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To: Chair & Members of the Customer
Services Scrutiny Committee

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Thursday, 2nd September 2021

Dear Councillor

CUSTOMER SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Monday, 13th September, 2021 at 10:00 hours.

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised from page 2 onwards.

Yours faithfully



Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

Bolsover
District Council

We speak your language
Polish **Mówimy Twoim językiem**
Slovak **Rozprávame Vaším jazykom**
Chinese **我们会说你的语言**

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**CUSTOMER SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

**Monday, 13th September, 2021 at 10:00 hours to be held in the Council Chamber,
The Arc, Clowne**

Item No.	<u>PART A FORMAL</u>	Page No.(s)
1.	Apologies for absence	
2.	Urgent Items of Business	
	To note any urgent items of business which the Chairman has consented to being considered under the provisions of Section 100(B) 4 (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
	Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of:-	
	a) any business on the agenda	
	b) any urgent additional items to be considered	
	c) any matters arising out of those items and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
4.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd August 2021	3 - 6
5.	List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private	
	<u>Link to List of Key Decisions and Items to the Considered in Private</u>	
6.	Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints Annual Report 2019/20	7 - 26
7.	LG&SCO and Housing Ombudsman Annual Report 2019/20	27 - 40
8.	North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021-23	41 - 67
9.	Consultation on Housing Policies - Rechargeable Repairs Policy	68 - 98
10.	Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021/22 - agreement of work scope	99 - 107

PART B INFORMAL

The formal meeting of the Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee ends at this point. Members will meet informally as a working party to carry out their review work. This meeting is closed to the public, so members of the public should leave at this point.

CUSTOMER SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne, on Monday 2nd August 2021 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Rose Bowler in the Chair

Councillors Allan Bailey, David Dixon, Stan Fox and Ray Heffer.

Officers:- Deborah Whallett (Housing Enforcement Manager), Joanne Wilson (Scrutiny & Elections Officer) and Alison Bluff (Governance Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting was Councillor David Downes, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism.

. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Rita Turner.

. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

. MINUTES – 8TH MARCH 2021

Committee considered the Minutes of a Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny meeting held on 8th March 2021.

Moved by Councillor Rose Bowler and seconded by Councillor Ray Heffer

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee held on 8th March 2021 be approved as a correct record.

. LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Committee considered the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document.

CUSTOMER SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Moved by Councillor Ray Heffer and seconded by Councillor Rose Bowler
RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document be noted.

BRIEFING ON ADAPTED ACCOMMODATION

Committee considered a report which provided information regarding Council owned adapted accommodation in the District.

Following approaches by applicants seeking family units, in April 2021, Executive received a report regarding the supply, management and allocation of Council owned adapted accommodation. Executive agreed that Scrutiny review the process and prepare recommendations to further support families with needs for adapted properties. The Executive report was attached as Appendix 1 and Committee was asked to note that the report referred to 41 x 2 bedroom bungalows when in fact 6 of these were flats.

The Council liaised with Derbyshire County Council's (DCC) Occupational Therapists to ensure the right adaptations were provided in a person's home. However, some work could be so significant that it could potentially mean the property should be considered as 'fully adapted', which meant the categorisation on the housing system would need to change.

Examples of significant adaptations which the Council regularly undertook were;

- Wetroom
- Ceiling Track Hoist (CTH)
- Closomat toilet (wash dry toilet)
- Through floor lift
- Adapted kitchen

It was important to note that although a property was categorised by Housing as disabled adapted for management of allocation purposes – it didn't mean the property was exempt from Right to Buy and could be legally challenged if an application was refused. The relevant section was part 7 of Schedule 5 to the Housing Act 1985 and stated;

“The right to buy does not arise if the dwelling-house has features which are substantially different from those of ordinary dwelling-houses and are designed to make it suitable for occupation by physically disabled persons, and

- (a) it is one of a group of dwelling-houses which it is the practice of the landlord to let for occupation by physically disabled persons, and*
- (b) a social service or special facilities are provided in close proximity to the group of dwelling-houses wholly or partly for the purpose of assisting those persons.”*

Housing officers had recently commenced a piece of work to agree a set of principles that reflected practice in terms of what 'significant adaptations' meant, and

CUSTOMER SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

to look at what decision making processes should follow if a property was no longer considered 'general needs' adapted stock. This was important as it would mean that a significant or fully adapted property would most likely be exempt from Right to Buy legislation but also the way in which disabled housing stock was allocated.

The Council continually looked for fully adapted properties to keep families together and had purchased some properties from 'Keepmoat Homes'. However, the number of fully adapted properties the Council should have required balancing with 'need' and also taking into consideration Right to Buy legislation.

Due to a limited budget for adapted properties, a working group had been set up to better manage stock and referrals – this would also help reduce the waiting list for these type of properties. For example, a wet room was a significant change to a house but not so much a bungalow. A through floor lift was expensive and tenants didn't always want to move so the balance of adapted properties in each area was being looked at.

If Scrutiny agreed to carry out a Review in relation to Council owned adapted properties, the Housing Enforcement Manager suggested that 2 Members from this Committee could attend the working group meetings to get insight on the issues facing Housing.

In response to a Member's query regarding right to buy on adapted properties, Committee was advised that some other authorities had been successful in stopping right to buy applications on properties where only 2 major adaptations had been made. This Council was proposing that where 3 or more major adaptations had been undertaken, or where there was one element with a value of over £15,000 - this be discussed at the internal officer welfare meeting for agreement that the property sat in the 'disabled adapted property' category, with a recommendation to the Housing Stock Management meeting for Member approval to change categorisation on the system. However, although this was a set of principles to work to, each case would need to be treated on its own merits.

In response to a Member's question regarding referrals for adapted properties, Committee was advised that around 35 referrals were discussed at each panel meeting with DCC, which took place every 6 weeks. However, referrals which came from DCC were for customers who already lived in their properties.

Committee was asked to note that there were also occasions where adaptations were removed and this meant a property would no longer be classed as disabled adapted on the housing system and would be put back into general needs accommodation. It would be proposed that any decision to move a property categorisation would follow the same process in terms of officer agreement before being presented to the Housing Stock Management Group. A number of properties that may meet this criteria had been identified and a formal assessment would be carried out to determine if they needed to be re-categorised. These properties were set out in Appendix 2 but in summary were 11 x 3 bedroom houses and 3 x 4 bedroom houses.

In response to a Member's question regarding payment to tenants who needed to move from a property to an adapted property, the Housing Enforcement Manager advised that no allowance was awarded in these types of cases.

Moved by Councillor Ray Heffer and seconded by Councillor David Dixon

CUSTOMER SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that in accordance with the recommendation agreed at Executive on 26th April 2021, Customer Services Scrutiny Committee take forward a review of Council owned adapted accommodation for the 2021/22 municipal year.

(Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

The Housing Enforcement Manager and the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism left the meeting.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Committee considered their work programme for 2021/22.

It was noted that this Committee now held all the 'housing elements' for review work, where previously it had been split with the former Healthy, Safe, Clean & Green Communities and Growth Scrutiny Committees. However, this Committee now had the waste collection element of Streetscene and the Head of Streetscene was currently looking at new legislation in relation to waste collection.

In relation to the Adapted Accommodation briefing presented earlier in the meeting, Members would need to agree the scope of the review within their Informal session. Further detail could then be considered at the September meeting.

It was noted that the Council's Joint Homelessness Strategy, with North East Derbyshire District and Chesterfield Borough Councils, was currently under review. This would be presented by the Head of Housing Management & Enforcement to the September meeting.

Due to the change to Committee Terms of Reference following Council AGM, Audit and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee (ACOSC) would be reviewing the Council's in-house procurement service and the Scrutiny & Elections Officer would speak to the Chair of ACOSC with regard to a Member from this Committee engaging in the discussion regarding procurement.

The formal meeting concluded at 1055 hours and Members then met as a working party to continue their review work. The working party concluded at 1115 hours.

Bolsover District Council

Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

13th September 2021

**Customer Service Standards/ Compliments, Comments and Complaints
Report 2020/21**

1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021 and Annual Summary

Report of the Head of Corporate Governance

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Head of Corporate Governance

Contact Officer: Customer Standards and Complaints Officer

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

- To provide information on the Council's performance in relation to its customer service standards.
 - To provide information on the effective management of complaints and customer requests which is central to excellent customer service and the Council can use to improve its services.
 - To provide information on the number of compliments, comments and complaints for the period 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021
 - To provide an Annual Summary on the above.
 - To make Elected Members aware of performance in relation to its Customer Service Standards and the effective management of complaints.
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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee note the overall performance on Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints

Approved by the Portfolio Holder – Councillor D McGregor

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

Whilst there are no direct financial implications with regard to the report, the Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well. In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

The Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman and, in the case of complaints about Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information requests, the Information Commissioner's Office can issue decision notices and impose significant fines. There are no Data Protection implications.

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

Not applicable as the report is to keep Elected Members informed.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Decision Information	
<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	No
District Wards Significantly Affected	All
<p>Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Cabinet / Executive <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SAMT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Details:</p>

Links to Council Ambition (BDC)/Council Plan (NED) priorities or Policy Framework including Climate Change, Equalities, and Economics and Health implications.
<p>Increasing customer satisfaction with our services Improving customer contact and removing barriers to accessing information Actively engaging with partners to benefit our customers Promoting equality and diversity and supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people</p>

REPORT DETAILS

1 **Background** *(reasons for bringing the report)*

The purpose of this report is to make Elected Members aware of performance in relation to its Customer Service Standards and the effective management of complaints.

1.1 Customer Service Standards

Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the key customer service standards by quarterly period, together with the target and the cumulative performance for each standard.

Telephones

Target - 93% to be answered within 20 seconds

Appendix 2 shows the performance between 1st October 2020 and 31st March 2021 by quarterly period. The report identifies 99% (in both Q3 and Q4) of incoming calls are being answered corporately within 20 seconds cumulatively. All departments achieved and exceeded the corporate target of 93%, except the Leader's Executive Team where only three calls were answered out of time, and because the total number of calls received was small, achieved 75% in Q3.

Cumulatively performance is 99% over 2020/21.

Contact Centres

Target - 80% of incoming calls to be answered within 20 seconds

Contact Centres achieved 94% and 99% for quarters 3 & 4 respectively (96.5% cumulatively).

Cumulatively performance is 97% over 2020/21 which exceeds the target of 80%.

Revenues & Benefits

Target - 60% of incoming calls to be answered within 20 seconds

Revenues & Benefits 'direct dial' achieved 79% and 78% for quarters 3 & 4 respectively (78.5% cumulatively).

Cumulatively performance is 76% over 2020/21, which exceeds the target of 60%.

E-mails

Target 1 - 100% to be acknowledged within 1 working day

Target 2 - 100% to be replied to within 8 working days

For this reporting period, 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021:

- 8,510 email enquiries (3,356 in Q3 and 5,154 in Q4) from the public were received through enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- All were acknowledged within one working day
- 99% were replied to in full within 8 working days.

There were more e-mails compared to the same period (6,488) in 2020/21 and this remains a popular method of contact, particularly because other contact channels were not available for some of the period of monitoring (e.g. face to face and webchat).

Face to face monitoring

Target – 99% not kept waiting longer than 20 minutes at a Contact Centre

No monitoring undertaken due to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic arrangements.

1.2 Compliments, Comments and Complaints

Compliments

Appendix 3 (A) shows the number of written compliments received for the period by department. In total 105 written compliments were received. Compliments were received from customers who appreciated excellent service.

Comments

Appendix 3 (B) shows the number of written comments received for the period. 100% (all 39) were acknowledged and passed to the respective department within the target time of 3 working days, for consideration when reviewing their service.

Complaints

Frontline resolution (stage one)

Appendix 3 (C) shows the number of Frontline Resolution complaints received by the Contact Centre service and recorded on the Customer Information System (Firmstep) by department. The customer service standard for responding to these complaints is 3 working days.

Formal Investigation (stage two)

Appendix 3 (D) shows the number of Formal Investigation complaints by department. 123 complaints were received during this period, 97% of which were responded to

within our customer service standard of 15 working days. Covid-19 restrictions did have an impact on performance during the earlier part of 2020/21 where staff were either unavailable due to sickness or redeployed to other duties. However, this appears to have improved.

As some complaints cross cut departments, the number does not correspond with the total above when viewed in this way.

Internal Review (stage three)

Appendix 3 (E) shows the number of stage three complaints received for the period by department. These are complainants who have already made a stage two complaint and still feel dissatisfied. During this period 17 stage three complaints were received, all of which were responded to within the standard of 20 working days.

Ombudsman

Appendix 3 (F) shows the status of Ombudsman complaints for 2020/21 as at 19th August 2021. During this reporting period three cases were received. One decision was received of the 'Ombudsman cannot investigate this complaint. This is because the complainant has already appealed to the Planning Inspector', with the remainder awaiting a decision.

Summary for 2020/21

The following tables provide a summary of performance for compliments, comments and complaints for 2019/20, with comparative data from previous years.

Volume and Performance

Volume by type	2020/21 Total	2019/20 Total	2018/19 Total	2017/18 Total
Compliments	228	273	258	266
Comments	97	55	69	58
M.P. enquiries	28	Data not recorded for these periods		
Formal Investigation Complaints (S2)	175	208	193	179
Internal Review Complaints (S3)	35	41	33	46
Total	563	577	553	549
Stage 1 Complaints	217	205	252	213
% Comments acknowledged within standard (target 3 working days)	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Stage 2 responded to within standard (target 97%)	94%	96%	99%	98%
Average response in days (target 15 working days)	10	13	11	10
% Stage 3 responded to within standard (target 100%)	94%	88%	97%	98%
Average response in days	16	19	16	14

When comparing 2020/21 to the previous year of 2019/20, the following is noted:

- There were slightly fewer written compliments
- We have received more comments
- We have received slightly more frontline resolution complaints
- Received a similar amount of formal investigation complaints/ M.P. enquiries
- Received slightly fewer internal review complaints

The above would appear to indicate that the Council has an easy to access complaints system, as recommended by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman Service.

A separate report is submitted for Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman Service complaints.

