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city’ and ‘Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city’ corporate priorities.

**What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, legal etc)?** *The Equality Act requires us to make this clear.*

To update the previous strategy (2017-2022).

To develop this strategy for 2023-28 we have reviewed the priorities of the last 2017-22 strategy. This strategy refresh highlights our ambitions and the actions we will take to embed an approach to tackling rough sleeping, through improvements to our preventative and early intervention efforts to support those at risk of or currently experiencing rough sleeping.

**Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function?** *(person/team/body and other organisations who deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements)*

## Equality Impact Assessment

The strategy will be implemented by Norwich City Council's Rough Sleeping Team within Housing Options, as well as our grant-commissioned Pathways services and voluntary sector partners.

### What outcomes do we want to achieve, why and for who?

A reduction in rough sleeping within Norwich. People who are sleeping out should be provided with the appropriate options so no-one should have to stay on the streets. Sleeping outside is dangerous, frightening and isolating and severely impacts on people's health. It can have a detrimental effect on communities.

Despite the substantial progress we have made around the issue of rough sleeping in Norwich, a lot has changed since the publication of our previous strategy. The key challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, coupled with the continuation of the challenges faced by those with no recourse to public funds and individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage, mean we have had to re-evaluate our approach.

Our new Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2023-28 outlines the actions we will take to promote the prevention, early intervention and recovery of residents sleeping rough and how we will work with external partners to improve and better connect the systems we all use, to facilitate improved access to services for this particularly vulnerable group of people within Norwich.

### Will anyone be disproportionately affected by the programme, and/or will it create any benefits? (*customers, employees, groups in the wider community etc*)

We will ensure a tailored service for all those who are sleeping rough, accounting for protected characteristics. It will create benefits by reducing and preventing rough sleeping, and we have a particular strategic focus on those facing No Recourse to Public Funds conditions, who are frequently disadvantaged.

### If yes, complete the relevant sections below for any benefits and adverse impacts identified.

Affected group	Key findings from analysis of data and evidence. Identify any gaps in data here	Level & type of impact: low/medium/high, positive/adverse	Justifiable if adverse	Actions to mitigate impacts, maximise benefits or address identified gaps in data	By when
Age	N/A – falls within normal provision	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Disability</b>	N/A – falls within normal provision	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	N/A – falls within normal provision	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	N/A – falls within normal provision	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	N/A – falls within normal provision	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	There is a key strategic commitment to ensure that migrant and asylum seekers who are sleeping rough are assisted.	Medium - positive	N/A	We will work closely with our partners in Norfolk County Council and the VCSE sector to target our support and gather/share relevant data.	2028
<b>Religion and belief</b>	N/A – falls within normal provision	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Sex/gender</b>	N/A – falls within normal provision	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	N/A – falls within normal provision	No impact identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Other groups – Rough sleepers</b>	Data gathered as part of the annual streetcount has shown that the numbers of people sleeping rough in Norwich have dropped, but that we have high numbers of new people sleeping rough ('flow') and hard-to-reach clients. This has informed our strategic priorities.	High - positive	N/A	We have brought partners into the Pathways consortium who are in a good position to work with some of our hard-to-reach clients. Our strategic priorities will inform the way our Pathways service operates and the data they report back to us.	2028
<b>What evidence and data has been used for this assessment, including community engagement and consultation? (include links to data sources, consultations etc)</b>					

## Equality Impact Assessment

The data used is the data collected by the Pathways service (particularly the outreach team) as well as our regular Delta submissions on our Rough Sleeping Initiative funded roles. We have also worked closely with our partners in the supported housing sector to establish priorities, and have been informed by the Norwich Co-Production Alliance to capture the voice of those with lived experience.

Initial work with the Norwich Co-production Alliance (a group of people with lived experience of rough sleeping) helped to influence our strategy, and they were also invited to consult on the final document.

The Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028 went out for external consultation, including on the Council's website, between Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September and Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October. The strategy was also presented to the Tenant Involvement Panel on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September.

Relevant changes were made to the strategy following receipt and review of this feedback.

### How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

Our proposal was already in line with our Equality Act duties.

### What actions have been identified going forward?

We have committed to focussing on clients with No Recourse to Public Funds conditions and improving our offer to them. We have also committed to continuing to work in line with best practice for all groups with protected characteristics.

### How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward?

As outlined in the strategy itself, the strategy will be reviewed annually by the council's Portfolio Holder for housing and community safety and Head of Housing, with more formal reviews taking place every 3 years to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Norwich City Council's Councillors and Leadership team will be appraised of progress regularly.

Monitoring of demographic data gathered by the Pathways outreach team and wider Pathways service, as well as our Housing Options team.

<b>Officer completing assessment</b>	<b>Joe Morris</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>11/10/2023</b>
<b>Senior leadership team sponsor</b>	<b>Chris Hancock</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>20/10/2023</b>

<b>Equality lead (strategy team)</b>	<b>Emma Smith / Joe Siggins</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>06/11/2023</b>
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**Committee name:** Cabinet

**Committee date:** 15/11/2023

**Report title:** The tenancy strategy, tenancy policy and tenancy agreement.

**Portfolio:** Councillor Jones, Deputy Leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety.

**Report from:** Tenancy Services Manager

**Wards:** All wards

**OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

**KEY DECISION**

### **Purpose**

To consider the tenancy strategy, tenancy policy and tenancy agreement for approval.

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that cabinet approves the tenancy strategy, tenancy policy and tenancy agreement documents.

### **Policy framework**

The council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report meets the corporate priorities; People live well and independently in a diverse and safe city, Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city, Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report addresses specifically the priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- Provide the right support to residents at the right time, with a focus on early help and prevention.
- Take action against domestic abuse, hate crime and anti-social behaviour, and regulate activity so our communities are places where residents feel safe.
- Listen to communities and use their views in decision-making.
- Provide and encourage others to provide new homes, open spaces, and infrastructure for residents.
- Make the best use of our Housing Revenue Account assets and resources, maximizing our income and spending wisely to provide easy access, high quality services and support for our tenants and leaseholders.
- Improve the way residents can access services by embracing new technology, investing in customer services, and making it easier for things to be done online, whilst providing alternatives for those unable to do so.
- Be open and transparent, with accessible data and decisions which are subject to public scrutiny.

### **Report details**

1. The revision of these three documents has been planned for since 2019, however delays occurred due to the Covid-19 pandemic and changes to senior staff within the housing and community safety service. It is now timely that we deliver on the revision of all three documents as a package.

### **Tenancy strategy**

2. The Localism Act 2011 required the council to publish a tenancy strategy in 2013 setting out the matters to which registered providers of social housing for its district are to have regard in formulating policies relating to:
  - a) The type of tenancies that they offer.
  - b) The circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind and where tenancies of a certain term are offered, the length of the tenancy; and
  - c) The circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.
3. Norwich City Council's latest tenancy strategy was published in 2013, and so it is necessary to review and update it to ensure its effectiveness.



4. The strategy must also summarise the registered providers' policies or signpost people to where they can be found. In developing the tenancy strategy, the council must have regard to its allocations policy and the homelessness strategy.
5. The tenancy strategy is appended at Appendix 1 and has been informed by the council's existing policies, and analysis of local market conditions. Consultation will involve residents and registered providers locally who this will impact.

### **Tenancy policy**

6. Since 2012, there has been a requirement now under the Regulator for Social Housing for all social landlords to publish a tenancy policy. This is set out in the revised tenancy standard that social landlords are subject to.

*“Registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud”.*

7. The tenancy policy is an overarching document that, in general terms, sets out:
  - the kinds of tenancies that the council will offer, and at what rent.
  - the circumstances in which tenancies will be granted.
  - the length of tenancies granted.
  - the process for reviewing tenancies.
  - whether the council will grant discretionary succession rights, and if so to who.
  - interventions used to sustain tenancies.
  - the council's approach to tackling tenancy fraud.
  - how frequently the policy will be reviewed.
8. The policy provides clarity to Norwich City Council tenants and protects the council from legal challenge. The council does not offer fixed term tenancies therefore the aspects associated with this type of tenancy that could be open to legal challenge do not apply.

### **Tenancy agreement**

9. A current and effective tenancy agreement is essential to enable Norwich City Council to efficiently manage its housing stock and protect the rights of tenants to enjoy living in their home.
10. Part of the drive to improve housing services and council homes is to improve the way council homes are managed. We wish to take positive action to encourage responsible behaviour. This requires a tenancy agreement that is clear for tenants to understand so that they can comply with their tenancy obligations.

The Council's existing tenancy agreement has been in place since 2010 and some of the terms used within it may be outdated due to changes in the law. This opportunity has been taken to clarify some of the other conditions and expand on definitions where appropriate. The new Conditions of Tenancy aim to be more easily understood and fully explain the rights and obligations of the council and its tenants. It also makes it easier for us to prove breaches of tenancy and act when necessary.

11. Before changing conditions of tenancy (other than those regarding rent or payments in respect of services/facilities provided by the Council or in respect of rates), local authority landlords must consult all their tenants by serving a preliminary notice. Comments received must be considered before then serving a notice of variation that formally implements the changes, this will be served to all tenants once cabinet approval has been obtained.

## **Consultation**

12. Consultation took place with key service areas internally: tenancy services, property services, home options, home ownership, independent living, community safety, anti-social behaviour, customer contact, strategy, communications, environmental strategy, revenues and benefits. Alongside this, we have also consulted key external partners too; Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) and Nplaw. We have carried out an eight-week consultation with residents, tenants, and registered providers on the three documents to make best use of resources, be transparent with our approach and focus attention.
13. Consideration has been given about what is reasonable for tenants given the costs of postage, print and delivery of consultation documents, which is approximated at £45,000. A full set of detailed information, consultation documents, proposed changes, existing documents, and survey questions were available on our website - Get Talking Norwich. This was promoted via direct letters, text messages, and social media. The Tenancy strategy used Get Talking Norwich for consultation, and registered providers have been consulted directly via email.
14. There were over 500 responses received from this consultation exercise. The consideration of these observations is summarised within appendix 4. During consultation, two member sessions were conducted, and tenant involvement panel members views were considered. Some tenants required hard copies, and others required talking through the proposed changes. The digital methods ensured a wide cross section of responses were received.
15. Over 8 out of 9 tenants agreed with changes, and the remainder wanted clarification on specific points with a broad range of observations relating to: specific clauses, types of improvements, purpose of visits, landlord access, domestic abuse, succession, repairs, and anti-social behaviour.
16. Registered providers within the Norwich District have been consulted and no changes were recommended to the Tenancy strategy.

## Implications

### Financial and resources

Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2022-26 and budget.

17. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources. Actions arising from these three documents are to be facilitated within existing resources.

### Legal

18. Nplaw, who provide the Council with legal guidance, have assisted with the development of the three documents, and have reviewed this report's recommendation to approve the documents.

### Statutory considerations

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:</b>
Equality and diversity	ECIAs have been completed for each of three documents.
Health, social and economic impact	The tenancy strategy advises on the Council's preference for tenancies that registered providers offer, which are secure lifetime tenancies. The Council's tenancy agreement and policy also offers this tenure type, and this provides stable homes which has linked benefits for people in respect of their health and economically with employment opportunities.
Crime and disorder	The tenancy agreement and policy detail the Council's approach to managing anti-social behavior, domestic abuse of tenants and occupants within our properties and the locality.
Children and adults safeguarding	The tenancy agreement and policy state the Council's approach to safeguard tenants and occupants within our properties and estates, and to sustain tenancies through support we can provide or refer too. This is in line with Councils Safeguarding adults and children policy.
Environmental impact	None

## Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Failure to implement the actions necessary to deliver the outcomes envisaged through the tenancy strategy.	The Council does not achieve the aims of the tenancy strategy.	Oversight for delivery will lie with the Portfolio Holders and the Executive director. The council's senior leadership team and elected Members will be appraised of progress regularly.
Failure to publish a tenancy policy that meets standards expected from the social housing regulator.	Scrutiny from the social housing regulator.	Publish and review the policy every 3-5 years to ensure it is current and meetings requirements.
Failure to publish a tenancy strategy.	The Council would be in breach of the Localism Act 2011.	Publish and review the strategy every 3-5 years to ensure it is current and meeting requirements.
Tenancy agreement missing conditions relevant for legislative requirements on social landlords.	Failure in duties as a landlord and/or difficult to enforce conditions of the agreement.	Consultation with all relevant partners internally and externally, including tenants.  Review of agreement every 5 to 8 years to ensure it is current and meeting requirements.

