



Civic Centre,  
Arnot Hill Park,  
Arnold,  
Nottinghamshire,  
NG5 6LU

# Agenda

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 15 December 2014**

---

Time: **5.30 pm**

---

Place: **Reception Room**

---

For any further information please contact:

**Jane Ansell**

Members' Services

0115 901 3627

---

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## Membership

**Chair** Councillor Mike Hope

**Vice-Chair** Councillor Gary Gregory

Councillor Patricia Andrews  
Councillor Sandra Barnes  
Councillor Paul Feeney  
Councillor Cheryl Hewlett  
Councillor Paul Hughes  
Councillor Lynda Pearson  
Councillor Stephen Poole  
Councillor Colin Powell  
Councillor Suzanne Prew-Smith  
Councillor Nick Quilty  
Councillor John Truscott

## **AGENDA**

**Page**

- |          |  |                |
|----------|--|----------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence and Substitutions.</b>  |                |
| <b>2</b> | <b>To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2014.</b>                    | <b>1 - 8</b>   |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Declaration of Interests.</b>   |                |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Portfolio Holder holding to account and Quarter 2 Performance</b>   | <b>9 - 16</b>  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15</b>   | <b>17 - 72</b> |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required under the Constitution or Law.</b> | <b>73 - 74</b> |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Any other item which the Chair considers urgent.</b>  |                |

This page is intentionally left blank

## **MINUTES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Monday 29 September 2014**

Councillor Mike Hope (Chair)

Councillor Gary Gregory	Councillor Lynda Pearson
Councillor Patricia Andrews	Councillor Stephen Poole
Councillor Sandra Barnes	Councillor Colin Powell
Councillor Paul Feeney	Councillor Suzanne Prew-Smith
Councillor Cheryl Hewlett	
Councillor Paul Hughes	Councillor John Truscott

Apologies for absence:

Officers in Attendance: J Ansell, S Bray and H Lee

Guests in Attendance P Barnes and D Wakelin

### **53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS.**

None received.

### **54 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 JULY 2014.**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

### **55 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

None received.

### **56 2014/15 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

#### **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT 2013/14**

#### **1. Rolling Programme of Portfolio Holder Holding to Account**

The chair welcomed Councillor Barnes, Portfolio Holder, Environment, and David Wakelin, Corporate Director, who had been invited to respond to questions on the following areas of the Environment Portfolio:

**Maintenance and Development of the public realm, including parks, open spaces, cemeteries and allotments, with specific reference to the Gedling Country Park.**

**Advance questions received from Members:**

1. An overview and update on the Gedling Country Park.
2. What protection/bye laws are to be established to curb such things as: Scrambles and Quad Bikes?
3. Environmentally, what plans are in place to foster and protect the future development of wild life?
4. Re: Ley St Field in Netherfield: I understand that the land originally belonged to Notts. County Council Education Department however Gedling BC had installed a football pitch and changing facility. There has been a notice on the site stating that, under an agreement, Gedling Borough Council is taking over responsibility for the field. The area is deteriorating and the changing facility is locked and unavailable for general use – could the Portfolio Holder provide an update on future plans for this site?
5. Re: Conway Road Pavilion, tennis courts and golf facility: The tennis courts and golf course are deteriorating and under used – could the Portfolio Holder give details of future intentions for the site?
6. What criteria are used to determine whether grass is cut or left to grow in parks and open spaces? There has been some concern that grass has been left to grow near to children's play areas thereby encouraging misuse by irresponsible dog owners.
7. Is any consultation undertaken with nearby local residents before grassed areas are left to grow?
8. Have any other options been considered by the Council with regard to saving money on maintaining small pieces of open land in residential areas such as selling of land; offering 'licences to occupy' or undertaking 'informal agreements to cultivate' (as used in recent years by the County Council's Highway Authority)?

**Response of Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director:**

Before answering specific questions raised by Scrutiny the Corporate Director updated Members on the progress of the Gedling Country Park with a presentation which answered some of the questions raised by Members.

- Stage 1 which consisted of remediation work on the drainage system and works to ensure the safety of the public were signed off on the 10 September 2014.
- Notts. County Council has assisted in the project management and their help and expertise has been invaluable.
- There have been some issues around public access expectations but currently this is a working site and warning notices have been erected. Safety is less of an issue now that the paths have been completed. All paths are DDA compliant. There will be no perimeter fence but where access issues have been a problem drainage ditches have been re-established which stop vehicles accessing the park from non - designated entrances.
- Stage 2 has now commenced and construction of the Solar Panel Farm will begin at the end of September and should be completed by December.
- To date the work has been financed by HCA and Gedling Homes, the authority does have a budget for completion of the project but thus far it has not been necessary to use. Section 106 money has been allocated for the project.
- A Friends of Gedling Country Park group has been formed and it is envisaged that in the future they will have a major role in the running of the park assisting with marketing, education, funding in addition to more practical issues like patrolling and maintenance. This group will be able to access funding streams to enhance the facilities in the Park that are not available to the authority.
- There will be space for 40 cars on Lambley Lane and a similar number on Spring Lane. This is will be reviewed to ensure it is sufficient.
- A Landscape and Wildlife Management Plan has been completed by EMEC Ecologists and a five year management plan is currently being developed.
- The park will be a centre for recreation and education for the community with many activities. Currently work is being undertaken with APSE to establish a community ranger's course for volunteer rangers, two schools have already visited the site and the educational potential of the facility will be developed.
- A play area located near the car park will be provided when funding is identified.
- The current Public Liability Insurance is sufficient to cover for any issues that arise.
- The lagoons will not be fenced off but warning signs and life jackets will be visible.
- When funding can be identified it is projected that a visitors' centre will to be built on the park.
- Sufficient signage and dog and litter bins will be located around the park.
- It is considered that the park will become self-policing and the activities of the Friends of Gedling Park may minimise the need

for bye laws to be passed to stop the use of quad bikes etc. This will be kept under review.

**The Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Director had answered in the presentation the three specific questions related to the Country Park and responded to the remaining questions raised by Scrutiny as follows:**

**Question 4**

**Response: Corporate Director**

- **Ley St Field.** This is a well utilised facility and the pitches and the changing rooms are in high demand from local football teams.
- The County Council is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of its play areas strategy. Once the findings from this are reported the future of the facility will become clearer.

**Question 5**

**Response: Corporate Director**

- **Conway Road** During the summer months the Bowling Green is used and maintained in good condition by two bowling clubs. There had been complaints about football being played on the bowling green which is causing problems for the bowls club. It was agreed that this would be looked into.
- The tennis courts are well used but have been subjected to some vandalism and to resolve this used of solid netting is being considered. The 'pitch and putt' course that was formally on the site has become overgrown.
- Members wanted to know if this could be reinstated and it was agreed that this would be considered.

**Question 6, 7, 8**

**Response Portfolio Holder**

- Due to the high cost of cutting grass in parks and open spaces a decision was taken to reduce the number of cuts each year. As an alternative to grass cutting there has been a move, where suitable, to cut paths for walking and the plant the remaining areas with wild flowers. This year, this has in the main been 'Cosmos', which will have to be cut back after it has flowered, but in future years this should be a variety of wild flowers. There are issues where grassland is next to City Council land as they continue to cut theirs, and in future there may need to be liaison



between the two authorities in order to better synergise works to grassland.

- Consultation takes place through the local ward councillors and during the Gedling Conversation.
- Small areas of land which may be able to be used for small building plots or allotments would possibly be available for sale. Currently plots of this size attract fly tipping. Very small pieces of land that could possibly have some other system of maintenance need identifying and it was agreed that Members should speak to officers about any such small areas of land that they are aware of.

## **2. Council Plan 2014/2015: Overview Quarter 1 Performance**

Stephen Bray, Corporate Director provided the following overview of Quarter 1 2014/2015 performance:

- It is very early in the year and, in the main, performance is positive.
- There are 10 red indicators and two amber. The amber indicators relate to attendance in leisure centres which is nearly on target and performance in recycling just off target.
- The target for Apprenticeships hasn't been met but this is due to young people obtaining temporary or permanent positions with the authority.
- Recorded crime and anti-social behaviour fell last year in comparison to other local authorities but this has now begun to rise.
- Sickness absence continues to be below target, although this has continued to improve. New measures to bring down the figure will take a full year to show an impact on the data. Another indicator which will run in parallel with the current indicator and track periods and frequency of sickness is currently being devised.

## **3. Future Programme of Portfolio Holder attendance**

The Chair reminded Members of the attendance of Councillor Payne, Portfolio Holder, Public Protection and Communications at the next Overview and Scrutiny meeting and raised the importance of Members submitting questions in advance.

#### **4) In depth Scrutiny updates**

The Senior Members Services Officer updated Members on the progress of the current Scrutiny Reviews as follows:

##### **4.1 Reducing unemployment in the Borough**

No further meetings will be held; the final report and recommendations are pending.

##### **4.2 Homelessness and hardship in the Borough**

Nearing completion, no further evidence gathering meetings. The final report and recommendations are being developed.

##### **4.3 Transport links to, and within Gedling Borough**

The working group has scoped the review and has held two meetings.

Members were informed that the reports and recommendations of the completed reviews at 4.1 and 4.2 will be tabled at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> December.

#### **Follow up on completed reviews**

- **The Council's engagement with the voluntary sector**
- **Taxi Licensing**
- **Inclusion and Equalities** – to be presented at the December meeting.

#### **RESOLVED to:**

- i. Thank the Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director for their attendance
- ii. Request an update on Ley St Field when the County Council report is available
- iii. Receive information in due course about the possible reinstatement of the 'pitch and putt' course at Conway Road
- iv. Note the Q 4 2013/2014 additional information
- v. Request information about how the target for residual waste is devised
- vi. Receive information about the new sickness tracking indicator when it is implemented, and an update on

absence when the new measures have been in place a year

- vii. Note the updates received on the progress of the in depth Scrutiny Working Groups
- viii. Note the follow-up responses received in respect of the Council's Taxi Licensing and Engagement with the Voluntary Sector review
- ix. Request that the Portfolio Holder, Communications and Public Protection attend in nine months' time to update on the progress of the implementation of the topography test and what could possibly be done in future to improve on current procedures
- x. Receive an update on the progress of the agreed recommendations of the Inclusion and Equalities Review at the December meeting.

57

#### **ITEMS REFERRED TO THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AS REQUIRED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OR LAW**

Members considered the standing report detailing items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny under the Constitution or Law as follows:

##### **1. Items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Contract Standing orders and Standing orders for dealing with Land**

- i. **Notifications received where it has not been possible to obtain 3 quotations for a contract estimated to be between £10,000 and £50,000.**
  - Entry into a contract with Heineken UK for the provision of Bar Supplies for the supplies of Beer, Cider and Soft drinks for those Leisure Centres within the Borough that have bars, on the same terms as the previous contract, from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> January, with the option to extend for a maximum of one further month.
- ii. **Notification of decision to dispose of land or property other than the sale of council houses to sitting tenants pursuant to the right to buy.**
  - Entry into an option agreement for the future sale of land at Florence Road, Gedling (the Land) to Maximus Projects Limited without using the tender process as defined in the Standing Orders for Dealings with Land.

**2. Items referred to Scrutiny under the Budget and Policy Framework**

- Addition of an item to the Forward Plan. The item related to the “Response to the Inspector’s report on the Aligned Core Strategy” and would be tabled for discussion at an additional meeting of Cabinet on Thursday 28 August 2014.

**RESOLVED:**

To note the information

**58 ANY OTHER ITEM WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.**

None.

The meeting finished at 19.05 pm.

Signed by Chair:  
Date:



**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Subject:** Portfolio Holder holding to account and Quarter 2 Performance Overview.

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014

**Author:** Senior Members' Services Officer

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- To consider the Portfolio of Councillor Michael Payne, Portfolio Holder, Public Protection and Communications, as part of the rolling programme of Portfolio Holder holding to account. Also attending will be Paddy Tipping, Police and Crime Commissioner, and Tim Wendels, Head of Estates, Nottinghamshire Police.
- To receive updates on Quarter 2 2014/15 Council performance and on progress of the 2014/15 Scrutiny Work Programme.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in August 2013 Members agreed an annual rolling programme of attendance by Portfolio Holders and relevant Corporate Directors at committee, and to identify in advance which areas of performance within each Portfolio they would like to examine. It was further agreed that questions for Portfolio Holders should be submitted in advance of each meeting, although 'ad hoc' questions may be put forward at the meeting itself.

This committee has elected to consider the following elements of the Public Protection and Communications Portfolio:

- Crime reduction and community safety - with specific reference to the PCC Policing Plan and the proposed closure of Carlton Police Station.
- Customer services, information and communications technology - with specific reference to Customer Satisfaction.

A customised 'Covalent' report detailing the performance outcomes of the above Portfolio is **attached at Appendix 1**.

## **2.1 Questions in advance from Members**

The following questions have been submitted in advance by Members:

### **i. Councillor Parr**

During the past two years or so we have had installed CCTV around the borough. I wonder how effective this has been in

- deterring traffic offences along Front street, Arnold?
- helping minimise incidents alongside B&Q in Daybrook?

A regular report relating to these assets would, I feel, be most welcome - in particular to the business community.

### **ii. Councillor Feeney**

#### **Re: Proposals to close Carlton Police Station**

- Would it not be better to keep Oxclose Lane and Carlton police station open and close Arnold in order to save money with regard to running costs as this would surely provide a more efficient balance of resources and give easier access to police services for both sides of the borough?
- What is the business case for moving the computer servers, custody and ID suite from Carlton to other locations?
- If this building is closed for police use, who will occupy it and what other users for this building have been identified?

### **iii. Councillor Gregory**

- I understand that a feasibility study was undertaken to establish the viability of putting co-locating partner organisations into Carlton Police Station to keep it open. What was the cost implication of that proposal?

## **3. COUNCIL PLAN 2014/15: OVERVIEW OF QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE**

Stephen Bray, Corporate Director will provide an overview of Quarter 2 2014/15 performance and take questions from Members.

The following item of further information on Quarter 1 performance was requested at the last meeting:

Overview Committee Members requested information about how the target for residual waste is devised.