Complaints Feedback

Whilst there were no real trends leading to service improvements during this financial year we have identified some issues around the contracted out services, which have been implemented.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 None – to keep Elected Members informed.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 To note the overall performance on Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 None.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
Appendix:	
1	Customer Service Standards monitoring
2	Telephony performance
3	Compliments, Comments and Complaints: A. Compliments by department 1/10/20 – 31/3/21 B. Comments by department 1/10/20 – 31/3/21 C. Frontline resolution complaints by department 1/10/20 – 31/3/21 D. Formal Investigation complaints by department 1/10/20 – 31/3/21 E. Internal Review complaints by department 1/10/20 – 31/3/21 F. Ombudsman complaints summary for 2020/21
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	

Key Customer Service Standards - Performance Monitoring - 2020/21												
Period	Telephone Standards					E-mail Standards			Face to Face Standards		Written Complaints	
	No. of Incoming Calls	% of Calls Answered within 20 Seconds	No. of Incoming Calls - Contact Centres	% of Calls Answered within 20 Seconds - Contact Centres	% of Calls Answered within 20 Seconds - Revenues & Benefits (direct dial)	No. of Emails	% Acknowledged within 1 Working Day	% Replied to within 8 Working Days	No. of Customers (Sample)	% Served at the Enquiry Desk in less than 20 minutes	No. of Complaints Received (Stage Two)	% Responded to within 15 Working Days
Target		93%		80%	60%		100%	100%		99%		97%
April to June	727	98%	17,898	98%	70%	3,794	100%	99%	No monitoring undertaken due to Covid-19 pandemic arrangements		20	70%
Quarter 1 Cumulative	727	98%	17,898	98%	70%	3,794	100%	99%			20	70%
July to September	1,712	97%	21,114	93%	76%	2,795	100%	98%	No monitoring undertaken due to Covid-19 pandemic arrangements		42	98%
Quarter 2 Cumulative	2,439	97%	39,012	96%	73%	6,589	100%	98.5%			62	88%
October to December	1,712	98%	18,270	94%	79%	3,356	100%	99%	No monitoring undertaken due to Covid-19 pandemic arrangements		58	95%
Quarter 3 Cumulative	4,151	98%	57,282	95%	73%	9,945	100%	99%			120	90%
January to March	1,864	99%	21,700	99%	78%	5,154	100%	99%	No monitoring undertaken due to Covid-19 pandemic arrangements		55	98%
Quarter 4 Cumulative	6,015	99%	78,982	97%	76%	15,099	100%	99%			175	94%

Appendix 2

Appendix 2 - Telephony Figures 1/10/20 – 31/3/21

Corporate target 93% Department (by directorate)	Q3			Q4		
	Total	Total in standard	%age	Total	Total in standard	%age
Corporate Resources						
Leader's Executive Team	12	9	75%	3	3	100%
Communications	7	7	100%	5	5	100%
Customer Services	22	22	100%	16	14	94%
ICT	773	770	100%	935	927	99%
Leisure	6	6	100%	11	11	100%
Legal, Governance, Scrutiny & Elections	120	114	95%	108	107	98%
HR, Payroll & Health & Safety	219	219	100%	225	224	100%
Performance						
Finance	39	39	100%	40	38	95%
Revenues & Benefits	28	27	96%	69	66	96%
	1226	1213	99%	1412	1395	99%
Development						
Housing Repairs	28	28	100%	17	16	94%
Property & Commercial Services	68	68	100%	28	27	96%
Planning	24	23	96%	8	8	100%
Economic Development	3	3	100%			
	123	122	99%	53	51	96%
Environment & Enforcement						
Streetscene Services	359	343	96%	387	379	98%
Housing & Community Safety	4	4	100%	12	12	100%
	363	347	96%	399	391	98%
Total	1712	1682	98%	1864	1837	99%
<p>Total in standard includes all incoming calls between Monday to Friday 9.00 a.m. until 17.00 p.m.: Answered on the original extension within 20 seconds Transferred to another extension on divert within 20 seconds Picked up by a group pick up within 20 seconds Which ring off within 20 seconds</p>						
<p>Does not meet target </p>						

Appendix 3

Appendix 3

A- Compliments 1/10/20 – 31/3/21		Number
	Leaders Executive Team	3
	Customer Services	19
	Leisure	2
	Communications	2
	Governance	1
	Revenues & Benefits	28
	Business Growth	2
	Housing (Repairs)	16
	Housing (Strategic Repairs)	2
	Property Services	3
	Planning	2
	Housing (Allocations)	4
	Streetscene Services	25
	Environmental Health	1
	Community Safety	4
Total		114

Compliments:

Would like to thank Benefits for all their council tax support during lockdown	Revenues & Benefits
Wanted to thank the Revenues C/Tax Department for their help	Revenues & Benefits
Tenant wanted to thank the men who fitted her new boiler	Housing Repairs
Housing Repairs did an excellent job with external door	Housing Repairs
Housing Repairs did an excellent job fitting a new sink	Housing Repairs
Matthew and Tannert excellent service	Housing Repairs
BDC Contact Centre helped get phone line and IT service back on	Customer Services
Rangers helped get phone lines and IT service back on	Community Safety
Has discussed on the phone I now understand my partner is receiving full pay whilst off sick. So no longer need to continue with this claim. Many thanks for your help	Revenues & Benefits
Thank you for emailing me. After speaking to my husband we have decided to not apply for the discretionary payment. You have gone above and beyond in advising me and I really appreciate it. Many thanks	Revenues & Benefits
Re. Discretionary Housing Payments to see if she will qualify for any additional assistance. She said she did not know about that and thanked me for calling her to let her know. I said that there will be a telephone number on the letter that will accompany the form I will send, so she should ring us if she needs help completing the form. She said 'thank you very much for that and have a lovely weekend'.	Revenues & Benefits
Customer would like to thank the team that cleared the fly tipping of glass bottles behind the post office on Carter Lane Shirebrook. This was done promptly and efficiently.	Streetscene Services
Caller would like to say how delighted he is with his new kitchen fit. He said that he couldn't have got it done better even if he has purchased it himself. He is extremely pleased and wished to thank everyone involved.	Strategic Housing Repairs

Customer would like to thank the grounds maintenance assisted gardens team for their continued hard work, throughout current circumstances and previously, he said he appreciates the work that you do and that you have never let him down.	Streetscene Services
Customer would like to say thank you to all teams that have helped him since his move to Bolsover District. His words were 'you've all been great, spot on with everything, thank you'	Streetscene Services Customer Services
Thank you ever so much for ringing, you have been really helpful (with regard to benefit claim)	Revenues & Benefits
A six month exemption was applied from date of probate that the customer didn't realise about and was very grateful for. She thanked the department for efficiency and said it's eased her worries no end.	Revenues & Benefits
Thank you for your help and assistance (regarding application for a discretionary payment being successful).	Revenues & Benefits
Resident said she wanted to pass on her thanks and appreciation of the warden service, and to say what a good job they all do.	Housing
Thank you for all your help at this stressful time with regard to a successful application for discretionary payment.	Revenues & Benefits
Caller advises that 2 men from the repairs department attended yesterday to fit a worktop, they were brilliant so polite and friendly and really pleased with the service and they have done a cracking job.	Housing Repairs
On behalf of Pleasley PCC, I would like to thank you for all the work your team has done in St Michael's Churchyard at Pleasley. It is much appreciated that you keep it in such good order. All the repair work on the walls and the splendid replacement gate are excellent. Thank you so much. I don't know if grass cutting, tree trimming etc is your department, but if not, please pass our thanks on for the splendid work that keeps the churchyard and footpath in safe order and looking so attractive.	Streetscene Services Property Services
Customer rang to say that he wanted to say thank you for the following which he has had done this week. Bin that had been missed - men came back and emptied New WC Cistern put in this morning New Shower put in	Housing Repairs Streetscene Services
Rang to say she had just had operative the Repairs team round to fit her a new fluorescent light in the bathroom and she wanted us to know how nice and polite he had been. He respected her house and wore his overshoes and did the job really well. She said it was a pleasure to have someone nice as they are not always and can be in a rush sometimes.	Housing Repairs
Telephoned regarding the delivery of his green bin. He spoke to Customer Advisor and he said our website says he will be met with friendly and helpful staff and on the last 2 occasions (including today) that is exactly what has happened. He said thank you for being so friendly and helpful	Customer Services
Customer rang to say that she wished to pass on her thanks to the men who removed her bulky waste collection this morning. She said they did a good job and cleared it all. Some of it had got wet as it had been out for a while but she was very pleased with the way they cleared it for her.	Streetscene Services
Customer came in to thank Customer Advisor for her help with a bulky collection as there had been a mix up with charging extra to collect on the back of the property when his front door opened onto the pavement. He also brought in some chocolates and said how grateful he was for her help.	Customer Services

Daughter has attended the Holiday Club this week at the Arc Clowne for the first time and was nervous to attend. She has really enjoyed the club and has come home each day saying Leisure Officer is brilliant and also the rest of the team. - Thank you	Leisure
Really grateful to have @BolsoverDC as our local authority - a strong social house building programme, a community lottery scheme, plans to plant over 1 million trees & defending local democracy against central gov reforms.	Strategic Housing Transformation Programme Housing Strategy
I wanted to let you know that I have had some very positive feedback with regards to the home security fitted. My client advised that he was not only very professional and polite, he was extremely efficient in completing the home security. I'm sure he completes all his work in the same way and our DV cases really appreciate the home security that is fitted, but I feel it's important to pass on the positive comments to you.	Community Safety
I came into Clowne Contact Centre to find out why I was paying council tax on two properties. The Customer Advisor was lovely and very helpful. Thank you.	Customer Services
Resident would like to thank Customer Advisor and the Environmental Health Officer for dealing with the abandoned vehicle outside her property. She reported it 2 hours ago and he is already at her property dealing with the car. He has explained in length what will happen and time frames in which it will be dealt with. She is very impressed.	Environmental Health Customer Services
Called in July to request that a tree to the rear of her property be cut, she says that we have now been and carried out the work and she wanted to pass her thanks onto the grounds maintenance team. She says that they have done a fantastic job!	Streetscene Services
Customer would like to thank the 2 plumbers who have put a new radiator on for her today. She is very happy with the work and said the men were extremely nice.	Housing Repairs
She thanked me for all my help and her husband also asked to speak to me again so that he could thank me too.	Revenues & Benefits
Thanks for your email and information which is very helpful. I'm not from the area and was unaware of the history and background to the properties or the recent works that have been carried out. I love period properties and sometimes despair at the tasteless and inappropriate modifications that are often carried out and fail to maintain the integrity of the building. I haven't actually been to view any at New Bolsover yet due to the Covid restrictions but when looking at the agent's details, thought what a pretty row of lovely cottages these are. I have since watched a number of online videos on the improvements. May I congratulate you and your team on an amazing project of restoration. I'm sure the founder of the village would be thrilled to see the labour of love and preservation that have gone into it and the lovely homes that have been created.	Planning
Just watched your Vimeo, it is Brilliant, well done to all concerned,	Communications
An excellent production which I would urge all members to watch and bring to their constituents attention. Congratulations to you all.	Communications
Complimented the Officer by saying she had a very good telephone manner and had been very helpful.	Revenues & Benefits
Resident has called to say thanks for sending the street cleaner as requested	Streetscene Services
Thanks to all involved with getting the roof sorted next door	Housing Repairs

Repairs Operative who came to do some plastering did a very good job really pleased. Thank you for all the hard work.	Housing Repairs
I am very happy with this outcome. Thank you for your dealing with this very fairly, and please pass on my thanks too to the Leisure Operations Manager. I do hope that we will feel comfortable to resume our membership some time in 2021.	Corporate Governance Leisure
Almost a year on from this last email exchange and I'm delighted to tell you that we moved in a couple of weeks ago and the project should be 100% complete by tomorrow . I will email you a couple of pics and I thank you once again for working with me to get this through planning because without you, this wouldn't have happened.	Planning
Big thank you to workmen who did bricks work and cover the hole near the waste pipe.	Housing Repairs
Following her complaint about the designated bin point on a new build - Hopefully the issue will now be resolved. Thank you!	Streetscene Services
Customer was very appreciative of Benefits Officer and how quickly he got her claim sorted and asked to pass on her thanks to him as she was really worried about her benefits being suspended	Revenues & Benefits
Customer was very appreciative of Customer Advisor regarding advice she had been given for her mother on council tax, housing benefit and careline	Customer Services
Customer was very appreciative of the bathroom repairs work that had been undertaken	Housing Repairs
Customer would like to compliment Housing Needs Officer on his professionalism and empathy towards her situation when she was about to become homeless. He was understanding and helped her when she needed it.	Housing
Thank you for the fast response from Customer Advisor, could you also please pass on my thanks to the Refuse Dept for arranging a collection so quickly and a last thank you to the operative who came to do the collection and made himself known to me so that I knew the bin had been emptied	Streetscene Services Customer Services
Customer is happy of the speed that her hessian bag was delivered and wanted to thank you for this	Streetscene Services
Regarding Benefits Officer, who has been very supportive and she has been guiding him through the benefit process for his son.	Revenues & Benefits
Thank you for being helpful on the phone and understanding means a lot if you need anything else from me please get in touch. Stay safe and well	Revenues & Benefits
Regarding the councils quick response and repair to her heating system. Tenant would like to say how wonderful the workman was, he could not do enough for her and made sure she was ok before he left and if there were any more problems to let him know. She could not praise him enough	Housing Repairs
Thank you for your response I appreciate it	Revenues & Benefits
Resident said the bin men came back round and emptied her bin after missed presenting it, she wanted to say thank you to all the relevant people.	Streetscene Services
I live in Creswell Model Village and was thinking how good a job the man who keeps our village clean and tidy.He's out at all times and in all weather's always happy to have a chat. 2020 has been a very bad year so I thought it would be good to finish it off on a positive note. Hope he gets some sort of recognition for his hard work.	Streetscene Services

<p>Pinxton Parish Council would like to thank Bolsover District Council for the support given with the Grants (especially the Lets Get Going Grant) to help and support the community throughout this awful and continuing pandemic.</p> <p>It has enabled the Parish Council to help groups/organisations in the Village who have wonderfully supported our community - older or younger - keeping their spirits up, spreading happiness throughout this festive time. It has been really nice to hear so many wonderful comments from Parishioners who have been touched by the work of the groups and it is all been made possible with the grants from Bolsover District Council.</p> <p>Once again.... A very big THANK YOU.</p>	<p>Leader's Executive Team</p>
<p>Very complimentary of the Revenues Department in relation to the grants for closed businesses.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits</p>
<p>Claimant did not know what the SEISS payments were. The Officer explained about the scheme and how to claim and she was very thankful. She was advised that if she wanted to claim for the third instalment that she only had until 31.01.21. She thanked her again and said she would get on with it today.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits</p>
<p>I would like to thank you for your support through these times, it has been a lifeline for us and were so grateful this is in place, hopefully it will see us through and we will be here at the end of this terrible time to continue doing what we do best</p>	<p>Economic Development Leader's Executive Team</p>
<p>Your email has arrived at the end of another difficult and challenging day, and it has raised my first smile! Thank you for arranging a second grant payment and for being so proactive in supporting local businesses.</p> <p>We will certainly apply for the one-off open grant, and I will email the relevant information first thing tomorrow.</p> <p>Again, our sincere thanks for your continued financial support and the relative ease in which we have been able to obtain it. Oh, that all current matters were so straight forward</p>	<p>Economic Development</p>
<p>Would like to say what a great job the litter picker is doing in Bolsover area.</p>	<p>Streetscene Services</p>
<p>Please pass on my appreciation to all those involved. Many thanks to everyone concerning the bin collections around the Christmas period. I understand the bin crews have worked extra hours/ weekends etc.</p>	<p>Streetscene Services</p>
<p>Just a quick email to say many thanks for your help, advice and guidance. We can now look forward and not worry about losing our gym.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits</p>
<p>We deal with 22 local councils ref Government Support Grants. @BolsoverDC are the best, fastest and organised.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits</p>
<p>Thank you very much. You have been very helpful. Quick, efficient and helpful</p>	<p>Customer Services</p>
<p>With regard to a benefit query, thank you once again taking your time to help and reply.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits</p>
<p>In relation to a Test & Trace Support Payment - Thanks for your advice. Once again thanks for your help.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits</p>
<p>Wanted to pass on that she is really pleased with our service regarding grants she is aware how hard we are working and really appreciates it says everyone she speaks to is patient and understanding. She says we are very much appreciated.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits</p>
<p>I rang on Friday for advice as my dad died on Boxing Day and we are trying to sort out support for mum who is in her 80s and now alone. We are all trying to do this in the lockdown which has been very hard.</p> <p>But your benefits officers were so kind and offered helpful advice to do this.</p>	<p>Revenues & Benefits</p>