### Other options considered

19. No other options have been considered.

### Reasons for the decision/recommendation

20. It is recommended that cabinet approve the documents:

- It is a statutory requirement of the Localism Act 2011 for local authorities to publish a tenancy strategy.
- It is a regulatory requirement by the Regulator of Social Housing for social landlords to publish a tenancy policy.
- The tenancy agreement needs revision to reflect legislative changes since it was last published in 2010.

**Background papers: None**

**Appendices: 5**

Tenancy Strategy

Tenancy Policy

Tenancy Agreement

Consultation summary of observations

Equality impact assessment (EqIA)

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# Draft Tenancy Strategy for consultation

Norwich City Council, July 2023

## Introduction

Norwich City Council is a local authority housing provider. We have more than 18,000 homes across the city, of which 14,050 are available for let and 3,300 are leasehold.

In the 10 years since we published our last Tenancy Strategy, the national housing landscape has changed. Rising homelessness, high rents in private housing, the Grenfell fire tragedy, Covid, and the cost of living, are just some of the issues driving social housing reform. We have evolved our strategy with these changing times, but our stance on lifetime (secure) tenancies remains the same. We grant secure tenancies, after tenants successfully complete an introductory tenancy.

We want our 14,050 secure tenants to live well and thrive in their homes and local community. The Tenancy Strategy explains what we expect from Registered Providers of social housing, and what we expect for tenants, including:

- the types of tenancies that will be granted.
- the length of fixed-term tenancies when these are granted.
- the circumstances under which a particular type of tenancy will be granted.
- the process for reviewing tenancies.

This strategy will contribute to mixed and balanced communities, with individuals and families settled in decent homes that they value, with advice and support delivered by people who care. It complements our overriding aims and priorities identified in our [Corporate Plan 2022 to 2026](#).

### **Beth Jones**

Portfolio Holder for housing and community safety

### **Louise Rawsthorne**

Chief Executive, Norwich City Council

## 1. Tenancy Strategy background

- 1.1 There have been many changes in the national housing landscape since Norwich City Council published its previous Tenancy Strategy on 24 January 2013 in accordance with section 150 of the Localism Act 2011. The tenancy strategy must be kept under review. But, in this latest update, we have not changed our position on offering lifetime tenancies. This strategy helps to inform registered providers of our expectations regarding social housing provision and expectations for social housing tenants.
- 1.2 The use of flexible tenancies in social housing originated from the Localism Act 2011, which came into force on 1 April 2012. This tenancy is derived from the government's view that social housing tenants should not benefit from greater tenancy security than tenants in the private sector. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 developed the definition of flexible tenancies with the intention of phasing out the award of lifetime tenancies for new social tenants. Social tenants were only to be offered fixed-term tenancies. But, with the proviso that landlords could offer tenancies lasting up to the 19th birthday of the youngest occupant. This would have affected new and existing tenants who moved home (with a few exceptions).
- 1.3 These provisions were not implemented as the national climate regarding social housing changed dramatically following the fire at Grenfell Tower, London, in 2017. In ["A New Deal for Social Housing" 2018](#), the government stated it would not implement compulsory fixed-term tenancies. This corresponds with proposals requiring landlords in the private sector to offer longer tenancies and to prohibit "no fault" evictions of private sector tenants. The recent impact of temporary constraints on eviction during the pandemic, and rising energy prices on the cost of living have been contributory factors.
- 1.4 The [Secure Tenancies \(Victims of Domestic Abuse\) Act 2018](#) and the [Domestic Abuse Act \(2021\)](#) recognised that, where a secure (lifetime) tenant was offered a new tenancy when moving due to domestic abuse, they should retain their existing security of tenure, and not be offered a fixed-term tenancy.
- 1.5 The social housing sector was subject to a compulsory 1% rent reduction for four years from April 2016 to March 2020. This affected many areas of social housing including regeneration and planned improvement programmes.
- 1.6 Universal Credit (UC) has been rolled out across the whole of the UK and is now the primary state benefit for those of working age on a low income or out of work. The impact of these requirements on rent arrears or on social landlords' income collection, particularly following yearly rent increases, will be monitored.



1.7 In the [Social Housing Regulation Act](#), the government sets out what every social housing resident should be able to expect on:

- safety
- landlord performance
- complaints
- being treated with respect
- having their voice heard
- the quality of their home and neighbourhood
- access to home ownership.

This tenancy strategy supports the practices we will use when awarding housing for lifetime secure tenants, and to new tenants where introductory tenancies will apply.

## **2. Objectives (local context)**

2.1. This strategy complements our five aims and five themes within the [Norwich City Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2026](#) and the [Norwich 2040 City Vision](#).

2.2. We want our strategy to contribute to the continuation of mixed and balanced communities and prevent the unnecessary cycle for resettling families and individuals who are well placed in their current homes.

2.3. Our aim for our 14,050 secure tenants is to see families and individuals live well while contributing to their future, education, and wellbeing inside the home and local community.

## **3. Tenancy Strategy overview**

3.1. We recognise that we may have limited influence over decisions by other social landlords operating within Norwich, many of whom operate across several local authority areas. The changes in national outlook have led some social landlords to withdraw from offering fixed-term tenancies and to return to only offering lifetime tenancies.

We expect social landlords to have regard to this Tenancy Strategy so that tenants and applicants across the borough understand the types of tenancy available.

3.2. The [Localism Act 2011](#) requires every Council to publish a Tenancy Strategy which contains provisions on expectations for all social landlords in the local area in relation to:

- the types of tenancies that will be granted.
- the length of fixed-term tenancies when these are granted.
- the circumstances under which a particular type of tenancy will be granted.
- the process for reviewing tenancies at the end of the fixed term, and the circumstances under which a tenancy may or may not be renewed either in the same property, or in a different property.
- All social landlords are required to set out the way in which a tenant or prospective tenant may seek a review of:
  - the length of the fixed term
  - the type of tenancy offered.
  - a decision not to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term.

#### **4. Strategy (expectations)**

4.1. We expect all social housing providers to produce a Tenancy Policy which addresses the items listed in 3.2. We have set out our strategy on these matters, and expect social housing providers to consider the contents of this strategy in the following ways:

##### **a. What type of tenancies will be granted?**

We expect that social landlords will offer either fixed-term tenancies or lifetime time tenancies (secure or assured). These tenancies may be preceded by a 12-month introductory or probationary tenancy.

##### **b. If fixed-term tenancies are offered, how long will they last?**

Although permissible by law, we do not support the granting flexible fixed-term tenancies of less than five years. We would expect that in most instances, fixed-term tenancies, where awarded, will be for a five-year period or longer, or up to the 19th birthday of the youngest occupant if longer than five years.

##### **c. Under what circumstances will a particular tenancy be granted?**

- Where social landlords offer an introductory or probationary tenancy, it should be available to all new social housing tenants.
- Existing social housing tenants should retain their security of tenure or other tenancy rights after a move to a different social housing tenancy, where there is no break in tenancy.

- Social landlords may want to offer a fixed-term tenancy to existing or new tenants moving to a new build affordable rent property.
- Social landlords may want to offer a mix of fixed-term and lifetime tenancies, depending on various circumstances.

Examples of people who may be granted a lifetime tenancy are:

- people over pension age
- people with an enduring physical or mental health disability

Examples of people who may be granted a fixed term tenancy are:

- tenants moving to certain types of property.
- tenants moving to certain size of accommodation.

**d. What process will be used for reviewing tenancies at the end of the fixed term?**

Social landlords must have a clear policy for reviewing a tenancy before the end of the fixed term. This should include details of any financial limits that may prevent the award of a further tenancy. It should state how a landlord will decide if a property still meets the household's needs.

- The tenancy review should primarily be an opportunity for both landlord and tenant to consider if the current home meets the tenant's needs now and in the future.
- Where a review is carried out with a vulnerable tenant, we expect social landlords to take all practical steps to make sure the tenant can fully participate in the review hearing.
- We would expect the review to take place at least 9 months before the tenancy is due to end. This is to allow enough time for a tenant to find alternative housing if the tenancy is not renewed, and alternative accommodation is not provided.

**e. Under what circumstances will a tenancy not be renewed in the same property or in a different property?**

Social landlords must have a clear policy for reviewing a tenancy before the end of the fixed-term and this should include:

- details of any financial limits that will prevent the award of a further tenancy.
- how a landlord will decide if a property continues to meet a household's needs
- any other matters that may be considered.

We aim to prevent homelessness where possible and expect landlords to offer financially realistic housing options to people in need. It would be counter-

productive for landlords not to renew tenancies, unless they have carried out a thorough review including proactively offering tenants advice and assistance to find alternative accommodation.

## 4.2. Preventing homelessness

Although it is clear in [the Localism Act 2011](#) that the landlord is responsible for providing advice and assistance, we can provide a comprehensive service locally to all applicants for affordable housing. This includes advice and assistance with finding suitable private rented accommodation. Further details on [housing and homelessness are on our website](#).

As we retain the statutory responsibility to provide housing for homeless households in priority need, we want to make sure there is a robust approach to providing advice and assistance where a tenancy is not renewed.

We would ask all social landlords in Norwich to:

- notify us when a tenancy will not be renewed, and the agreed alternative housing arrangements.
- provide details of the advice and assistance provided, if not using our advice and assistance service which is our preferred option.

4.3. All social landlords are required to set out the way a tenant or prospective tenant may seek a review of:

- the length of the fixed term
- the type of tenancy offered.
- a decision not to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term.

4.4. We expect social landlords to make sure tenancy policies contain the following information:

- Who to make a request to and how, and the timescales to do it
- How review panels will work
- Timescales for administering reviews.

This information must be accessible and widely publicised, such as on websites, and be available on request.

## 5. Tenancy sustainment

Norwich City Council has various services which provide targeted interventions support and Independent Living Teams. We work in partnership with agencies, third sector and voluntary organisations, NHS, and independent commissioning boards to increase tenants' capacity to sustain their tenancies.

Register providers are expected to consider and provide tenants throughout their tenure, advice, guidance, or support in relation to:

- regular tenancy reviews and visits
- identifying support for mobility and adaptations
- challenging times and life events - referrals and housing staff working with specialist care and support agencies to identify the best support available for short term interventions.
- experiencing hardship and needing welfare support – each person is impacted in different ways and timely advice and support must be available at the earliest point, rather than during times of crisis.
- maintaining housing land and the local environment – long term needs of a household and everyday livelihood within their surroundings
- safety inside their home and in communal areas.

## 6. The Tenant Standard

The [Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012](#) sets out the specific standards that Registered Providers (RPs) must meet. It takes account of the amendments made because of the Localism Act 2011.

The Tenant Standard requires RPs to let their homes in a transparent and efficient way, and to take account of the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants.

They must demonstrate how their lettings:

- make the best use of available housing.
- are compatible with the purpose of the housing.
- contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities.

Registered Providers are also expected to cooperate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duty to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nomination agreements. As we own and manage our own

housing stock, we review our own tenancy policy.

## **7. Complaints**

All social landlords must set out the way in which a tenant or prospective tenant can escalate a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the response. This should include information on:

- Internal complaints' procedure
- Housing Ombudsman
- Judicial Review
- Where to seek independent legal advice

The [Social Housing Regulation Act](#) sets out what every social housing resident should be able to expect in relation to complaints.

The expectation is that social housing tenants will have their complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to an ombudsman who will give them swift and fair redress when needed. Further guidance has been issued by the Regulator of Social Housing when considering complaints.

## **8. Consultation**

We are required to consult and will follow an eight-week consultation exercise allowing observations from:

- Secure tenants and introductory tenants
- Registered Providers of social housing
- Residents of the City of Norwich
- Agencies supporting tenants and working with the Council.

## **9. Equality**

We consulted a range of stakeholders during the development of this Tenancy Strategy, and completed an Equality Impact Assessment, and the summary can be found within the appendix.

# Tenancy Policy

This tenancy policy sets out how Norwich City Council will manage tenancies within our owned housing stock. It covers granting, use of tenancy conditions relevant to introductory and secure tenancies, and any associated support and enforcement tools.

The policy is applicable to tenants of Norwich City Council.  
The Government introduced the requirement for all social landlords to publish a tenancy policy within Localism Act 2011.

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# 1. Tenancies

Local authorities will normally only grant secure tenancies. We operate all tenancies according to statutory criteria. In general, security of tenure legislation does not allow councils to tailor a tenancy to an individual's needs outside of the statutory criteria.