The targets were set based on reducing amount of residual waste being produced per household. In 2009/10 the amount produced per household was 546 kg this then reduced to 535kg in 2010/11, 527kg in 2011/12 and 522kg in 2012/13 so a 5kg reduction per year was thought achievable as residents recycling and re-use habits improve with awareness and education. Also the introduction of new schemes such as kerbside wood, small waste electrical items and batteries will have diverted some waste away from the black bin. However, household waste also includes street litter and leaf clearance so any increases in these will have an impact on the outcome. It also depends on weather conditions so if lots of garden waste is produced and goes in the black bin this will have an impact on the weights.

It is possible to split the weights so it only includes black bin residual waste and report that only but it would take some time and another local indicator would need to be set up.

**Caroline McKenzie: Service Manager, Waste Services**

#### **4. 2014/15 PROGRAMME OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER ATTENDANCE**

The current programme of Portfolio Holder attendance is now completed. As there are two more committees scheduled in the 2014/15 financial year, it is proposed that a further Portfolio Holder is invited to the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February, and the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April is used to wind up the 2014/15 Scrutiny work programme.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Members:

- Thank the Portfolio Holder, Public Protection and Communications, the Police and Crime Commissioner and other guests for their attendance.
- Note the Quarter 2 performance information and further information provided on the Quarter 1 information.
- Consider and agree the attendance of a Portfolio Holder at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February.












This page is intentionally left blank




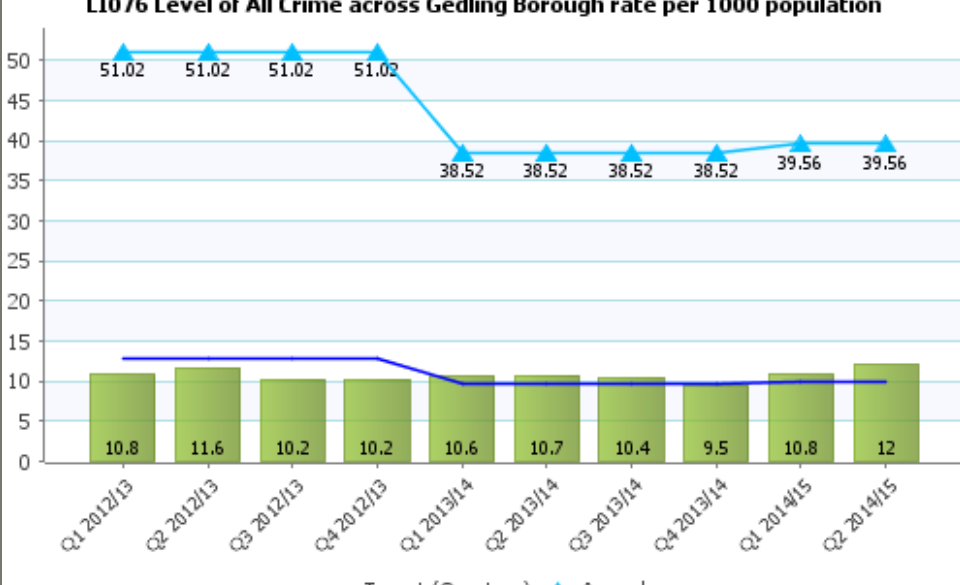


## Portfolio Owners Public Protection and Communications Portfolio




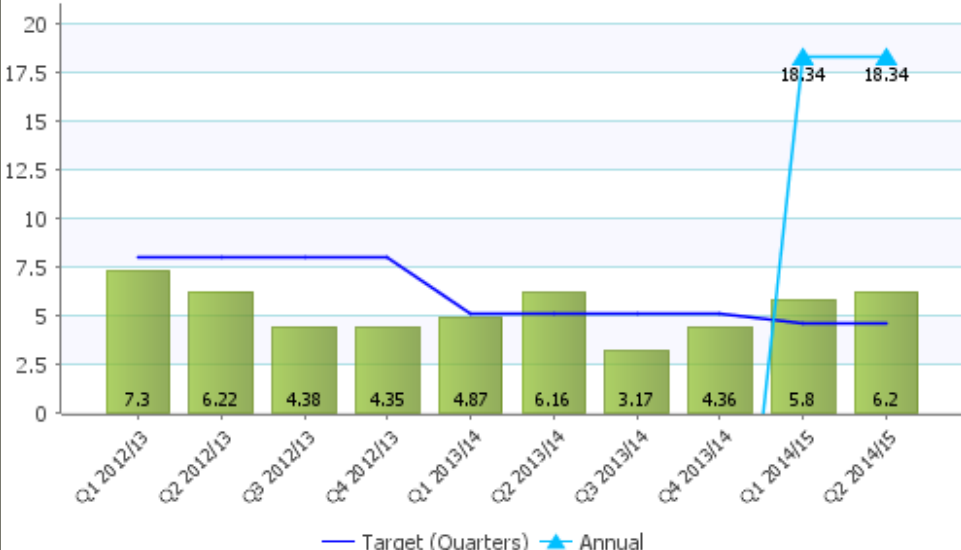
Report prepared 13 November 2014

### Indicators






PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				






LI076 Level of All Crime across Gedling Borough rate per 1000 population																																															
Managed By	Andy Callingham	Status																																													
Current Value	Current Target	Trend compared to last period	Trend compared to year ago																																												
12	9.89																																														
Latest Note	Year to date there have been 2591 crimes recorded in the Borough, 1365 of which were recorded during quarter 2. This reflects an increase of 7.2% (174 more crimes) than the same period 2013-2014. The greatest increase is in violence, auto crime, sexual crimes and those recorded as "other".																																														
Performance against target	<p><b>LI076 Level of All Crime across Gedling Borough rate per 1000 population</b></p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Crime Rate Data (per 1000 population)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Annual Rate</th> <th>Quarterly Rate</th> <th>Target (Quarters)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Q1 2012/13</td><td>51.02</td><td>10.8</td><td>12.5</td></tr> <tr><td>Q2 2012/13</td><td>51.02</td><td>11.6</td><td>12.5</td></tr> <tr><td>Q3 2012/13</td><td>51.02</td><td>10.2</td><td>12.5</td></tr> <tr><td>Q4 2012/13</td><td>51.02</td><td>10.2</td><td>12.5</td></tr> <tr><td>Q1 2013/14</td><td>38.52</td><td>10.6</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>Q2 2013/14</td><td>38.52</td><td>10.7</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>Q3 2013/14</td><td>38.52</td><td>10.4</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>Q4 2013/14</td><td>38.52</td><td>9.5</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>Q1 2014/15</td><td>39.56</td><td>10.8</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>Q2 2014/15</td><td>39.56</td><td>12</td><td>10</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			Period	Annual Rate	Quarterly Rate	Target (Quarters)	Q1 2012/13	51.02	10.8	12.5	Q2 2012/13	51.02	11.6	12.5	Q3 2012/13	51.02	10.2	12.5	Q4 2012/13	51.02	10.2	12.5	Q1 2013/14	38.52	10.6	10	Q2 2013/14	38.52	10.7	10	Q3 2013/14	38.52	10.4	10	Q4 2013/14	38.52	9.5	10	Q1 2014/15	39.56	10.8	10	Q2 2014/15	39.56	12	10
Period	Annual Rate	Quarterly Rate	Target (Quarters)																																												
Q1 2012/13	51.02	10.8	12.5																																												
Q2 2012/13	51.02	11.6	12.5																																												
Q3 2012/13	51.02	10.2	12.5																																												
Q4 2012/13	51.02	10.2	12.5																																												
Q1 2013/14	38.52	10.6	10																																												
Q2 2013/14	38.52	10.7	10																																												
Q3 2013/14	38.52	10.4	10																																												
Q4 2013/14	38.52	9.5	10																																												
Q1 2014/15	39.56	10.8	10																																												
Q2 2014/15	39.56	12	10																																												

Appendix 1

LI081 Level of recorded anti-social behaviour across Gedling Borough (per 1000 population) - quarterly cumulative figure																																															
Managed By	Andy Callingham	Status																																													
Current Value	Current Target	Trend compared to last period	Trend compared to year ago																																												
6.2	4.59																																														
Latest Note	ASB is recording a year to date increase of 7.2% when compared to the same period the previous year. During quarter 2 there were a total of 701 recorded incidents.																																														
Performance against target	<p>LI081 Level of recorded anti-social behaviour across Gedling Borough (per 1000 population) - quarterly cumulative figure</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Value</th> <th>Target (Quarters)</th> <th>Annual</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1 2012/13</td> <td>7.3</td> <td>7.3</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2012/13</td> <td>6.22</td> <td>7.3</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3 2012/13</td> <td>4.38</td> <td>7.3</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2012/13</td> <td>4.35</td> <td>7.3</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2013/14</td> <td>4.87</td> <td>5.0</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2013/14</td> <td>6.16</td> <td>5.0</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3 2013/14</td> <td>3.17</td> <td>5.0</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2013/14</td> <td>4.36</td> <td>5.0</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2014/15</td> <td>5.8</td> <td>4.59</td> <td>18.34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2014/15</td> <td>6.2</td> <td>4.59</td> <td>18.34</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Quarter	Value	Target (Quarters)	Annual	Q1 2012/13	7.3	7.3		Q2 2012/13	6.22	7.3		Q3 2012/13	4.38	7.3		Q4 2012/13	4.35	7.3		Q1 2013/14	4.87	5.0		Q2 2013/14	6.16	5.0		Q3 2013/14	3.17	5.0		Q4 2013/14	4.36	5.0		Q1 2014/15	5.8	4.59	18.34	Q2 2014/15	6.2	4.59	18.34
Quarter	Value	Target (Quarters)	Annual																																												
Q1 2012/13	7.3	7.3																																													
Q2 2012/13	6.22	7.3																																													
Q3 2012/13	4.38	7.3																																													
Q4 2012/13	4.35	7.3																																													
Q1 2013/14	4.87	5.0																																													
Q2 2013/14	6.16	5.0																																													
Q3 2013/14	3.17	5.0																																													
Q4 2013/14	4.36	5.0																																													
Q1 2014/15	5.8	4.59	18.34																																												
Q2 2014/15	6.2	4.59	18.34																																												

# Actions

Action Status	
	Cancelled
	Overdue; Neglected
	Unassigned; Check Progress
	Not Started; In Progress; Assigned
	Completed

Title	Managed By	Status	Completion Date	Progress Bar	Notes
Implement Internal Communications strategy	Caroline Newson; Carolynne Watson		31-Mar-2015	<div><div>25%</div></div>	
Increase the number, range and take up of services available online	Mark Lane		31-Mar-2015	<div><div>50%</div></div>	<p>Following the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration, Customers can now register on Line using facilities provided by Central Government</p> <p>Customers using the Council's Personal Search Service can now submit search enquiries on line</p> <p>Customers can now report details of Uncollected Bins on line</p> <p>Customers can now use their smart phones to report incidents requiring attention for example environmental crime such as graffiti, fly-tipping</p>
Implement and embed an updated Customer Services Charter	Mark Lane		31-Mar-2015	<div><div>0%</div></div>	
Deliver Gedling Borough Council's contribution to the activities and plans co-ordinated through South Nottinghamshire Community Safety Partnership	Andy Callingham		31-Mar-2015	<div><div>30%</div></div>	
Implement a range of activities to embed the Council's new Community Protection Policy	Andy Callingham		31-Mar-2015	<div><div>51%</div></div>	No further activity required through the summer



**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Subject:** Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014

**Author:** Senior Members' Services Officer

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To receive updates on progress of the 2014/15 Scrutiny Work Programme.

## **2. IN DEPTH SCRUTINY**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had nominated three in depth Scrutiny Reviews to be undertaken as part of the 2014/15 work programme. Updates are detailed below.

### **2.1 Reducing unemployment in the Borough**

**Working Group Members:** Councillors Bailey (chair), Wheeler, R. Ellis, R. Allan, Gregory P. Andrews, B Andrews, Hewson, Hughes, Parr.

Members of this working group have completed their review and the final report and recommendations are attached at **Appendix 1**.

### **2.2 Homelessness and hardship in the Borough**

**Working Group members:** Councillors Lawrence (Chair), Weisz, Blair, Paling, Hope, P. Allan, Bexon, Hewson, Hughes, Parr.

This review is also now complete and the report and recommendations are attached at **Appendix 2**.

### **2.3 Transport links to, and within Gedling Borough**

**Working Group Members:** Feeney, Paling, Pearson, Truscott, D. Ellis, P. Andrews and G. Clarke.

This group last met on 29<sup>th</sup> September. At the meeting, young people of the Transport sub group of the Gedling Youth Council presented their views on young peoples' transport needs. Colin West, project coordinator and Gary Smerdon – White, Executive Director of the Sustainable Travel Collective LTD also attended and presented the action plan of the TravelRight sustainable travel initiative.

A further meeting scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> October with Mark Hudson, Group Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council Transport and Travel Team was unfortunately cancelled due to his illness, and will be rescheduled in the New Year.

#### **2.4 Follow up on completed reviews**

A six month follow up request was recently issued to the relevant Portfolio Holder on the **accepted** recommendations of the Inclusion and Equality review.

A response is attached at **Appendix 3**.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members note:

- the final reports and recommendations of the '**Reducing Unemployment in the Borough**' and '**Homelessness and Hardship in the Borough**' in depth reviews and refer the recommendations to the next meeting of Cabinet, with a request for a response from the relevant Portfolio Holder within 28 days.
- the response of the Portfolio Holder to the 6 month follow up on the Inclusion and Equality review.

**Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Subject: Final report and recommendations of the 'Reducing Unemployment in the Borough' Scrutiny Working Group**

**Date: Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

**Author: Senior Members' Services Officer**

### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To inform Scrutiny Members of the findings and recommendations of the **Reducing Unemployment in the Borough** Scrutiny Working Group.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

The **Reducing Unemployment in the Borough Scrutiny Review** was appointed as one of three strategically linked in-depth reviews proposed in the 2013/2014 Scrutiny work programme. The overarching aim has been to examine progress of the Council's ambitions as a community leader, driving ongoing partnership approaches in securing social and economic sustainability within Gedling Borough. The findings of the review should therefore be considered in conjunction with those of the **Hardship and Homelessness in Gedling Borough** and **Transport Links to, and within Gedling Borough** in depth reviews.