I would like to express my gratitude to our wonderful black and burgundy bin men who have worked tirelessly throughout lockdown. It is really appreciated please pass on my thanks	Streetscene Services
This is a message for the Customer Advisor who replied to my enquiry today, thank you so much for getting to the bottom of this for me, it has taken a few emails but now you have sorted it all out.	Customer Services
Well a quick call to a Benefits Officer who is working from home and she put my mind at rest in a friendly, professional manner. Please pass on my compliment to Jackie and her line manager, if you know her.	Revenues & Benefits
Thanks so much for all your help!	Revenues & Benefits
I recently reported dog fouling on the public pavement on Fox Road, Whitwell. I am absolutely thrilled that someone has been and cleared it all up – I have to assume that it was one of your employees. Please pass on my thanks to the relevant department.	Streetscene Services
Resident's daughter called and would like say a big thank you to our binmen, she is very happy with the assisted service. She says they are marvellous.	Streetscene Services
Resident would like to thank Domestic Violence Officer / IDVA for all her efforts and everything that she has done	Community Safety
Resident called to pass thanks to Customer Advisor for his assistance with organising an assisted collection for his bins, he also thanks the Refuse department who have facilitated this. He said if he had a computer he would have written in to BDC to pass on his thanks himself and wants to ensure Dan's efforts are recognised.	Customer Services Streetscene Services
Resident would like to say how polite and helpful Customer Advisor was whilst dealing with her enquiry about bins.	Customer Services
Please can you pass on my thanks to the Careline service who came out to help Mum, on Sunday 14th Feb. She was caring, patient, considerate. Excellent at manoeuvring Mum back on her feet. The Careline service is brilliant. Thank you.	Housing
Resident would like to say 'Thank you' to the person who attended today to fix the problem with the leaking downpipe.	Property Services
How helpful and professional Customer Advisor was dealing with her call. She really listened to the customer and she knew exactly what to do and it was an extremely pleasant interaction. It was so nice to speak to her and felt really listened too, especially during these unpleasant times with COVID.	Customer Services
Aww lovely thank you, lots and lots of bills going out and the grants are keeping me afloat, big thanks for all the help. Would not have not survived the pandemic closures without it so thank you	Revenues & Benefits
Resident of Mill Crescent Whitwell say's a great job done	Housing Repairs
I would like to wholeheartedly thank the NG20 Multicultural Advisor for professional, caring care, kind attitude, sincere empathy, warmth, understanding, nice smile, individual approach to each applicant. I am asking for appreciation and distinction.	Leader's Executive Team
Tenant rang to praise the Gas engineer who has been this morning. She says that he has done a fine job and he is a very lovely gentleman with good manner.	Housing Repairs
Customer wanted me to pass on that she was very pleased with the service she always receives when she rings us. She said all the members of staff that she has spoken to, are really nice and are trained really well.	Customer Services

I just wanted to send some feedback as he did an incredible job. He initially swept early in the morning. And later returned to do a more thorough job which he had to do by hand. And the whole street looks a lot better. Please pass on our thanks if possible.	Streetscene Services
Please pass on our thanks to Grounds Maintenance, who I saw clearing up the fly tipping on Sawpit Lane this morning. These guys are down here almost weekly and work tirelessly to keep this stretch clean.	Streetscene Services
Would like to say thank you to all who have been looking after the distribution of the grants. He said he thinks we have been very helpful and without the payments he would not have survived the lockdowns.	Revenues & Benefits
Wishes to thank the support officers who have taken good care of his 90 year old Mum on the occasions that she has fallen. He thinks it's a marvellous service we offer.	Housing
Resident wants to say what a good service we have offered over the last few years for the European Community.	Customer Services
Just wanted to say a massive THANK YOU for all your hard work and dedication during the Covid pandemic crisis. You have worked so hard to protect the most vulnerable people. WELL DONE.	Community Safety
Resident would like to say a big thank you to the Contact Centre service for the service she has received regarding problems with bin collections. She is very happy the way her query was dealt with	Customer Services
Craggs Road has been swept by the road sweeper, thank you	Streetscene Services
Would like to thank the refuse crew and the customer advisor - missed bin emptied	Streetscene Services Customer Services
Customer's neighbour has called on her behalf due to the tenant being very disabled and struggles on telephone. She would like to say thank you to the drains team and the Contact Centre service for getting this resolved swiftly. Julie was very kind and considerate.	Property Services Customer Services
Customer would like to thank the workman who visited her property recently. She said he was extremely pleasant and did a very good job	Housing Repairs
Would like to thank the department for removing the fly tipping so quickly. The customer said they reported it on the Wednesday and it was gone by the weekend. Thank you very much, much appreciated.	Streetscene Services
Would like to thank the bin crew for being lovely and kind this morning when the collection coincided with his mums funeral. They were very respectful & kind	Streetscene Services
She said thank you for going through it all with her and for taking the time to explain everything to her. She said she really appreciates what we do.	Revenues & Benefits
Thank you for this. It was wonderful to see the team at work this week and the (church) grounds are already looking so much better. The trees really were in need of attention. Thank you once again,	Streetscene Services
Customer rang wishing to thank a Customer Advisor for her help on Monday 22.3.21 regarding food bank. Customer said within 10 minutes of speaking to her the food bank rang her.	Customer Services

A- Comments 1/10/20 – 31/3/21		Number
	Customer Services	4
	Communications	4
	Legal, Governance & Elections	9
	Revenues & Benefits	3
	Housing (Allocations)	1
	Streetscene Services	11
	Environmental Health	3
	ICT	1
Total		38

C - Number of Frontline Resolution (Stage 1) complaints via Contact Centre 1/10/20 – 31/3/21		Number	Out of timescale (3 working days)
	Customer Services	5	
	Property Services	2	
	Housing (Allocations)	8	
	Streetscene Services	110	6
	Environmental Health	5	
	Revenues & Benefits	1	
	Leisure	1	1
	Housing Repairs	3	1
Total		135	8 (4%)

D – Number of Formal Investigation (Stage 2) complaints 1/10/20 – 31/3/21		Number	Out of timescale
	Leisure	2	2
	Customer Services	6	
	Revenues & Benefits	18	
	Business Growth	4	
	Housing (Repairs)	14	
	Property Services	2	
	Planning	10	
	Housing (Allocations)	28	1
	Streetscene Services	30	
	Environmental Health	17	
	Community Safety	8	
Total		139	3 (2%)

E – Number of Internal Review (S3) complaints 1/10/20 – 31/3/21		Number	Out of timescale
	Legal, Governance & Elections	3	
	Revenues & Benefits	4	
	Housing (Repairs)	1	
	Performance	3	
	Planning	4	

	Streetscene Services	2	
	Environmental Health	2	1
	Housing (Allocations)	2	
	Finance	2	
	Leisure	3	
Total		26	1 (4%)

Appendix 3

F - Ombudsman's Summary		Departments Involved	Date Decision Letter Received	Ombudsman Decision
10/09/20	LGSCO planning complaint	Planning	02/10/2020	Ombudsman cannot investigate this complaint. This is because the complainant has already appealed to the Planning Inspector.
11/12/20	LGSCO Initial enquiries pollution from nearby farm	Environmental Health Performance	13/01/21	Invalid
20 02/02/21 29/3/21	HO Noise complaint not investigated correctly Initial enquiries Formal Investigation	Corporate Resources	02/08/21	No maladministration
03/03/21	HO repairs not completed	Housing Repairs	Awaiting decision	

LGSCO* Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
HO* Housing Ombudsman

Bolsover District Council

Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

13th September 2021

**Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman
2020/21**

Report of the Head of Corporate Governance

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Head of Corporate Governance

Contact Officer: Customer Standards and Complaints Officer

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

- To provide information contained within the Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) 2020/21.
-

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Customer Service Scrutiny Committee receive the report and the Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman 2020/21.

Approved by the Portfolio Holder – Councillor D McGregor

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

Whilst there are no direct financial implications with regard to the report, the Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well. In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

The Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman and, in the case of complaints about Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information requests, the Information Commissioner’s Office can issue decision notices and impose significant fines. There are no Data Protection implications.

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

Not applicable as the report is to keep Elected Members informed.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Decision Information	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
District Wards Significantly Affected	All
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Cabinet / Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SAMT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes Details:

Links to Council Ambition (BDC)/Council Plan (NED) priorities or Policy Framework including Climate Change, Equalities, and Economics and Health implications.
Increasing customer satisfaction with our services Improving customer contact and removing barriers to accessing information Actively engaging with partners to benefit our customers Promoting equality and diversity and supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people

REPORT DETAILS

1 Background (reasons for bringing the report)

The document contains an annual summary of statistics on the complaints made about the Authority for the financial year ending 31st March 2021. Please note that the data provided by the LGSCO may not align with the data this Council holds. This is because their numbers include enquiries from people who have been signposted by the LGSCO back to the Council, but who may then choose not to pursue their complaint.

The Annual Letter 2021 has been appended (Appendix 1) and supporting information Excel workbook (Appendix 2) including 'Complaints Received', 'Complaints Decided', and Compliance for your information.

Key points from the information provided, specifically in relation to Bolsover District Council:

- The LGSCO received 6 enquiries and complaints during 2020/21, one of which was subject to a detailed investigation.
- The LGSCO decided 7 complaints, of which 2 were incomplete or invalid, 2 was closed after initial enquiries and in 2 cases advice was given only. The remaining one was decided as 'Maladministration and injustice'.

Benchmarking information – (CIPFA) Nearest Neighbour

When looking at close neighbouring authorities, the following is noted:

	Detailed investigations	Upheld complaints (average for similar authorities - 53%)	Compliance rate	Satisfactory remedy before complaint reached the Ombudsman
Ashfield District Council	3	0 (0%)	No recommendations were due for compliance in this period	0
Bassetlaw District Council	1	1 (100%)	100%	0
Bolsover District Council	1	1 (100%)	No recommendations were due for compliance in this period	0
Chesterfield District Council	4	4 (100%)	100%	1
Erewash District Council	The Ombudsman carried out no detailed investigations	The Ombudsman carried out no detailed investigations during this period	No recommendations were due for compliance in this period	The Ombudsman did not uphold any detailed investigations during this period

	Detailed investigations	Upheld complaints (average for similar authorities - 53%)	Compliance rate	Satisfactory remedy before complaint reached the Ombudsman
	during this period			
Mansfield District Council	The Ombudsman carried out no detailed investigations during this period	The Ombudsman carried out no detailed investigations during this period	No recommendations were due for compliance in this period	The Ombudsman did not uphold any detailed investigations during this period
NE Derbyshire District Council	2	1 (50%)	100%	0

One complaint was upheld against this Council (100%). Whilst 100% may appear to be high, it needs to be borne in mind that this was the only detailed investigation in this period). This complaint was regarding the New Bolsover regeneration project and, following the decision, a report was submitted to the Executive on 21st June 2021 as required.

By way of background information, the LGSCO upheld 67% of complaints submitted to them in 2020/21 (up from 61% in 2019/20) with the average being 53% for similar authorities.

Although this report is regarding complaints directed to the LGSCO, the Council received three complaints via the Housing Ombudsman (HO) for the same period, one of which was decided during that period. In that case the decision was that there was 'no maladministration'.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 None – to keep Elected Members informed.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 To note the overall performance and receive the report and the Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman 2020/21.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 None.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1:	Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman 2020/21
2:	Excel workbook: Complaints Received Complaints Decided Compliance
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
None	

Reference	Authority
No compliance data recorded during the period	

Category	Decided

Remedy

--

Remedy Target Date	Remedy Achieved Date

Satisfaction with Compliance



21 July 2021

By email

Mr Hickin
Director of Corporate Resources
Bolsover District Council

Dear Mr Hickin

Annual Review letter 2021

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the decisions made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2021. At the end of a challenging year, we maintain that good public administration is more important than ever and I hope this feedback provides you with both the opportunity to reflect on your Council's performance and plan for the future.

You will be aware that, at the end of March 2020 we took the unprecedented step of temporarily stopping our casework, in the wider public interest, to allow authorities to concentrate efforts on vital frontline services during the first wave of the Covid-19 outbreak. We restarted casework in late June 2020, after a three month pause.

We listened to your feedback and decided it was unnecessary to pause our casework again during further waves of the pandemic. Instead, we have encouraged authorities to talk to us on an individual basis about difficulties responding to any stage of an investigation, including implementing our recommendations. We continue this approach and urge you to maintain clear communication with us.

Complaint statistics

This year, we continue to focus on the outcomes of complaints and what can be learned from them. We want to provide you with the most insightful information we can and have focused statistics on three key areas:

Complaints upheld - We uphold complaints when we find some form of fault in an authority's actions, including where the authority accepted fault before we investigated.

Compliance with recommendations - We recommend ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority - In these cases, the authority upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit authorities that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your authority with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), along with a copy of this letter on 28 July 2021. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the decisions we have made about your Council, public reports we have issued, and the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

I would encourage you to share the resource with colleagues and elected members; the information can provide valuable insights into service areas, early warning signs of problems and is a key source of information for governance, audit, risk and scrutiny functions.

As you would expect, data has been impacted by the pause to casework in the first quarter of the year. This should be considered when making comparisons with previous year's data.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

I am increasingly concerned about the evidence I see of the erosion of effective complaint functions in local authorities. While no doubt the result of considerable and prolonged budget and demand pressures, the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have amplified the problems and my concerns. With much greater frequency, we find poor local complaint handling practices when investigating substantive service issues and see evidence of reductions in the overall capacity, status and visibility of local redress systems.

With this context in mind, we are developing a new programme of work that will utilise complaints to drive improvements in both local complaint systems and services. We want to use the rich evidence of our casework to better identify authorities that need support to improve their complaint handling and target specific support to them. We are at the start of this ambitious work and there will be opportunities for local authorities to shape it over the coming months and years.

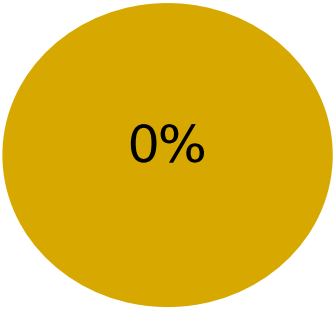
An already established tool we have for supporting improvements in local complaint handling is our successful training programme. During the year, we successfully adapted our face-to-face courses for online delivery. We provided 79 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,100 people. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training.

We were pleased to deliver two online complaint handling courses to your staff during the year. I welcome your Council's investment in good complaint handling training and trust the courses were useful to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M King', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael King
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaints upheld		
	<p>100% of complaints we investigated were upheld.</p> <p>This compares to an average of 53% in similar authorities.</p>	<p>1 upheld decision</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 1 detailed investigation for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>
Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations		
<p>No recommendations were due for compliance in this period</p>		
Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority		
	<p>In 0% of upheld cases we found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.</p> <p>This compares to an average of 16% in similar authorities.</p>	<p>0 satisfactory remedy decisions</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 1 detailed investigation for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>

NOTE: To allow authorities to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, we did not accept new complaints and stopped investigating existing cases between March and June 2020. This reduced the number of complaints we received and decided in the 20-21 year. Please consider this when comparing data from previous years.

Bolsover District Council

Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

13th September 2021

North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021-23

Report of the Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Victoria Dawson – Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement

Contact Officer: Victoria Dawson – Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

To advise the Customer Services Committee of the production of a revised draft North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021 – 2023. Committee comments will be noted prior to formal Executive approval of the Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members review the attached North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021 – 2023 in advance of formal Executive approval and implementation

Approved by the Portfolio Holder – Councillor Sandra Peake

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

The preparation of the North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy will have no direct financial implications for the Council. Most of the outcomes achieved together with the future commitments have been achieved in partnership with a range of stakeholders each adding considerable value in terms of, existing staff resources, knowledge and experiences. The recent strengthening of these partnerships has resulted in effective decision making and enabled services to become established. The North Derbyshire area, along with the rest of the County, has benefitted from accessing external funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative totalling, to date, approximately £500,000. Additional funding applications, recently submitted by the

Council will, if successful bring a further investment into rough sleeping services across Derbyshire.