## Introductory tenancy

If you're not already a secure tenant with us, or another council, we will offer you an introductory tenancy. This tenancy normally lasts 12 months, but we can extend it. After you complete it, if everything has gone well, we will offer you a secure tenancy.



Stick to the rules of your introductory tenancy agreement. Your tenancy is not secure, so you have fewer rights, and can lose your home if you break the agreement. As an introductory tenant, you cannot buy your home under Right to Buy or exchange it with other tenants.

## Secure tenancy

A secure tenancy means you have the right to stay in your home for your lifetime if you stick to the rules of your tenancy agreement. You can rent out a room, buy your home through [Right to Buy](#), and exchange your home with other tenants. You can also improve your home, with permission, and transfer your tenancy in some circumstances.

## Fixed term tenancies

A fixed term tenancy is a secure tenancy for two years or more. We do not offer fixed term tenancies. Our introductory tenancy leads to a secure tenancy after 12 months, except if we extend the time.

## Licence agreement

If we carry out extensive repairs or make improvements to your home, we may need to move you into another property while we do the work. We will provide a licence agreement, which gives consent for you to temporarily live in the property.



You do not have the same protection in a property under a licence agreement as you do in your secure tenancy home. This is because we are using it to house you temporarily. It is important to stick to the rules of your licence agreement, or you could lose the property.

## Demoted tenancy

A court may end a secure tenancy and replace it with a demoted tenancy if a tenant is in court for anti-social behaviour. A demoted tenancy can last 12 months or longer. Like the introductory tenancy, it is not secure, and you would have fewer rights. It is an alternative to a suspended possession order.

## Joint tenancies

We can grant all tenancies to joint tenants on the basis you are:

- both eligible for housing as defined by legislation,
- married or civil partners,
- living together, and can prove you have done so for at least 12 months, or
- in a mutually supportive and established relationship.

We do not normally grant a joint tenancy to a person who can succeed the tenancy, such as a mother and daughter. Agreeing to this would reduce our ability to make the best use of our council homes in the future. When deciding whether to grant joint tenancies, we act consistently and in accordance with this policy.

- 1.1 When a joint tenant serves the council with a notice to quit:
- 1.2 Where there is a joint tenancy and a notice to quit is submitted by either tenant, the tenancy will end for all of the tenants after four clear weeks (in other words, at the end of the four-week period starting on the Monday after the council receive the notice). Whilst the council can offer advice about Home Options and rehousing, a decision made about serving a notice to quit on the council is a decision for the tenant alone and if they are uncertain whether to give notice or not then the council recommends they seek independent legal advice.
- 1.3 Please note that once a notice to quit has been served it cannot be withdrawn. In the event that the tenant/joint tenants decide they want to remain after serving a notice to quit, it will be a matter for the council's discretion, in accordance with its allocation policy, whether a new tenancy will be granted.
- 1.4 **What happens to the remaining joint tenant**
- 1.5 The Council has the discretion whether to offer a tenancy in the same property or a new property. The property must be deemed suitable in accordance with our Allocations policy and the Council will consider whether the terms of the tenancy agreement have been observed correctly.
- 1.6 **When the Council permits the remaining tenant to stay in the same property**

- 1.7 If the terms of the tenancy agreement have been kept to and the property is suitable for their housing needs, the council can decide to allocate the property back to the remaining tenant and the remaining tenant will be invited to sign a new tenancy agreement.
- 1.8 **When the Council seeks alternative property for the remaining tenant**
- 1.9 If the tenancy agreement has not been kept to, or the property is too big for their housing needs, then the council will not offer a new sole tenancy to the remaining occupant.
- 1.10 The council are entitled to a 'use and occupation' charge, which is equivalent to the rent, while an alternative property can be found. The council may defer its right to possession for a limited period to allow the remaining occupant to seek alternative accommodation or to pay any use and occupation charge arrears. This may preclude a direct let from being considered (in accordance with the council's allocation policy).
- 1.11 In such circumstances, the remaining occupant will make a Home Options application and place bids on suitable properties. The council will offer advice and support where required through the Home Options scheme.
- 1.12 If this advice is not followed and a move is not achieved within 3 months, the council will commence possession proceedings to recover possession of the property so that it may be re-let in accordance with the council's allocation policy.

## Length of tenancy

A secure tenancy usually carries on for life. In legal terms, a secure tenancy is a weekly tenancy, if the rent is paid weekly. The week begins first thing on Monday and ends midnight on Sunday. Your tenancy starts on the date on your original tenancy sign-up sheet.

## Ending a tenancy

You can end your tenancy by giving us Notice to Quit. If there is no security of tenure, we can end your tenancy by giving you Notice to Quit.

Normally, we will only end your tenancy if you break the agreement or if you die.

A court can end your tenancy, and in exceptional circumstances only, we can agree to you surrendering it.

## 2. Tenancy breaches

If you breach (break) your tenancy agreement, we will ask you to put things right. In many circumstances we will engage support services to help households remedy breaches.

Remember that you are also responsible for the behaviours of any occupants of your household, including visitors.

If problems persist, we will use a variety of methods to remedy the breaches such as:

- Verbal and written warning
- Notices
- Suspended possessions orders
- Injunctions
- Closure orders
- Demoted tenancy
- Court warrant

Note: this is not an exhaustive list.

If the breach continues or you do not engage, we will go to court to seek possession of the property.

## 3. Rents and service charges

We charge social rent on all tenancies. Rent levels are based on the value of the property and average earnings in Norfolk. Under government guidelines a 'target rent' is calculated, and rents are adjusted yearly until they reach the 'target rent'. During your tenancy, rents are raised in line with the Rents Standard, which is the government criteria for setting social and affordable housing rents. This is usually within 1% of inflation, although for 2023/24 this was capped to 7%. During a financial crisis, Government may cap rents to a certain level. We may decide to set a different rate, but not above the capped level. We give notice of the rent raise before the new financial year, which starts in April.

You may need to pay service charges for some communal items. This can include charges for window cleaning, premises management, landlords' supply of electricity, grounds maintenance, and caretaking.

Some homes benefit from a communal district heating supply. Such costs are passed on within the weekly service charges, although a new government scheme known as Heat Metering and Billing has introduced direct billing to individual residents in certain heat networks. Individual water rates are passed on and paid weekly, and added separately so you can pay these directly.

Rents for “Passivhaus” properties are set at 5% above ‘formula rent’ in accordance with the Rents Standard. This helps to pay the extra cost of developing energy efficient homes. It also reflects the savings you get from lower energy bills.

## 4. Housing exchange

If you’re a secure tenant, you can exchange your home with another council or housing association tenant. This is sometimes called a mutual exchange. To exchange your council home, [register on the house exchange website](http://www.houseexchange.org.uk) (www.houseexchange.org.uk).

When you find a tenant to swap homes with, you must write to us to ask for permission to exchange. We will confirm if the exchange can go ahead within 42 days.

Sometimes, there are conditions that you may need to fulfil before we allow an exchange. Your rent account must be up to date, and if there is any damage or unauthorised alterations to the property, you would need to put this right.

We will inspect your home before any exchange and arrange to test the electricity supply and fittings to make sure they are safe.

There are circumstances where an exchange may not be allowed, for example if:

- you, or the other tenant, has a Notice Seeking Possession or a court order against you.
- the exchange would mean that one or both homes would be overcrowded or under occupied.
- the property has been adapted for special needs or the elderly, and the tenants you want to exchange with do not have those needs.
- Where certain repairs are the landlord’s responsibility then these may need to be completed before the assignment can take place.

## 5. Tenancy reviews and visits

### Tenancy appraisals

If you are an introductory tenant, you must allow us to visit you at home to do appraisals. You will have up to three visits in the first year of your tenancy. We will assess how well you’re keeping to the rules of your tenancy, how you’re coping and looking after your home, and if you’re paying rent regularly.

If there are problems, we will talk to you about what you can do to put things right. We may also extend your introductory tenancy beyond 12 months.

## Settling in visits

If you're a secure tenant, we will normally come to your home to do a settling in visit four to six weeks after you move in.

## General and programmed visits

There will be times when we need visit you at home to inspect your property, verify your tenancy, identify support needs, and carry out repairs or improvements. Some of these visits will be programmed and we will tell you in advance about them.

We are committed to making sure our council homes are safe and in good repair, and you have help and support to manage your tenancy and live well.

During our visit we will:

- identify any support needs you may have
- signpost and direct you to other services
- update records with any changes to a household
- arrange repairs that are our responsibility
- verify who lives in the property against the tenancy agreement.

You must be present for the visit and allow us into your home. You should be aware that we can gain entry to your home by serving notices and pursuing court action.

In some cases, for convenience, we may choose to conduct digital viewings to allow any of the above to take place. This will include the requirement to see live video call footage of yourself and the property to assess its condition, verify your identity and confirm you are using the property in accordance with the terms of the tenancy agreement.

## 6. Succession rights

The general rule for succession, which means taking over a property, is you cannot pass your tenancy on to other people.

There are some exceptions to the general rule, and we will allow succession if:

- A joint tenant dies during the tenancy, and the tenancy can continue for the remaining tenant.
- A sole tenant dies during their tenancy and:
  - specified members of their family occupy the home as their main residence
  - they have resided (lived) with the tenant for at least 12 months prior to death?
  - the tenant was not a joint tenant originally nor somebody to whom a tenancy had been passed on to already.

The tenancy can pass to one of the family members if the tenancy was granted to the deceased tenant before 1 April 2012.

If you no longer need the home, we must re-let it in line with our allocation policy.

### Succession rights for tenancies before 1 April 2012

Secure tenancies, and the right of succession, did not exist before 3 October 1980. You can pass a tenancy on to a family member, but only once. Specified family members that can apply for succession, must have lived in the property as their only home for at least 12 months.

Specified family members are:

- |                 |                |          |
|-----------------|----------------|----------|
| • Aunt          | • Grandchild   | • Niece  |
| • Brother       | • Grandparent  | • Parent |
| • Child         | • Half brother | • Sister |
| • Civil partner | • Half sister  | • Spouse |
| • Cohabitee     | • Nephew       | • Uncle  |

### Succession rights for tenancies from 1 April 2012

If your tenancy started on or after 1 April 2012, only your spouse, civil partner or cohabitee have succession rights to the tenancy if you die. They must be living with you at the time of death.

Cohabitee means one of a couple who are living together as if married or a civil partner as set out in the list below:

- Civil Partner
- Cohabitee

- Husband
- Spouse
- Wife

## Under occupying homes by successor

Social housing is in high demand, so we cannot allow tenants to under occupy homes that are suitable for larger households. We know this will be a difficult time, and we will support and help you to apply for Home Options to find a smaller home.

If you are not a spouse or civil partner of the deceased tenant, and the property is bigger than you need, we may serve notice under the Housing Act 1985, Section 83. You would need to move out of the property within 6 months, or possession proceedings would start. We will offer support and help you to apply for Home Options so you can bid on smaller properties.

## Occupants with no succession rights

If you do not have the right to take over the tenancy (succession), you will need to leave the property. We would serve a notice to quit to the deceased tenant's representative, and this normally gives you 4 weeks' notice to leave. But, if you meet our criteria for council housing, we will help you find another home.

In exceptional circumstances, we will allow you to stay in the property while you apply for Home Options and bid on suitable properties. You will pay a 'use and occupation' charge equivalent to the rent. You would need to move home within 3 months, or we start possession proceedings to recover and relet the property.



## 7. Tenancy support and sustainment

We are committed to helping you to successfully manage your tenancy.

Our Independent Living service provides advice, support, and guidance for more complex and vulnerable households.

### Sheltered housing

We provide sheltered housing for people aged 60 and above. You have the usual rights of a secure tenancy, but your home is not eligible for Right to Buy.

The accommodation is designed for independent living for older people, and many have shared communal lounges, laundry rooms, gardens, and courtyards. You will incur additional weekly charges for:

- Sheltered support.
- Communal upkeep and maintenance
- Care Alarm (Telecare) service
- District heating and hot water.

We will signpost you to external agencies who can provide additional support, for example, Age UK, Social Services, the Citizens Advice, Financial Inclusion Consortium, and other partners.

### Specialist support team

We know that some tenants have multiple and complex needs, and this can increase the likelihood of difficulties with your tenancy. We help around 250 tenants, families, and individuals in this situation every year.