**Working group members:** Councillors Bailey (Chair), Wheeler (until appointed to Cabinet in May 2014), R. Ellis, R. Allan, Gregory, P. Andrews, B. Andrews, Hewson, Hughes and Parr.

Subject to the approval of this Committee, the recommendations will be tabled at the next available meeting of Cabinet, and Councillor Pulk, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Economic Development will be asked to provide a response to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee within 28 days of that meeting.

### **3. PROJECT SCOPE**

In scoping the review, members identified two clear lines of enquiry:

- To clarify the role of Gedling Borough Council in positively influencing levels of unemployment in the Borough both in respect of local economic

**Appendix 1**

development and in driving partnership approaches to service delivery in this area.

- To identify the role of the voluntary sector and specialist agencies in supporting individuals to become job ready, and to establish how effective the links are between local businesses, schools, colleges, service providers and jobseekers.

#### **Project Scope: Appendix 1.1**

#### **4. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members undertook the following work programme:

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Work Programme</b>	<b>Agreed actions</b>
<b>29<sup>th</sup> October 2013</b>	Scoping meeting: Members examined County Council employment bulletins and other relevant data and identified key areas of enquiry.	Draft scope produced
<b>30<sup>th</sup> January 2014</b>	Members met with Councillor Pulk, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Development, and Peter Baguley, Service Manager, Planning and Economic Development and received an overview of the work of the Employment and Skills Group.	Cllrs Gregory and Andrews to attend a meeting of the Employment and Skills Group on 22.5.2014 and report back.
<b>1<sup>st</sup> May 2014</b>	Members reviewed the evidence of the last meeting and established some emerging recommendations.	Emerging recommendations identified; next meeting to examine proposals for employment focussed European funding bids.
<b>26<sup>th</sup> June 2014</b>	Members met with David Drury, Consultant to the Gedling Employment and Skills Group, to receive an overview of European fundraising strategies.	Agreed that Cllr Gregory would attend the Jobsfair at Richard Herod LC on 22.7.14 and report back.

#### **5. FINDINGS**

Following the scoping of the review, Members were advised that many of the lines of enquiry that the group had identified were already being pursued by the Gedling Employment and Skills Group, a partnership led by Gedling Borough Council which is addressing issues of Economic Development, including employability and employment development.



At a meeting with Councillor Pulk, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Development, and Peter Baguley, Service Manager, Planning and Economic Development, Members received an overview of the work of the Employment and Skills Group and gained an understanding of the key priorities and work programmes contained in the Employment and Skills Action Plan.

### **5.1 Overview of the work of the Employment and Skills Group**

The Employment and Skills Group had been established 18 months previously, and has representation from a wide range of partners and specialist providers including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Futures, Nottinghamshire County Council, Groundwork Greater Nottingham, Gedling Homes, Central College as well as Gedling Borough Council Housing Strategy, Organisational Development and Localities and a number of vocational training providers. Local schools are also involved. The key priority of the group is tackling unemployment, with a particular focus on focus on Youth unemployment. Partners have been able to access funding to target resources in Gedling as a direct consequence of the establishment of the group.

Some projects had already been delivered, and an action plan produced, with a lead organisation for each strand of the action plan. The plan is regularly reported into Cabinet. The aim of the group is to more effectively coordinate the efforts and expertise of all partners to improve efficiency and maximise service to individuals; for example it had been identified that there has been some crossover and uneven distribution in respect of job clubs in the Borough.

Members were informed that the Council has appointed to an additional half time Economic Development post, and a consultant is also working half time with a specific Employment and Skills remit. The roles of the two posts cross over, working together in a flexible way.

Work to address youth unemployment is specifically targeted towards those individuals, specifically the 16 -24 age group, that are classed by the DWP as Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET). The work also targets those areas with the highest number of NEETS, for example in Killisick, where there are over 40 NEETS.

The 4 themes in the Employment and Skills group action plan and work undertaken within each theme are:

#### **i) Schools**

Members were informed that Corporate Director Paula Darlington has made a series of visits to local schools to introduce the Employment and Skills partnership and identify ways in which the partnership might help them either to provide careers advice or to strengthen current careers advice provision. This is now particularly pertinent as the school leaving age increases to 18 in 2014. As a result of the visits, three local schools are engaged in the partnership and Futures has been able to provide a careers service in those schools.

## **ii) Employers**

The partnership is promoting the take up of apprenticeship schemes and working to stimulate business start-ups. Key to this is the development of Local Employment Agreements, one example of which is Sainsburys, which has agreed to work with local schools to provide training for local school leavers towards local employment opportunities. Members were informed that Sainsburys would shortly provide up to 500 jobs and the training initiative will give local young people a head start to getting some those jobs.

Members were interested in whether the partnership is encouraging employers to provide work experience placements. The Service Manager, Economic Development confirmed that the group is prioritising this, and Tesco is already providing a placement leading to a guaranteed interview. The group is focussing on ways to help people to 'get through the door' by using the expertise and interventions of a range of agencies, including employers, to create a package of support. Promoting apprenticeships is at the top of the agenda, and in addition to incentives provided by the national apprenticeship Scheme, Gedling Borough Council pays £1000 top up to employers per apprenticeship to guarantee that priority is given to Gedling residents. Gedling Borough Council has also taken on apprentices under the National Apprenticeship Scheme.

Members raised the need to include achievement of Level 2 Maths and English in the apprenticeship programme, and were informed that schools are considering different qualification levels in basic Maths and English, the aim being to create an achievable bridging process aimed at enhancing motivation, confidence and engagement. The ultimate aim, in conversation with employers, is employment. Ongoing liaison with employers is a high priority, in order to secure more jobs for local people as they arise, to enable the Council to identify and build up a picture of the skills needs of employers and to build the skills base accordingly to fit their future needs.

Members suggested that a priority should be increasing the participation age in vocational learning, and were informed that there is an increasing move by FE providers towards offering more vocational qualifications, West Nottinghamshire College being a good example of this. The National Careers Service offers careers advice and support with C.Vs, and Futures provide similar services, albeit under a different banner of funding. Schools are being signposted to Futures with some success, and the partnership is also focussing on Gedling based support. Central College has a physical presence in the Civic Centre, and is therefore able to deliver 'on site' support, however they are not the Council's only partner; there is a willingness to engage with as wide a range of careers guidance and job skills providers as possible.

Members discussed levels of access to support in Newstead, which has 7% NEETS. Newstead is in the catchment area for Kirkby College, Annie Holgate Academy and the National Church of England School. There was general agreement that it would make sense to signpost to, and engage with West Notts

College in respect of Newstead, particularly as there is a reliable bus route, and also specifically to link into those local schools. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that the partnership is willing to engage with any college that has potential opportunities for Gedling residents.

The Employment and Skills Group has opted to prioritise areas that have been identified as having the greatest need, which are Killisick, Netherfield and Colwick and Newstead. The partnership includes representation from the Localities Co-ordinators to ensure that resources and initiatives are effectively directed at those communities. This includes the provision of localised job clubs in both Netherfield and Newstead and directing of the YouPro youth skills development project in Killisick.

### **iii) The Unemployed**

Through the Employment and Skills Partnership, projects are in development around very specific, sector based training and up skilling, prioritising growth Sectors such as the food/catering industry, care and I.T. There are also a high number of care vacancies in the Borough. This strand of the action plan is focussing on 'Jobmatch' – connecting vacancies to people, maximising work experience opportunities and informing people of what is required of them in specific work sectors.

The Service Manager, Planning and Environment, confirmed that the partnership group is working on the creation of new businesses as well, channelling clients through by - monthly business start-up training via Central College, promoting free business support services via Nottinghamshire Business Venture and establishing the Enterprise Club, which is promoted through Arnold job club and provides a series of focussed topics pertinent to new businesses.

### **iv) Signposting/Promoting Vacancies**

This strand includes maximising a series of promotional mechanisms, including signposting/support and the provision of local Jobsfairs. Employment and Skills consultant David Drury is preparing funding bids around the key strands of the Employment and Skills action plan, and the group will have a performance management role in respect of successfully funded projects, meeting on a 2-3 month cycle to review project development.

### **Employment and Skills Group: Key achievements to date**

The overarching aim of the Employment and Skills group is to enhance awareness of the range of both local and wider provision, join up initiatives, target gaps in provision and address those areas most in need. To that end, a range of approaches have been taken with the following positive results, including:

- Access to schools
- Better coordination of local Job clubs

- Employment development work with Sainsburys in conjunction with the Teal Close Development.
- The creation of job agreements encompassing the catchment areas of Netherfield, Carlton, Porchester and Mapperley.
- Delivery of the Apprenticeship Scheme at the Council – each department has taken on an apprentice. At least 3 have gone on to further employment.
- Using the top-up grants available from the national apprenticeship scheme, GBC and the partnership have enabled 17 apprentices to take up the scheme with local employers. The Council has funding to enable 20 placements in total.
- Engagement work by the You Pro Project, through which young people with IT skills are matched with local employers, with funding attached to continue their development. Over half of the young people on the programme are now employed.

### **Funding developments**

Members were informed that the Council is leading on developing good practice by maximising opportunities available to access European Funding. Employment and Skills consultant David Drury is developing bids including proposals for local employment casework and customised action planning with the long term unemployed and initiatives aimed at upskilling young people.

At a meeting with David Drury, former Programme Leader at South Nottinghamshire College, Members were provided with an overview of EU funding available from Brussels (separate from the European funding available via the Local Enterprise Partnership / DN2), and were presented with outline proposals for funding bids and relevant timescales.

£220 billion EU funding is centralised in Brussels. Members were informed that, as a nation, the United Kingdom does not really engage with these funds. In terms of access, the UK is third from bottom out of 28 countries and, on the UK list, the East Midlands is second from bottom. The scheme has just entered into a new 7 year budget period (2014 – 2020).

Gedling meets the markers for the EU funding, which are **Disadvantage, Innovation and Skills**. The fund has three strands; Research and Innovation, Eco Systems and Vocational Development. David Drury's company works with private/ public/ voluntary sector partnerships to help them to access these funds. He is able to work alongside the core functions of the Council, adding value to partnership schemes and projects

The Council has submitted two project proposals to the bidding process as follows:

1. **Green Pro:** Working with Micro and SME organisations in the 'Green Sector' – development of young PR entrepreneurs, establishment of social

media placements and training with Small to Medium Enterprises to help them to develop a presence in the social media. Targeting 30 organisations and up to 30 young people. Similar projects have resulted in 23 out of 30 going into substantial employment as a result. Value: 52,600 euros.

2. **SoCot:** Working with unskilled/low skilled young people and adults with low self - belief and barriers to access to mainstream employability support, providing customised life-skills and employment upskilling as a bridging process to mainstream vocational training and jobs. May be delivered by Groundwork. Value: 42,100 euros.

If bids are successful, the funding might create new posts, or be disseminated as resources for partnership activity as appropriate.

Members were informed that the next priority for the Council would be to create a 7 year funding strategy to coincide with the EU budget period 2014 – 2020.

### **Working group members' observational visits**

Councillors P. Andrews and Gregory attended the Employment and Skills Group meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, and Gedling Jobsfair at the Bonington Theatre on 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

### **Observations: Employment and Skills Group**

Members were satisfied with the level of information provided in advance of the meeting, which included the latest version of the Employment and Skills Action Plan, and were impressed with the wide range of partners in attendance. The meeting was productive in planning the upcoming Jobsfair at the Richard Herod LC and in reviewing the latest economic data for Gedling, which indicated that, whilst overall unemployment in Gedling is falling, youth unemployment remains high, particularly in Killisick. Members were therefore pleased to hear that Gedling BC will be providing a further £1,000 incentive to local small businesses willing to take on a Gedling young person as an apprentice. Progress against milestones in the action plan was also reviewed, which Members found informative.

### **Observations: Jobsfair at Richard Herod LC**

In attending and observing the Jobsfair on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014, which was delivered in partnership with the Nottinghamshire Evening Post, Councillor Gregory concluded that the event was well attended by a wide range of people, the majority being either unemployed or in part time employment. A total of 456 people attended, of which 56% were male and 44% female. 33% of attendees were between the ages of 15 and 24, and 20% between 45 and 54. Whilst 87% of those who attended stated that they found the event valuable, there was scope to increase the number of exhibitors in future, particularly local employers. Members would like to see the event run on a regular basis, over time providing

an opportunity for local people to meet businesses and pick up on potential local employment opportunities. Councillor Gregory observed that the event should be promoted as widely as possible throughout the Borough. The majority of attendees (68%) had seen the Jobsfair advertised in the Evening Post, 15% had picked up on the event through Jobcentre Plus, 7% via the Metro newspaper and small percentages via the Council's website and social media.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

The working group welcomed the valuable engagement being undertaken with local schools in order to promote careers advice and vocational development. Members noted however that those schools with Academy status were proving more difficult to bring on board, and recognised that the role of Members as School Governors could be helpful in this respect.

The group was also pleased that the Council has embraced and is widely promoting the national apprenticeship scheme and providing additional financial incentives to local firms, and would like to see more detailed tracking information on the progression route of both GBC and other local apprentices as it was felt that the Council and Employment and Skills group needs to be demonstrating continuous improvement in retention and/or ongoing positive development for those individuals.

Members endorsed the targeting of Economic Development initiatives through the priority localities of Netherfield and Colwick, Newstead and Killisick, however considered that the potential role of the voluntary sector has not yet been fully explored. Scope was identified for the possible use of community facilities such as the Newstead Centre for business start-ups, and for the establishment of robust support and referral mechanisms to vocational training, jobseeker services and business start-up advice with specialist registered charities and other well established voluntary and community organisations, particularly in the priority Localities. One example given was the social care pathway qualification previously delivered by Framework. Young unemployed people had been referred to Framework and trained to NVQ 1 in social care however Framework had lost their funding due to low referrals to the scheme. It was deemed important by Members to ensure that the referral pathways remain strong and that the voluntary and community sector might have a key role to play in this respect. The development of social enterprises could also be further explored, particularly where community organisations might wish to engage in the delivery of pathways to employment.