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

The North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy complies with the Council’s legal requirement to have a published strategy detailing its activities to resolve rough sleeping. The strategy is consistent with the aims and objectives of the National Rough Sleeper Strategy. The strategy will also enable the Council to deliver its statutory functions under Homelessness legislation

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

The Strategy will assist in alleviating the pressures facing the Council’s Housing Needs team, by addressing this complex customer group and meeting their needs through cross sector partnership work. It should be noted there has been a significant increase in the requests for homeless assistance since the Eviction Ban ended on 31st May 2021 and approval has been given for a temporary Homeless Triage officer to assist with this.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Decision Information	
<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	Yes
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	Yes/No

District Wards Significantly Affected	District wide Strategy
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Cabinet / Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SAMT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes Details: Ward Members

Links to Council Ambition priorities or Policy Framework including Climate Change, Equalities, and Economics and Health implications.
Customers - Promoting equality and diversity and supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people Environment – Actively engaging with partners to benefit our communities

REPORT DETAILS

1 **Background** *(reasons for bringing the report)*

1.1 In 2016, Bolsover District Council, jointly with Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District published a North Derbyshire Homeless Strategy. This was updated in 2019 to become a North Derbyshire Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy. This document is due to expire in September 2021.

1.2 Due to the ever increasing importance of tackling rough sleeping it was agreed that the Councils would develop a standalone Rough Sleeping Strategy with the intention being to merge both strategies into one comprehensive Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy following the a review in 2021. This work has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting impacts upon services.

1.3 Since then all Derbyshire Authorities have agreed to have a county wide Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy with each Council having its own local plan sitting underneath this with an action plan detailing specific commitments in our area. This County wide strategy will supersede the requirement to have an individual strategy for each local authority. Estimated implementation of the County wide strategy is April 2022.

1.4 Alongside the national lockdown, MHCLG launched the “Everyone In” initiative requiring local authorities to accommodate all rough sleepers. This recognised that rough sleepers were considerably high risk of contracting and spreading the virus should they remain sleeping rough.

1.5 This accelerated partnership working across the County to enable the delivery of a multitude of services to protect rough sleepers from harm; and enabled the delivery of many of the commitments and outcomes contained in the Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-21.

1.6 Key services include:

- **Commissioning of largescale emergency accommodation** – to enable instant access to accommodation.
- **Derbyshire Outreach Team (DOT)** – street outreach team to make initial contact with rough sleepers.
- **Supported Lettings Workers** – Support Officers to assist rough sleepers into accommodation.
- **Keeping Everyone In Service (KEIS)** – Link workers to support to maintain accommodation and engage with wider support services.
- **Probation Link Worker** – based within Probation to link Offender Management and Housing services together
- **Housing First** – 14 Units of specialist accommodation for people with high level and multiple complex needs.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 It is a legal requirement to have a Rough Sleeper Strategy agreed and published.

2.2 The Rough Sleeper Strategy is a refreshed document that outlines why it is essential to provide a package of measures to enable vulnerable members of our community, without accommodation and suffering a range of multiple complex needs, to access services and to live safely and independently. The measures will have a positive effect on communities within the district and takes account of what we have done in partnership during the pandemic.

2.3 The proposed updated Strategy continues to be rooted in a partnership approach between the Council, other statutory services, the third sector and homeless people.

2.4 The Strategy continues to be based on the three 'pillars' of prevention, intervention and recovery that are identified in the National Rough Sleeper Strategy. These are:

- **Prevention** - To prevent new people from starting to sleep rough.
- **Intervention** - To intervene rapidly when people start to sleep rough to help them off the street.
- **Recovery** - To promote a person's recovery once they are off the street to build positive lives and not to return to rough sleeping.

2.5 Many of the commitments from the existing strategy remain in place as they are continuous commitments. However, new, and ambitious commitments have been added at **Appendix 1**.

2.6 These commitments will maximum outcomes and will act as a cornerstone for the delivery of additional activity.

2.7 A copy of the proposed strategy is attached as **Appendix 2**.

3 **Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 It is a legal requirement to have a published Rough Sleeper Strategy in place. This is an updated document following the success of the 2020-21 North Derbyshire Strategy and it will ensure that the Council continues to deliver prevention, intervention, and recovery to ensure people at risk of, or experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping can access effective services and support.

4 **Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

4.1 Not to approve the recommendation to implement the proposed strategy. It should be noted that the Council would be in breach of its legal requirement to have a published Rough Sleeper Strategy in place.

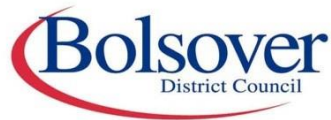
4.2 Not to approve the implementation of the proposed strategy would have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of considerably vulnerable individuals. The strategy provides a co-ordinated framework for the delivery of essential services to protect the wellbeing of rough sleepers

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1	Table of commitments 2021-23
2	North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021-23
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	

Appendix 2 – North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021-22	
Commitments (New Highlighted in Red)	
Prevention:	
1.	Improve data intelligence base/profile of people sleeping rough in North Derbyshire.
2.	Conduct ethnographic research into local views and needs of rough sleepers.
3.	Explore early interventions such as education in schools
4.	Develop links with Universities to conduct local research into sector and consider work placements with front line services. Research into Hidden Homelessness.
5.	Provide a programme of training to ensure all public bodies understand the ‘duty to refer’ in respect of rough sleeping.
6.	Request that the Clinical Commissioning Group and Health & Wellbeing Boards make the health needs of rough sleepers a strategic priority.
7.	Strategic co-ordination of funding applications to include Rough Sleeper Initiative, Cold Weather Fund and any other available funding under national Rough Sleeper Strategy
8.	Better understanding of how to help people with no recourse to public funds coming out of hospital/prisons.
9.	Develop a range of Move on options including PRS accommodation.
10.	Strategic co-ordination and increase in provision of appropriate supported accommodation options.
11.	Develop provision of 24/7 supported accommodation including a Specialist Residential Care unit
12.	Look at positive ways of engaging and communicating with the general public about helping rough sleepers
13.	Develop an Alternative Giving Scheme
14.	Build in-reach services with hospitals/prisons to ensure no one is discharged to the street.
15.	Build stronger links with Probation and Offender Management services
16.	Review and update hospital discharge policies.
17.	Ensure provision of services for priority groups including Veterans, LGBT+, BAME, same sex couples and families, DV, MH and physical disabilities, care leavers, ex-offenders, Gypsy and Travellers

18.	Build working relationships with the DWP including 'Homeless Champions' in every Job Centre Plus
19.	Develop routes in employment/support.
20.	Develop access to debt and benefits advice
21.	Ensure we offer the right services to people who have been victims of trafficking or modern slavery
22.	Develop a range of accommodation and support that meet the varying needs of Rough Sleepers with Multiple Complex Needs
23.	Review and commission an Out of hours service that is fit for purpose
Intervention:	
24.	Increase and expand the provision of local outreach work to include quick intervention to prevent people from becoming entrenched
25.	Develop a 'Street Medicine' model including community prescription
26.	Improve access to emergency accommodation including crash pads
27.	Future commitment to the provision of a winter nightshelter, or suitable alternative, including integration of health services into the services offered.
28.	Explore provision of storage facilities for rough sleeper's possessions.
Recovery:	
29.	Work with partners to build a programme of recovery options to help people stay off the street
30.	Recruit or commission a Rough Sleeper Navigator Service
31.	Work with partners to develop a needle exchange
32.	Establish a mobile hub of professional support
33.	Explore provision of specialist mental health support from within housing options services.
34.	Develop provision of intense support for individuals with high level and multiple needs
35.	Implement a panel cross sector panel of experts for individuals with high level and multiple needs.
36.	Consider the need for day centres or local hubs
37.	Engage with Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
38.	Engage with local Place Alliance Groups/Boards



North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021- 2023

Introduction.

Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council (the Councils) already have a joint North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy. This is due to be reviewed and updated in 2021/22.

Due to the ever increasing importance of tackling rough sleeping it was agreed that the Councils would develop a standalone Rough Sleeping Strategy with the intention being to merge both strategies into one comprehensive Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy following the review in 2021. This work has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting impacts upon services.

A county wide Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategy is currently being scoped for implementation in 2022 which will supersede the requirement to have an individual strategy for each local authority. Each council will have its own local action plan detailing specific commitments for their areas that sits under the umbrella of a wider county strategy

Rough sleeping is the most visible and acute form of homelessness. The life expectancy of long-term rough sleeper is 47 compared to 77 for the general population. Two people who were known to have slept rough in North Derbyshire have passed away in the last 12 months with their deaths, whilst not all on the street, being linked to them rough sleeping.

Definition of Rough Sleeping

The government defines rough sleeping as being a person who is 'bedded down' (sleeping/trying to sleep) or 'about to bed down' in the open air or another place not designed for habitation. This will include being on the street, in a doorway, park, car, derelict building, bus/train station, tent or car. A person's housing status is not relevant; the key criteria is that they have been found 'bedded

down’/’about to bed down’ in a place that someone ordinarily wouldn’t try to sleep in.

The government expects each local authority to carry out a formal count/make a robust estimate of rough sleeping numbers in the authority area every November. A count should be carried out between 2a.m. and 5a.m. (when people are likely to be bedded down) and try to cover every place that rough sleepers are likely to be found.

Number of Rough Sleepers in North Derbyshire

The number of people sleeping rough in North Derbyshire has risen substantially in recent years based upon the November headcounts:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
BDC	2	1	2	4	2	4	7	5	2	3	4
CBC	6	4	3	9	8	0	10	12	18	13	9
NED DC	0	1	5	0	2	3	2	3	3	0	0
Total	8	6	10	13	12	7	19	20	23	16	13

There had been a 65% increase in rough sleeper numbers in the period 2010 to 2017. The number reported represents the number of people found sleeping rough on a single night; rather than the number of people who will sleep rough at some point over a three or six month time period. It’s believed that there are three to four times more people who might sleep rough over a three or six month period than who are found sleeping rough on a single night.

Data collected from the Winter Nightshelter in Chesterfield recorded 117 different people using the shelter across a 4 month period between 1st December 2018 and 31st March 2019.

For the same period between 1st December 2019 and 31st March 2020 there were 128 rough sleepers that accessed the winter

Nightshelter provision.

During the winter months of the pandemic in 2020 into 2021 the safe delivery of a Nightshelter was not possible. An alternative service was developed in partnership with most councils in Derbyshire consisting of 35 units of self-contained accommodation. This provided safe accommodation for 91 rough sleepers. 49 of these were from the North Derbyshire area (30 CBC, 13 NEDDC, 6 BDC).

In total throughout the pandemic there were 219 rough sleepers accommodated in the North Derbyshire area.

Chesterfield has historically had a higher level of rough sleeping than Bolsover and North East Derbyshire Districts.

Our belief is that unless the councils take a different approach to tackling rough sleeping that the numbers of people sleeping rough, and the adverse effects of doing so on them, will continue to rise.

A key priority will be to improve our intelligence on the profile of people who are sleeping rough over a period of time including numbers, frequency of rough sleeping, gender, ethnicity, nationality, support needs and contact with other services including the criminal justice system and health.

Core Existing Services

There are a whole host of services working with rough sleepers in the North Derbyshire area and the following is not designed to be exhaustive but to give readers an idea of the current available services in the sub-regional area:

Street Outreach Service: The service is managed by Pathways of Chesterfield, a specialist homelessness support charity. This service is commissioned by the three Councils but also forms part of the County wide Outreach service commissioned as part of a wider Staffordshire Moorlands and Derbyshire Partnership. Pathways provides an outreach service to find rough sleepers and to help them come off the street thereafter. The service attempts to engage with rough sleepers and support them into engaging with other statutory and non-statutory services as appropriate.

The North Derbyshire Single Persons Homeless Pathway: The pathway comprises of a **Homelessness HUB**, a single point of contact where all referrals for single homeless people are sent from key agencies such as Probation, Hospitals & Prisons. The service is commissioned by the Councils and provided by Pathways of Chesterfield who, upon receipt of a referral, tailor a bespoke package of support and interventions for clients in partnership with the council's homelessness prevention teams. Clients benefit from the in-house health and support workers there are a number of activities people can access as well as training and education opportunities. In cases where there are more serious blockages to housing a **Rough Sleeper Action Group (RSAG)** can be called to develop a person centered action plan around the individual aimed at securing accommodation.

Derby City Mission Winter Nightshelter: Provides an emergency accommodation service for rough sleepers in the area. The Nightshelter operates on a rolling bases utilizing 7 different Church buildings that have volunteered one night per week. This provides a bed for up to 15 guests and includes a hot evening meal and breakfast in the morning. This service operates between 1st December and 31st March. This was not possible in 2020/21 but remains part of our ongoing commitment for winter accommodation provision in the future.

Newbold Court: This is supported accommodation for medium to high level vulnerable adults including rough sleepers and single homeless people. It is a 17 bed unit managed by **Action** and is commissioned by the Council. The increased capacity of Newbold Court provides much needed accommodation supply in the area and other services including **Action's Sustainable Tenancies Project** will serve as move on option for clients needing reduced support towards independent living.

Platform for Life: Provides 8 units of supported accommodation for young people aged 18 to 25. This is provided by **Action**.

Sustainable Tenancies Project: Provided by **Action** and provides floating support to vulnerable adults who have a history of failed tenancies for a variety of reasons. The project involves the Council leasing properties to **Action** who offer tenancies with support to enable people to become "tenancy ready". The property with tenant

in situ is handed back to the council as a secure tenant. The STP project has also been rolled out in North East Derbyshire where properties have been procured from the private rented sector. There are currently

County Wide Rough Sleeper Outreach: A team of 6 rough sleeper outreach workers covering the Derbyshire County area. Funding was secured from MHCLG through the Rough Sleeping Initiative to establish the service which targets hot spot areas to reduce rough sleeping. P3 provide this much needed service in partnership with Pathways in the Chesterfield area. P3 are experts in the field. The outreach team provides a high level of intervention and engagement to the rough sleeping population that will lead to more people being taken off the street.

Supported Lettings Service: This service is managed by P3 Housing in conjunction with the outreach service and aims to provide tailored support to rough sleepers to assist them to access and maintain accommodation.

Rough Sleeper Co-ordinators: Consists of a team of 2 specialist strategic co-ordinators covering Derbyshire County as a whole. They are funded via the Rapid Rehousing Pathway Fund and aim to carry out a review and gap analysis of service across the County. One of the co-ordinators is based within the Homeless Prevention team at Chesterfield Borough Council.

Call B4 You Serve: A unique and innovative service designed with landlords in mind to prevent homelessness and increase housing supply in the private rented sector. Delivered by DASH Services, Call B4 You Serve provides a support, problem solving and advice service for landlords who are considering giving notice to their tenants. The philosophy of the service is to solve issues including debt and rent arrears without a notice being served. The service currently spans 20 local authority areas and is set to expand even further. The service also acts as an informal PRS lettings service and procurement vehicle. Strong links and partnerships have been forged with landlords and letting agencies across Derbyshire and this has increased the supply of accommodation for people that need it. For those who are considering giving up being a landlord or looking to sell properties the service can connect landlords with supported housing providers who will lease properties to rent as supported accommodation. This in turn increases housing supply in the homeless sector. Significantly, this service has a role in

preventing rough sleeping. The project has established a strong partnership with the Chesterfield Job Centre Plus team. Here, work coaches who identify clients at risk of homelessness from private rented accommodation contact CB4YS for intervention. Likewise, landlords who make contact with the Job Centre with Universal Credit housing element queries are directed to CB4YS.