Our principal role is to support you in situations that make you more vulnerable. This helps to increase your ability to manage a healthy tenancy for the long term and reduce the risk of eviction and abandonment.

We aim to build your resilience, wellbeing, and ability to solve issues to bring about lasting change to help retain and manage your tenancy.

Referrals in to this team are made by Norwich City Council staff.

### Safe and Habitable Homes

We have a grant funded service called Safe and Habitable Homes working with St Martins to support mental health and hoarding casework.

## Interact

We have a grant funded service called Interact help people whose wellbeing is suffering as a result of something linked to their housing circumstances. People eligible for the scheme are referred by an organisation or medical professional, via our website [Healthy homes referral form | Instructions \(norwich.gov.uk\)](#). The service is a partnership between Norwich City Council, Voluntary Norfolk, One Norwich Practices, Age UK Norwich and Norfolk Citizens Advice Bureau.

## Budgeting and money advice service

We have a free and confidential team to help you if you fall into rent arrears and debt. We can help you to manage your weekly income and outgoings, to make sure your priority debts are paid.

Contact our Income Officers on 0344 980 3333, or email [budgetingandmoneyadvice@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:budgetingandmoneyadvice@norwich.gov.uk).

You can fill in a referral form on our website: [Housing, budgeting and money advice | Norwich City Council](#).

## Home improvements and disabled adaptations

If you are disabled, we can help you and your family to improve your home and garden to make it easier to get around. This may include aids and adaptations such as grab rails, ramps, stair lifts or a walk-in shower. We work closely with you and an occupational therapist to find the most appropriate solutions for you and your home.

You can fill in a referral form on our website: [Healthy homes referral form | Instructions \(norwich.gov.uk\)](#).

## Care alarm services

We provide an alarm service with 24-hours and year-round monitoring and response for anyone who feels unsafe or at risk in the community.

This independent service can be particularly useful for people who are elderly, disabled, or experiencing domestic abuse, racial harassment, or neighbourhood nuisance. [Community Alarm Service | Community Alarm Service | Norwich City Council](#).

## Domestic Abuse

Norwich City Council are committed to supporting survivors of domestic abuse and work in partnership with other organisations such as the Police and Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (NIDAS). The council will look to increase survivors' safety, housing security and hold perpetrators to account for their harm in accordance with our domestic abuse policy

## Anti-social behaviour

We take anti-social behaviour seriously and recognise that, if allowed to persist, it can have a significant impact on your quality of life. Resolving anti-social behaviour requires a multi-agency approach. We work with statutory and voluntary sector agencies to problem solve and provide solutions.

Prevention is an essential part of our approach to dealing with antisocial behaviour. We will seek to develop support measures which prevent and deter the underlying causes of anti-social behaviour.

We will utilise support-based interventions to help you maintain your tenancy. If this is not successful or the perpetrators do not engage, we will use enforcement measures.

We want you to feel empowered to address anti-social behaviour, and there are tools available you can use:

- Further information is available on our website [Antisocial behaviour \(ASB\) | Norwich City Council](#).
- Dear [Neighbour Cards](#) - download letter templates on our website
- [Mediation service](#) – a confidential service to help resolve behaviour problems between tenants.

We take Hate Crime incidents seriously and work closely with the Police and other partners in relation to this criminal behaviour. A hate crime is one that constitutes a criminal offence and further information is available here [Hate crimes and incidents | Hate crimes and incidents | Norwich City Council](#).

## Nuisance

We are committed to developing and maintaining sustainable communities and expect a reasonable level of tolerance between neighbours. Complaints which are not a breach of tenancy like staring, pulling faces, malicious gossip, one-off parties, or social gatherings are not investigated as anti-social behaviour.

## Health and safety checks

Occasionally, we will need access to your home to make sure that it is safe and habitable. We will write to you or phone you to tell you why we, or our contractors, need to visit and when. Most visits will be to carry out repairs, maintenance, or safety checks, this includes:

- Annual gas safety checks and remedial works
- Electrical safety checks and remedial works
- Smoke and alarms detector checks
- Leaks and water ingress (into parts of the building, or other flats).

If you do not respond to our requests to visit, we will issue a notice to seek entry and apply to the courts to gain access. This costs time and money, and we may have to recharge the costs to you. Alternatively, if it is an emergency then we will make reasonable endeavors to contact you to provide us with access, however we may force entry otherwise.

## 8. Tenancy fraud

Our tenancy fraud policy defines what we consider housing fraud, what we will do to prevent it, and what actions we will take when we find it. This is part of our corporate anti-fraud policy, which underpins our corporate anti-fraud and corruption strategy.

### Commitment

Our policy on tenancy fraud states our commitment to tackling housing fraud. It details the measures we take to prevent fraud, and the actions we take to make sure our homes are only occupied by people who have the legal right to live there.

We use the following measures:

- Partnership – we will work in partnership to tackle reports of tenancy fraud with other Council departments and external agencies.
- Communication – where appropriate, we will publicise cases of tenancy fraud.
- Prevention – we identify opportunities to prevent tenancy fraud.
- Enforcement – we take enforcement action to stop tenancy fraud and to make sure social housing is used for its intended purpose.
- Performance – we look at ways to continually improve our performance on tackling tenancy fraud.

## Prevention

We know the importance of different departments and agencies working together to tackle housing fraud.

We use several key methods when trying to prevent housing fraud, including:

- The use of data analytics and credit reference agency checks to prevent fraud.
- Working closely with other partners and sharing information appropriately.
- Carrying out rigorous checks at registration and allocation stage including photographic ID.
- The introduction of photographing new tenants at sign up to eliminate ID abuse and misrepresentation.
- Making sure new tenants are fully aware of their responsibilities under the tenancy agreement.
- Carrying out appraisals visits for all new introductory tenancies.
- Actively investigating all reports and complaints of tenancy fraud to establish the facts and act where appropriate. A fraud reporting form is available on our website.
- Publicising national fraud hotlines as part of specific fraud drives.
- Investigating refusals to allow us to enter the property, for example, to carry out gas safety checks, essential repairs, or general access visits.
- Publicising cases of proven tenancy fraud.
- Continually reviewing and implementing best practice.

## Principles and standards

We apply a variety of principles and standards when dealing with tenancy fraud problems. But the most important thing is to recover properties to make sure social housing is used for its intended purpose.

We follow these principles and standards:

1. We will respond promptly to reports of tenancy fraud.
2. All reports of tenancy fraud will be taken seriously and clearly documented with an accurate record of contacts, investigations and actions taken.
3. All appropriate investigations will be conducted professionally and to the required level of thoroughness and detail to establish relevant facts and find a solution.

4. The complainants' identity is confidential unless they agree to have it disclosed. If this affects the type of action that we are able to take, we will discuss it with the person concerned.
5. All persons who are the subject of an investigation into suspected housing tenancy fraud will be always treated fairly and courteously.
6. We will consider publicising cases of proven tenancy fraud.
7. We will treat each case as being unique and deal with it based on the circumstances of that case. Action taken will be proportionate and appropriate.

## Tackling fraud

We investigate all reports or possible fraudulent abuse with our partners, where appropriate, based on our principles and standards.

We have zero tolerance policy towards fraudulent activities.

## 9. Policy review

The tenancy policy will be reviewed every three to five years. Where there are proposed changes to the policy, we will seek approval from portfolio holder and cabinet as necessary.

As a public body, we are required to have due regard to the public sector equality duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This includes the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

When developing new policies or making material changes to existing policies, we will carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIQAs) to make sure we meet our public sector equality duty.

## 10. Useful links

Tenancy Strategy

[Tenancy agreement](#)

[Allocations Policy](#)

[Norwich City Council website - housing](#)

# Draft introductory and secure tenancy agreement for consultation

Norwich City Council, July 2023

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## 1. Introduction

### (A) Scope of this agreement

1.1 This agreement sets out the rights and obligations of the council and its tenants. It is the legal contract between us. It covers the following kinds of tenancy:

1.2 Introductory tenancy – Unless you already have a secure tenancy (or some types of social housing assured tenancy other than an assured shorthold tenancy), you begin your tenancy as an introductory tenant. Introductory tenancies are for a trial period. The trial period normally lasts one year but may be extended.

During the trial period, you have less security and fewer rights, for example:

- your home is at much higher risk of repossession if you do not keep to this agreement
- you cannot buy your home
- you cannot exchange homes with other tenants.

1.3 Secure tenancy – If you successfully complete the trial period, you automatically become a secure tenant. If you already have a secure tenancy (or some types of social housing assured tenancy other than an assured shorthold tenancy), you are a secure tenant from the beginning of your new tenancy.

1.4 Demoted tenancy – A secure tenancy may be ended by a court order for some kinds of anti-social behaviour and replaced with a demoted tenancy. A demoted tenancy has more limited rights, like an introductory tenancy. This is explained in paragraphs 12.4 and 12.5.

1.5 Most of this agreement applies to all kinds of tenancy. Where part of it only applies to some, we say so in the paragraph concerned.

### (B) Understanding this agreement

1.6 Please take time to read this agreement in full. We acknowledge that much of it will only apply if the situation arises. Where one part of the agreement needs to be read with another part, we have shown that by cross-referencing the other part or paragraph numbers. But the agreement should be read in full to understand how it could affect you.

1.7 Changes to the law can affect tenancy agreements of this kind. This agreement is therefore subject to any such changes that there may be. Paragraph 2.3 explains how we tell you about developments or information that affect your tenancy.

1.8 Definitions

- **We** - means Norwich City Council's housing service and the staff responsible for its housing work.
- **You** - means the tenant (or joint tenants) named in the original tenancy

sign-up sheet or to whom the tenancy is passed on under part 13.

- **Your home** - means the house or flat, including any garden or other land, that is let exclusively to you. Paragraph 10.4 has further information about boundaries and the extent of gardens.
- **Communal areas** - means land around your home that is owned by us for housing purposes, and which is not exclusively let to you or your neighbours. It therefore includes, for example, stairways and landings in blocks of flats and communal parking and access areas.
- **Neighbourhood** - means your home and all the area nearby (whether it is part of the communal areas or not).
- **Rent** - means the basic rent and other charges as notified by us to you at the beginning of your tenancy and whenever it changes (see, for example, paragraph 8.14 charges where we maintain your garden).

## (C) How long does the tenancy last?

- 1.9 The tenancy carries on indefinitely, rather than for a fixed time. In legal terms, it is a weekly tenancy. It continues running week-by-week (from first thing Monday to midnight Sunday), beginning with the date shown on the original tenancy sign-up sheet, until it ends as explained in part 14.

## (D) Responsibility between joint tenants and responsibility for other occupants

- 1.10 Joint tenancies are almost always between two people. In very exceptional cases, they may be between three or four people. References in this agreement to joint tenants assume that there are only two. If there are more than two, references to both joint tenants should be read as references to all joint tenants.
- 1.11 Joint tenants are both fully entitled to the rights and fully responsible for the obligations set out in this agreement. This applies even if one of the joint tenants is not in occupation.
- 1.12 You are responsible for other members of your household and visitors to your home. That means that where this agreement prohibits you from doing something, it applies to them too.

## 2. Customer service and communication

- 2.1 You can contact us via our website [www.norwich.gov.uk/contact](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/contact), by email, post, telephone, or at our offices. You can also login to your My Account [www.norwich.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/myaccount) to manage your tenancy.

Contact details and opening hours may change from time to time. We will give you current details when your tenancy begins and tell you when they change. Please note:

- we have a 24-hour emergency telephone service out of office hours
  - private meeting facilities are available for confidential discussions
  - home visits can be arranged.
- 2.2 We value your views and consult all our tenants as best we can about the service we provide. Please contact us [www.norwich.gov.uk/contact](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/contact) if you want information about joining or forming a tenant association and other ways to get involved.
- 2.3 We write to all our tenants from time to time, so that you are kept up to date with developments or information that may affect your tenancy. We also publicise such information on our website [www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20004/housing](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20004/housing) and/or at our offices.
- 2.4 We sometimes operate incentive schemes for tenants to encourage and reward best tenancy practice. We will publish such schemes when they apply.
- 2.5 You may inspect the information we hold about you. Please ask us for details.
- 2.6 If you think your neighbours are not keeping to this agreement so as to spoil the enjoyment of your home, please contact us [www.norwich.gov.uk/contact](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/contact). We will investigate and do our best to resolve the problem. Part 12 explains how we enforce the agreement.
- 2.7 If you are not satisfied with the service we provide and you cannot resolve the problem with your neighbourhood housing officer, you can use our complaints process.