In examining recent Nottinghamshire County Council employment bulletins and specifically the employment and training destination statistics of Gedling residents, Members observed that there is a growing increase in NEETs in Carlton, Carlton Hill and Carlton Valley, which appears to coincide with the Carlton Academy ceasing to provide the BTEC. Members enquired whether there were plans to establish a Job club in Carlton, and were advised that subject to transport, Carlton residents could potentially access the Netherfield Jobclub

provision. Under the TravelRight initiative, which the Council has signed up to, the Travel Scheme co-ordinator is looking into extending the scheme into Carlton Valley to help address the access needs of Carlton residents to jobseeker services. Members proposed that this situation be kept under review.

Members noted that social care is a now significant employment growth area, particularly in Gedling, which has a higher than average aging population. The group proposed that the Council considers launching a PR campaign aimed at changing the perceptions of young people and adults about the role of carers. The campaign could include case histories of those who had progressed to health sector jobs via social care, additionally highlighting the intergenerational benefits to communities. A Carers award category could be included as part of the proposed 'Pride of Gedling' Awards Scheme. Members also saw great potential for apprenticeships and training placements in social care within the local voluntary and charitable sector, and further proposed that Gedling Homes be encouraged to take up the apprenticeship scheme for social care and other related work.

Members concluded that the Council is pursuing the right set of priorities in responding to the current economic situation in Gedling. By focussing on youth unemployment, small business sustainability and the building of skills for growth sector employment, the Council is targeting its limited resources and maximising partnership approaches effectively and the approach is demonstrating some early positive results.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

In forming a set of recommendations, the working group focussed upon sharing their local knowledge in order to enhance the Employment and Skills group network, making suggestions for inclusion to a forward plan and funding strategy that would help extend work with schools, strengthen the role of the voluntary sector, use of local community facilities and increase social enterprise development, and put proposals forward for a PR campaign and partnership training and apprenticeship approach to address care sector employment.

Having considered all evidence, Members now make the following recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Development:

- 1. In creating a seven-year EU (and other) funding strategy, consideration should be given to:**
  - An initiative to build on work with schools, targeting children from 12 -13 years of age upwards with access to careers advice and bridging skills to employment.
  - Development of outreach/referral links and voluntary sector placement agreements with local voluntary organisations, establishing a conduit to mainstream training and employment opportunities.

- Consider the feasibility of using local community facilities such as the Newstead Centre and St Georges Centre as business incubation units and venues for employability training.
  - Social Enterprise development linked to the Localities initiatives taking account of the above, with advice and support from Social Enterprise Link.
- 2. Improve access to jobseeker services, jobs, training and employment for Newstead residents, especially young people, by:**
- Recognising where they currently attend school and college and access jobseeker services, which include Mansfield and Sutton in Ashfield, and raise awareness of more local alternatives.
  - Making contact with the schools for which Newstead is part of the catchment area, specifically the Annie Holgate Academy and the National Church of England School, and linking those schools into the work of the Gedling Employment and Skills Group.
  - Approaching Kirkby College and West Nottinghamshire College to join the Employment and Skills Group network, as Newstead young people attend those colleges.
  - Examining how well served Newstead is in respect of inter district and cross borough travel.
- 3. Help to address the Education and Employment needs of Forces and Ex Forces residents** within the Employment and Skills group delivery plan, with specialist Forces Employment Support agencies such as **Remploy Veterans** represented on the Employment and Skills network.
- 4.** Continue to monitor rising youth unemployment in Carlton and seek out opportunities to extend job-seeking services to young residents of that area.
- 5.** The partnership to undertake medium term tracking of the destination of individuals taking up local apprenticeships, to help support the continual progression of those young people that we have invested in.
- 6.** The Council and Employment and Skills partnership to consider creating and specifically promoting an employment, placement and training scheme in Social Care to raise the profile and importance of care work. This would increase take-up of jobs and training in that sector, foster intergenerational respect and understanding, address the needs of our aging population and engage the voluntary sector.



7. Consideration to be given to ways in which organisations such as Gedling Homes, NNE CCG / Park House Clinic and Schools could be linked up to create work experience, mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities for young people in social care, repairs and maintenance and business administration/customer service.
8. Consider linking a PR campaign about the importance of Social Care to a Carers category within the proposed 'Pride of Gedling' Community Award scheme.
9. Create high visibility links to ring fenced job opportunities, placements and apprenticeships on the Council's website.
10. As part of the skills audit of Members planned following the May 2015 local election, details of Councillors appointments to School Governing Boards to be gathered and shared with the Employment and Skills group to enable Members to support and advocate the work of the group. **(Refer to the Elections and Members Services Team).**

## **8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Members would like to thank the following councillors and officers for their input to this review:

- Councillor Darrell Pulk: Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Development
- Paula Darlington: Corporate Director
- Peter Baguley: Service Manager, Planning and Environment
- David Drury, Consultant to the Employment and Skills Group

## **9. APPENDICES**

- **Appendix 1: Project Scope**

This page is intentionally left blank

## Draft Scope

<b>Scrutiny committee:</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Working Group:</b>	<b>Reducing Unemployment in the Borough</b>
<b>Chair of group:</b>	<b>Councillor E. Bailey</b>
<b>Working group members:</b>	<b>Councillors:</b> Wheeler, R Ellis, R Allan, Bailey, Gregory, P. Andrews, Hewson, Hughes, Parr.
<b>Portfolio holder/s:</b>  <b>Corporate Director:</b>	Councillor Pulk, Leisure and Economic Development  Paula Darlington

### (1) Scope

Why this review is being undertaken

(List the specific outcomes – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime bound)

This review aims to clarify the role of Gedling Borough Council in positively influencing levels of unemployment in the Borough both in respect of local economic development and in driving partnership approaches to service delivery in this area.

The working group will also seek to identify the role of the voluntary sector and specialist agencies in supporting individuals to become job ready, and to establish how effective the links are between local businesses, schools, colleges, service providers and jobseekers.

### Aims

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Corporate Values</b>
	<b>1. A caring and fair Council</b> that treats customers, residents, partners and staff well
	<b>2. A listening Council</b> that listens to and involves the people it serves

To consider and promote innovative, practical tools to help local people into gainful employment, training and personal development.	3. <b>An ambitious Council</b> one that is never satisfied and constantly hungry for improvement
To identify the hotspots of unemployment in the Borough and establish how well the council is extending partnership services to address them.	4. <b>A responsive Council</b> that is sensitive to different needs and acts accordingly
To examine whether the council might take an even more pivotal role in harnessing multi agency responses to unemployment.	5. <b>An efficient Council</b> that is responsible; that avoids waste and makes the most of what it has

## **(2) Timetable**

The review will commence in:	<b>October 2013</b>
Milestones:	<b>Work programme to be agreed</b>
The review will report in:	<b>Approximately 3 months</b>
Committee dates:	
Frequency of meetings:	<b>6 weekly cycle</b>

## **(3) Information gathering and consultees**

The working group has requested the following information:

Statistical data regarding unemployment, economic development and business start-up in the Borough – an overview of unemployment/ economic development in Gedling. – NCC, GBC, Census.

How to set up a job-club – a practical toolkit - DWP step by step guidance

Information on social enterprise development and education:

Co-operative mutual Solutions – Social Enterprise support

Co-operative Studies Group – supports social enterprise skills and education

A summary of the GBC Apprenticeship scheme: Cost of the scheme, numbers appointed, retention rate and post scheme development.

Mapping exercise of local job clubs/Statutory and Voluntary Sector.

What are the main questions to be asked and of what parties?

- How far is GBC responsible for Employment? What influence does/can it have? Where does the Authority's responsibility lie?
  - How does Gedling fit into the bigger picture?
  - What is the statistical overview/background?
  - Where are the unemployment hotspots in the Borough and how are we working in partnership to focus services in these areas?
  - What about employment opportunities for degree level candidates?
  - How are we working with Employers in the Borough?
  - How are policies to address the impact of changes to benefits this impact in Gedling being implemented?
  - How does the responsibility filter down and who picks it up?
  - What is being done to attract employers into Gedling?
  - How can we stimulate business start-up?
  - How are the unemployment issues for different age groups addressed – i.e. under 25, over 25, 50+.
  - How does the Sustainable Travel Project fit in? Are we extending the concessionary service for the unemployed to Gedling?
  - What is being done to identify and promote voluntary sector support for the unemployed (job skills, job club etc)?
  - EU regulations – has there been any positive negative impact of national immigration policies in Gedling?
  - How far are local employers taking on local young people?
  - How can the Council promote new ways of finding jobs?
  - How are issues of self- esteem and confidence addressed?
  - What good practice could Gedling BC and the NCC share as employers?
  - What provision exists in the Borough for interview skills, CV writing etc? What about re-skilling?
  - Could GBC be more proactive in encouraging businesses to get involved with local schools?
  - What about the opportunities presented by the employment sites in the local plan, i.e. Top Wighay?
- **To be asked of various parties.**

The working group may be inviting the following persons/organisations to one or more meetings to help with the review:

- Department for Work and Pensions /Jobcentre plus
- FE Colleges inc. Central College
- Schools esp. 6<sup>th</sup> Forms – Arnold Hill School as a good practice example
- Futures – targeted work, linkages
- YISP – targeted work, linkages
- Buxton Training – a Social Enterprise working in Killisick
- Economic Development Officer – her role in identifying funding streams to tackle unemployment in the hotspots
- Gedling Business Forum – overview of local employment of local people
- Gedling Employment and Skills Group

## Visits

The working group might need to consider:

Targeted projects and initiatives, i.e:

- Killisick employment project
- Arnold Hill School/Futures session

### **(4) How the community will be consulted, informed and involved**

The working group wishes to consult through:

Partner organisations represented on the Employment and Skills Group  
6<sup>th</sup> formers.

Range of consultees to be identified through an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **(5) Equality of opportunity**

The following Equality Impact Assessment method will be applied

An assessment to be undertaken of the range of consultees that might be engaged in this review, to ensure that the needs of individuals, groups and geographical areas that are recognised as being disadvantaged in the labour market are represented.

### **(6) Resources**

The working group is supported by:

Senior Members' Services Officer

### **(6) How the effectiveness of the review will be measured**

Follow up of agreed recommendations to be undertaken at an appropriate point by Overview Scrutiny Committee.

**Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Subject: Final report and recommendations of the Homelessness and Hardship in the Borough Scrutiny Working Group**

**Date: Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

**Author: Senior Members' Services Officer**

### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To inform Scrutiny Members of the findings and recommendations of the **Homelessness and Hardship in Gedling Borough Scrutiny Working Group**.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

The 'Homelessness and Hardship in Gedling Borough' Scrutiny Review was appointed as one of three strategically linked in-depth reviews proposed in the 2013/2014 Scrutiny work programme. The overarching aim has been to examine progress of the Council's ambitions as a community leader, driving ongoing partnership approaches in securing social and economic sustainability within Gedling Borough. The findings of the review should therefore be considered in conjunction with those of the **Reducing Unemployment in Gedling Borough** and **Transport Links to, and within Gedling Borough** in depth reviews.

**Working group members:** Councillors Lawrence (Chair) Hope, Weisz, P. Allan, Blair, Hughes, Paling, Hewson, Bexon.

Subject to the approval of this Committee, the recommendations will be tabled at the next available meeting of Cabinet, and Councillor Wheeler, Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing will be asked to provide a response to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee within 28 days of that meeting.

### **3. PROJECT SCOPE**

In scoping the review, members identified the following lines of enquiry:

- Recognising that there are indications of increased hardship and homelessness in the Borough, the review aimed to evaluate the current and future impact of multi-agency service provision and to establish what further could be achieved.

**Appendix 2**

- The review would also examine the implications of proposals by the County Council to reduce adult social care funding, their possible impact on key support organisations and the subsequent implications for Gedling Borough Council's statutory duty of care in the Borough.

#### **Project Scope: Appendix 2.1**

#### **4. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members undertook the following work programme:

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Work Programme</b>	<b>Agreed actions</b>
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> October 2013</b>	Scoping meeting: Members met with the Service Manager, Housing and Localities to receive an overview of the current legislative environment and potential impact on Housing Needs services.	Draft scope produced Representatives of Framework and Notts Housing Advice Service to be invited to the next meeting.
<b>27<sup>th</sup> November 2013</b>	Members met with Michael Leng, Operational Director of Framework, and Sharon Batey of the Nottinghamshire Housing Advice Service	To meet with the Portfolio Holder, Health and Housing to discover
<b>6<sup>th</sup> February 2014</b>	Members met with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing and Service Manager, Housing and Localities to receive an overview of key initiatives and approaches to address hardship in the Borough.	To arrange a day of visits to Elizabeth House and SureStart Centres around Gedling Borough.
<b>6<sup>th</sup> June 2014</b>	Councillors Hope, Lawrence and Hewson visited Elizabeth House, Carlton Children's Centre and Surestart Netherfield.	Feedback to be provided at next working group meeting
<b>11<sup>th</sup> June 2014</b>	The group reviewed evidence to date and identified interim recommendations.	To meet with the Chair of NCC Adult Social Care Committee.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> September 2014</b>	An overview of Nottinghamshire County Council 'Supporting People' funding reductions, with particular reference to their impact on services in Gedling - County Councillor Muriel Weisz, Chair, Adult Social Care and Health Committee	To meet with representatives of Gedling Homes and RCAN.
<b>11<sup>th</sup> September 2014</b>	Members received information on rural poverty levels in the Borough and approaches used by Gedling Homes to address homelessness and hardship.	Final report and recommendations to be produced and circulated for comments.



## **5. FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Homelessness: Gedling Borough Council Housing Needs Service**

The Housing Needs Team is currently experiencing unprecedented levels of need, mainly as a result of the impact of recent welfare reform. Gedling Homes is beginning to evict those tenants who go into arrears. There are currently approximately 10 cases of eviction by Gedling Homes per year and this could potentially escalate as a result of the reforms. Prior to eviction however tenants are given help with budgeting skills and offered options, including engaging with the credit union. Eviction is still seen as the final resort. There are some instances where generations of families have been on benefit, and there are concerns about their ability to manage the changes in benefits resulting from welfare reform. Added to this are the new rules for claimants up to 35 years of age, which particularly impact upon separated fathers with access to children as they can now only receive Housing Benefit for shared houses and are being advised to share with a friend.