Derbyshire Law Centre PRS Prevention Service: Funded via a successful bid to the PRS Access Fund the service compliments Call B4 You Serve by offering support for tenants renting privately who are experiencing difficulties with the tenancy. A team of three prevention workers based across Derbyshire & Chesterfield providing support and practical solutions to reduce homelessness from the private rented sector.

Housing First (Chesterfield Only): 14 Units of specialist accommodation provided by South Yorkshire Housing Association and delivered under the Housing First principles.

National Rough Sleeping Strategy

The government published its national rough sleeper strategy in August 2018. The Councils decided to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy as a supplemental document alongside the existing joint Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021. This was in response to the national strategy being published and to ensure that this strategy reflected and responded to the national approach. The national strategy includes the targets to halve rough sleeper numbers (from the 2017 baseline) by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027. The national strategy is rooted in three 'pillars':

- To **prevent** new people from starting to sleep rough
- To **intervene** rapidly when people start to sleep rough to help them off the street
- To promote a person's **recovery** once they are off the street to build positive lives and don't return to rough sleeping

This North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy will therefore be based upon the same **three 'pillars' of prevention, intervention and recovery**.

The national strategy emphasises the importance of local

authorities forging strong partnerships with other public services, the third sector, the business sector, community groups, the general public, people with lived experience of rough sleeping and current rough sleepers to tackle rough sleeping. Strong partnerships will be the basis of everything we do in North Derbyshire.

The national strategy highlights the importance of the role of health services in tackling rough sleeping because of the high proportion of rough sleepers who suffer from mental ill-health, physical ill-health and addiction issues, the challenges rough sleepers face in accessing mainstream health services and the adverse health outcomes of sleeping rough including reduced life expectancy. This strategy will set out our plans to promote the importance of health interventions in tackling rough sleeping and demonstrate the importance of developing recovery pathways rather than solely housing pathways.

The Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has placed considerable pressures upon all services since its implementation on March 2020. These unprecedented times have resulted in an acceleration in the activities aimed upon ending rough sleeping nationally. Partnership working became more prevalent than ever before and has achieved considerable successes and outcomes as a result.

Everyone In Initiative: Alongside the national lockdown, MHCLG launched the “Everyone In” initiative requiring local authorities to accommodate all rough sleepers. This recognised that rough sleepers were considerably high risk of contracting and spreading the virus should they remain sleeping rough. In order to achieve this objective, we commissioned a local hotel which provided 36 units of self-contained accommodation. This facility alongside our existing B&B provision and housing accessed from within our own stock profiles enabled us to achieve this object and accommodate over 219 rough sleepers during the pandemic. Chesterfield had the higher numbers of rough sleepers, accommodating over 130 rough sleepers alone.

Change to Legislation: In order to protect the safety of rough sleepers beyond the Everyone In Initiative Government approved a change to the legislation concerning Priority Need assessments

to include those at risk of Covid-19 and rough sleeping. This ensured that almost all rough sleepers were owed a duty to provide temporary accommodation.

Protect Plus Initiative: This initiative was intended to focus upon those accommodated under Everyone In with the intention upon developing tailored housing plans and recovery pathways for each rough sleeper to enable them to remain in accommodation.

Suspension on Evictions: A suspension on all evictions was implemented in March 2020 and largely remains in place until 31st May 2021 save for a few exceptions.

Keeping Everyone In Service (KEIS): As a result of the Everyone In initiative we quickly identified a number of rough sleepers who had been placed into accommodation that may not be suitable for their longer term needs. In order to address this, we developed and commissioned, on behalf of the Staffs Moorlands & Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Partnership the Keeping Everyone In Service (KEIS) delivered by P3. The service consists of 6 support workers aimed at working with rough sleepers with high level and multiple needs to ensure the risk of eviction and returning to the streets is minimised.

This service is funded through contributions from all Derbyshire housing authorities, Derbyshire County Council, Public Health and Probation.

Included within the KEIS is a specialist Probation Link worker who provides an essential link between Housing Options/Homelessness Prevention teams and the Probation Service. This is proving to be an extremely successful role enabling the better sharing of information and improved outcomes for offenders.

Although **KEIS** was developed and implemented before the announcement of **Protect Plus** it very much worked to same principles and was focused upon the same client group and activities.

Government Funding

Rough Sleeper Initiative

The government announced the Rapid Rehousing Pathway and Rough Sleeper Initiative Funds in 2018/19. Joint applications were submitted on behalf of all housing authorities in Derbyshire and we were successful in acquiring funding totaling just over £408,000.

The government combined these sources of funding in 2019/20 under the sole banner of Rough Sleeper Initiative fund. There was extreme competition for this money and that preference was given to the authorities with the highest number of rough sleepers and those who have made a commitment to deliver the most significant reduction in numbers.

The national rough sleeping strategy refers to a number of funding pots that could be available to tackle rough sleeping and we will make sure that we submit bids, as appropriate, for available funds.

Chesterfield Borough Council have led, on behalf of all Derbyshire authorities on a bid to the Rough Sleeper Initiative fund and are currently awaiting the outcome, expected in June 2021. The bid aims to progress and bolster the existing provision and implement learning gained through the existing services and support with additional resources in key areas. These include:

3 x Rough Sleeper Navigators: Specialist and intense support to engage and support rough sleepers into accommodation and to maintain access to wider support services. This includes a personal budget to assist in the removal of barriers into accommodation.

1 x Additional Rough Sleeper Outreach Worker: taking the total number for the County to 6.

1 x Prison Resettlement Worker: to effectively link with prisons and plan for the release of offenders into accommodation rather than released to rough sleeping.

The above additions to the services available for rough sleepers will further enhance the provision across the North Derbyshire area and the County as a whole.

Rough Sleeper Accommodation Project (RSAP)

This additional fund, formerly known as Next Steps Accommodation Project, is aimed at providing a range of Move on options for rough sleepers. In October 2020, North East Derbyshire District Council led on a successful funding bid resulting in £152,000 being available for this purpose.

The second round of this funding process, now called RSAP, has been released in April 2021. Chesterfield Borough Council have submitted a bid, which, if successful, will enable access to 12 units of new supported accommodation for rough sleepers in the North Derbyshire area.

If successful, the funding applications recently submitted will result in a total investment into rough sleeper services in North Derbyshire and across the rest of the County in excess of £2.5 million in the past 12 month period.

Partnerships:

This strategy covers the North Derbyshire Partnership area consisting of Chesterfield Borough and Bolsover and North East District Councils.

The authorities also form part of a range of different partnership groups and structures. This is an area that has really been enhanced and strengthened as a result of the pandemic.

Derbyshire & Staffordshire Moorlands Rough Sleeper Partnership: This is a group of authorities responsible for rough sleeping activity, submission of funding applications and the resulting commissioning of services. This partnership includes:

Amber Valley
Bolsover
Chesterfield
Derbyshire Dales
Erewash
High Peak
North East Derbyshire
South Derbyshire
Staffs. Moorlands (Due to joint management structure with High Peak)

The partnership reports the Derbyshire Homeless Officer Group.

Derbyshire Homeless Officers Group (DHOG): This group consists of strategic leads and homelessness managers for all Districts and Borough councils across the Derbyshire. It acts as the governance structure and decision-making body for the majority of Derbyshire wide activity on homelessness and rough sleeping.

They are also responsible for the strategic oversight of funding applications and resulting commissioning of services including the monitoring and performance management of those services.

This group is supported by the MHCLG Specialist Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Advisors.

Derbyshire Housing Health & Systems Group: This group consist of Housing Strategy, Public Health, Social Care lead officers, Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS and key commissioners for the Derbyshire area. The group aims to identify key strategic priorities for joint working between housing and health structures to effect whole systems change for the benefit of vulnerable client groups. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping has been identified as one of three priorities for 2021/22.

North Derbyshire Homelessness Forum: Re-established in 2017 the homeless forum now plays a pivotal role in bringing together services and organisations from across multiple sectors to network, share information, learn about new legislation and form partnerships to reduce and prevent homelessness. From 2020 we will be holding forum on a quarterly basis to serve demand. Over the last few years we have used the forum as a primary vehicle for consultation. The single persons' pathway took shape via the forum from the feedback and advice given by attendees and over the course of 2020 and 2021 it will help us to deliver the rough sleeper action plan and the next homelessness & rough sleeping strategy.

Community Groups: There are a number of community-based groups that are active in trying to help rough sleepers in the area. Some of the groups provide outreach services and others focus on trying to keep people as safe as possible on the street (provision of food/clothes/bedding/tents). Some groups pro-actively engage with the Council whilst others do not. The strategy recognises the

positive role that community groups can play and statutory services want to positively engage with all the community groups. We recognise that some rough sleepers, who have had negative experience of statutory services, might prefer to engage with the community groups more than the council. Engagement with these important services will be driven the homelessness forum and through our continued commitment to reach out to as many services as possible. One of the areas for engagement we want to take forward with community groups is the role they can play in supporting people in their tenancies and tackling community isolation/loneliness under the banner of promoting recovery.

Health and Rough Sleeping

The national strategy on rough sleeping emphasises the importance of health services in tackling rough sleeping. This principle very much applies in North Derbyshire given the number of rough sleepers who suffer from acute mental ill-health, physical ill-health and addiction issues. These support needs lead to people starting, staying and returning to rough sleeping. All of these challenges have been exacerbated by the rise in the use of substances such as psychoactive substances.

There are some key structural actions and ambitions, which are recommendations in the national strategy, to promote joint working:

- The Derbyshire Health and Housing Systems Group leading on the development of a county wide Rough Sleeping strategy to make the health needs of rough sleepers a strategic priority.
- A review of every death of a person known to sleep rough to be carried out, ideally by the Adult Safeguarding Board, to look at opportunities for improved working including between health and housing services.

We would like to bring health services directly to rough sleepers on the street: '**Street Medicine**'. Having mental health professionals and addiction support workers, attached to the Street Outreach Service/wider Street Support Service, is one of our commitments to explore and develop where possible. The aim being for mental health/addiction support workers delivering support on the street and helping people access mainstream health services thereafter.

Primary Health Care is another commitment of this strategy to explore the commissioning of specialist rough sleeper General Practitioners. Whilst we acknowledge that this is an extremely ambitious commitment, we firmly believe that this would be an essential service for rough sleepers.

'Street Medicine' and Primary Health Care should include community or street based prescribing including detox from substances such as Spice. We are looking at how this successfully works in other areas such as Worksop and Stoke. It will rely on the Street Outreach Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups working in partnership.

We need to look at how health services can promote recovery and help keep people off the street. A key service will be the Community Mental Health services that will provide people with support to come off/stay off the street and also help people access wider health services.

Specialised Residential Accommodation: This has been identified as a key priority for this Strategy and also the wider County strategy currently in development.

The activity undertaken during the pandemic has clearly highlighted a gap in provision for people with severe and multiple disadvantage (SMD) due to their multiple complex needs, this cohort cannot access more mainstream housing solutions, and this also includes Housing First projects.

Our work undertaken at the Mount Cook winter provision gave us a glimpse of what could be provided to meet the needs of people with SMD. 65% of all referrals into the project had 3 or more complex needs. Having a solutions based, holistic approach where multiple services worked together all under one roof showed us what could be achieved in only a short period of 3 months.

In order to address this, we need to explore the possibility of having a residential facility that is accessible by a range of people, addressing a range of needs and providing support at all levels including step down drugs and alcohol rehabilitation and palliative, end of life care.

This requires a different mix of partners and funding sources to

develop and commission. The location of such a venue will be key. We believe the impact of such a service would be maximized by working collaboratively with colleagues at Derby City Council as well as the Derbyshire County partnerships.

Horizon Scanning and Planning for the Future

We have seen a considerable increase in demand for services to support rough sleepers in the past 12 months due to the current pandemic and the subsequent Government initiatives and legislative changes.

Funding: We have successfully responded to this increased demand by developing new and enhancing existing services largely due to the increased availability of funding to do this.

The majority of this funding is short term meaning the risk of services and support not being available in the future.

Suspension on Evictions: This ends on 31st May 2021 which is expected to result in considerable additional demand upon a range of services including Homelessness Prevention teams,

We are aware that the Court's system is already holding a substantial backlog of existing cases but it is also expected that new cases, where rent/mortgage arrears have accrued during the pandemic, will be instigated resulting in even more pressures on the system.

Domestic Abuse: National evidence has shown that abuse has significantly increased with a large number of victims choosing to remain in the relationship during the pandemic. We anticipate, following the relaxation of the pandemic restrictions, that there will be an increase in victims of domestic abuse seeking to leave the relationship and secure independent living arrangements.

Mental Health: The number of cases of people suffering with their mental health has dramatically increased during the pandemic. This often presents as an underlying issue alongside a range of other conditions including physical conditions, substance misuse or a history of offending.

These people presenting with complex multiple needs or sever

multiple disadvantage are often the more difficult cohort to identify suitable options.

We feel that the existing core and newly implemented services detailed earlier in this strategy together with the extensive list of ongoing and future commitments contained in the table below will give us the best possible opportunity of meeting this suppressed demand and continuing to support rough sleepers into safe and suitable accommodation that meets their individual needs.

Engagement with the General Public

Most local authorities have developed communication plans around rough sleeping, begging and street based living that have been somewhat negative in the messages conveyed. For example, discouraging people from giving to people on the street because it sustains rough sleeping and substance misuse that could lead to more harm. Overwhelmingly such communication approaches have been negatively received by the public.

The strategy recognises that telling people not to do something, when they meet a person who is in need, is the wrong approach to take. Rather we need to do more about highlighting the positive things that services do and the positive ways that people can help. One of the best ways we can do this is to give an increased voice to people with lived experience who have come off the street so that they can tell their story on what worked for them.

To help achieve this level of understanding we have, in conjunction with Derbyshire County Council, committed to undertaking an ethnographic research project. This will give us the understanding and insight into the world of rough sleepers and enable us to identify suitable and impactful services for the future.

'Pillars' of Rough Sleeping

Prevention – One of the key actions is to better understand the trigger points (such as leaving prison/falling into rent arrears) that lead to rough sleeping and to put in place timely interventions to prevent rough sleeping thereafter. A key part of this work will be the **'duty to refer'** on all public bodies, that came into force on 1

October 2018, to refer people who are homeless/threatened with homelessness to the housing authority for assistance. We need to develop comparable information sharing arrangements with housing associations and third sector partners.

Intervention – The intervention pillar is about rapid action to help people get off the street as quickly as possible. We believe that the need is more complex than this with services often having to engage with people on multiple occasions before they decide they are ready to accept help. Therefore we need to ensure that, when this window of opportunity arises, we are ready to put in place housing and support options on an immediate basis. It may well be that people need to receive health related services before they are willing to engage on housing options. The offer of health care/other support may well build up trust with the person so that they are more willing to engage on the offer of housing. It may also be that the person is willing to engage with a specific service, including community groups, and therefore this service should take the lead on offering help.

Recovery – the conventional model of tenancy sustainment (housing related support/help with property furnishing) is, whilst important, not going to be enough to promote recovery and keep people from returning to the street. Discussions with people with lived experience of rough sleeping has highlighted that isolation, loneliness, boredom and inactivity are reasons why people leave their tenancies and gravitate back to the street. We need, under the banner of recovery, to put in place a package of measures to help build their lives in their new homes.

We need to come up with a package of measures that the Council can cover the cost of that help former rough sleepers stay in their new homes.

Targets

Our main target is in keeping with the National objective which is:

Halve the number of people sleeping rough by 2022

To have no people sleeping rough by 2027.