If a problem cannot be resolved under our own complaints process, [www.norwich.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/complaints), you can refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman, [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk).

#### Giving formal notice

- 2.8 When we need to give formal notice to you about your tenancy, we must do so in writing by handing it to you in person or posting it or delivering it by hand to your home. Remember that your home, in this context, is your tenancy address, not somewhere else that you might be living at the time (see paragraph 1.8).
- 2.9 When you need to give formal notice to us about your tenancy, you must do so in writing by handing it to one of our housing staff in person. You can also post it or deliver it by hand to Norwich City Council, City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH, or any other office we use for our housing service. Or via the online form on our website: [Contact us - Norwich City Council](#).
- 2.10 In the case of joint tenancies, notices are effective if given by us to one joint tenant only, or if given by one joint tenant only to us.
- 2.11 This paragraph applies if you die during your tenancy, you are the only tenant, and no family members are allowed to have the tenancy passed on to them (see paragraphs 13.3 and 13.4). In that situation, any notice that we must give about the tenancy is effective if addressed to your personal representatives and posted or delivered by us in accordance with paragraph 2.8.

#### Appraisals during trial period

- 2.12 While you are an introductory tenant, you must allow us to visit you in your home and

make yourself available accordingly. This is so we can carry out appraisals of whether you are successfully maintaining your tenancy during your trial period.

- 2.13 **If you are a secure tenant only** you may have the right to buy your home (subject to certain statutory exceptions) and only after a qualifying period. Further information on right to buy is available on our website [www.norwich.gov.uk/righttobuy](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/righttobuy) Certain properties, such as sheltered housing, are excluded from the right to buy.
- 2.14 **If you are a secure tenant only** if you or a person living in or visiting your home has behaved, or has threatened to behave, in an antisocial way or has used or threatened to use your home for an unlawful purpose then we can ask for a court order suspending your right to buy your home.

### 3. Rent

- 3.1 We will write to you at least four weeks before the beginning of each financial year (the first Monday in April) to tell you about your rent for that year. You can view information about your rent anytime when you sign up for My Account [www.norwich.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/myaccount).
- 3.2 Remember that your rent includes other charges as well as the basic rent (see paragraph 1.8). Some of those other charges may only be finalised shortly before the new financial year. At that stage we will notify you of the finalised figures and the weeks for which the rent is due. It is due each week except for the last two weeks of December (see paragraph 3.8).
- 3.3 When your tenancy begins, we will notify you of the rent for the current year and the weeks for which it is due.
- 3.4 If we need to review your rent during a financial year, we will give you four weeks' notice of any changes to it.
- 3.5 You must pay your rent promptly. If you do not keep up with your payments your home is at risk of repossession. If you are worried about money or debt, we have a specialist team of budgeting and money advisers. This is a free service. For advice, complete this referral form [www.norwich.gov.uk/budgetingandmoneyadvice](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/budgetingandmoneyadvice).
- 3.6 We expect you to pay your rent by regular instalments using a direct debit. We will give you the details to set up a direct debit [www.norwich.gov.uk/directdebitform](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/directdebitform) when your tenancy begins. If you do not pay by direct debit, it is your responsibility to make sure that your rent is paid for each week that it is due.
- 3.7 You may be entitled to help with your rent. We and/or the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) can give you information about this. It is your responsibility to apply for benefit [Benefits and support | Norwich City Council](#) and supply all the information needed for your application to be processed. You continue to have an obligation to pay your rent, whatever the situation is with your benefit application.
- 3.8 Rent is not due for the last two weeks of December. This makes no difference to how

we calculate the total amount due over a full year. It does not affect the way we collect direct debit instalments over a full year. But because rent is not due for those two weeks, no Universal Credit or housing benefit is available for those weeks. And when your tenancy ends, there is no adjustment to your rent account to reflect the two rent-free weeks.

- 3.9 The general rule is that you cannot begin a new tenancy with us if you owe us money from another tenancy (for example, for rent arrears, damage to property or legal costs in connection with the tenancy). But there are exceptions to this rule, particularly if you have paid your current rent plus an affordable instalment off the debt consistently. If that is the case, you must continue to pay those instalments, as well as paying your current rent.

## 4. Residential use

- 4.1 You must occupy your home for residential purposes.
- 4.2 You must not use your home for business purposes unless you get our written permission to do so. We will not give permission if the intended use is against other regulations, for example planning laws, or might cause a problem for your neighbours.
- 4.3 If you stop occupying your home (or, in the case of a joint tenancy, you both do), you are at risk of losing your tenancy. Paragraph 14.7 explains how we may end the tenancy in these circumstances. If you expect to be absent for a temporary period of more than six weeks, please contact us to discuss the situation.
- 4.4 You may have a lodger living with you in your home and we ask that you inform us of this and provide their details.
- 4.5 **If you are a secure tenant only** you may sub-let part of your home, but only if you get our written permission to do so.

## 5. Antisocial behaviour

- 5.1 You must not behave in the neighbourhood in a way that is (or is likely to be) a nuisance or annoyance to other people. It is not possible to list everything that is a nuisance or annoyance. These are examples of some of the most common kinds:
- loud music and other unreasonable noise
  - noisy DIY for prolonged periods or late at night
  - rowdy behaviour, including excessive visitors, shouting, and swearing at people
  - keeping animals in an irresponsible way (or at all in some flats) against part 7
  - keeping your home (including any garden area) in poor condition (see paragraphs 8.7 to 8.15 for examples of how we expect you to maintain your home)

- misusing the communal areas against Part 9.

5.2 You must not harass, intimidate or abuse:

- anybody in the neighbourhood
- anybody at our offices
- anybody that you know to is connected to the neighbourhood or management of your tenancy (for example, your neighbours, their visitors, or our staff), wherever they are.

Harassment includes offensive behaviour directed at people because of their age, gender, disability, racial group, sexual orientation, religion, or belief. It also includes indirect threats towards people and making malicious allegations against people.

5.3 You must not have in your home any unlawful drugs or equipment for the misuse of drugs.

5.4 You must not use your home for immoral or illegal purposes or commit indictable offences in the neighbourhood.

5.5 Remember you are responsible for other members of your household and visitors to your home (see paragraph 1.12). You must not allow them to behave in an anti-social manner. This includes children.

## **6. Domestic abuse**

6.1 You must not be violent to, harass, control, coerce, threaten, intimidate, or abuse (including physical, sexual, economic, psychological, emotional or other abuse) other members of your household or those that you are personally connected with. Section 2 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 states that two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies—

- (a) they are, or have been, married to each other;
- (b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
- (c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- (d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- (e) they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;
- (f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));
- (g) they are relatives.

- 6.2 In the case of such abuse perpetrated by one joint tenant against the other, we may enforce this agreement to prevent the perpetrator remaining in sole occupation of the home.
- 6.3 Paragraph 14.5 explains how we will deal with the situation if one joint tenant ends the tenancy, leaving another joint tenant in occupation.

## **7. Pets**

- 7.1 You must not keep any animals (except confined small pets like budgerigars and goldfish) if you live in:
- the following tower blocks – Ashbourne, Aylmer, Burleigh, Compass, Markham, Normandie, Seaman, or Winchester Towers;
  - the following sheltered housing flats – Douro House, St James' House, Silkfields, Singer Court or Stone Road;
  - other sites with communal carpeted areas.
- 7.2 Otherwise, you may keep animals, but you must do so responsibly. You must be able to care for them and control them without causing a problem for your neighbours or interfering with the amenities in the communal areas (see paragraph 8.10) or create a hazard for our staff or contractors. This means, for example, not:
- keeping more animals than is reasonable for the size and type of your home
  - allowing them to foul the neighbourhood
  - allowing them persistently to bark
  - allowing them to damage your home including any garden area (please note any animal fouling must be disposed of hygienically).

## **8. Repair maintenance and safety of your home**

- 8.1 We are responsible for keeping in repair:
- the structure and exterior of your home (including drains, gutters, and external pipes).

We are responsible for keeping in repair and proper working order the installations for:

- the supply of water, gas, and electricity
  - sanitation (for example basins, sinks, baths, and toilets)
  - heating (both space and water heating).
- 8.2 We must carry out those repairs provided:
- the disrepair has not been caused by you
  - we know about the disrepair

- we have your co-operation over access to your home for our staff and contractors
  - you make sure your home is free of tobacco smoke, or smoke from any other substance including e-cigarettes, when our staff and contractors attend your home by appointment. This is to protect the health and safety of our staff and others that we ask to visit your home.
- 8.3 You must treat the structure and exterior of your home and the installations with respect and report any defects to us [www.norwich.gov.uk/reportarepair](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/reportarepair) as soon as you are aware of them. We may charge you the cost of carrying out works that are necessary because you have failed to do so.
- 8.4 Remember you are responsible for other members of your household and visitors to your home (see paragraph 1.12). You must not allow them to damage your home.
- 8.5 You must ventilate your home and keep it at a reasonable temperature to minimise condensation.
- 8.6 You must keep the parts of your home that you are responsible for to a reasonable standard, carrying out minor repairs and maintenance, as necessary.
- 8.7 Paragraph 8.1 deals with what we must keep in repair and proper working order. In addition, you must maintain your home and all your own appliances safely and not do anything that compromises the safety of you and your neighbours. For example, you must:
- not store anything that is a safety risk (including, petrol and other inflammable or toxic materials)
  - make sure your own gas and electrical appliances are serviced in accordance with manufacturers' advice and provide us with evidence on request (paragraph 8.8 deals with bottled gas appliances)
  - maintain your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors so that they work properly.
- 8.8 Bottled gas appliances are prohibited indoors or in flats with balconies.
- 8.9 You must not store any personal belongings to such an excessive extent that we or our contractors are unable to gain access in accordance with paragraphs 11.1 to 11.3 (inspection and carrying out works) to the areas of your home required.
- 8.10 You must maintain your home to a standard of hygiene and good order, so you do not damage the fabric of the building, cause a nuisance or annoyance to your neighbours, or create a hazard for our staff or contractors.
- 8.11 You must not do anything to encourage vermin, including but limited to ants, wasp nests, fleas, bed bugs, mice and rats so that they cause a nuisance and annoyance to your neighbours and/or or create a hazard for our staff or contractors. If we have to intervene and carry out work in default due to the presence of vermin then you will be charged for the cost of the work, including any legal costs.
- 8.12 Remember that your home includes any garden area (see paragraph 1.8). You



must therefore maintain it in accordance with paragraphs 8.7 to ~~8.10~~ 8.11 as to safety, access, hygiene, and good order.

- 8.13 You must also maintain and cultivate your garden to a neat and tidy standard. This includes any plants, shrubs, hedges and trees.
- 8.14 If neither you or any other member of your household can maintain and cultivate your garden in accordance with paragraphs 8.12 to 8.13 because of a physical or mental health condition, disability, or long-term illness, we may carry out the necessary work for you. If we do, you will be charged for the cost of the garden maintenance and/or other work.
- 8.15 You must cooperate over arrangements that apply from time to time for putting out your refuse and recyclable materials for collection.
- 8.16 We recommend that you take out insurance for your personal property (in other words your furniture, clothes, and other belongings) and other potential losses for which we are not responsible. Details of insurance arrangements that we can offer are available on request.

## **9. Communal areas**

- 9.1 We will maintain the communal areas to a standard necessary for health and safety only. But we can only deal with a hazard or danger if we know about it.
- 9.2 You are responsible, jointly with other occupiers using the communal areas, for keeping it clean and tidy.
- 9.3 You, your visitors and/or members of your household must not do anything that is detrimental to other people's enjoyment and safety of the communal areas. It is not possible to list all such activities, but common examples are:
- fly tipping
  - leaving things there that obstruct access or are otherwise a hazard or danger
  - carrying out car repairs (apart from occasional routine maintenance of your own vehicle outside)
  - graffiti.
- 9.4 If the communal areas include parking facilities, you may use them for your private vehicles if you do so responsibly and with consideration for your neighbours. Any vehicles that you park there must be roadworthy, taxed, and have a valid parking permit [www.norwich.gov.uk/parkingpermit](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/parkingpermit) if applicable. If we have to intervene and carry out work in default due to the presence of your possessions and/or waste in communal areas then you will be charged for the cost of the work, including any legal costs.
- 9.5 You must not store or charge any vehicle, scooter or bicycle within any internal or enclosed communal area. You must seek our permission and

guidance to store or charge a mobility vehicle.