The wider impact of the current economy and of competition in the private rented sector is also a factor. We may see scenarios where a person is claiming a higher rent for a 2 bedroom property in the private rented sector than they were previously claiming for a three bedroom housing association property. The Council has limited influence over rent increases, and if Gedling Homes or another Housing Association evicts, the Council has a duty of care which could result in a more expensive rehousing. However the process of eviction involves the issue of a suspended possession order, then a 2<sup>nd</sup> order before the courts would issue a final eviction notice. Judges are reluctant to do this. Another scenario could be where intentionality is involved. There is a procedure whereby if someone is deemed to have intentionally made themselves homeless, the Council would be within its rights not to accept the duty to rehouse, however would still provide advice and assistance and signposting to the private rented sector. Members were informed that the most significant area of growth has been youth homelessness, due to increased cases of parental eviction. Broxtowe youth Forum is working with schools to raise awareness and dispel myths around re housing. There is also a high demand for emergency housing associated with domestic violence. It was acknowledged that some clients respond to advice and help more readily than others, and it is often only at the last minute that clients explain the issues they are tackling. There is a right of appeal against eviction right up to Judicial Review. There are presently 2,300 people on the housing register. The Council now has a Common Allocations Policy with neighbouring authorities. There are presently 21 registered local Housing Associations to

which clients are able to bid for properties. Changes in the Common Allocations Policy allow Local Authorities more freedom to prioritise clients on their register on the basis of affordability, size and features. Now, a client must be in priority housing need in order to join the register, which potentially reduces the list by up to 65%. They must also have a connection to the Borough. Priority bandings and weightings are applied in each case, with the majority of people on the housing register seeking family accommodation. Those over 50 or on disability allowance can remain on the list. Members were informed that, as these reforms come into effect, the Council may experience an increase in appeals, however will also have more scope to rehouse those in greatest need.

### **5.1.1 Current position in the light of changes to the Common Allocations Policy**

#### **Bandings**

- **Band 1:** home no longer suitable for needs/disability, fleeing extreme violence, existing tenancy coming to an end
- **Band 2:** acceptance as homeless for 12 weeks (then move up to band 1) – often rehoused into 2 bed flats
- **Band 3:** People who would benefit from a move i.e. asthma sufferers/steep stairs, but not top priority.
- **Band 4:** Removed

#### **a) Outcomes of banding reviews including exclusions from the register for the last 6 months:**

There have been 33 banding reviews, of these 8 resulted in a change to the original band, but in all 8 cases additional information was provided.

#### **b) Outcomes of homeless appeals for the last 6 months:** There have been 2 requests, neither has yet been decided.

#### **c) Break down of the number of applications in each of the 4 bands as at 15/11/2013**

**Band 1:** 56    **Band 2:** 139    **Band 3:** 541    **Band 4:** 1308 (prior to removal of this banding)

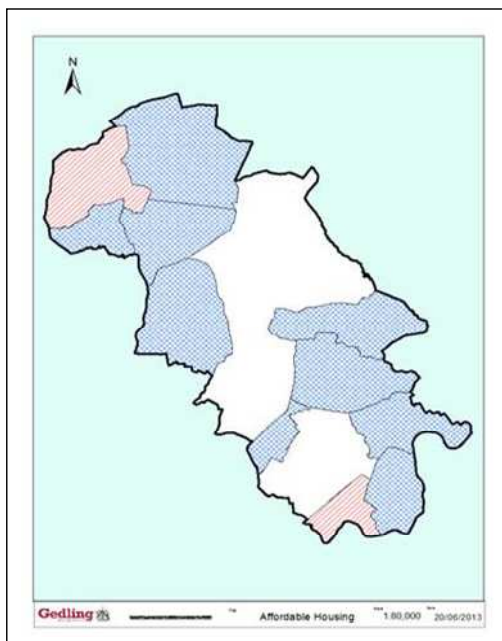
Members were particularly interested in how the Council works to ensure that as far as possible whether the right sort of homes are built to match identified local needs - for example, do we consider what is needed in Calverton alongside what

is needed Borough-wide, and are we are doing anything with the bigger landlords to enable them to link up with developers to ensure we meet housing need?

Members were advised that the Housing Needs team now work closely with the Planning team on pre application processes and discussions with developers, which is underpinned and supported by an Affordable Housing supplementary planning document. An annual Housing Market Assessment is conducted which this year has identified that we need around 300 affordable homes. The current makeup of the housing register also reflects and informs levels of demand, and feeds into that annual assessment. The Covalent performance management system has a performance indicator for affordable homes.

**Gedling currently requires:**

- Blue: 30% affordable housing in Ravenshead, Linby, Papplewick, Bestwood, Mapperley, Woodborough, Lambley, Burton Joyce
- Red: 10% affordable housing in Newstead Village and Netherfield
- White: 20% affordable housing everywhere else.



**Map illustrating the varying percentages off affordable housing acquired across the borough.**

These quotas are based on current house and land prices. Only sites of 15 dwellings or more are required to contribute to affordable housing quotas. The affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document provides more details.

The various evidence bases are then used to influence discussions with developers, whereby they are advised to provide x amount of affordable homes as a proportion of their development. There is also a growing need for 2 bedroom properties. In discussions with developers and assessment of planning applications the 'Robust Viability' model is applied. This is an industry standard which demonstrates the cost to developers of providing affordable housing. Engagement by developers with private Landlords is actively encouraged through the Gedling Developers Forum, for example Landlords are regularly invited to hear guest speakers at Developers Forum events. These events include presentations by the Nottingham Credit Union, British Gas and EON – energy efficiency and the green deal, Council Tax and CT Benefit, advice on tenancy agreements and choosing the right tenants for the right property. The overarching aim is to 'up-skill' the private rented sector and to effect influence with developers. This is already yielding benefits as the Council has built up a good relationship with some of the Landlords and persuaded them to rent out at the local housing allowance rate. Currently around 35 private landlords attend the forums. Members were interested to know who buys up the affordable housing. It was explained that the developer is required to provide so many, then, once they have been built, social housing agencies / companies enter into an agreement with developers to buy and rent out those properties.

The Council also supports various initiatives that aim to address housing need, for example by promoting supported mortgages and the 1<sup>st</sup> Buy initiative in the private sector – previously this only applied to new build however can now be old and new.

#### **5.1.2 Hardship: process for referrals to the Food Bank**

In response to Members' queries, the following information was provided about the availability of vouchers for the Food Bank:

If someone approaches the Council needing food, Housing Officer are authorised to issue a food voucher, having firstly established why the person/persons require the food voucher. It is then explained that the food voucher entitles them to 3 days' worth of food (one voucher is issued per household, be that a single person or a family of 4). The Housing Needs Team holds vouchers for Daybrook Baptist Church and Carlton Methodist Church Food Banks and the opening times are on the front of the voucher. The voucher is completed in full and details added to a centrally maintained log before being issued. If someone needs a food voucher and the food banks in the Gedling area are closed, staff are able to call 07854 690 694 to establish where the nearest food bank is and direct clients accordingly.

### 5.1.3 Main causes of homelessness

The figures for the previous 6 months for advice and prevention were as follows:

Reason for approach in last 6 months	Number
Loss of rented/tied accomm not due to end of AST	8
Loss of tenancy - other	6
Other reason for loss of last settled home	7
Relationship breakdown - violent	34
Rent arrears - loss of tenancy HA	7
Rent arrears - loss of tenancy PS	20
Return from abroad	1
Sleeping rough	4
Split household	1
Violence other	9
Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated persons	2
	99

In addition there had been 46 homeless applications taken in the last 2 quarters:

Reason for homeless application	Number
Parental eviction	5
Other relatives/friends no longer willing to accommodate	6
Non violent relationship breakdown	5
Violent breakdown with partner	7
Violent breakdown with partner and associated persons	1

Other forms of violence	1
Harassment, threats, intimidation	1
Mortgage arrears	5
Rent arrears RSL or RP	1
Rent arrears private sector	1
Termination of assured shorthold	8
Loss of rented tied other than end of AST	1
Left prison/remand	1
Left institution or LA care	1
Other, emergency, sleeping rough, returned from abroad	2

#### **5.1.4 How the Council promotes the option for people to sub-let bedrooms**

As part of the South Nottinghamshire Homeless Action Plan the Council has agreed that information on taking in lodgers would be produced by Broxtowe Youth Homelessness Service, which they have done in order that the Housing Needs Team can distribute the pack to appropriate candidates. The Spare Room Pack was circulated to working group members for information, along with a copy of the 2012/13 Homelessness Watch report.

#### **5.1.5 Cold weather – the number of people we have housed in recent years and the number of nights**

Year	no of nights	no of individuals
2009/10	29	7
2010/11	14	6
2011/12	60	5
2012/13	70	9

## **5.2 Framework and Elizabeth House: Taking a cross-boundary approach to emergency housing need: Michael Leng, Operations Director at Framework**

Michael Leng, Operations Director at Framework, Nottinghamshire provided an overview of the history and aims of Framework and specifically the role of Elizabeth House, the organisations' emergency accommodation and support facility in Gedling. Prior to 2003 there was very little specialist homelessness support in the Borough. In the lead-up to 2003 a lot of prevention services were developed in the Borough and across districts, which led in turn to the establishment of Elizabeth House.

### **5.2.1 Key steps taken to establish the project**

- Gedling Rushcliffe and Broxtowe Councils had all independently recognised the lack of emergency accommodation for single homeless people in their areas and had approached Framework about this.
- Nottingham City Council established the Gateway scheme which restricted access to emergency accommodation in the City from bordering authorities.
- The three Councils recognised that they could not afford to develop a direct access hostel with 24 hour staff cover exclusively for their area.
- They were also aware that their 2007/8 homelessness strategies would need to address the shortage of provision for single homeless people.
- Framework brought the Councils together and initiated discussions on setting up a joint emergency accommodation scheme. They modelled their plans on their other successful emergency accommodation projects, such as Russell House in Newark and Sherwood.
- A joint working protocol was established and signed by all parties involved to confirm who is eligible for the project and how the authorities should manage and prioritise their referrals and arrangements for move-on accommodation.

### **5.2.3 Potential impacts of Nottinghamshire County Council Supporting People Budget reductions.**

Members were informed that the advent of Universal Credit coupled with proposals by the County Council to reduce grants to voluntary organisations from the Supporting People Budget will potentially have a significant detrimental effect upon specialist preventative and recovery services going forward. In 2010 a similar scenario left Framework, Nottinghamshire with a 45% cut in grant funding, which prompted a remodelling of the organisation and a reduction in the level and breadth of specialist services. There is concern that further reductions may result in the elimination of those specialist services, and for this reason a major campaign against the proposed cuts is underway. Likely impacts would include a

potential change of use of Elizabeth House, shifting the focus away from complex support for those with a high level of need and towards housing support for those individuals needing a lower level of risk management. Since Gedling Borough Council has a statutory duty to provide housing to eligible individuals in its catchment area, the pressure would therefore be upon the Local Authority to resolve those more complex and challenging cases. The point was made that Framework has provided a great deal of added value in dealing with drug and alcohol abuse, and, if the proposed cuts go ahead, around 168 specialist support jobs across the County may be at risk. Members were informed that the County's proposals represent a shortfall of 1 quarter of Framework's annual budget, of which £700,000 is received on behalf of other agencies. In current proposals the organisation will receive £1m to protect statutory services only, which means that all non-statutory activity would cease. The advent of Universal Credit has already seen some incidences of eviction by local housing providers. Universal Credit rules do not apply to Framework accommodation as it is classed as transitory.

#### **5.2.4 Nottinghamshire Housing Advice Service: Sharon Batey of the Nottinghamshire Housing Advice Service**

Nottinghamshire Housing Advice is a local charity. It is the only service in the county that specialises only in housing and housing related debt advice. The organisation has been in existence for over 20 years and is currently funded by Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council, Gedling Borough council, Mansfield District Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council. The service delivers advice to a specialist quality mark level and is subject to an independent bi-annual audit by National Shelter. Advice services are centred around housing and housing related debt and advocacy, which includes advice on housing options, domestic violence, relationship breakdown, Landlord and tenant disrepair issues, harassment, rent arrears including negotiation with landlords, Housing Benefit, mortgage arrears including MRS and negotiation with lenders, court representation, debt management, income maximisation and court representation. The advice team comprises 6 advisors, 1 manager, 1.5 receptionists a part time administrator, and a team of 11 volunteers in various roles. Most of the volunteers are looking for experience to help them find employment, and training and support are given including advice on completing applications and interview skills. The majority of volunteers move either into paid employment in a similar area or further education.

#### **5.2.5 Homelessness Monitoring Statistics 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

Total Number of cases dealt with	Total number of cases where homelessness was prevented	Total number of people prevented from becoming homeless	Total number of children prevented from becoming homeless
289	264	575	309



Gedling Borough Council has agreed funding until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. Detailed monitoring reports are submitted to the Council on a quarterly basis. Funding from the County Council had been cut that year from £80, 000 to 30,000, and the belief is that within 2 years this funding would cease entirely. If that funding position remains, the service would reduce to information provision only in line with minimum statutory requirements.

Amongst the Gedling client group there appears to be low levels of full time employment and 35% of clients from the Borough this year stated they were unemployed. Almost 50% of the clients seen so far this year live in private rented sector accommodation, and just over 28% were owner occupiers. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 all but one Client from the Borough who have presented have had problems that could have resulted in them becoming homeless. Historically, disrepair and domestic violence have been prevalent amongst the client group from the Borough however this has not been the case so far this year, with no clients reporting domestic violence and 3.45% reporting disrepair. The organisation receives referrals from a wide range of agencies. This year, almost 30% of clients have been referred from CAB, 16% from GBC homelessness section and 40% were self/friend referrals.

The funding provided by Gedling Borough Council enables the organisation to undertake proactive casework within the Borough, and without it the service would reduce to the provision of information only for Borough residents. Particular impacts would be felt in the areas of mental health, employment and those with physical disabilities. The service has supported around 50 Gedling clients over 2 years, averaging an overall total of 100 clients each year. The service has seen an increase in cases of mortgage arrears and repossession cases associated with the economic downturn. In response to the work of the advice service 75% of Gedling clients had retained their current housing.