Our Table of Commitments:

North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021-22	
Commitments	
Prevention:	
1.	Improve data intelligence base/profile of people sleeping rough in North Derbyshire.
2.	Conduct ethnographic research into local views and needs of rough sleepers.
3.	Explore early interventions such as education in schools
4.	Develop links with Universities to conduct local research into sector and consider work placements with front line services. Research into Hidden Homelessness.
5.	Provide a programme of training to ensure all public bodies understand the 'duty to refer' in respect of rough sleeping.
6.	Request that the Clinical Commissioning Group and Health & Wellbeing Boards make the health needs of rough sleepers a strategic priority.
7.	Strategic co-ordination of funding applications to include Rough Sleeper Initiative, Cold Weather Fund and any other available funding under national Rough Sleeper Strategy
8.	Better understanding of how to help people with no recourse to public funds coming out of hospital/prisons.
9.	Develop a range of Move on options including PRS accommodation.
10.	Strategic co-ordination and increase in provision of appropriate supported accommodation options.
11.	Develop provision of 24/7 supported accommodation including a Specialist Residential Care unit
12.	Look at positive ways of engaging and communicating with the general public about helping rough sleepers
13.	Develop an Alternative Giving Scheme
14.	Build in-reach services with hospitals/prisons to ensure no one is discharged to the street.
15.	Build stronger links with Probation and Offender Management services
16.	Review and update hospital discharge policies.
17.	Ensure provision of services for priority groups including Veterans, LGBT+, BAME, same sex couples and families, DV, MH and physical disabilities, care leavers, ex-offenders, Gypsy and Travellers

18.	Build working relationships with the DWP including 'Homeless Champions' in every Job Centre Plus
19.	Develop routes in employment/support.
20.	Develop access to debt and benefits advice
21.	Ensure we offer the right services to people who have been victims of trafficking or modern slavery
22.	Develop a range of accommodation and support that meet the varying needs of Rough Sleepers with Multiple Complex Needs
23.	Review and commission an Out of hours service that is fit for purpose
Intervention:	
24.	Increase and expand the provision of local outreach work to include quick intervention to prevent people from becoming entrenched
25.	Develop a 'Street Medicine' model including community prescription
26.	Improve access to emergency accommodation including crash pads
27.	Future commitment to the provision of a winter nightshelter, or suitable alternative, including integration of health services into the services offered.
28.	Explore provision of storage facilities for rough sleeper's possessions.
Recovery:	
29.	Work with partners to build a programme of recovery options to help people stay off the street
30.	Recruit or commission a Rough Sleeper Navigator Service
31.	Work with partners to develop a needle exchange
32.	Establish a mobile hub of professional support
33.	Explore provision of specialist mental health support from within housing options services.
34.	Develop provision of intense support for individuals with high level and multiple needs
35.	Implement a panel cross sector panel of experts for individuals with high level and multiple needs.
36.	Consider the need for day centres or local hubs
37.	Engage with Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
38.	Engage with local Place Alliance Groups/Boards

Bolsover District Council

Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

13th September 2021

Rechargeable Repairs Policy

Report of the Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Victoria Dawson – Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement

Contact Officer: Andrew Clarke – Operational Repairs Manager

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Customer Services Scrutiny Committee to consider and feedback on the revised Rechargeable Repairs Policy. Committee's comments will be considered prior to Executive approval of the policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members review the attached updated Rechargeable Repairs Policy and provide comments for consideration as part of the development of the Policy in advance of formal Executive approval and implementation

Approved by the Portfolio Holder – Councillor Sandra Peake

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

There are no financial implications in the Report or arising from the updated Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

There are no legal implications in the Report or arising from the updated Rechargeable Repairs Policy

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

There are no staffing implications in the Report or arising from the updated Rechargeable Repairs Policy

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Decision Information	
<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies</p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	No
<p>District Wards Significantly Affected</p>	District wide Policy but no wards significantly affected
<p>Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Cabinet / Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SAMT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	Yes Details: Ward Members

Links to Council Ambition (BDC)/Council Plan (NED) priorities or Policy Framework including Climate Change, Equalities, and Economics and Health implications.

Customer Services - Providing good quality council housing where people choose to live

REPORT DETAILS

1 Background *(reasons for bringing the report)*

- 1.1 Bolsover District Council owns and manages its housing stock consisting of 5019 properties as at August 2021.
- 1.2 The Housing Repairs department aims to deliver a continuously improving responsive repair and maintenance service, by making sure that day to day repairs are carried out quickly, on time, and to a high standard that customers are satisfied with, whilst maintaining value for money in the service at all times.
- 1.3 All Tenants are made aware of their obligations not to damage or neglect Council properties, at the point they sign the Tenancy Agreement. It advises Tenants that they must keep their home in a reasonable condition and leave it clean and tidy at the end of the tenancy. The Tenancy Agreement also allows Tenants to be recharged for repairs or replacements arising from damage to properties, by the Tenant, family members or visitors to the home.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The updated Rechargeable Repairs Policy outlines Bolsover District Councils approach to recovery of recharges. It provides a definition of rechargeable repairs and the circumstances in which it may arise, giving some helpful examples.
- 2.2 The Policy sets out the internal procedure in terms of assessing repairs and calculating recharges as well as the recovery process that will be followed.
- 2.3 In addition there is a section on when we may exercise discretion for example when a person's vulnerabilities affect their ability to pay the rechargeable repairs, or there may be exceptional circumstances which need to be considered.
- 2.4 There is a formal appeals process where a tenant is given an opportunity to challenge the reasons for recharge or the recharge amount. This is considered by the Repairs manager in the first instance and if this is challenged further is dealt as a complaint in accordance with the Councils Complaints procedure.
- 2.5 A copy of the draft, updated Policy is attached as **Appendix 1**. The previous Policy is attached at **Appendix 2** for comparison.

2 Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 It is considered good practice to have a policy which sets out the Councils approach to recovery of recharges
- 2.2 The policy which sits alongside and supplements the tenancy agreement ensures that all tenants are aware of their rights and responsibilities, but also ensures that officers involved in housing repairs and tenancy management, adopt the same fair

but firm approach and takes account of the need to consider equality and proportionality when taking any action.

3 **Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

3.1 The updated Policy is considered necessary so that members of the public are aware of the Councils approach to recovery of recharges and in what circumstances these arise.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1	Draft Rechargeable Repairs Policy 2021
2	Rechargeable Repairs Policy 2009 – revised May 2013
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	



Rechargeable Repairs Policy

2021



We speak your language

Polish

Mówimy Twoim językiem

Slovak

Rozprávame Vaším jazykom

Chinese

我们会说你的语言

If you require this publication in
large print or another format
please call us on **01246 242424**

CONTROL SHEET FOR [policy title here]

Policy Details	Comments / Confirmation (To be updated as the document progresses)
Policy title	Rechargeable Repairs Policy
Current status – i.e. first draft, version 2 or final version	First Draft
Policy author (post title only)	Head of Housing Management and Enforcement
Location of policy (whilst in development)	Housing DMT folder
Relevant Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Cllr Sandra Peake
Equality Impact Assessment approval date	
Partnership involvement (if applicable)	
Final policy approval route i.e. Executive/ Council	Executive
Date policy approved	
Date policy due for review (maximum three years)	
Date policy forwarded to Performance & Communications (to include on Extranet and Internet if applicable to the public)	

1. Introduction

Bolsover District Council aims to deliver a continuously improving responsive repair and maintenance service, by making sure that day to day repairs are carried out quickly, on time, and to a high standard that customers are satisfied with, whilst maintaining value for money in the service at all times.

Bolsover District Council will make sure that all properties are repaired and maintained, providing a safe home environment for all its residents and Tenants.

All Tenants are made aware of their obligations not to damage or neglect Council properties, at the point they sign the Tenancy Agreement. It advises Tenants that they must keep their home in a reasonable condition and leave it clean and tidy at the end of the tenancy. The Tenancy Agreement also allows Tenants to be recharged for repairs or replacements arising from damage to properties, by the Tenant, family members or visitors to the home.

This policy outlines Bolsover District Councils approach to recovery of recharges, these are the costs of repairs/works that the Council have been required to carry out to a council property following damage, unauthorised or non-compliant DIY, neglect or abuse by Tenants, residents or members of their household, visitors to their home.

2. Scope

Generally, Bolsover District Council is responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure of the property and any fixtures and fittings originally provided in the property.

Tenants are informed of their repairing responsibilities when they sign their Tenancy Agreement, and the repairing responsibilities are further outlined in the Repair handbook issued to all Tenants which sets out expected conditions. [Link to the webpage when available](#)

We also encourage Tenants to purchase household insurance which may cover the costs of repairs which we would recharge for. It is the Tenant's responsibility to check their policy before agreeing a recharge.

This policy sets out how we will deal effectively with recharges, including those arising from damage, non-standard alterations or the costs of clearing redundant possessions left by the Tenant. This policy applies to all Council properties including garages, and those let on a non-secure basis.

3. Principles

The Council is committed to maintaining the housing stock to the highest standard, and aims to provide a good service to all Tenants.

However, there are times where Tenants (including members of their household or visitors) cause damage to Council property. In some cases the Council will not be aware of the damage until the property is void.

The overall aim of the Rechargeable Repairs Policy is to contribute to the efficient and effective management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock. It will assist in

ensuring the Council provides well maintained properties and ensure that expenditure is managed effectively.

The specific objectives of the Rechargeable Repairs Policy are:-

- To give clear guidance on the circumstances when people or Tenants will be recharged.
- To give clear guidance on the circumstances where discretion will be exercised.
- To outline the process of recharging for repairs.
- To outline the basis for calculating the recharge.
- To inform Tenants of payment arrangements.
- To inform Tenants of the action the Council will take if payment is not made.
- To monitor the performance of rechargeable repairs in order to seek continuous improvement.

The principles underlining the Recharge are:-

- The Council is committed to delivering a repair service that is fair, equitable and transparent.
- The Council is committed to ensuring that existing housing is maintained to standards that are acceptable to the Council
- That Tenants or others who cause additional expense to the Council are held responsible for their actions.

4. Definition of a Recharge

We will define rechargeable repairs as a repair, replacement or clearance work that is necessary due to one of the following reasons:

- Wilful damage - damage caused to Council Property intentionally this would include damaged doors or windows, DIY which has damaged the fabric/ structure of the property or its internal parts.
- Neglect - e.g. include failing to dispose of rubbish properly, losing keys, putting nappies, baby wipes and other inappropriate items down the toilet Damage caused by fire when a pan has been left on, or items placed too close to a fire. (Note damage that is accidental usually falls under this category) .
- Misuse damage caused to Council Property by incorrect or improper use, for example, damage to doors, graffiti to walls, damage to fire grates from using the wrong fuel.
- Abuse - e.g. unauthorised alterations
- Work that may be required when moving out of their home in order to bring it up to an acceptable standard for a new Tenant.

A list of example recharges is attached at Appendix 1.

5. Circumstances for Recharging

Tenanted Properties

We will aim to identify whether or not a repair is rechargeable at the initial reporting stage and the Tenant will be informed at this point. Where information is incomplete or where a technical decision has to be made the repair request will be passed to a repairs co-ordinator to determine whether an inspection is required. An officer will inspect the repair and make a decision as to whether the repair would constitute a recharge.

Non – emergency works

Where the Tenant is to be recharged, the Council should provide an estimated price to the Tenant. Work should only start when the Tenant has given acceptance that they agree to pay the cost of the repair, this acceptance should be in writing, see pro forma at Appendix 2

The Tenant may choose to arrange to employ their own contractor, or carry out work themselves, and has up to 28 days to complete this. In such cases the repair will be inspected by the Council to ensure the work meets the appropriate standard. If not, the Council will complete the repair and the Tenant will be recharged.

If the Tenant neither carries out the work to a standard that is acceptable to the Council, nor agrees to the Council carrying out the work then the Council will consider enforcement action against the Tenant.

Emergency repairs

In the case of emergency repairs that are rechargeable, due to the urgent nature, the Council will repair and the Tenant be recharged, without seeking a quotation in advance. These will be 'make safe' repairs only. For example a broken window reported as an emergency will be boarded up rather than replaced.

Note the Council will recharge a Tenant should they abuse the emergency call out service, e.g. when a repair is not really an emergency, but has been reported as one.

Void Repairs

When a Tenant gives notice to end their tenancy, arrangements will be made for a pre-termination inspection. This inspection will identify any aspects of disrepair, damage or alteration, which are the responsibility of the Tenant. The Tenant will then have the opportunity to rectify any repairs for which they are responsible prior to the end of the tenancy.

If such defects are not remedied prior to the end of the tenancy, or if the work is not of an acceptable standard, a recharge may be raised for the costs of the work. In addition other rechargeable repairs may also be identified once the customer has vacated the property, e.g. if the property and garden are not left in a clean and tidy condition. Photographs will be kept as evidence of the condition of the property.

Tenants Improvements (also see the Tenants Improvement and Alteration Policy)

Tenants have a general right to improve their home provided the improvement is agreed by the Council and complies with all planning, building and environmental requirements, and does not adversely affect neighbours or their properties.

If the improvement has damaged the property, even where permission has been granted then the Tenant will be charged for rectifying the damage and make good any issue identified.

Where an improvement has been made without prior written permission from the Council, either the Tenant will be charged the cost of reinstating the property or, the costs of granting permission retrospectively as long as the improvement has met all other provision required. The Council will decide which option will apply.

Permission will not be refused unreasonably but may be granted with conditions such as returning the property to its original standard before the end of the tenancy.

There will be an expectation that whoever undertakes the work on behalf of the Tenant is competent to do so. In the case of Solid Fuel, Gas or Electric, they must be qualified and registered with the appropriate governing body. Certification will be required for the work, failure to do so will deem the work potentially dangerous and as such unacceptable.

Mutual exchanges and transfers

Where a Tenant has requested a transfer to another property either as part of a mutual exchange, or internal transfer to another Council property a transfer inspection will take place to determine the standard of the property.

If rechargeable repairs are identified, conditional approval for the exchange will be given, but subject to the necessary work being completed. The Tenant will be given the opportunity to complete the necessary repairs before the tenancy ends. Alternatively the Council can undertake the work and the Tenant be recharged. In these circumstances the exchange would not be completed until the Tenant had paid the debt in full.

It is not always possible for the Council officers to identify every non-standard fixture and fitting, poor DIY job or damage to property. The responsibility therefore lies with the incoming Tenant to carry out a full inspection of the property with the outgoing Tenant.

The Council will not accept liability for non-standard items, DIY or damage on the basis that it was not apparent during the inspection.

Checks will also be made of outstanding rechargeable debts when a request for a mutual exchange is received and conditional approval be given until the debts have been cleared in full.

Action taken by the Police or emergency services

When Derbyshire Police act with reasonable force in correctly executing a warrant at a property, there is no liability on their part to make good the damage caused whether an

arrest was made, or not. In all cases the damage will be recharged to the Tenant. If the Tenant objects then they must take this matter up with the Police and the recharge will stand.

Calculating repairs

A rechargeable repair may consist of various elements as follows;

- The costs of the repair (including time and materials)
- The costs of any call out fee if out of hours or an emergency
- The cost of any specialised reports and or contractors needed
- VAT if applicable
- A 20% admin charge (upto a maximum of £500)

6. Circumstances for Not Charging

A recharge will not be applied in the following circumstances:

- Where a Tenant has been the victim of a serious crime, and they have reported the crime to the Police and obtained a crime reference number or valid supporting evidence from the Police.
- Where the damage has been during a violent incident towards the Tenant or a member of the Tenant's household or a visitor to the Property
- Where the damage is caused by general wear and tear with fixtures and fittings reaching the end of their practical life span.