## **10. Improvements and alterations**

### **(A) By us**

10.1 We carry out improvements for the long-term benefit of our properties. We will discuss this with you as and when the situation arises. We may insist that improvements are carried out, for example, when they are part of a phased programme of works for the overall benefit of the neighbourhood. You must allow us access to your home to do works.

### **(B) By you**

10.2 You must get our written permission before you carry out any improvements or alterations to your home. This applies if you plan to change, for example, standard fittings or floor surfaces, as well as to more major works. We will consider safety, the impact on neighbours and future maintenance. You may need other permission too, for example planning or building regulation consents. We will discuss this with you at the time. For more information go to [www.norwich.gov.uk/homeimprovements](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/homeimprovements).

10.3 Remember that your home includes any garden area (see paragraph 1.8). You must get our written permission before you cut down trees, carry out other major landscaping or garden works or install sheds, other buildings, or structures.

10.4 Before making any changes to the boundaries of your home (particularly the garden area, see paragraph 1.8) you must get our written permission. Sometimes the precise boundaries of garden areas are not clear. It may be necessary for us to check our records for the housing estate to clarify where the boundary lies and who is responsible for it. If we have to intervene and carry out work in default due to any unauthorised alterations then you will be charged for the cost of the work, including any legal costs.

10.5 You may be entitled to compensation at the end of your tenancy for improvements you have carried out (see paragraph 16.4).

## **11. Arrangements for visits, inspections and carrying out work**

11.1 You must allow us and our contractors access to your home to:

- conduct tenancy visits and inspections which include property condition, welfare and/or safety checks (welfare checks may be carried out where the council have concerns about: someone's wellbeing, safeguarding, lifestyle and/or sanitary conditions, which may impact upon the sustainability of a tenancy)
- carry out works of repair, maintenance, or improvement to your home.
- To test the services within the property such as electrics, gas, water and detectors.

11.2 You must allow us, and contractors authorised by us, access to your home to carry out works to other people's homes or for the benefit of the neighbourhood that cannot otherwise be reasonably carried out.

- 11.3 We must give you at least 24 hours written notice of any access appointment unless it is an emergency, in which case we may attend without notice.
- 11.4 We, or our contractors, may enter your home by any means necessary, including a forced entry if:
- it is an emergency
  - we have been unable to contact you despite all reasonable efforts (including, contact through your next of kin and any social or support worker), and have reason to believe that you are not in occupation of your home or that your well-being is at risk.
- 11.5 The timetable for carrying out repairs depends on all the circumstances. The more it affects your health, wellbeing and enjoyment of your home, the sooner we will do it. On the other hand, external repairs will often await the next planned programme of maintenance in the neighbourhood. We will discuss this with you at the time.
- 11.6 Before starting major works, we will discuss with you the timetable for the works and how to minimise inconvenience.
- 11.7 If we need you to leave your home while we do the improvement works, we will tell you. You must then leave your home for the period concerned. In such cases we will discuss arrangements for alternative temporary accommodation.
- 11.8 We must remove all associated rubbish, building materials and equipment from your home on completion of works carried out by us.
- 11.9 Under the right to repair scheme, if we fail to carry out certain works on time, you can ask us to employ an alternative contractor. Details are available on request.
- 11.10 Paragraph 14.16 explains your obligations to give access to your home in the period leading up to the end of the tenancy.
- 11.11 If you fail to provide access and we have to force entry, with or without a court order, then we will seek to recover any additional costs (including professional, trade or legal) from you.

## **12. Enforcing this agreement**

- 12.1 As explained in paragraph 1.1, this agreement is a contract between us. We both have rights and obligations. The general rule is that either of us can enforce the agreement against the other in the County Court by civil action (as opposed to criminal action, which requires a higher standard of proof).
- 12.2 This part of the agreement explains how we will enforce it against you if necessary. If you believe that you have the right to take legal action against us and it is necessary to do so, we recommend that you contact a solicitor for advice.
- 12.3 Unless it is urgent that we take immediate legal action against you, we will contact you if we have cause for complaint. That way we hope to sort it out before it becomes

a major problem requiring legal action.

12.4 But we will not tolerate persistent or serious breaches of this agreement. If necessary, we will therefore apply to the court for an order against you. For example, the court may:

- end your tenancy, leading to your eviction
- issue an injunction or similar order against you to stop breaches of the agreement.

For some kinds of anti-social behaviour by secure tenants the court may also, or instead:

- suspend your right to buy for a specified period of time
- make a demotion order against you (as explained in paragraph 12.5).

12.5 Before applying to the court for a demotion order, we must give you a preliminary notice. That notice will explain the process. If the court makes a demotion order, your secure tenancy ends and is replaced with a demoted tenancy. The effect is that you begin a new trial period. During that period, you have less security and fewer rights, for example:

- your home is at much higher risk of repossession if you do not keep to this agreement
- you cannot buy your home
- you cannot exchange homes with other tenants (and your right to pass your tenancy on otherwise is restricted).

This agreement still applies to the demoted tenancy.

12.6 If we apply to the court for an order against you, we will include a claim that you must pay our legal costs.

### **13. Passing your tenancy on**

13.1 The general rule is that you cannot pass your tenancy on to other people. When you no longer need your home, we must re-let it in accordance with our allocation policy. What follows in this part of the agreement are the exceptions to this general rule.

#### **Death**

13.2 In limited circumstances, a person may succeed you as a tenant of your home if you die during your tenancy. This means they will become the tenant. In housing law, it is called a succession. There can only be one succession of a tenancy.

13.3 If you die during your tenancy and you are a joint tenant, the tenancy continues for the remaining tenant. This counts as a succession to the tenancy. If you have become the tenant through succession, the tenancy cannot be passed on again if you die during your tenancy.

13.4 If you die during your tenancy and you are the only tenant and have not yourself previously become the tenant through succession, your tenancy might pass to a

member of your family if the following applies:

a. If your tenancy began before 1st April 2012, and:

- i. The member of your family is occupying your home as their only or principal home at the time of your death; and

Either:

- ii. The member of your family is your spouse or civil partner; or
- iii. The member of your family is a relation listed in our tenancy policy AND they resided with you for at least 12 months ending with the date of your death.

b. If your tenancy began on or after 1st April 2012, and:

- i. The member of your family is occupying your home as their only or principal home at the time of your death; and

Either:

- ii. The member of your family is your spouse or civil partner; or
- iii. The member of your family is a cohabitee who was living with you as your spouse or civil partner.

#### Exchanging homes with other tenants

13.5 **If you are a secure tenant**, you can exchange homes if you get our written permission to do so, with another secure tenant (or assured tenant of certain social landlords), if they, too, have written permission from their landlord. To apply go to [www.norwich.gov.uk/houseexchange](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/houseexchange).

13.6 We can only refuse permission if we do so on grounds specified by legislation. If we want to rely on one of those grounds, we must say which one and why.

13.7 Exchanging your home with another tenant does not count as a succession, but if you are a successor to the tenancy in respect of the home you exchanged, you will continue to be a successor in respect of the tenancy of your new home and no further succession will be allowed if you die during that tenancy.

#### Relationship breakdown

13.8 Tenancies may be passed on by a court order in divorce or similar proceedings, subject to any objection we have. The court order may be to pass the tenancy from joint tenants to one tenant or to somebody who is not already a tenant.

13.9 If you are in this situation, you or your solicitor should check with us as soon as possible whether we might have an objection. We will only object if the kind of property is unsuitable for the prospective new tenant's household (in accordance with our allocation policy) or there are (or may be) tenancy management problems.

13.10 A tenancy passed on by a court order in divorce or similar proceedings does not count as a succession.

#### Qualifying successor

- 13.11 **If you are a secure or introductory tenant**, during your lifetime, you may pass your tenancy on to somebody who would be entitled to it on your death (see paragraphs 13.3 and 13.4), but only if you get our written permission to do so.

## 14. Ending the tenancy

### (A) By you – Notice to quit

- 14.1 If you want to end your tenancy, you must give us formal notice (see paragraph 2.9). We can give you the form to use or you can go to [www.norwich.gov.uk/endtenancy](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/endtenancy). It does not end the tenancy immediately. The tenancy will only end after four clear weeks (in other words, at the end of the four week period starting on the Monday after we receive your notice).
- 14.2 Remember that in the case of joint tenancies, notices to us are effective if given by one joint tenant only (see paragraph 2.10).
- 14.3 Once you have given us notice, you cannot change your mind. When the notice takes effect, everybody who lives at your home must leave. Nobody has an automatic right to be rehoused by us.
- 14.4 You should think carefully before ending the tenancy in this way, particularly if you are a joint tenant or there are other members of your household. If your intention to end the tenancy relates to a relationship breakdown, you should take advice about it. If you do not already have a solicitor advising you on the relationship breakdown, we recommend you see one.
- 14.5 If one joint tenant ends the tenancy in this way and the other tenant remains in occupation, we will only offer a new sole tenancy if the kind of property is suitable for the remaining occupant's household (in accordance with our allocation policy and/or tenancy policy) and there are no tenancy management problems.

### (B) By us – Notice to quit

- 14.6 The general rule is that if we want to end your tenancy, we must get a court order. But in the following situations we can end it by giving you four weeks' notice to quit.
- 14.7 Non-occupation or sub-letting – We can end your tenancy by giving you four weeks' notice to quit if you:
- stop occupying your home as your only or principal home (or, in the case of a joint tenancy, if you both do)
  - sub-let or part with legal possession of your home (except in the limited way allowed and explained in paragraph 4.5).
- 14.8 Death – This paragraph applies if you die during your tenancy, you are the only tenant, and no family members are allowed to have the tenancy passed on to them (as explained in paragraphs 13.3 and 13.4). We can end the tenancy by giving four weeks' notice to quit. Paragraph 2.11 explains the formalities of how we can do so.

(C) By us – court order

- 14.9 Except where paragraphs 14.6 to 14.8 apply, we can only end your tenancy by getting a court order and then enforcing our right to possession.
- 14.10 Before we apply to the court for such an order, we must give you a preliminary notice. This is sometimes called a notice of seeking possession or a notice of proceedings for possession. The notice will explain why we want to end your tenancy and what rights you have.
- 14.11 We may then apply to the court.
- If you are an introductory or demoted tenant, you are at much higher risk of eviction. The court must make an order if the judge is satisfied that we have followed the right procedure. In other words, the judge has no discretion to consider the overall merits of the case.
  - If you are a secure tenant, you have more rights when the case comes to court. The judge must be satisfied that we have followed the right procedure and proved one of the grounds for acting set out in legislation. In most cases the judge must also consider the overall merits and be satisfied that it is reasonable to make an order. And in some cases, the judge may suspend eviction. This will normally be on condition, for example, that you make specified payments or keep to this agreement in the future.
- 14.12 Paragraphs 12.4 and 12.5 explain how a demotion order can end a secure tenancy. But in that case, it is replaced with a demoted tenancy and this agreement still applies.

(D) By agreement – surrender

- 14.13 If everybody agrees, your tenancy can end immediately. In the case of a joint tenancy, both tenants must agree, as well as us.
- 14.14 If so, we can give you the correct form for signature by you (or in the case of joint tenants, both of you).
- 14.15 In some cases, an agreement to end the tenancy in this way can be implied. This often arises where you have abandoned your home (because you have, for example, moved out, stopped paying the rent or returned the keys to us).

(E) Access when your tenancy is due to end

- 14.16 Once a date has been set for your tenancy to end (following service of a notice to quit or a court order), we need to make sure we can re-let your home as soon as possible. You must allow us access to your home at that stage, both to check what works are needed before we re-let it, and to show it to prospective new tenants.

## 15. Occupation after your tenancy has ended

- 15.1 If Part 14(C) applies (tenancies ending by us getting a court order), your tenancy continues for as long as you remain in occupation.

- 15.2 If your tenancy ends otherwise (notice to quit by either of us or surrender), everybody must leave your home as soon as it ends. We may enforce our right to possession and evict anybody who does not do so by getting bailiffs to execute a possession warrant.
- 15.3 In exceptional cases, we may delay such enforcement action for a limited time. This may be to give remaining occupants an opportunity to move elsewhere. Or it may be pending our decision whether to offer them a tenancy of that property.
- 15.4 Technically, people remaining in occupation after a tenancy has ended do not pay rent. But we are entitled to payment of the equivalent amount. Those payments are sometimes called charges for use and occupation or mesne profits. People who make those payments can apply for universal credit or housing benefit just as they would if they had to pay rent.