### **5.3 Meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing: Gedling Borough Council initiatives and approaches**

#### **5.3.1 Support to alleviate Hardship**

The Portfolio holder provided examples of several initiatives currently supported by or working in partnership with the Council which contribute towards the overall alleviation of hardship. These included:

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Tackling Domestic Violence programme
- Money advice
- Drop in advice
- Support for the Nottingham Credit Union

Work is also underway to try to educate the public about the pitfalls of payday loans and to get individuals to recognise when they have a problem. It was acknowledged that people often bury their heads in the sand and are afraid of final demands. Members were interested in whether debt mediation services are available, particularly in respect of fuel poverty and liaison with the big energy companies. The Portfolio Holder reported that the local suppliers disconnect individuals, but not households, and signpost people towards agencies that provide help and support. Household budgeting is a major issue, particularly in cases where individuals or households have complex needs, i.e. mental health issues, drug and /or alcohol addiction. Drop in services provided at the Council include case based support in order to build up trust over time and to gain a full understanding of those needs. It is deemed important to make the intervention early enough, before things have spiralled out of control. Members asked whether the home visits undertaken by the Housing Needs Team are identifying those in fuel poverty. It was noted that people who pay cash pay more on their fuel bill, which tends to disadvantage poorer families. Members were informed that there is a campaign underway to cap these extra payments at £12 per year. We know that the most vulnerable people will have a key or card meter and be paying over the odds, although the service amount is the same. For people on low incomes the utility companies are required to offer a credit of £110 on the winter fuel bill. The challenge is to get the message out to people who are eligible. Some work can be done to influence the energy companies however.

### **5.3.2 Locality working**

Members were given an overview of the Council's move towards a 'Partnership Hub' of integrated services, both within the Council and in priority neighbourhoods. The strategy involves undertaking structured and inclusive regeneration in line with agreed Locality Action Plans, additionally widening and promoting access to services such as credit unions and food banks using local 'gateways' including libraries, GP surgeries and health centres, schools, community access centres and children's centres. Food vouchers for local food banks can be obtained via these routes. Members discussed the programme 'Benefit Street' which demonstrates how entrenched learned helplessness and the benefit dependent culture can be. It was flagged up that transport costs can be a huge barrier to access to opportunities and help. The two Locality workers covering Newstead, Netherfield and Killisick are able to issue food voucher forms and are careful to inform people that it is only the voucher holder who can cash it in. A new food bank had been launched in Netherfield that week. Members discussed whether there is any evidence that these approaches work, particularly in respect of 'uplifting' a local area. It is known that once people start to recover economic stability they move out of an area and others move in at the bottom of the ladder to replace them. The Portfolio Holder reported that there is evidence of a shift in these localities however it is now more about the working poor, not just the unemployed.

Members considered the important role of volunteering as a stepping stone out of hardship and into future opportunities. At Surestart volunteering is encouraged, and individuals can begin volunteering with Surestart and move on to become qualified, paid workers. For example an individual with literacy and numeracy issues became a paid worker through this route and had also entered education. The Portfolio Holder stated that a spectrum approach needs to be applied to quantifying success with those in most need. In supporting the working poor, it can be about helping families to manage their resources adequately. It is for this reason that the Government is promoting money advice services. The Service Manager, Housing and Localities, raised the issue of repeat homelessness. There is a concerted aim to reduce this. Concomitant with repeat homelessness are some complex, challenging behaviour patterns requiring specialist interventions to resolve. If those services are reduced, it may create more problems, most prevalent in single men over 40, but a growing issue in the 16/18 year age group. Members noted that both these target groups are currently well served by Framework. What people need is 'cycle breaking' support – to make a fundamental shift and to change their expectations/aspirations. Members acknowledged the added pressure caused by wages not keeping pace with utilities and food prices. The Locality Working approach also aims to stimulate and revive a sense of community in order to improve how areas look and feel.

### **5.3.3 Access to Social Housing and Benefits**

In trying to uplift disadvantaged communities, the Council looks for mixed tenure and balance to mitigate urban crowding. The Portfolio Holder highlighted the need to be creative and use a partnership approach, particularly in the light of potential budget reductions in the area of specialist homelessness services. When universal credit is rolled out those people who have been looked after by the state will be receiving less money than before and there will be an expectation that they are up-skilled and better able to manage. The benefit is also paid monthly rather than fortnightly, as is currently the case.

This in turn affects the position of private landlords. In the light of the above, there is concern amongst landlords as they can go up to eight weeks without being paid rent from tenants' housing benefits, before having recourse directly to the Council for payment, and the 8 week rule is going to be stopped. The Credit Union can provide a service to landlords, which has been well received by the Landlords Forum. Members asked how the rent is charged against housing associations, and were informed that there are 2 types of property: social rent at £80 – £100 per week and private rented, which is considerably higher. Other factors affecting hardship levels are the availability of social networks and access to facilities. Members asked whether there is a demand for social housing in Ravenshead. The situation had been monitored, and it was found that there was a 10% turnover of property in Ravenshead against a 2% borough-wide turnover therefore people were less likely to stay in social housing in Ravenshead. The Housing needs team is using commuted sums to do some more needs

assessment work to examine the need for retirement bungalows in Newstead. It was explained that with the advent of Localism the Council is no longer required have to secure social housing in all areas. Ravenshead can contribute to social housing across the wider Borough, as the commuted sum from Ravenshead can be used to offset social housing in Netherfield and Arnold. In the case of the development around Mapperley, residents can take intermediate steps towards ownership via the Mortgage scheme which is now a national scheme.

Members expressed surprise that the Teal Close development has a requirement for 5% social housing. The possible housing mix on Gedling Colliery site was also discussed. The Service Manager, Housing and Localities confirmed that the National Planning Policy Framework is quite challenging of councils. Development is largely driven by market forces and Councils must be innovative and work strategically to ensure, as far as possible, that social housing needs in the Borough are met. The Council's Common Housing Allocations Policy ensures parity across districts in respect of housing allocations and, whilst the Council has its' own homelessness strategy, it is closely linked to those of other authorities. Gedling BC also has an agreement with Rushcliffe to access some of their accommodation. Joint Strategic Needs Assessments are carried out across Boroughs. Broxtowe BC is the only district with its own Housing Strategy. The Portfolio Holder reported that work is underway to unblock stalled sites in order that the Council can meet its' growth targets. Alongside this the Council is actively endorsing a range of pastoral initiatives, including Men in Sheds, Dementia Friends and the Loneliness Campaign. Additional resources are available nationally to help people onto the right benefits, which will be relevant to the new look One Stop Shop which hosts the Department for Work and Pensions working alongside a range of other welfare rights agencies. Additionally The Council has recently delivered training for staff aimed at raising awareness of the needs of vulnerable adults.

#### **5.4 Members visits to local initiatives and access centres**

Councillors Lawrence, Hope and Hewson undertook a day of visits to local SureStart Children's Centres and to Elizabeth House, run by Framework. The following feedback was provided:

##### **5.4.1 Carlton and Netherfield Children's Centres**

Members reported that eligibility to access to Children's Centre services is triggered by registration of birth. The target age group for the service is children from 0 – 12 years, their parents and families. Services provided at Carlton and Netherfield Children's Centres include health outreach and nutritional support, the provision of children's groups and breakfast clubs, midwife services, drop - in access to Jobcentre Plus employment advice and vocational training in a range of skills in the area of childrens' services. Their main targets and objectives are to support those in most need, including domestic violence cases, teenage parents

and workless households. Jobcentre plus undertakes casework and provides help with C.V's and signposting to jobs and training. The service is split between Carlton and Netherfield, delivered at each venue on alternate Fridays, and deals with a combination of drop in and scheduled appointments.

Members were informed that Children's Centres in the City operate a policy of automatic registration triggered by registration of birth, whereas in Gedling the policy is one of voluntary registration. Some parents are deterred from accessing services as they feel a stigma is attached to this. The Children's centre co-ordinator reported that a recent Ofsted had identified that the centre's contact rate was 40% below target, however made the point that the numbers registered may be less significant than what is done to support those who are registered. It was noted that different Ofsted inspectors can have a focus on different priorities. Contact rates can also vary according to area. Members observed that as Health Visitors are required to carry out post natal home visits as well as undertaking a two year child health check, this would be an opportunity to pick up those in need who haven't yet registered. The co-ordinator reported that SureStart would like to publicise their services more widely and have been offered use of the digital screens at the Civic Centre and in local leisure centres. Gedling BC Contacts magazine is another opportunity to raise awareness of what Children's Centres can provide. The centre provides outreach at Richard Herod Leisure Centre, which costs £4, 000 per year however Members were informed that the hire fees had recently increased by 15%. SureStart had previously been eligible for a reduced rate, however this no longer applies. The lack of FE provision in the Borough can be an issue as the requirement for further education is high amongst SureStart clients. An ideal scenario would be if Gedling residents had access to a year round calendar of courses and personal development opportunities. This would be useful for organisations as well as individuals, providing opportunities for outreach and service promotion.

Members discussed the perceived stigma associated with SureStart registration and the fact that there are a significant number of parents groups in the area which are very enthusiastic and could help to change the message. Some individuals have developed skills and confidence through participation and moved on to forge careers. The Local Area Forum in Netherfield has an Education and Training Sub Group on which SureStart is represented, and this helps to increase access. The Locality Coordinator for Killisick and Newstead attends Surestart meetings. It was reported that attendance by representatives of primary schools, another potential route for increasing take-up, is low.

#### **5.4.2 Elizabeth House**

Elizabeth House is a 21 unit Direct Access Hostel based in Gedling that was developed in 2008 for single homeless people from the local authority areas of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. The project accepts anyone over 16 who are currently homeless, unless they pose an unmanageable risk. It is a medium to

high support service that will accept people with substance misuse or mental health issues. The service has 24 hour staff cover and an active key working approach that involves access to education, training and tenancy preparation. The project is run by the voluntary sector agency Framework, who provided the capital funding to establish the project alongside money from the Housing Corporation (now Homes and Communities Agency). The revenue is provided by 'Supporting People' Grants and Housing Benefit from the three authorities involved who all have seven bed spaces within the service. Each Council completes application forms with the clients, and manages a waiting list of up to five people. If a bed becomes available and a council has no one on their list, referrals are accepted from one of the other councils. Service users moving on from Elizabeth house are prioritised for vacancies in move-on accommodation in the area that they were referred from.

At the time of the visit Elizabeth House provided accommodation for 7 Gedling referrals, 7 from Broxtowe and 5 from Rushcliffe. Accommodation is categorized in terms of Primary and Secondary facilities – primary being highly dependent, available for 5 - 6 months up to a year and secondary being more independent. A third stage, which is ideally move - on accommodation, is becoming difficult to arrange as there are less and less one bedroom accommodation units available, and the 'bedroom tax' means that clients cannot take 2 bedroom accommodation. This means that in practice Elizabeth House will not be able to move on more difficult clients and would therefore deal more and more with those with minor problems. Registration at Elizabeth House means that a client is also automatically registered with Social Services. Once clients are set up with accommodation, an appointment is made with the GP and the client is accompanied by a member of staff to the appointment. A non-judgemental approach is taken with individuals.

Manager Karen Maze reported significant gaps in provision in respect of the quality and effectiveness of moving on services for their clients. The two GP practices to which clients with alcohol dependency are referred do not seem to be geared up to dealing with complex needs, i.e. a combination of mental health, drugs and alcohol problems. In the past, from the previous GP, Dr Michael Varnham, a whole range of services were available, however there no longer appears to be any programme of support. Members had since raised the issue with the CCG Local Advisory Group in Calverton, who have indicated a wish to undertake outreach and community care, however it does not seem to be happening in practice. Another issue is the interface of clients with the DWP. As it currently stands, if a client misses an appointment or is late, they can be sanctioned with loss of a week's benefit, if two appointments are missed the sanction is 3 weeks benefit, and three appointments missed can mean up to a year's loss of benefits. This means that people with dependency issues, whose lifestyles are very chaotic, are in a constant cycle of extreme hardship.

## **5.5 Nottinghamshire County Council Adult Social Care Budgets**

At a meeting with Councillor Muriel Weisz, Chair, Adult Social Care and Health Committee, Lyn Farrow, Commissioning Manager and Nottinghamshire County Council, provided the following briefing on the Countywide Supporting People budget decision:

### **5.5.1 Planned Savings**

The budget setting Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February agreed a £3.2 million reduction to the countywide Supporting People budget. In addition, different elements of this budget will be transferred to be managed within other parts of the Council and other elements will be picked up through the realignment of Public Health Grant. This briefing note sets out how the agreed savings will affect services in Gedling over the next two years.

#### **Drug & Alcohol Accommodation Services (£125,645 countywide)**

There are currently 38 properties across the county that are used for supported accommodation for people on drug and alcohol recovery pathways. Of these, at least 4 are located in Gedling. Public Health Grant has been identified to pick up this area of work from April 2014. The requirement to address and support the housing needs of this client group were set out in a Public Health tender for community based substance misuse recovery services and contracts have now been awarded to CRI (Crime Reduction Initiative) and Stonham Housing to commence from October this year.

**The needs met through these services at present will continue to be met through alternative arrangements being put in place by Public Health from October 2014.**

#### **Domestic Violence (£456,420 countywide)**

Domestic Violence services have been the subject of a review carried out by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The review report is due imminently. The Supporting People budget for domestic violence refuges, supported housing and floating support has been picked up by Public Health from April 2014, along with funding for domestic abuse services from other parts of the Council. Public Health will now hold the strategic responsibility for domestic abuse and manage the budgets and contracts in their entirety from this year.

**There are no proposed changes to the current Domestic Violence Refuges, Supported Housing or Floating Support, although these will be funded and managed within Public Health from April 14 and are likely to be re-tendered in 2015.**

### **Homelessness & Offender Accommodation Services (approx £132, 000 in Gedling)**

Elizabeth House provides 21 units of Quick Access supported accommodation to the boroughs of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. In addition there are a number of properties providing a lower level of support as move-on accommodation and offender specific accommodation located in Gedling.