7. Payments for rechargeable repairs

Whenever practical, Tenants will be required to agree to the rechargeable repairs prior to completion of any works. However in instances where this is not possible, i.e. emergency repairs, the work will be carried out and the Tenant will be invoiced after the work has been completed.

Payment for repairs would normally be expected to be paid in full. However where this is not possible a repayment arrangements can be made, and the debt would be monitored until it had been repaid in full.

Payments will be monitored by the Finance department.

Note: If a Tenant (or a member of their household, or a visitor) causes damage, this is a breach of tenancy and the Council may take further legal steps such as seeking an injunction, possession proceedings and/or recovery action through debtors. Examples of this would be:

- Where actions by a Tenant pose a risk to people or property – for example unauthorised alterations to the gas or mains electrical supply.
- Where damage is wilful and extensive.
- Where there has been a history of neglect over a period of time.

A record of the former Tenant and the outstanding debt will be held against that individual for future reference on the Councils Housing management system.

Discretionary circumstances

There may be circumstances when a person's vulnerabilities affect their ability to pay the rechargeable repairs, or there may be exceptional circumstances which need to be considered.

Where this is the case, consideration will be given to the appropriateness of recharging a Tenant either in full or in part. However any exceptional circumstances or vulnerabilities may not be known by the Council until after the recharge invoice has been sent.

If someone wishes to dispute a recharge they will need to follow the appeals process set out below.

Note recharges will only be written off in exceptional circumstances where but is agreed that the debt is irrecoverable in line with the Councils policies and procedures.

8. Appeals process

Current and former Tenants have the right to appeal the recharge. Appeals should be in writing setting out reasons why the work and the amount is being challenged. Documentary evidence to support the appeal/dispute should be provided.

This will be assessed and discretion to reduce or waiver the recharge may be exercised. This will depend on the circumstances affecting the individual case. A decision will be taken by the Repairs Manager and Housing Enforcement Manager and will be confirmed in writing.

If the Tenant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal or dispute, their complaint will be entered into the Councils Complaints procedure.

Complaints

The Council has its own Compliments, Comments and Complaints procedure.

We want you to complain if you feel you've been poorly or unfairly treated by any of our services and we will do our best to put things right when things have gone wrong.

If you are unhappy with the *process* then you can make a complaint about us or any of our services by completing the on-line Compliments, Comments and Complaints form.

You can write to us at The Arc, High Street, Clowne, Derbyshire S43 4JY, call into any one of our Contact Centres and asking one of our employees to put your complaint in writing for you ,or call the Contact Centre on 01246 242424.

Appendix 1 - Examples of Tenant Recharges – note this is not exhaustive

We will recharge the Tenant for any costs incurred by the Council in:

- Replacing any lost or broken door entry key fobs or keys and for changing locks
- Storing Tenant's belongings following vacating the Council Property
- Removing graffiti and rectifying any damage
- Relation to vandalism to Council Property, where the Court has prosecuted the perpetrator or where the individual has admitted the damage
- Taking legal action where the Tenant has prevented us from carrying out our legal obligations
- Clearing items from communal areas
- Damage identified following routine property inspections
- Removal of trees or hedges which are not the Council's responsibility, if these are deemed to be dangerous or overgrown
- Tidying of gardens including shrubs and trees that have been neglected or are overgrown
- Use of the Council's Handyman scheme to carry out specified works on the Tenant's behalf
- Damage caused by excessive hoarding of items within the property/land
- Clearing dog fouling
- Garage or garage ground rent plot evictions (to include clearance costs and lock changes)
 - Damage to car parking areas and the removal of unauthorised vehicles
 - Removing abandoned or non-roadworthy vehicles
 - Damage to fences and gates owned by the Council
 - Damage to the structure of the building
 - Attending a power failure caused by blown light bulbs or faulty appliances
 - Attending a blocked waste where the Tenant has not tried to clear it themselves, or where the cause of the blockage is deemed to be through neglect or misuse
- Removing rubbish or items left at the property/land on ending a Tenancy Agreement
- Damage to communal TV aerials
- Excessive cleaning required to a property/land due to Neglect
- Unnecessary water damage caused to a Council property where a Tenant has refused to turn the stop tap, or refused access to remedy a leak
 - Carrying a gas safety check as a result of two or more Tenants wishing to undertake a mutual exchange
 - Carrying an electrical safety check as a result of two or more Tenants wishing to undertake a mutual exchange
- Any other circumstances that cause an unreasonable cost to the Council

Appendix 2 Recharge form

Housing Officer		Works Order No.	Date	
			Recharge No	

RECHARGE/INCIDENT REPORT			
This form must be completed in full and returned to Bolsover District Council within 7 days			
REASON FOR RECHARGE: DAMAGE/GLASS/OTHER			
PERSON TO BE RECHARGED:			
NAME:			
ADDRESS:			
POST CODE:		TEL:	
SIGNATURE:		DATE:	
POLICE INVOLVED: YES/NO			
If Yes please give: Name: Number:			
Incident No:			
DETAILS OF DAMAGE TO COUNCIL PROPERTY:			
DESCRIPTION	QTY	SOR NO.	COST (£)
ADMIN CHARGES @ 20%			
VAT CHARGES @ 20%			
TOTAL COST:			

Appendix 3

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

RE-CHARGEABLE WORKS – AGREEMENT TO WORK AND PAYMENT

In accordance with Part (i) of my Housing Tenancy Agreement and after discussion with the Housing Officer

on the atam/pm

I being the named Tenant of

.....

.....

DO HEREBY AUTHORISE Bolsover District Council to undertake such works detailed in the attached schedule, to the above property

I AGREE to pay such proportion of the cost of the works as the Council may determine to be attributed to me

TENANTS SIGNATURE DATE

OFFICERS SIGNATURE

COST (INCLUDING ADMINISTRATION AND VAT) £.....

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Rechargeable Repairs Policy

July 2009. Revised May 2013



This Policy addresses the following Corporate Aims (show those which are appropriate to the policy only):



COMMUNITY
SAFETY



CUSTOMER
FOCUSED SERVICES



STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



REGENERATION



SOCIAL INCLUSION

The District of Bolsover Equalities Statement

The District of Bolsover is committed to equalities as an employer and in all the services provided to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminate all forms of discrimination in compliance with the Equality Strategy.

The Council also has due regard to eliminate racial discrimination and to proactively promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups when performing it's functions.

This document is available in large print and other formats from any of the Council Offices or by contacting the Chief Executives Directorate on 01246 242323. Please bear in mind we will need a few days to arrange this facility.

If you need help to read this document please do not hesitate to contact us.

Our Equality and Improvement Officer can be contacted via [Email](#) or by telephoning 01246 242407.

Minicom: 01246 242450

Fax: 01246 242423

Details of Document	
Title	Rechargeable Repairs
Document type – i.e. draft or final version	Review
Location of Policy	L:\housing\policies
Author of Policy	Peter Campbell
Reviewed by Director of Strategy	July 2008
Risk Assessment completed	Yes
Community Safety implications Please indicate any implications in relation to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998	This policy involves working with police who have been consulted during development
Equality Impact Assessment completed.	August 2008
Approved by	Patch Mgt route
Date Approved	June 2009
Policy Review Date	November 2012

Version numbers

- 4.0 – 2012 Review – changes to charging calculation
- 4.1 – 2012 Review with PMWG comments
- 4.2 – 2012 Final PMWG Comments
- 4.3 – 2012 Final – proof
- 4.4 Updated with changes from Audit.

CONTENTS

1. The Introduction
2. The Scope of the Policy.
3. The Principles of the Policy.
4. Responsibility for implementing the Policy

Rechargeable Repairs Policy

Scope

This policy applies to tenants of Bolsover District Council Housing Department, and their households. Although, for convenience, the word tenant is used throughout this document this policy includes secure tenants, non-secure tenants other tenants and tolerated trespassers – the same principles will apply to tenants of Council garages.

This policy describes the activities and responsibilities involved in carrying out repairs in circumstances where

- The repair is the responsibility of the tenant, or
- The damage to the property is caused by wilful damage, neglect, misuse or abuse by the tenant, their family or visitors to the property, or
- The repair is required when moving out of a house to bring it up to an acceptable standard.
- The repair is a result of a break in
- Where a tenant has misrepresented a repair, or the urgency of a repair when reporting this to the Council.

This document does contain some examples in the appendix, but this is not an exhaustive list. However, the principles within this policy will apply to all cases.

Principles

The Council is committed to maintaining the housing stock to the highest standard, and aims to provide a good service to all tenants.

However, there are times where tenants (including members of their household or visitors) cause damage to Council property. In some cases the Council will not be aware of the damage until the property is void.

The overall aim of the Rechargeable Repairs Policy is to contribute to the efficient and effective maintenance of the Council's housing stock and to ensure that expenditure is managed effectively.

The specific objectives of the Rechargeable Repairs Policy are:-

- To give clear guidance on the circumstances when people or tenants will be recharged.
- To give clear guidance on the circumstances where discretion will be exercised.
- To outline the process of recharging for repairs.
- To outline the basis for calculating the recharge.
- To inform tenants of payment arrangements.
- To inform tenants of the action the Council will take if payment is not made.
- To monitor the performance of rechargeable repairs in order to seek continuous improvement.

The principles underlining the Recharge are:-

- The Council is committed to delivering a repair service that is fair, equitable and transparent.
- The Council is committed to ensuring that existing housing is maintained to standards that are acceptable to the Council
- That tenants or others who cause additional expense to the Council are held responsible for their actions.

Circumstances for recharging

Generally, the Council is responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure and property and any fixtures and fittings originally provided. Tenants are informed of their repair responsibilities when they sign the Tenancy Agreement and these responsibilities are also outlined in the Tenants Handbook.

Tenants will be recharged for :

- Wilful damage - e.g. replacing a smashed door,
- Neglect - e.g. clearing a blocked sink, drain or bath. Damage caused by fire when a pan has been left on, or items placed too close to a fire. (note damage that is accidental usually falls under this category)
- Misuse - e.g. damage to fire grates from using the wrong fuel.
- Abuse - e.g. graffiti to walls, unauthorised alterations
- Work that may be required when moving out of their home in order to bring it up to an acceptable standard for a new tenant.

Note: If a tenant (or a member of their household, or a visitor) causes damage, this is a breach of tenancy and the Council may take further legal steps such as seeking an injunction, possession proceedings and/or recovery action through debtors. Examples of this would be:

Where actions by a tenant pose a risk to people or property – for example unauthorised alterations to the gas or mains electrical supply.

Where damage is wilful and extensive.

Where there has been a history of neglect over a period of time.

Discretionary Circumstances

Each case must be assessed and discretion may be exercised, depending on the circumstances affecting the individual case. In considering when discretion should be exercised and a recharge waived in part or in full, account should be taken of issues such as, but not limited to the following:

- Age of members of the household
- Health of members of the household
- Any disability within the Household.
- Type of repair
- Evidence of previous rechargeable repairs

Officers are asked to make an assessment of the vulnerability of the tenant and their ability to carry out repairs. If the tenant is considerably more vulnerable than the typical tenant, and the repair is not due to wilful damage, officers will consider waiving the charge.

The decision not to charge can be made either by a Repairs Manager or the Housing Enforcement Manager. If a tenant is not satisfied with this decision they can appeal to an appeals panel who will be the Head of Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Housing (or another Executive member if there is a connection between the tenant and the Portfolio Holder, or the tenant lives in that members ward)

If someone caused the damage in the course of a violent incident, towards the tenant (or a member of the tenant's household or a visitor to the property) and the tenant completes and returns a declaration (see appendix) to the Council, an investigation will be carried out. However, we will seek to recover this cost from the person who has caused the damage.

In all cases where the tenant claims the damage has been caused by someone unknown they will be required to complete and return a declaration (copy included in appendix). If this is not returned the tenant will be charged for the work.

Similarly if damage has been caused by vandalism, the Council will work with the Police to identify the perpetrators. When identified, the Council will always seek to recover money from perpetrators and where appropriate take legal action.

Investigations will be carried out on all cases where the damage is over £200 or there is a history of damage to the property (i.e. more than 1 incident of damage within a 12 month period). This will involve taking a statement from the tenant, and details of any witnesses. If the officer carrying out the investigation feels that, on the balance of probabilities it is likely that damage is due to the tenant (or their household or visitor) the police will be informed who may carry out a more detailed investigation.

If these investigations find that the tenant has caused damage to the property, the Council will seek to take legal action against the tenant provided evidence is available.

Insurance

Some tenants may be covered on their household insurance for repairs for which the Council would make a charge. Arranging insurance is the responsibility of the tenant. Tenants should be advised to check their insurance policy before agreeing a recharge repair. Any work carried out by contractors appointed by an insurer should meet Council standards, and be accepted by a suitable officer who is identified by the Head of Housing.

Responsive Repairs

When a tenant reports a repair a member of the housing service will assess the repair and identify:-

- The urgency of the repair - the type of repair will determine the timescale by which the repair must be completed.
- Who is responsible for the repair - the Council or the tenant?

- Where information is incomplete or where a technical decision has to be made the repair request will be passed to a Repairs Co-ordinator to determine whether an inspection is required.

In the case of emergency repairs that are rechargeable, owing to the limited timescale involved, the Council will complete the repair and the tenant will be recharged.

The amount to be recharged is made up of several elements, as follows:

An estimate cost of repair (time plus materials)

PLUS

The cost of any call out fee if out of hours or an emergency.

PLUS

The Cost of any specialist reports and/or contractors needed

PLUS

Value Added Tax (if appropriate)

PLUS

An administration charge of 20% (to a maximum of £500)

Emergency repairs can be arranged immediately, and there is no requirement to receive quotations.

Note – in many cases Emergency Repairs will be to 'make safe' only. For example a smashed window reported as an emergency will be boarded up rather than replaced.

For other repairs, the Council should provide an estimated price to the tenant before work starting. Work should only start when the tenant has given acceptance that they agree to pay the cost of the repair, this acceptance should be in writing.

The tenant may choose to arrange to employ their own contractor, or carry out work themselves, and has up to 28 days to complete this. In such cases the repair will be inspected by the Council to ensure the work meets the appropriate standard. If not, the Council will complete the repair and the tenant will be recharged.

If the tenant neither carries out the work to a standard that is acceptable to the council, nor agrees to the council carrying out the work then the council will consider enforcement action against the tenant.

Void Repairs

When a tenant gives notice to end their tenancy, arrangements will be made for a pre-termination inspection. This inspection will identify any aspects of disrepair, which are the responsibility of the tenant. The tenant will then have the opportunity to rectify any repairs for which they are responsible prior to the end of the tenancy. This notification should be in writing.

If any identified defects are not remedied prior to the end of the tenancy, or if the work is not of a satisfactory standard (as determined by a suitably qualified officer from Bolsover District Council Housing Department) a recharge may then be raised for the cost of the works.

When properties are vacated, the Council expects that the outgoing tenant will ensure the property is tidy and in good repair. A booklet will be issued to all tenants describing the expected condition. If the property falls below these standards the tenant may be recharged for any works needed to bring the property up to standard.

If a potential recharge is identified when the property is void the Council will take photographs as evidence of the condition of the property. These photographs will be kept as evidence of the condition of the property. Photographs should be date stamped where possible and original prints signed and dated by the officer taking the photograph.

Note; In addition to repairs for void properties the Council will also recharge if the property, including the garden, is not left in a clean and tidy condition. This may include clearance costs, gardening cost and the costs of cleaning the property.

Tenants Improvements (also see the Tenants Improvements Policy)

If a tenant seeks and is granted permission before carrying out an improvement and complies with all conditions normally no charge will be made. However if the improvement has damaged the property (even if permission is granted) then the tenant will be charged for rectifying the damage.