## **16. Handing your home back to us**

- 16.1 At the end of your tenancy, you must hand your home back to us in accordance with the following provisions of this part. Remember that your home includes any garden area (see paragraph 1.8).
- 16.2 You must:
- return your keys to us
  - give us vacant possession by not allowing anybody else to remain in occupation of your home
  - leave your home in good condition
  - leave your home clear of rubbish and all your personal property (see paragraph 16.5).
- 16.3 If you do not, we will re-charge you the cost of us putting things right. The amount of the re-charge could just be the cost of changing the locks. But if your home is in poor condition or somebody still occupies it, the re-charge will be a lot more. In these cases, the re-charge may cover the equivalent of the rent for the delay in being able to re-let your home and the costs of court action.
- 16.4 You may be entitled to compensation for improvements that you have carried out under paragraph 10.2. We can give you details of qualifying improvements and a claim form. There are time limits for claiming.
- 16.5 We are entitled to throw away any personal property (furniture, clothes, and other belongings) left in your home. We will:
- throw away immediately any personal property that is perishable, not practical for us to store or of no obvious value
  - store any other personal property for up to one month
  - if we have a forwarding address for you, write to you confirming that you may collect the personal property from storage during that month, provided you pay storage costs.



Remember that the main obligation is on you not to leave any personal property behind. We are not responsible for checking the value of it or keeping it safe. Nothing will be kept for more than a month.

If you require this booklet in another language or format e.g. large print, audio cassette or braille please contact Norwich City Council on 0344 980 3333 or email [info@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:info@norwich.gov.uk)

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Appendix 4- Summary of Observations- consultation.

	Theme	Summary of responses	Norwich City Council response
Why would you refuse to allow staff working for or with the council into your home to do health, safety, and welfare checks?	Arrangements for visits, inspection and carrying out work	Welfare checks should be carried out by trained professionals (Police, NHS, Social Care etc.).	There are reasons why Norwich City Council staff may need to carry out welfare checks of tenants in their home, these include: for wellbeing, safeguarding, lifestyle concerns and sanitary conditions. We have therefore included this further explanation into the tenancy agreement. We will make referrals to professional agencies as deemed appropriate.
		For repairs, maintenance and compliance reasons it is ok, but I want privacy in my home otherwise.	Other situations we may wish to visit you in your home are to check on your or any other occupant's welfare for safeguarding purposes, verify who is living at the address and ensure the property is being used for its intended purpose. We would always provide prior notice of these visits unless it was an emergency.
	Repairs maintenance and safety	I'd rather pay for my own contractor to carry out work in my home.	Repairs that fall under the landlord responsibility will need to be undertaken by contractors that the Council procure so that we can ensure the work is completed satisfactorily and is compliant. Repairs that are a tenant's responsibility can be resolved by the tenant and a contractor of their choosing, however if you want to make any improvements or alterations to the property then you must get our written permission before you carry out that work.

	Theme	Summary of responses	Norwich City Council response
<b>Why would you not report suspicion of domestic abuse or violence to the council?</b>	<b>Domestic abuse</b>	I would report to the Police instead of the Council.	Reporting domestic abuse to the Police is a good step to take to protect and safeguard victims. The Council is currently developing a domestic abuse policy which will provide further advice and guidance on our approach to support and safeguard victims of domestic abuse and take any necessary action against perpetrators. The policy includes input from people who have experienced domestic abuse.
		Fear of repercussions.	The council adheres to the UK data protection regime, which includes the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Where applicable the council must comply with this legislation when processing your personal data. There are support services available for people who are experiencing domestic abuse, more information is available on the Council's website- <a href="https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20392/community_safety/1467/domestic_abuse_and_violence">https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20392/community_safety/1467/domestic_abuse_and_violence</a>
		Don't wish to get involved.	The council adheres to the UK data protection regime, which includes the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Where applicable the council must comply with this legislation when processing your personal data. There are support services available for people who are experiencing domestic abuse, more information is available on the Council's website- <a href="https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20392/community_safety/1467/domestic_abuse_and_violence">https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20392/community_safety/1467/domestic_abuse_and_violence</a>

	Theme	Summary of responses	Norwich City Council response
What is missing from the tenancy agreement or policy that you think we should include?	Communal areas	The outside communal areas need to be kept in better condition- too many overgrown weeds, shrubs and the grass not being cut.	The vast majority of external communal areas within land owned by Norwich City Council's housing service are part of a grounds maintenance contract. We recognise the importance of providing well maintained areas for people to live in. This element was included within our Housing Management strategy 2023-2026, which recommends including resident feedback and monitoring to help maintain and improve standards in line with costs incurred.
		The internal communal areas need more cleaning by the Council.	Currently 1870 tenants receive a caretaking service. We are looking to increase this number and are currently trialling new sites receiving a caretaking service with a view to this becoming permanent as we recognise the cleanliness and safety of communal areas is important to our tenants
		Storage and charging facilities for mobility vehicles.	We are currently developing a mobility vehicle policy which will provide further advice and guidance on our approach to safe storage and charging of mobility vehicles for our tenant's and leaseholders.
	ASB3	Be clearer on what is anti-social behaviour and what the Council will do about it.	We are currently developing a new anti-social behaviour policy which will provide further advice and guidance on our approach to tackling anti-social behaviour.

		Why is door slamming being removed from the tenancy agreement as an example of anti-social behaviour?	Door slamming is being removed as being listed as a specific example of what might constitute anti-social behaviour because it is covered already by an existing line which reads under section 5.1 'loud music and other unreasonable noise'. Frequent and/or deliberate door slamming, particularly at unsociable hours could be classed as unreasonable noise.
	<b>Repairs maintenance and safety</b>	Repairs should be carried out on time by the Council.	The council acknowledges the importance of carrying out repairs in a timely manner. An improvement plan has been drafted and we have engaged a Repairs Improvement Consultant.  In addition we have reviewed and developed a draft repair policy which will be subject to a consultation with the Council's tenants soon.
		Provide regular updates about repairs and programmed work/upgrades so the tenant knows what is happening and when.	The draft repair policy reviews how we engage with our tenants. Upon expiry of the consultation period for this policy we will review tenants' feedback about how they want the Council to communicate with them regarding repairs/programmed works.

	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Summary of responses</b>	<b>Norwich City Council response</b>
<b>What are the proposed changes to your tenancy policy and agreement that you do not understand or support?</b>	<b>Rent</b>	Will my rent go up?	The tenancy agreement, policy and strategy documents will not alter the amount of rent you pay. Any changes to your rent will be communicated to you separately, and typically on an annual basis prior to the beginning of each new financial year which begins in April.
		Remove the bedroom tax.	The bedroom tax (under occupancy charge) is legislated for by Central Government relating to housing benefit or universal credit and is not something that the Council can remove or change.
	<b>Customer service and communication</b>	What provision is there for deaf people to communicate with the Council?	We work in partnership with INTRAN, the interpretation and translation service for the eastern counties to arrange interpreters and translators, for free, to anyone requiring the following services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-telephone interpreting</li> <li>-face-to-face interpreting</li> <li>-lip speaking/British Sign Language interpreting</li> <li>-translation of written council information</li> </ul>

		How can documents be translated into other languages?	<p>into other languages -translation of written council information in other formats such as Braille, audiotape, and large print.</p> <p>If you need an interpreter, please let us know in advance of any appointment so we can arrange it. If this is not possible, we can use the telephone interpretation service instead.</p>
	<b>ASB</b>	The council does not do anything to tackle anti-social behaviour	<p>The Council takes anti-social behaviour seriously and you can find further information and guidance about what to do if you or somebody you know is experiencing anti-social behaviour on our website- <a href="https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20302/antisocial-behaviour-asb">https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20302/antisocial-behaviour-asb</a>. We are currently developing a new anti-social behaviour policy which will provide further advice and guidance on our approach to tackling anti-social behaviour.</p>

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>What is being assessed</b>	Tenancy agreement, tenancy strategy and tenancy policy.	<b>Status</b>	First assessment of new proposed agreement, strategy and policy.
<b>Officer completing</b>	Lewis Parr	<b>Role</b>	Tenancy Services Manager
<b>Team</b>	Tenancy Services	<b>Directorate</b>	Community Services
<b>Senior leadership team sponsor</b>	Chris Hancock	<b>Role</b>	Interim Head of Housing and Community Safety

### What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function? *(include links to project briefs, cabinet reports etc)*

The **tenancy agreement** provides the legal terms and conditions applicable to a tenant of Norwich City Council. It sets out what the Council expects of the tenant in respect of behaviours, and what the tenant can expect of the Council as a landlord.

A current and effective tenancy agreement is essential to enable the efficient management of the housing stock and protect the rights of individuals to enjoy living in their home.

The **tenancy strategy** explains what we expect from Registered Providers of social housing, and what we expect for tenants, including:

- the types of tenancies that will be granted.
- the length of fixed-term tenancies when these are granted.
- the circumstances under which a particular type of tenancy will be granted.
- the process for reviewing tenancies.

The **tenancy policy** sets out how Norwich City Council will manage tenancies within our owned housing stock. It covers granting, use of tenancy conditions relevant to introductory and secure tenancies, and any associated support and enforcement tools.



**How does it fit with other services and policies, and how does it support our [corporate objectives](#) and [City Vision](#)?**

Our Tenancy strategy, Tenancy policy, Housing Management strategy,

Our property services team and the Repairs policy, health and safety, compliance.

Our Community safety strategy and Tenant engagement strategy

It meets the following corporate objectives:

- People live well and independently in a diverse and safe city
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

It supports the following City Vision themes:

- A fair city

**What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, legal etc)?** *The Equality Act requires us to make this clear.*

Part of the drive to improve housing services and council homes is to improve the way council homes are managed. We wish to take positive action to encourage responsible behaviour. This requires the backing of a clear and accurate tenancy agreement. The Council's existing tenancy agreement has been in place since 2010 and some of the terms used within it are now outdated due to technical changes in the law. This opportunity has been taken to clarify some of the other conditions and expand on definitions where required. The new Conditions of Tenancy aim to be more easily understood and fully explain the rights and obligations of the council and its tenants. It also makes it easier for us to prove breaches of tenancy and act when necessary.

The Government introduced the requirement for all social landlords to publish a tenancy strategy and a tenancy policy within Localism Act 2011.

## Equality Impact Assessment

**Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function?** *(person/team/body and other organisations who deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements)*

The housing and community service directorate.

Other local registered providers relating to the tenancy strategy.

**What outcomes do we want to achieve, why and for who?**

An updated tenancy agreement that reflects current legislation and best practise, to allow for effective management of council homes as a landlord and to provide clarity for tenants.

We want the tenancy strategy to contribute to the continuation of mixed and balanced communities and prevent the unnecessary cycle for resettling families and individuals who are well placed in their current homes.

Our aim for our 14,500 secure tenants is to see families and individuals live well while contributing to their future, education, and wellbeing inside the home and local community.

The tenancy policy aims to provide safe and habitable homes to those who need them most, and to sustain healthy secure tenancies.

**Will anyone be disproportionately affected by the programme, and/or will it create any benefits?** *(customers, employees, groups in the wider community etc)*

Nobody will be disproportionately affected by this tenancy agreement.

It benefits staff and tenants by providing clear guidance on how Norwich City Council supports our tenants and acts proportionately when required to safeguard people and our assets.