**Adult Social Care funding for move-on and offender accommodation support will cease from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, however NCC intend to combine these services within the contract for Elizabeth House thus allowing the provider to pool resources and maximise opportunities to maintain the full range of services. Adult Social Care funding for Quick Access services are scheduled to cease from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, however the allocation of £1M of Public Health budget provides an opportunity to explore what service can and should be retained from April 2016.**

### **Homelessness Prevention Support Services (£309,540 across BGR)**

£310k is currently spent in the south of the County on support to prevent homelessness and to support people to establish sustainable independence after a period of homelessness.

**Adult social care funding for Homelessness Prevention Support Services will reduce by 40% from April 2015 and cease at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, however Public Health funding will be used to maintain services during 2015-16. The continuation of services from April 2016 will be determined through the use of the £1M available from that date.**

### **Mental Health Support Services (£407,650 across BGR)**

Services are accessed via Community Mental Health Teams and provide support to people in their own homes, crisis support, carer support and promote social inclusion. Whilst it is intended that services will be retained, the service budget will be reduced by 22% from April 2015 and a further 11% from April 2016. It is currently expected that around half of the 2016 savings requirement will be met by health. and the services delivered will therefore be reviewed to ensure that the funds available are used in ways that are most effective and that services are targeted at those at most risk of requiring statutory social care services. Originally, the proposal had been for the reduction to take effect from October 2014 but this area has benefited from the agreement by February Council to use short term funding to slow the pace of change.

**Funding for Mental Health Support Services to be reduced by 22% from April 2015 and a further 11% in April 2016, leaving a total investment in**



**Mental Health prevention support of £273k across BGR. It is anticipated that some of this reduction will be met by health.**

**Older People's Services (£310,000 across BGR)**

Formerly funded by the County Council for those on low incomes, community alarms are now only available on a self-funded basis.

Gedling Homes is by far the greatest provider of accommodation and support to older people in Gedling, but in addition, there are 7 housing associations and an Almshouse provider that also have contracts with NCC to provide older people's services. These contracts are due to end on 30<sup>th</sup> November this year. Each provider has determined, through consultation with service users, the level of service it will continue to provide.

It remains the intention to use the retained budget to commission prevention support, targeted at those most at risk of losing their independence. Plans to achieve this are now being reviewed to take account of:

- The 'Redefining Your Council' programme;
  - The new Adult Social Care Strategy
  - New requirements under the Care Act 2014;
  - The health and social care integration agenda.
- 
- Community alarm contracts ended from April 2014
  - Older people's support service contract will end on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2014
  - Future prevention service proposal are currently being reconsidered

A range of other services remain in place commissioned by or financially supported by the County Council, including: benefits advice through the Customer Service Centre, HPAS, First Contact scheme, Community Outreach Advisor (Gedling CVS), befriending services (Age UK and Gedling CVS), Cornwater lunch club and BME groups for older people (Gedling Asian Elders and Indian Community Centre Association).

**Vulnerable Adults Service (£51,100 across BGR)**

A Vulnerable Adults Floating Support service is currently commissioned as a separate service sitting alongside Homelessness Prevention services. Work will be done to redefine services for vulnerable adults in line with the new Adult Social Care Strategy and requirements of the Care Act 2014. Based on this there are likely to be changes to the access criteria and service model, although overall there is intended to be an increase in budget allocated to support vulnerable adults. In addition, there is a Deaf Floating Support Scheme that can support up to 28 hearing impaired adults across the county

Members were concerned about the increased contracting out of adult care services to the third sector, in that voluntary sector organisations, agencies and contractors may not pay minimum wage, therefore by outsourcing how does the County encourage the living wage? Members were informed that in bigger homecare contracts the County has introduced a phased reduction of zero hour contracts and the introduction of a statement that agencies must sign supporting a move towards provision of the living wage, and Tupe has applied on 9 of the contracts.

**Countywide 52% increase in overall budget for vulnerable younger adults (18-65 years), including those with hearing impairment, from April 2016.**

## **5.6 Meeting with Gedling Homes and RCAN**

### **5.6.1 Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire (RCAN)**

Jenny Kirkwood of RCAN explained that the organisation supports rural groups and parish councils to undertake development plans in rural communities. They also deliver a number of time limited externally funded projects including IT Champions, which provides voluntary mentoring placements and training for the over 50s in IT, Travelling Together, a Gypsy and Traveller supportive intervention programme, Wheels to Work, a project which supports rural residents with access to a moped for 6 months in order to access work and training, and the Ignition Scheme, which provides help with bus fares to work and education and targets 16 – 18 year olds. There is also CAST, a vibrant youth engagement project which engages young people at year 10 and 11 through fishing and countryside activities and provides 50 places at any one time. Young people achieve an Open College Network Qualification. Community led plans have been developed for Lambley, Newstead, Burton Joyce and Bestwood Village. The plans help to identify and take action on local issues, i.e. in Bestwood Village the high demand for school places and an overflowing school. Other actions identified include access to health services and transport. RCAN is also the lead partner in the Newstead Country Park, a rural park which featured on the Village S.O.S TV programme. RCAN works closely with the Locality Coordinator for Newstead. GBC had applied for Newstead to take part in the Frontrunner programme, to be a pilot for a Neighbourhood Plan however the Parish Council opted against it. Members noted the fact that despite Calverton being in the top 5 multi deprivation areas, the village currently receives no targeted support. Members also noted that with the forthcoming boundary changes, Netherfield, already a deprived area, may score more highly on the indices of deprivation than previously. Members were informed that a big issue in rural communities is the outward migration of young people, which is resulting in an increasingly aging population.

Jenny informed members that as funding levels are reducing, so too are levels of partnership working, particularly at local action planning level.

## **RCAN funding**

Nottinghamshire County Council: £20,000

Rushcliffe BC: £38,000

Newark and Sherwood BC: £17,000

Gedling BC: £10,500

### **5.6.2 Gedling Homes**

David Price of Gedling Homes provided an overview of their approaches to alleviate homelessness and hardship. He reported that the organisation commits a lot of time and money to this, driving forward a number of initiatives underpinned by a 'firm but fair' approach, including the Moneywise Team, which provides in-house debt advice and counselling. Currently 2 members of staff serve around 3,000 tenants, about 1/3 of which are in sheltered schemes.

David reported that in the last 18 months around £142,000 in benefits had been accessed that would not otherwise have been claimed and some large scale debt had been significantly addressed as a result, some of which centred on payday loans. This had highlighted to the organisation how vulnerable Gedling Homes's residents are, and, prior to this, the issue had not been on their radar. The issue of under occupation had also come to the surface, and two years previously the organisation introduced the Special Welfare Action Team who identified in advance those tenants that may be vulnerable to the bedroom tax. Incentives have been offered to encourage downsizing, however there is a lack of 2 bedroom properties in the Borough, and there were still 250 tenants not in receipt of full housing benefit due to under occupation. Those who took on a tenancy knowing of their under occupation are managing better than those who find themselves in that position. Members were informed that there were different pressures on the elderly around cash-flow. Currently 153 tenants are in arrears of some sort, 14 are clear of arrears and 88 are in credit. Tenants were also advised in advance about changes in local and national legislation including welfare reforms and Supporting People Budget changes, and being aware that there now were fewer organisations out there to refer people to for help, established in – house preventative measures. These included drop-in advice services around the Borough and at the Civic Centre. Gedling Homes also employs support workers funded by the NCC Supporting People budget, and the aim is to continue that funding. Members noted that some housing associations are encouraging residents to build up credit to mitigate their transfer to universal credit and in preparation the monthly payment of benefits, and work is underway to encourage claims for discretionary housing benefit payments although these are set to reduce.

Members asked whether Gedling Homes is still looking to increase its housing stock and were informed that 2 new schemes were underway however it is becoming more difficult to locate both funding and sites. Members were

interested whether Gedling Homes is able to have dialogue with developers and planning officers as part of pre-application discussions to request 2 bedroom properties. Members were informed that these discussions are dealt with by GBC Housing Needs officers and Gedling Homes then have the option to buy directly from developers, using funding provided for that purpose.

Members reported an approach being taken in Netherfield where there are 22 housing providers. Locality Partnership is looking to establish an owners' forum to encourage property swaps and potential buying up by Gedling Homes of individually owned properties, often on the same streets, in order to improve investment in the area and ensure a more uniform appearance and standard of accommodation. Members noted that a number of large scale developments are on the horizon and it will be crucial that Gedling Homes are involved in informing the local plan, specifically the mix of housing stock on those sites.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

During the course of the review, Members examining a wide range of information about current and future services, changes in the funding landscape and benefits legislation, opportunities for growth and ways in which the Council and its partners work to maximise these opportunities, both locally and at a strategic level. Members understood that that NCC Supporting People funding changes represent a further development to a significant shift that started in 2012, moving to an enabling culture and encouraging people to be as independent as possible. This includes changed ways of working, providing packages of support and an aim to improve services as well as reduce costs. The approach has involved realigning parts of services and the resources associated with them, rather than having one pot of money and a defined process as in the past. Public Health monies are also now in the mix and the focus of the remaining Supporting People budget will be upon vulnerable adults, including older people and those with mental health issues. Members noted that the Chair of Adult Social Care and Health Committee is seeking ongoing dialogue with districts and with third sector providers about contract management with an element of collaboration in respect of Vulnerable Adult Services going forward.

In respect of the future of Elizabeth House and Nottinghamshire Housing Advice Services, the implication is that funding is secure from April 2015, but that it may cease in 2016 unless an alternative solution is found. NCC is working with Framework to assist Elizabeth House in financial remodelling, focussing on homelessness prevention accommodation and offender accommodation and finding alternative funding streams. Framework is currently the contract holder for Crisis Mental Health services.

Members noted that there is a need to engage the involvement and potential investment of CCGs, who have a potential role to play in supporting Elizabeth House, particularly due to their focus on care in the community and in the light of the NHS Trust's targets to reduce the pressure in the acute sector. The key to

this is the provision of sufficient aftercare, which Framework is well placed to deliver. Additionally, unitary authorities like the City Council have the statutory responsibility for housing with Nottingham Homes, and Gedling must look to Gedling Homes and consider how that organisation's role might impact more on homelessness prevention in the future. Members were made aware of a change in approach with regard to older peoples services, moving away from the traditional warden aided complex approach as the service provided had no direct link to need. Members noted that the reason homelessness was not made a priority in the NCC Supporting People Budget restructure is that the statutory responsibility lies with the districts.

Members were nevertheless encouraged by the assertions of the Chair of Nottinghamshire County Council's Adult Social Care and Health Committee that the County is committed to working together with Gedling Borough Council in the financial remodelling of specialist services to relieve homelessness and hardship.

Key areas for consideration in Gedling are therefore:

- Vulnerable people
- How GBC and NCC can work together
- Joint services, i.e. commissioning prevention services for CCGs in the South of the County.

Members would like to thank Cllr Weisz in advance for agreeing to take up with the Health and Wellbeing Board issues identified by the review of apparently limited drug and alcohol treatment programmes in the Borough.

In visiting Elizabeth House and local Surestart Children's Centres, Members were impressed with the level and range of support and signposting available within the Borough, noting however that more could be done to strengthen referral mechanisms, ensure the quality of longer term support for those with complex needs (i.e. the treatment of drug and alcohol dependent residents) and to more effectively publicise the gateway services available in local communities through access centres, children's centres, GP practices and Health Centres.

Members, being aware of a number of large scale developments underway in the Borough, were of the view that Gedling Homes and Localities coordinators must be involved in informing the local plan and the mix of housing stock on those sites. The danger of providing the wrong balance of housing being that too many people attracted in from outside the Borough could potentially force Gedling residents into hardship.

Members were satisfied that the Council is taking a strong lead in drawing together partnership approaches to mitigate hardship and homelessness, however felt that we would benefit from examining good practice across the

country in order to ensure continuous improvement in coordination, communication and problem solving around those partnerships and approaches. Members commended the Council's support for national and local pastoral initiatives, and would like this ethos to translate further into the ability to be as flexible as possible to help individuals to overcome specific barriers and resolve 'one off' problems, as well as longer term issues.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Working Group makes the following recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing and associated partner organisations:

### **Homelessness and Housing**

1. Gedling Borough Council, in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council and our district collaboration agreement partners, to broker dialogue with Nottingham North East CCG and other CCG Leads via the Health and Wellbeing Board to help secure future funding for Elizabeth House services beyond April 2016, focusing on high need individuals that have a high impact on local health services.
2. Gedling Homes to consider providing a ring fenced number of supported accommodation flats for complex move-on cases referred from Elizabeth House.
3. The potential for Framework /Elizabeth House services to receive Crime and Disorder Partnership funding should also be explored.
4. The Council to explore previous good practice and good practice of other local authorities in influencing developers to ensure the most appropriate housing mix on new developments in the Borough. (Members cited an occasion when the Council worked proactively with a developer on Teal Close (Pepper potting, New Housing Markets).)
5. The Council and partners to consider holding a stakeholder event to address inclusive development and the maximisation and streamlining of specialist advice and support; to include CAB, Credit Union, registered housing providers and anyone with a stake in financial inclusion. – see Tayneside Money Inclusion Network (MINTC) best practice.
6. Ensure that the aspirations and plans of Gedling priority neighbourhoods and Neighbourhood Planning areas and the knowledge of local social housing providers are taken into account in pre application discussions on major development sites.

7. The Council to revive the reporting back mechanism for representatives on key outside bodies, i.e. Gedling Homes, which was in place when we had the Committee System.
8. Seek to influence the development of more one and two bedroom properties in the Borough.