If the tenant carries out an improvement without permission they will be charged for either:

- a. the cost of reinstating the property, or,
- b. the costs of granting permission retrospectively. This may include a cost for inspections. .

The Council will decide which option will apply.

Misrepresentation

When a tenant reports a repair, and purposefully exaggerates the seriousness of the repair in order to either ensure the repair is assigned a higher priority, or to ensure that a call out is made to an out of hours repair the Council will seek to recover costs from the tenant. In the case of an out of hours call the amount recharged to the tenant will cover the call out charge made by the out of hour's contractor. If the work is carried out by another external contractor the recharge will cover the call out charge, if the work or visit is carried out by a Council the recharge made will cover the time and expense incurred by the Council. In all cases the charging methodology, as explained above, will apply.

Recharge Payments

The Council will raise an invoice for payment as soon as possible after the repair is completed. The Housing Service recognises that in some circumstances, repayment of charges in full would cause excessive financial problems for the tenant. With this in mind, Revenues Officers may agree a reasonable and affordable payment of the debt, by instalment, based on their knowledge of the individual tenant's financial circumstances

Contributory Negligence

When considering a request to waive payment, Officers will consider if a tenant has behaved in such a way that has either contributed to the damage (for example someone who is dealing drugs from the property who has had a window damaged), or has not prevented the damage (for example leaving open a window to allow an intruder into the property who then causes damage). In such case it is very unlikely that the recharged will be waived.

Special Circumstances.

No recharges will be issued for less than £50 at the end of tenancies.

If the tenant has died, any recharges should be recoverable from the estate of the tenant; this is not always a relative. Any correspondence and the bill should be sent to 'The Personal Representative of (NAME OF TENANT)'

Appeals Process

Current and former tenants have the right to appeal initially to the appeals panel. The appeals panel will be the Head of Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Housing (or another Executive Member if the tenant is in the Portfolio Holders ward, or is known by the Portfolio Holder) and a member of Senior Management Team. An appeal may be made by the tenant (or executor) or their representative, but must be authorised by the tenant (or executor). Any appeal must be in writing – the panel will consider all submissions, but the tenant has no right to make a personal appearance.

Collection

The responsibility for issuing invoices for payments, and recovery of debt lies with Revenue Services.

Monitoring

In order to comply with its service commitments, it is important that the Council should monitor the effects of rechargeable repair procedures. Areas to be monitored are as follows:

- Number of rechargeable repairs carried out as a void repair.
- Number of rechargeable repairs carried out as a responsive repair.
- Cost of rechargeable repairs.
- Income received from rechargeable repairs/recovery rate
- Details of where discretion has been applied. .

This information will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy, and will be used in any future review of this policy.

3. Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy lies with the Head of Housing. Other staff and departments have responsibilities as outlined in the policy.

Responsibility for recovery lies with Revenue Services.

NOTE: In parts this policy refers to the tenant as causing damage. However, in practice damage may also be caused by a tenant's household or visitors of the property. In such cases recovery action will be taken against the tenant.

4, Glossary

In the document the term "A Repairs Manager" has been used. For clarity this refers to the tier of staff who report to the Head of Housing

Examples

1. Broken Window

A broken window will normally be recharged. Unless this has been broken by vandalism or other crime by a person who is not the tenant, a member of their household or a visitor to the property, AND the tenant completes and returns a declaration form (containing a police incident number). The tenant will always be asked who caused the damage

Details of all such incidents must be passed to the ASB team who will investigate the circumstances.

Note: If the tenant is a victim of harassment and the ASB team are aware of this, no incident number will be required.

2. Lost keys

A charge will normally be made to tenants who have lost their keys and need to gain access. However, this may be waived for tenants who are:

- vulnerable due to age or disability, or
- had their keys stolen and have a completed a declaration, or
- victims of domestic violence who suspect the violent partner has a copy of the key

In all these cases authorisation must be granted by a Repairs Manager, Housing Enforcement Manager or Head of Housing.

3. Additional keys

A charge will always be made for tenants who require additional keys.

4. Damage to Doors caused by Police gaining access (and other emergencies)

It is not generally possible to pursue the Police for damage caused to the property by their forced entry as they will have various powers to force entry, for example, the Police have a power to lawfully gain entry under Section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 where they have reasonable cause to believe that illegal substances or documentation related to transactions concerning illegal substances are likely to be recovered at the Property. Before the Police are able to obtain a warrant they have to satisfy the Justice of the Peace of this, therefore it would be difficult to argue that a justice of the peace acted in error in granting the warrant

Therefore the council will attempt to work with the police, and to provide access to properties when this is accompanied by a warrant Paragraph 6.4 of Police and Criminal Evidence Act Code B states that the Police should try to obtain consent for the search from the occupier or any other person entitled to grant access to the Property unless it can be shown that the property was unoccupied, or both the occupier and (in this case) landlord were absent, or there are reasonable grounds to show that seeking consent would frustrate the purpose of the search or endanger the police or other persons

If the police do not gain our permission we will, attempt to recover the cost of any damage from the police,

Similarly if a door is damaged by the fire brigade in order to gain access to a property to tackle a fire that has been caused by a tenant (or a member of their household or a visitor) even if this is accidental the tenant will be charged for repairs.

(Although this example mentions a 'door', this could relate to any part of the property including windows, internal doors, door frames and surround etc).

5. Damage caused by neglect.

If a tenant (or their household or visitor) has behaved in a way that has caused a fire in their home, the tenant will be recharged for any subsequent repairs. This will include:

- Chip Pan or other kitchen fire
- fires caused by defective electrical equipment not owned by the Council
- Fires caused by placing items too close to heat sources.

If a tenant deliberately causes a fire in the property enforcement action will be taken.

6. Internal fittings

In most circumstances damage to internal fittings, including glazing, sanitary ware and internal doors will be recharged to the tenant.

7. Misrepresentation

If a tenant reports a problem which is an emergency and necessitates the use of an out of hours service, but when the contractor arrives on site the job is not an emergency the tenant may be recharged the full call out fee incurred by the Council (including VAT and an Admin fee).

8. Fire Grates.

The Council will normally replace fire grates for properties with a Coal Fire. However, if the tenant is burning coke or another produce that burns at a higher temperature, and as a result damages the fire grate the tenant may be charged for replacements of grates. The decision to recharge for this will be made by a Repairs Manager,

(name)
(address)

Dear

Damage to property

Following your report of damage to your property, I write to advise you of the following:

We have raised an order to carry out this work. You will receive a target dates, by which you can expect the repair to be completed.

Please find, on the reverse of this letter, a declaration of truth. You must complete, sign and return the declaration in 7 days to ensure that you are not charged for the repair. If we do not receive the fully completed declaration, we will charge you for the full cost of the repair plus VAT and an amount for administration.

Before returning the declaration, please ensure that you have included an incident number, which you can obtain from your local police station. **Please be aware that if you make a false declaration your home may be at risk and you may be prosecuted for fraud.**

Yours sincerely

DECLARATION

I (NAME).....declare that this statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I wilfully state anything in it, which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Location of incident including damage or loss (including address of property)

.....
.....

Incident number (from the Police)

How incident occurred including time /date

.....
.....

Name and address (if known) of person responsible for damage / loss

.....
.....

Details of person reporting

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Signature.....**Date**.....

Use the reverse of this form, or attach additional sheet if needed.

Information provided to Bolsover District Council on this form will be held and treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. It will be used for the purpose for which it was given and may be shared with other council departments or third party organisations including the police.

Please return this completed form to Housing Department – Bolsover District Council – The Arc – High Street – Clowne – Derbyshire – S43 4JY

Bolsover District Council

Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

13 September 2021

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021/22

Report of the Scrutiny & Elections Officer

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Scrutiny & Elections Officer

Contact Officer: Joanne Wilson

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

- To provide members of the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the meeting programme of the Committee for 2021/22.
-

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members review this report and the Programme attached at Appendix 10.1 for approval and amendment as required. All Members are advised to contact the Scrutiny & Elections Officer should they have any queries regarding future meetings.
2. That Members review the draft scope attached at Appendix 10.2, and approve the document, with amends if required, so the Review can commence.

Approved by the Portfolio Holder – N/A

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

None from this report.

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

In carrying out scrutiny reviews the Council is exercising its scrutiny powers as laid out in s.21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent legislation which added to/amended these powers e.g. the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

None from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Decision Information	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
District Wards Significantly Affected	N/A
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Cabinet / Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SAMT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes Details: Committee Members

Links to Council Ambition (BDC)/Council Plan (NED) priorities or Policy Framework including Climate Change, Equalities, and Economics and Health implications.

All

REPORT DETAILS

1 Background *(reasons for bringing the report)*

- 1.1 The main purpose of the report is to inform members of the meeting programme or the year 2021/22 and planned agenda items (Appendix 7.1).
- 1.2 This programme may be subject to change should additional reports/presentations be required, or if items need to be re-arranged for alternative dates.
- 1.3 Review Scopes submitted will be agreed within Informal Session in advance of the designated meeting for Member approval to ensure that there is sufficient time to gather the information required by Members and to enable forward planning of questions.
- 1.4 Members may raise queries about the programme at the meeting or at any time with the Scrutiny & Elections Officer should they have any queries regarding future meetings.
- 1.5 All Scrutiny Committees are committed to equality and diversity in undertaking their statutory responsibilities and ensure equalities are considered as part of all Reviews. The selection criteria when submitting a topic, specifically asks members to identify where the topic suggested affects particular population groups or geographies.
- 1.6 The Council has a statutory duty under s.149 Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination.
- 1.7 As part of the scoping of Reviews, consideration is given to any consultation that could support the evidence gathering process.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the meeting schedule for 2021/22 and the proposed agenda items for approval/amendment.
- 2.2 Attached at Appendix 2 is a draft review scope for discussion and approval.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 This report sets the formal Committee Work Programme for 2021/22 and the issues identified for review.
- 3.2 The Scrutiny Programme enables challenge to service delivery both internally and externally across all the Council Ambitions.
- 3.3 The Scrutiny functions outlined in Part 3.6(1) of the Council's Constitution requires each Scrutiny Committee to set an annual work plan.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 There is no option to reject the report as the Scrutiny functions outlined in Part 3.6(1) of the Council's Constitution requires each Scrutiny Committee to set an annual work plan.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1.	Work Programme 2021/22
2.	Draft Review Scope
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Previous versions of the Committee Work Programme.	

Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2021/22

Formal Items – Report Key

Performance Review	Policy Development	Policy/Strategy/ Programme Monitoring	Review Work	Call-In/Review of Executive Decisions	Petition

Date of Meeting	Items for Agenda		Lead Officer
28 June 2021 ω	Part A – Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CANCELLED 	
	Part B – Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CANCELLED 	
2 August 2021	Part A – Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing on Adapted Accommodation 	Head of Housing Management & Enforcement/ Housing Enforcement Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Programme 2021/22 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
	Part B – Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
13 September 2021	Part A – Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints Annual Report 2019/20 	Customer Standards and Complaints Officer
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LG&SCO and Housing Ombudsman Annual Report 2019/20 	Customer Standards and Complaints Officer
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021-2023 	Head of Housing Management & Enforcement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation on Housing Policies – Rechargeable Repairs 	Head of Housing Management & Enforcement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Programme 2021/22 – Agreement of Review Scope 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
	Part B – Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer

Date of Meeting	Items for Agenda		Lead Officer
18 October 2021	Part A – Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on Housing Policies – Tenant Improvement Policy 	Head of Housing Management & Enforcement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2021/22 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
	Part B – Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
13 December 2021	Part A – Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints Report 2019/20 – 1st April 2020 to 30th September 2020 	Customer Standards and Complaints Officer
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2021/22 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
	Part B – Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
21 February 2022	Part A – Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Housing Strategy – Monitoring Update – TBC</i> 	Head of Service – Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing Delivery; Head of Property & Housing Repairs; Head of Housing Management & Enforcement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2021/22 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
	Part B – Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
21 March 2022	Part A – Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation Governance Group Update 	Joint Head of Transformation & Organisation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2021/22 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
	Part B – Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
23 May 2022	Part A – Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>TBC</i> 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2021/22 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer
	Part B – Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work 	Scrutiny & Elections Officer

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

SCRUTINY PROJECT MANAGEMENT – REVIEW SCOPE

NAME OF COMMITTEE:	Customer Services Scrutiny Committee
SUBJECT TO BE REVIEWED:	Review of Council-owned Adapted Accommodation
REASON(S) FOR THE REVIEW:	Report submitted to Executive calling for Scrutiny to consider a review of our existing supply, allocation and management of properties, particularly in relation to family accommodation.
IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE CORPORATE PLAN AIMS, PRIORITIES AND TARGETS:	<p>CORPORATE PLAN AIM – Customers – providing excellent services</p> <p>Economy</p> <p>PRIORITIES –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Providing good quality council housing where people choose to live</i> <p>TARGETS – Delivery of an efficient and effective service will support: CUS.08 - Maintain high levels of tenant satisfaction with council housing and associated services</p>
DIRECTORATE/SERVICES INVOLVED:	<p>Directorate – Resources Services – Housing Management & Enforcement</p> <p>Directorate – Strategy and Development Services – Property Services & Housing Repairs; Governance</p>
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF REVIEW:	<p>Aim: To ensure that the Council has adequate plans and processes in place to maintain the required level of adapted accommodation for both individuals and families</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of current policies and procedures • Completion of an analysis of existing adapted stock inc. family-sized stock

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of demand against demographic profile of area. • Assessment of current principles defining categorisation of stock as a 'disabled adapted property'
KEY ISSUES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring new supply through design and location of new stock – Bolsover Homes • Location of existing stock across District • Use of Housing management Officer information when assessing applications • Existing approach for property categorisation • Process for assessing demand/future demand • Current cross-team working
METHOD(S) OF REVIEW:	<p>Document review of existing policies and procedures Briefings by Officers at Committee/Informal Committee Attendance at Officer meetings</p>
IMPLICATIONS: (legislative, regulatory, etc)	<p>Housing Act 1985 – definition of a disabled adapted property and exemption from Right to Buy Right to Buy legislation and MHCLG guidance (April 2021)</p>
DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE: (Internal/External)	<p>List of existing adapted properties and mapping across District List of applications over last 2-3 years List of current planned additions to stock – inc.mapping Previous Committee reports Current policies and procedures including property categorisation.</p>
STAKEHOLDERS:	<p>*RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER MUST BE INVOLVED IN THE REVIEW Portfolio Holder – Housing Executive Director of Strategy and Development Executive Director of Resources Assistant Director of Housing management & Enforcement Assistant Director of Property Services & Housing Repairs Solicitor to the Council and Assistant Director of Governance Housing Officers Existing and prospective Council tenants</p>
CONSULTATION/ RESEARCH:	<p>Review of legal challenges to Right to Buy exemptions</p>
SITE VISITS:	<p>Attendance at Officer meeting</p>

TIMESCALE	ESTIMATED	REVISED	ACTUAL
Commencement	September 2021		
Interim Report/ Recommendations	February 2022		
Finish (Report to Committee)	March – May 2022		
Report to Executive	April-June 2022		

SCRUTINY REVIEW OUTCOMES

CONCLUSIONS:	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
DRAFT REPORT SENT TO DIRECTOR & ANY RELEVANT OFFICERS FOR COMMENT:	*DATE AND OFFICERS RESPONDING
DATE DRAFT REPORT CONSIDERED BY PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	
DATE SIGNED OFF BY COMMITTEE/CHAIR:	
DATE CONSIDERED BY EXECUTIVE:	
DATE OF EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE:	
POST-SCRUTINY MONITORING PERIOD:	
DATE OF EVALUATION OF PROCESS:	