**If yes, complete the relevant sections below for any benefits and adverse impacts identified.**

## Equality Impact Assessment

Affected group	Key findings from analysis of data and evidence. Identify any gaps in data here	Level & type of impact: low/medium/high, positive/adverse	Justifiable if adverse	Actions to mitigate impacts, maximise benefits or address identified gaps in data	By when
<b>Age</b>	Secure lifetime tenancies offered by Norwich City Council provide reassurance and stability for tenants and prospective tenants, and this is promoted through tenancy strategy for registered providers too. Sheltered housing provide support to elderly residents to promote independent living.	Positive			
<b>Disability</b>	Home improvement team provide disabled adaptations for tenants following occupation therapist assessment.	Positive			
<b>Gender reassignment</b>		None			
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	Succession criteria permits succession of tenancy for this group whether joint tenants or not, provided there has been no previous succession and they are residing at the property together at the point of death.	Positive			
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>		None			
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	The documents will be translated for the top 5 most common first languages of	Positive			

## Equality Impact Assessment

	tenants, aside from English as a default. Other languages aside from this can be translated upon request.				
<b>Religion and belief</b>		None			
<b>Sex/gender</b>		None			
<b>Sexual orientation</b>		None			
<b>Other groups</b>	Low-income households are provided tenancy support with the offer of money and budgeting advice.	Positive			
<p><b>What evidence and data has been used for this assessment, including community engagement and consultation? (include links to data sources, consultations etc) N/A</b></p> <p>Formal 8-week consultation with tenants and registered provides has taken place. Along with consultation with internal stakeholder teams.</p>					
<p><b>How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal? N/A</b></p>					
<p><b>What actions have been identified going forward? N/A</b></p>					
<p><b>How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward? N/A</b></p>					

**Once complete, email to: [strategy@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:strategy@norwich.gov.uk) For the assessment to be final, the relevant people agreeing it must sign off this section**

<b>Officer completing assessment</b>	Lewis Parr	<b>Date</b>	18/10/2023
<b>Senior leadership team sponsor</b>	Chris Hancock	<b>Date</b>	

<b>Equality lead (strategy team)</b>	Emma Smith	<b>Date</b>	
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**Committee name:** Cabinet

**Committee date:** 15/11/2023

**Report title:** Procurement of Council Insurance Programme

**Portfolio:** Councillor Kendrick, Cabinet member for resources

**Report from:** Head of legal and procurement

**Wards:** All wards

**OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

**KEY DECISION**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet endorsement for the approach to the procurement of the Councils insurance cover and delegated authority to enter into the insurance contracts.

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director with responsibility for insurance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to enter into contracts for insurance cover for the Council.

### **Policy framework**

The council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report helps ensure that Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the City

## Background

1. Norwich City Council provides a wide range of services and holds a significant asset portfolio. Occasionally, things can go wrong or an accident happens, and it's important that when it does, the Council has insurance cover to manage the potential risk and exposure it faces. Our current insurance contract was purchased to operate from 1 April 2019, and therefore a new contract is now required for the period from 1st April 2024.
2. Due to the scale of its operations, the Council's insurance needs are complex; property insurance, for its housing and non-housing assets; public and employee liability, professional indemnity to protect the Council in respect of claims made against it, compulsory covers such as fidelity guarantee as well as more minor covers such as fine art insurance for its collection of art and civic regalia; and terrorism to protect the Council should a terrorist event result in damage or disruption to buildings.
3. The Council's current insurance programme is provided by a range of public sector insurance providers, primarily, Zurich Municipal, Travelers and QBE.
4. The management of the Council's insurance service is provided by Cambridgeshire County Council, who also provide services to a range of other authorities including Cambridge City Council, Milton Keynes Council and West Northamptonshire Council. The team have specialist resources to manage our insurance programme working with the appointed insurance brokers, Arthur J Gallagher. In respect of claims there is a mix of in house and insurer service provider management depending on the nature of the claim to be considered, where required on liability claims legal advice is generally provided by the insurers nominated solicitors, Weightmans. The contract with Cambridgeshire is managed through the Council's procurement service.
5. Historically, the Council has sought insurance on a 3 year term with the option to extend for up to 2 further years. A comprehensive review of the Council's insurance cover and policies is undertaken prior to a procurement process which is compliant with public contract regulations due to its value. Each year in the contract the Council is required to undertake a review of its level of cover, providing information on any emerging risks and ensure its policies and insured risks are up to date. Based on this, a revised premium is set by insurers at renewal.
6. The insurance market has been challenging since the last contract was entered into. Prior to this had been a long period of stability where premium rises had been low. A variety of events have contributed to growing premiums, including inflation in the building industry meaning repairs to buildings costing more, similar cost pressures in the motor industry, the growing concern of the impact of climate change and shifting risk appetite on the part of the insurance industry with suppliers withdrawing from the market.
7. As well as mitigating risk through increased premiums, insurers are also seeking to reduce their exposure in the event a loss happens – for example, capping the amount of insurance they will provide on specific assets, particularly properties that are vacant.



## The Procurement Exercise

8. Due to the significant value of the Council's insurance, the Council has to follow a procurement process that is compliant with the public contract regulations 2015. The Council has taken the approach of using an open tender which provides insurers the best opportunity to review the Council's specific needs rather than using a framework.
9. Ahead of the tender, the Council has undertaken a comprehensive review of each aspect of its insurance policy, informed by intelligence and recommendations provided by the insurance team and the insurance broker. At appendix 1, we have summarised some of the key areas of risk and change that the Council holds within its proposed procurement.
10. The Council also obtained an actuarial valuation to support recommended levels of deductibles (the level of excess the Council would pay in the event of a claim).
11. Information to support the tender was sought from across all service areas of the Council. Prior to issue of the tender to the market, Heads of Service and Executive Directors undertook a full review of the documents to ensure accuracy and validity. Heads of Service and Executive Directors have also input to relevant policy decisions on the level of cover sought.
12. The tender documents were published on the Government's Find a Tender service which is used to promote open opportunities nationally, with the broker also seeking to advise insurers of the opportunity. The tender has been broken down into different lots, meaning that insurers can either submit a tender for all of the Council's insurance, or just specific types of cover. This means the Council can pick the best outcome for each separate insurance area and ensure that it can attract a wide range of potential insurers, including specialist market insurers who may not be interested in the full package.
13. Following submission of tenders, an evaluation will be undertaken by the insurance team and brokers of the quality of bids, supported by the procurement team who will evaluate the financial value. The tender submissions will be evaluated based on price 60%, cover 25%, claims management 10% and social value 5%.
14. A decision was made to remove the following areas of insurance from the tender and instead seek a separate procurement route due to their specialist nature. Each element is expected to be under the threshold for a cabinet decision:
  - a. Fine Art – to be separately procured due to its specialist nature
  - b. Terrorism – to be separately procured due to its specialist nature
  - c. Engineering – this contract provides for the statutory testing of the Councils boilers, pressure equipment and lifting equipment and is usually placed within an insurance procurement as it comes with a limited policy of insurance. Advice from brokers is that the insurance is no longer fit for purpose and as such the Council is to issue a contract solely for statutory testing. The market for this service is dominated by around 5 suppliers however the experience of the Insurance team is that

the service provided by the suppliers is being significantly challenged by the availability of appropriately qualified engineers, as a result this has brought challenges to the provision of service where the supplier is changed and it has been recommended that the Council therefore work to retain the existing provider. As a result, the Council is seeking to extend its current contractual arrangements with the incumbent provider and review the position in two years.

- d. Cyber – as highlighted in appendix 1, again, this is a very challenging market with insurers generally unwilling to provide cover in this area unless Councils meet a strict minimum criteria. The Council does have some insurance cover for issues such as data breaches or data recovery and is working with the broker to identify what steps it needs to take to be able to approach the insurance market with work continuing outside of the tender.

15. Due to the complex nature of the Council's insurance needs, it is anticipated that there will need to be a process of clarification with suppliers and careful consideration of the submitted bids, which will lead to a final decision on the preferred options in January. A delegated approval is being sought at this stage due to the need to move quickly following evaluation to confirming the preferred provider and resolving contractual requirements before cover comes into place on 1 April 2024.

16. As with previous contracts, the Council will seek to enter a 3 year initial agreement with an annual review process inbuilt and 2 x 12 month extensions available for utilisation where appropriate.

17. The willingness of the market to provide the levels of insurance the Council seeks will become clearer through the tender process. Insurers may wish to cap the level of insurance it provides; however the Council can then seek to "layer" the insurance by seeking further insurance providers who will provide additional cover for that element not covered by the primary insurer. A final decision will need to be made on the level of cover that assesses the potential benefits and risks of each aspect of coverage.

## **Consultation**

18. As set out above, the Council's insurance broker has been an active participant in the service, enabling professional expertise informed by regular market engagement.

## **Implications**

### **Financial and resources**

19. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2022-26 and budget.

20. The Council funds its insurance requirements through three means:

- a. The Council has a budget of £1.119m to pay for its insurance cover. This budget includes all aspects of the insurance, including those omitted from the current exercise (see paragraph 12). There is a risk that the

current tender, which is being undertaken to seek the most economically advantageous outcome for the Council, may ultimately see a rise in premiums. This will be kept under review as the tender process emerges alongside the Council's budget setting. Some elements of the insurance are distributed to tenants and leaseholders.

- b. The Council has an insurance reserve of £1.005m. This assists the Council in the event that a significant event occurs that requires payment from the insurance reserve. Each year, an actuarial review is undertaken to ensure the level of reserve is accurate.
- c. The Council has a balance of £100k from which it settles smaller claims. Any residual on the balance is used to top up the insurance reserve in line with actuarial advice annually.

## Legal

21. The procurement is being undertaken in a manner compliant with the public contract regulations 2015.

## Statutory considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	No specific implications
Health, social and economic impact	No specific implications.
Crime and disorder	No specific implications
Children and adults safeguarding	No specific implications
Environmental impact	As part of the tender, insurers have been asked to submit social value information which will be included in the scoring of bids. This includes specific questions on how suppliers are working to reduce carbon and increase recycling and reuse within their operations.

## Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
The Council fails to obtain adequate insurance to cover its potential liabilities	If an event was to happen that the Council was not insured for, it would be expected to cover the costs and any liabilities of this	Comprehensive review of cover required followed by robust procurement process to obtain adequate insurance cover

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
The costs of the Council's insurance exceed the budgetary allocation	The Council may have to compromise on other resource allocation to ensure the level of cover required	Ongoing dialogue between finance and procurement as the outcome of the tender emerges to assess impact on Council budget

**Other options considered**

22. The Council could have procured its insurance through a framework. Whilst frameworks can be effective where the Council is purchasing less complex and more standardised products, operating through an open tender gives best opportunity for the specific needs of the Council to be considered.

**Reasons for the decision/recommendation**


23. To ensure that the Council has adequate insurance cover in place from 1 April 2024.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 Key areas of risk and change within the Council's insurance

**Contact officer: Leah Mickleborough, Head of Legal and Procurement**

**Email address: [leahmickleborough@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:leahmickleborough@norwich.gov.uk)**

	<p>If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.</p>
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## Appendix 1: Key areas of risk and change within the Council's insurance

Area of risk / change	Explanation
Housing – coverage for housing properties	It is increasingly common practice for housing authorities to only obtain insurance for those properties that are three stories and above. That means if something was to happen to a property less than 3 stories, the Council would directly pay the costs associated with this. The Council has taken this approach with its insurance for some time and it is anticipated that if we do otherwise, the costs of premiums would inevitably equate to a similar level to what it may pay in an average year now for restoration of such properties. However, this will be kept under review and the Council is gathering data required to investigate this with insurers in future.
All properties – developments to manage environmental risks	The Council does not presently have insurance for the risk of subsidence, meaning again any claims would be paid for directly by the Council. Most general fund properties are outside the key areas of risk within Norwich. This is being explored as part of the current insurance exercise. The Council is also adding insurance for work to support environmental efficiency and carbon reduction such as chargers, solar panels and heat pumps.
Loss limits	At present, the Council's insurers have limited the value they are willing to pay out on some properties, meaning if an event occurred the Council may not receive the full re-instatement cost and would have to carefully consider its options. We are seeking to address this through the current insurance tender, including whether insurers would be willing to layer cover to reduce their risk.
Deductibles	The Council's current deductible is generally £50k and an aggregate of £500k. This means that the Council pays £50k for any single claim, but is limited to £500k in total per year. This has been reviewed by actuaries to ensure it is appropriate. Shifting the level of deductible is unlikely to have a significant impact on premiums.
Business Interruption	The Council's current level of cover, at £37m, is comparatively extremely high. The advent of more mobile and hybrid working has reduced the reliance on City Hall and other work locations, meaning that high degrees of cover are no longer required. As a result, the insurance cover is being reduced to £10m in line with other authorities of a similar size. The

	Council is also seeking to increase the length of time for cover to 4 years, and adding business interruption insurance at the multi-storey car parks so we could claim for loss of income if there was a significant downtime.
Money	The amount of physical cash the Council receives has significantly reduced, to the point where the level of cash at any one time is now less than the deductible we would have to pay to make a claim. As a result, this cover is being removed in future.
Public and Employer liability	Our current level of cover is £25m, however this is being increased to £30m to reflect inflation since it was last reviewed.
Cyber	The Council is obtaining cover for a data loss or reinstatement event. However, the market for cyber insurance is extremely challenging, with many insurers refusing to provide cover at present. We will continue to review how we might be able to secure cover with our insurance brokers.