## **Hardship**

9. The Council to continue to raise public awareness and advocate against the dangers of payday loans and encourage more people to invest in the credit union as well as to borrow, which improves sustainability and increases access.
10. The Council to lobby on the issue of energy poverty and support a reduction in the higher tariff costs to individuals associated with pre-paid meters.
11. Greater publicity to be given to the services and facilities provided by local Surestart Children's Centres in order to increase registration. Suggestions include:
  - Concessionary access provided for Children's Centre staff to use our Leisure and Community Centres to conduct outreach sessions.
  - Use of the digital screens in Leisure Centres and the Civic Centre to promote Children's Centre Services.
  - Health Visitors to promote registration with Children's Centres at the two year child health check.
  - GP Surgeries to be more proactive in publicising and referring patients to Children's Centres.
  - GBC Housing Needs Service to strengthen referral links from their customer base to Surestart services.
  - Gedling BC Contacts magazine to run a feature raising awareness of what Children's Centres can provide.
12. Alongside vocational development work currently underway within the Gedling Employment and Skills Group, communities and localities to be encouraged to access external funding for the provision of community based training and life skills. An ideal scenario would be for Gedling

residents to have access to a year round calendar of local courses and 'first step' personal development opportunities.

13. Improve the level of specialist medical and social support available to those at risk of, and moving on from, alcohol and drug dependency and homelessness.
14. Training and awareness to be made available to GPs and frontline staff in alcohol /drug dependency issues, sources of referral and treatment.
15. The Health and Wellbeing Board to reinstate / enhance availability of drug and alcohol recovery programmes that clients can attend locally, supported by Elizabeth house staff and Framework support workers.
16. The NNE CCG to consider commissioning informed health advocacy for those in hardship and dependency situations.
17. Under our commitment to the Armed Forces Community Covenant, enhance support for ex-military personnel at risk of dependency, hardship and homelessness by strengthening referral links to SAFFA and other Service benevolent organisations.
18. Consider the provision of DWP outreach at Elizabeth House.

## **7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Members would like to thank the following councillors and officers for their input to this review:

- Councillor Muriel Weisz, Chair: NCC Adult Social Care and Health Committee
- Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth: Portfolio Holder, Health and Housing (until May 2014)
- Alison Bennett: Service Manager, Housing and Localities (until Oct 2014)
- Tracy Lack and Penny Castle: Carlton and Netherfield Children's Centres
- Michael Leng, Operations Director, Framework, Nottinghamshire
- Sharon Batey, Nottinghamshire Housing Advice Service
- David Price: Gedling Homes
- Jenny Kirkwood: Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire

## **8. APPENDICES**

- **Appendix 1: Project Scope**



## Scope

<b>Scrutiny committee:</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Working Group:</b>	<b>Homelessness and Hardship in the Borough</b>
<b>Chair of group:</b>	<b>Councillor M. Lawrence</b>
<b>Working group members:</b>	<b>Councillors: Hope, Weisz, P. Allan, Blair, Hughes, Lawrence, Paling, Hewson, Bexon.</b>
<b>Portfolio holder/s:</b>	<b>Councillor Hollingsworth</b>
<b>Corporate Director:</b>	<b>Paula Darlington</b>

### (1) Scope

Why this review is being undertaken

(List the specific outcomes – **Specific**, **Measurable**, **Achievable**, **Realistic** and **Time bound**)

The working group recognises the increased incidences of hardship and homelessness.

This review aims to evaluate the current and future impact of multi-agency service provision and to establish what further could be achieved.

The review will also examine the implications of proposals by the County Council to reduce adult social care funding and its possible impact on key support organisations.

### **Aims**

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Corporate Values</b>
To identify any barriers for individuals in Gedling to those services engaged in the alleviation of hardship and homelessness.	<b>1. A caring and fair Council</b> that treats customers, residents, partners and staff well
	<b>2. A listening Council</b> that listens to and involves the people it serves
	<b>3. An ambitious Council</b> one that is

	never satisfied and constantly hungry for improvement
To ensure that services provided are reflective of the different needs represented in Gedling.	4. <b>A responsive Council</b> that is sensitive to different needs and acts accordingly
To identify whether local networks, partnerships and community development links could be further maximised to extend the reach of current provision.	5. <b>An efficient Council</b> that is responsible; that avoids waste and makes the most of what it has

## **(2) Timetable**

The review will commence in:	<b>October 2013</b>
Milestones:	<b>Work programme to be agreed</b>
The review will report in:	<b>Approximately three months</b>
Committee dates:	
Frequency of meetings:	<b>6 weekly</b>

## **(3) Information gathering and consultees**

The working group has requested the following information:

An overview of current poverty and homelessness levels in the borough  
A detailed understanding of partnership provision and levels of positive impact  
Opportunities and threats to provision

What are the main questions to be asked and of what parties?

- What are the main issues of hardship in Gedling?
- To what extent is rural poverty an issue in Gedling?
- What are the main drivers for debt and hardship?
- Where are the key points of intervention?
- How are services promoted?
- What resources are available?
- Who are our partners?
- What extra resources might be drawn in?
- What are the gaps in provision?
- What are the barriers to access to existing provision?
- What is the impact of youth homelessness on the youth service?
- Elizabeth House – an update on how this facility is benefitting the area
- How can GBC help agencies to extend/maximise their services in Gedling?

The working group will be inviting the following persons/organisations to one or more meetings to help with the review:

- Alison Bennett, Service Manager, Housing and Localities
- Framework
- Nottingham Housing Advice Service
- Nottinghamshire County Council – Adult Social Care
- NHS/Police?

### **Visits**

The working group might need to consider:

A visit to Elizabeth House  
Sure Start  
Arnold Foodbank  
Children's Centres

### **(4) How the community will be consulted, informed and involved**

The working group wishes to consult through:

Partnership networks

### **(5) Equality of opportunity**

The following Equality Impact Assessment method will be applied

N/A

### **(6) Resources**

The working group is supported by:

Senior Members Services Officer

### **(6) How the effectiveness of the review will be measured**

Progress on the recommendations of the review will be subject to follow up at an agreed point to be set by the Overview Scrutiny Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Progress of Scrutiny Review Recommendations**

### **Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Title of the review: **Inclusion and Equalities**

Initial response to Overview received: **7 October 2013**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor K Fox**

Chair of the review group: **Councillor M Weisz**

Officer supporting the review: **Helen Lee**

#### **Guidance**

Monitoring of the progress of recommendations to scrutiny reviews is requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approximately six months after the initial response.

The Committee requests further information regarding the recommendations that were **accepted** or **partially accepted**. The update section should be completed identifying progress or new developments that have taken place.

If you need any further assistance in completing this response please contact the Officer that supported the review

#### **Recommendation 1**

Simplify and standardise the format for the Equality Objectives published on the Council website.

#### **Recommendation Accepted**

##### **Initial Response to Overview**

Will review format when updating objectives. The aim is to do this once the government's review of the public sector equality duty has been completed. We would retain reference to accountable manager and portfolio holder – this is helpful to identify who is accountable for the action and fits with wider performance management arrangements.

##### **Update on progress of recommendation**

.

Commitment remains though work has not yet started on updating objectives

## **Recommendation 2**

An annual review of the progress of the Equality Objectives should be undertaken as part of a monitoring process.

### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

This will be done as part of performance management arrangements. It reflects aspirations to mainstream equalities.

#### **Update on progress of recommendation**

Relevant continuing measures are monitored as part of ongoing performance management arrangements.

## **Recommendation 3**

Develop a process to indicate how equality and inclusion considerations/implications are taken into account when new policies are being developed.

### **Recommendation Partly Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

Equality Impact Assessments for significant new policies and changes to policies are likely to continue – this is in line with current practice. The pro-forma for Equality Impact Assessments is being updated to reflect latest good practice. It is however important that any work involved remains proportionate.

#### **Update on progress of recommendation**

Equality Impact Assessments continue to be required for significant new policies and changes to existing policies. A new proforma has been developed and is in use.

## **Recommendation 4**

Ensure the cultural breakdown of the borough identified through the census data is considered when identifying service need.

### **Recommendation Accepted**

**Initial Response to Overview**

Briefings on census findings are being arranged for all Members and for officers. This will include information on people with the protected characteristics. Managers will be encouraged to use this information when planning future services.

**Update on progress of recommendation**

Managers and members have received briefings on census results. Information is available on Gedling Insight, broken down in relation to protected characteristics where that information was gathered as part of the census. Insight continues to be used in the planning of future services and managers are encouraged to reference it as part of service planning.

**Recommendation 5**

Develop mechanisms to target applications from minority groups by broadening the list of agencies that receive notification of vacancies.

**Recommendation Partly Accepted****Initial Response to Overview**

We are doing as much as is reasonable at the present time. The impact of current work has been considered and examined, but it has not been significant. It remains our understanding that groups involved do tend to be City/Conurbation based and our contact database reflects that. If anyone is aware of borough specific groups, if they could let us know then we will consider their inclusion in future mail-outs.

**Update on progress of recommendation**

No further progress to report.

**Recommendation 6**

Consider how job adverts and application forms can be improved to make potential applicants aware of the Council's policy that jobs are open to job share.

**Recommendation Partly Accepted****Initial Response to Overview**

We are doing as much as reasonably practical at present.

**Update on progress of recommendation**

No further progress to report.

### **Recommendation 8**

Undertake initiatives to promote awareness and understanding of diverse groups for existing employees by the use of themed displays and events.

#### **Recommendation Accepted**

##### **Initial Response to Overview**

This is already in place. Our aim is to set up or display at least four events per year in the Civic Centre targeting both employees and the public. Recent examples include displays, for Age UK and the LGBT display (including raising of the Rainbow Flag). We also work on why the campaigns such as the “Man Enough” campaign which while not specifically equalities related does have a disproportionate impact on the protected characteristics.

##### **Update on progress of recommendation**

We have recently supported Stonewall’s “No Bystanders” campaign about the impact of bullying and how we can tackle it in all areas of our lives. A link to a powerful message has been featured on the Intranet – this adds an on-line element to our work to promote awareness and encourage appropriate challenge amongst existing employees.

There have been no further displays in the Reception Area.

### **Recommendation 9**

Remind staff of the need to use clear English on any printed material that is in the public domain.

#### **Recommendation Accepted**

##### **Initial Response to Overview**

Guidelines on plain English the Gedling way have just been published and are being promoted to managers.

##### **Update on progress of recommendation**

Guidelines as outlined above are now in use.



## **Recommendation 10**

Proactively work to counter negative perceptions about diverse groups in the community.

### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

This is already in place. We will look to supply examples from current and future Contacts magazines in due course.

#### **Update on progress of recommendation**

Recent examples of coverage of the diverse groups covered in Contact magazine include: -

##### **Contacts 34 (Winter 2013/14)**

<http://www.gedling.gov.uk/media/documents/aboutus/contacts/Contacts%2034%20P2.pdf%20NEW%20-%20Web.pdf>

This edition included articles about volunteering opportunities; Nottingham credit union; Gedling Play Forum; new facilities for people with disabilities; and independence for older people.

##### **Contacts 35 (Summer 2014)**

<http://www.gedling.gov.uk/media/documents/aboutus/contacts/Contacts%2035%20web.pdf>

This edition included articles about the Gedling Youth Council; the Council's work to be a dementia friendly organisation; services offered by the Royal British Legion at the Civic Centre; new skatepark and arts trial facilities for young people and the Netherfield and Conway Good Neighbour awards. See pages 2, 3, 4, 7, 22, 23 and 25.

## **Recommendation 11**

Promote positive examples of community/multicultural action by publishing news stories/photo opportunities via the Gedling Borough web pages, Staff Intranet and Contacts magazine.

### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

This is already in place and we are aiming to do more wherever possible.

## **Update on progress of recommendation**

See response to Recommendation 10 for recent examples included in Contacts magazine. All of these are also published on the Council's website.

## **Recommendation 12**

Consider what can be done at the Arnold and Gedling Shows to celebrate diversity.

### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

A number of organisations already involved and invited to these events that represent the protected groups

## **Update on progress of recommendation**

### **Arnold Carnival 2014**

Activities during the Carnival:

- Arnold Churches Together has its own marquee and Sunday service on stage.
- Older Gedling Homes' tenants parading their art work.
- Sports activities and Zumba for young people
- Youth Service Bus
- Extreme Wheels activities for young people
- Gedling Play Forum arts and crafts for both children and grandparents. This includes Debz4Coffee group support for children with disabilities.
- On stage performances opportunities for local children

Charities and other organisations in attendance with promotional stalls:

- Less Able Bodied Holidays, supported disabled and disadvantaged people in Nottingham
- The Anthony Booth Trust, supporting aplastic anaemia
- Alzheimer's Society
- Cancer Research UK
- Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- The Bahai Faith

### **Gedling Show**

Activities during the Show:

- Sports activities for young people
- Extreme Wheels activities for young people
- Children performing in the dance marquee and period dance performances for older people
- Gedling Play Forum arts and crafts for both children and grandparents. This includes Debz4Coffee group support for children with disabilities.

Charities and other organisations in attendance with promotional stalls:

- Less Able Bodied Holidays, supported disabled and disadvantaged people in Nottingham
- The Anthony Booth Trust, supporting aplastic anaemia
- Arthritis Care
- Carlton and Gedling U3A, providing educational and leisure activities for semi-retired and retired people
- Young Persons Positive Moves Extras group providing exercise for children with disabilities

### **Recommendation 13**

Create a link from the GBC web pages to the database the Council for Voluntary Services is currently developing which will catalogue voluntary and community groups.

#### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

This will happen once it is ready, as long as there are no data protection implications.

#### **Update on progress of recommendation**

Still under review at present

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Reports and Notices received by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required under the Constitution or Law.**

- 1. Items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Contract Standing orders and Standing orders for dealing with Land**
  - i. Notifications received where it has not been possible to obtain 3 quotations for a contract estimated to be between £10,000 and £50,000.**
    - Contract for Council to represent GBC at the Court of Appeal in the matter of Gedling Borough Council / Westerleigh –v- Timmins/AW Lymn.
  - ii. Notification of decision to dispose of land or property other than the sale of council houses to sitting tenants pursuant to the right to buy.**
    - Proposal for the future sale of land at Teal Close, Netherfield without using the tender process as defined in the Standing Orders for Dealings with Land.
    - Proposal for sale of part of the unused long stay element of Carlton Square Car Park.
- 2. Items referred to Scrutiny under the Budget and Policy Framework**
  - None received
- 3. Items where the Executive proposes to take a key decision without it being published (on the Forward Plan) for at least 28 days. (New Local Authorities Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.**
  - None received

Please note that the above list may not be exhaustive; items may be referred at short notice to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank