

# Public Document Pack



**Service Director – Legal, Governance and  
Commissioning**

**Samantha Lawton**

Governance and Commissioning

PO Box 1720

Huddersfield

HD1 9EL

**Tel:** 01484 221000

Please ask for: Andrea Woodside

Email: [andrea.woodside@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.woodside@kirklees.gov.uk)

Monday 2 September 2024

## Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

### Cabinet

The **Cabinet** will meet in the **Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **1.30 pm** on **Tuesday 10 September 2024**.

This meeting will be live webcast. To access the webcast please go to the Council's website at the time of the meeting and follow the instructions on the page.

The items which will be discussed are described in the agenda and there are reports attached which give more details.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "S Lawton".

**Samantha Lawton**

**Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning**

Kirklees Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair/Clerk of their intentions prior to the meeting.

## Membership of Cabinet

<b>Member</b>	<b>Responsible For:</b>
Councillor Carole Pattison	Leader of the Council
Councillor Beverley Addy	Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health
Councillor Munir Ahmed	Cabinet Member - Environment and Highways
Councillor Moses Crook	Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member - Transport and Housing
Councillor Tyler Hawkins	Cabinet Member - Corporate
Councillor Viv Kendrick	Cabinet Member - Children' Services (Statutory Responsibility for Children)
Councillor Amanda Pinnock	Cabinet Member - Education and Communities
Councillor Graham Turner	Cabinet Member - Finance and Regeneration

# Agenda

## Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

---

**Pages**

**1: Membership of Cabinet**

To receive any apologies for absence.

---

**2: Minutes of Previous Meetings**

1 - 16

To approve the Minutes of the Meetings of the Cabinet held on 9 July and 13 August 2024.

---

**3: Admission of the Public**

Most agenda items will be considered in public session, however, it shall be advised whether Cabinet will consider any matters in private, by virtue of the reports containing information which falls within a category of exempt information as contained at Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

---

**4: Declaration of Interests**

17 - 18

Cabinet Members will be asked to advise if there are any items on the Agenda in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, or any other interests, which may prevent them from participating in the discussion or vote on any of the items.

---

**5: Deputations/Petitions**

Cabinet will receive any petitions and/or deputations from members of the public. A deputation is where up to five people can attend the meeting and make a presentation on some particular issue of concern.

A member of the public can also submit a petition at the meeting relating to a matter on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, Members of the Public must submit a deputation in writing, at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting and shall subsequently be notified if the deputation shall be heard. A maximum of four deputations shall be heard at any one meeting.

---

## **6: Questions by Members of the Public**

To receive any public questions.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, the period for the asking and answering of public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes.

Any questions must be submitted in writing at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

---

## **7: Questions by Elected Members (Oral Questions)**

Cabinet will receive any questions from Elected Members.

In accordance with Executive Procedure Rule 2.3 (2.3.1.6) a period of up to 30 minutes will be allocated.

---

## **8: To present Cabinet with findings from recent informal consultation and other relevant details to enable a decision to be made on the future library service** 19 - 36

To consider the report.

Contact: Mags Rogerson, Head of Local Integrated Partnerships

---

## **9: Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy** 37 - 66

To consider the approval of the policy.

Contact: Neil Hutchinson, Homes and Neighbourhoods

---

**10: Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024-2027** 67 - 98

To consider the adoption of the policy.

Contact: Stephen Bonnell, Policy Partnerships and Corporate Planning

---

**11: Council Budget Strategy 2025/2026 and future years (Reference to Council)** 99 - 140

To receive the Council Budget Strategy.

Contact: Kevin Mulvaney, Service Director - Finance

---

**12: Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 - 2029 & Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2024** 141 - 186

To consider the approval of the policies.

Contact: Sarah Holmes, Housing Services

---

**13: Kirklees Major Transport Capital Schemes; Annual Report 2024** 187 - 206

To consider the report.

Contact: Rashid Mahmood, Major Projects

---

This page is intentionally left blank

Contact Officer: Yolande Myers

## KIRKLEES COUNCIL

### CABINET

**Tuesday 9th July 2024**

Present: Councillor Cathy Scott (Chair)  
Councillor Masood Ahmed  
Councillor Yusra Hussain  
Councillor Habiban Zaman

Observers:  
Councillor Tanisha Bramwell  
Councillor Moses Crook  
Councillor David Hall  
Councillor Zahid Kahut  
Councillor Viv Kendrick  
Councillor Jo Lawson  
Councillor Carole Pattison  
Councillor Mohan Sokhal  
Councillor Graham Turner  
Councillor Alison Munro

- 1 Membership of Cabinet**  
Councillor A Zaman was absent from the meeting.
- 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**  
Approved as a correct record.
- 3 Declaration of Interests**  
No Interests were declared.
- 4 Admission of the Public**  
Cabinet noted exempt information was provided under items 9 and 11.
- 5 Deputations/Petitions**  
There were no deputations or petitions.
- 6 Questions by Members of the Public**  
No questions were asked.
- 7 Questions by Elected Members (Oral Questions)**  
Cabinet received oral questions under Executive Procedure Rule 2.3

#### **Question from Councillor D Hall**

“My question is regarding Heritage buildings in the centre of the village of Gomersal being Red House, the Public Hall, the old Gomersal First School and Grove Chapel

## **Cabinet - 9 July 2024**

with three of them either in serious dilapidation or in danger of becoming so. Could I have an update as to how we are proceeding with these Heritage buildings, given that the Council has some control of three of these buildings?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Culture and Greener Kirklees (Councillor Y Hussain)

### **Question from Councillor V Kendrick**

“There is an ambition in Children's Services that every child and young person should have the best start in life. The last government expanded the range of free childcare to much younger ages, but these places are not being taken up by families on low income, and particularly SGO Carers. What do you think can be done to increase take up?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet member for Children's Services (Councillor H Zaman)

### **Question from Councillor G Turner**

“I notice on the Health and Safety Service Plan report, there is no portfolio holder. It is my understanding that the portfolio holder should have undertaken the requisite training. Do we know when this position might be filled and when they will complete the training?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor C Scott)

### **Question from Councillor T Bramwell**

“The closure of Dewsbury Sports Centre has had a serious impact on residents with many Members wanting to see it reopen. Several schools are seeing antisocial behaviour and gang related activity. Grass roots organisations utilised the Sports Centre and were able to set up play schemes that intervened and worked on preventative measures with young people. I would like to ask if it is a priority of this cabinet is to see the doors reopen”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor C Scott)

### **Question from Councillor C Pattison**

“The Government has announced that it wants 3000 new nursery places available in schools. Does the current policy on SENDIF funding take into account this, as there are costs associated with providing the places in schools, along with staffing arrangements. How are we going to meet that new demand of 3,000 places for children, especially children with Special Educational Needs?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor C Scott)

### **Question from Councillor Z Kahut**



## **Cabinet - 9 July 2024**

“In relation to Batley Library, has a decision been made about its relocation to a setting where space is limited? What are some of the factors being considered in making that decision?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor C Scott)

### **Question from Councillor Z Kahut**

“In relation to Dewsbury Sports Centre, when will we see the report regarding the further investigations of RAC within the building?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor C Scott)

### **Question from Councillor Jo Lawson**

“In the Netherton ward, like other areas, we see parks and play areas that are overgrown, where the play equipment is not safe and playing fields where the grass is not getting cut. I have been informed that there are 19 out of 72 park staff facing redundancy and I understand that Unison have been waiting over a year for a redundancy policy, when will that be put in place?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor C Scott)

### **Question from Councillor Z Kahut**

“There seems to be a disparity of service between areas, specifically Pavilion Bowling Green where the grass is no longer cut to a good enough standard. There is an absence of regular maintenance, which is resulting in a lack of use, are there any plans to rectify the level of service needed?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Culture and Greener Kirklees (Councillor Y Hussain)

### **Question from Councillor V Kendrick**

“The four bowling clubs that use Firth Park Bowling Green in Heckmondwike have been informed that they will no longer have their grass cut by the Council and that the community must do this themselves. However, we have previously been told that the grass cutting was a specialist job and I’m not sure how the community will be able to do it. This is affecting our communities; can some thought be given to looking at the number of staff employed?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Culture and Greener Kirklees (Councillor Y Hussain)

### **Question from Councillor T Bramwell**

“In relation to the reduction in services to libraries and community buildings, when these are done in areas of high deprivation, where some members of the community are working 40 – 60 hours per week to make ends meet, when are they able to find the time to engage and volunteer, and how do we get them to do this?”

## Cabinet - 9 July 2024

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor C Scott)

### 8 **Appointment of Cabinet and Portfolios (Notice Under Article 7)**

Cabinet received, for information, the schedule of appointment of Cabinet Members and associated portfolio responsibilities, in accordance with Articles 7.2.4 and 7.3.4 of the Constitution.

**RESOLVED** – That the appointment of Cabinet Portfolios, under the provision of Article 7.2.4 and 7.3.4 of the Constitution, be noted.

### 9 **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - Capital investment in the rebuild of two special schools**

(Under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 36(1), Cabinet received a representation from Councillor Munro).

Cabinet considered a report which sought approval to draw down and spend a proportion of the £48.3m capital allocation from the Aspire & Achieve - Strategic Priorities section of the Capital Plan approved by Council to enable the provision of two new build, expanded special schools to replace the existing school sites.

The report advised that the rebuild of the two special schools continued to deliver on the Council's priorities in (i) addressing financial challenges (ii) transforming services (iii) delivering a greener, healthier Kirklees and (iv) investment in towns and villages.

The rebuild of the special schools would provide more places locally for children and young people with SEND and help to improve their educational outcomes alongside a more cost-effective alternative solution to independent provision.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- 1) That approval be given for the draw down of capital funds as outlined in Appendix 4 of the considered report to enable the appointment of a building contractor to construct a new build 132 place SEMH school on the former Deighton centre site, Deighton Road, Huddersfield.
- 2) That approval be given to the draw down of capital funds as outlined in Appendix 4 to enable the appointment of a specialist contractor to undertake the site clearance of all buildings on the former high school site on Fernside Avenue, Almondbury, Huddersfield.
- 3) That approval be given to the draw down of capital funds to facilitate the settlement of the exit of the former school site on Fernside Avenue from the PPP1 contract as detailed in Appendix 4.
- 4) That the allocation of government grant for High Needs Provision from the Department for Education (DfE) of £7,056m for Financial Year 2024/25, and which may be used as a contribution towards the budget for the two new build schools, be noted.

## Cabinet - 9 July 2024

- 5) That to enable the delivery of the schemes without returning to Cabinet, the delegated powers contained in the Council's Financial Procedure Rules (FPRs) 3.9-3.12, dated June 2024, may be used to:
  - (i) Transfer resources within a programme area without restrictions.
  - (ii) Transfer resources between any project or programme area up to a maximum of £2m in any financial year.
  - (iii) Transfer resources within programme areas between any year within the approved capital plan, subject to compliance with FPRs 3.9 - 3.12 and notification to the relevant Cabinet Member and appropriate Ward Members.
  
- 6) That it be noted, approval to tender and award a contract for the new build school will be sought in late 2024 once detailed design of the new Woodley School and College had occurred, and a pre-tender estimate had been calculated.

**10 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inclusion Fund Policy Update**  
Cabinet considered a report which outlined changes to the national approach to funding of support to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in childcare settings.

The report presented the outcome of the consultation on proposed changes to the SEND Inclusion Fund (SENDIF) policy and sought approval to implement the policy to reflect the changes to the national approach which ensured SENDIF eligibility mirrored the expanded free childcare offer. The new approach changed the way SENDIF was calculated ensured it continued to support children with SEND in early years settings whilst the eligibility criteria and allocation process remained fair. The policy would provide a more efficient, flexible, and straightforward for providers, along with maintaining its current financial envelope.

### **RESOLVED –**

- 1) That approval be given to the revised policy for the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inclusion Fund (SENDIF).
- 2) That authority be delegated to Service Director Learning & Early Support to:
  - (i) Align SENDIF to reflect the Council's expanded duties under the government's expansion of free childcare hours for eligible children aged from 9 months to 4 years old.
  - (ii) Ensure children in early years education can continue to benefit from additional support funded by SENDIF and that the eligibility criteria and allocation process remain fair.
  - (iii) Ensure the budget for SENDIF operates within its financial envelope and note if a decision was taken to continue with SENDIF+ (Kirklees voluntary provision), there was no identified budget.

- (iv) Reflect Cabinet's decision in January to approve changes to process, after January 2024's consultation, for the allocation of funding and remove the old process from the policy.

**11 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - Mainstream High Needs Funding**

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval to move to a new mainstream cluster funding model and way of working to support children and young people with additional needs reflecting the arrangement with a revised funding model.

The report advised that the new model would enable children to receive funded support at the earliest opportunity and for support to be delivered at a local level. The model would improve collective capacity to meet the needs of pupils by sharing expertise across school clusters, along with providing greater consistency and high quality. This approach would, over time, enable children to be supported in their mainstream school, as well as supporting the delivery of the High Needs Safety Valve Agreement and the Council's SEND Big Plan.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the new funding model to support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in mainstream schools be approved.
- 2) That it be noted, the new model would devolve high needs funding to schools at a cluster and area level to meet the needs of children at the earliest opportunity and that multiagency support would ensure the right support was offered in the right place at the right time.
- 3) That it be noted, the new model would allow clusters and areas to use the funding more flexibly to support children with SEND, no longer tying funding only to those children with an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan.
- 4) That authority be delegated to the Service Director for Learning and Early Support to implement the new model from September 2024.

**12 Kirklees Environment Strategy: Everyday Life (Reference to Council)**

Cabinet received the draft 'Environment Strategy: Everyday Life' for consideration and recommendation to Council as a key strategy within the four top-tier strategies.

The report outlined the strategy would achieve 'our Vision' and 'Shared Outcomes' outlined within the Council Plan 2024/25 alongside the priority for delivering a greener Kirklees and addressing the environmental challenge faced in relation to the climate emergency.

Cabinet noted the strategy was developed via a process of co-design which involved residents, partner organisations, businesses, institutions, and community groups across Kirklees to ensure it delivered a strong ambitious and successful strategy which was both realistic and achievable.

**RESOLVED –**

## Cabinet - 9 July 2024

- 1) That the 'Environment Strategy: Everyday, Life,' be recommended to 17 July 2024 Council meeting for adoption.
- 2) That should Council approve the Environment Strategy, authority be delegated to the Strategic Director for Corporate Strategy, Commissioning & Public Health, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Greener Kirklees to:
  - (i) Establish the Partnership Pledge and associated monitoring and evaluation process via the Environment Strategy Partnership Group.
  - (ii) Establish the governance structure, associated board and necessary policies and procedures to effectively govern the implementation of the strategy within the Council.
  - (iii) To deliver any future minor alternations for the strategy.
  - (iv) To meet the ambition (targets and objectives) outlined within the 'Environment Strategy, Everyday life.'
  - (v) To apply for and accept external funding for the implementation of the partnership pledge process and any actions associated with achieving the strategies targets.
  - (vi) To collect and analyse data for the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy, with the support of necessary service areas which hold, or have responsibility for collecting this information.

### 13 **Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2024**

Cabinet received the Food Safety Service Plan 2024, which outlined the function and activity of the Health and Safety Team within Environmental Health and present for adoption their Service Plan detailing activity over April 2023 to March 2024 and priorities and activity for the following 12 months until March 2025.

The report advised that service priorities had been set in conjunction with national guidelines from the Health and Safety Executive. Both national and local intelligence had been used to form the service priorities, with neighbouring authorities critically reviewing these priorities to ensure consistency with national guidance.

**RESOLVED** – That approval be given to the Food Safety Service Plan 2024 and direct officers to publish the plan on the Council's Website.

### 14 **Statutory Health & Safety Service Plan 24-25**

Cabinet considered a report which outlined the function and activity of the Health and Safety Team within Environmental Health, and appended for adoption the Service Plan detailing activity over April 2023 to March 2024 and priorities and activity for the following 12 months until March 2025.

The report highlighted the continued priority to investigate all major injuries, accidents and serious complaints and notification of disease. The report also saw new priorities for 24/25 which were (i) to reduce work related ill health from stress and depression by raising awareness amongst employers within the retail sector (ii) planned preventive maintenance within tyre and exhaust retailers (iii) raising awareness of pressure vessels in coffee machines and (iv) carbon monoxide in commercial premises.

**RESOLVED** – That approval be given to the Health & Safety Service Plan 24-25.

**15 Highways 2 year detailed Capital Plan allocation 2024/25 and 2025/26**

(Under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 36(1), Cabinet received representations from Councillors Munro, Kendrick and Crook).

Cabinet considered the intended delivery programme for the Highways Capital Plan allocation for the years 2024/25 & 2025/26 and planned highways projects for 2024/25 and indicative programme for 2025/26.

The report provided a breakdown of new additional budget since 6th March 2024, and sought approval to allocate and spend any additional budget income awarded since 6th March 2024. The works would be delivered through a combination of in-house contractors and external specialist contractors ensuring value for money was achieved.

Cabinet noted the projects and programme of works had been developed in consideration of statutory requirements and available budgets to offer the most efficient, sustainable, and cost-effective intervention that could be delivered within the 2024/25 financial year.

**RESOLVED** –

- 1) That approval be given to the budget and programme / scheme allocations within the detailed 2-year Highways Capital Plan to the sum of £24,265,806 and £17,174,575 for 2024/25 and 2025/26, respectively.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director Growth & Regeneration or Service Director for Highways & Streetscene and in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to manage the implementation of the programme and to enable any amendments to identified schemes, the addition of future schemes, and to award funding (within the £24,265,806) for those schemes.
- 3) That approval be given, where necessary, to accelerate spend of the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) and accelerate the two year forward programme.
- 4) That authority be delegated to Service Director for Highways and Streetscene, in consultation with the Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning, to negotiate, agree, and enter into the terms of any applicable funding agreements (and associated documentation) to enable individual projects and schemes to proceed.

**16 2024/25 - 2025/26 Corporate Landlord Capital Plans - Proposed allocation of capital funding**

Cabinet gave consideration to a report which sought approval for potential projects, to be funded from the 2024/25 – 2025/26 Corporate Landlord baseline programmes in the Council's Capital Plan, and for officers of the council to receive delegated powers to manage the programmes.

The report outlined the funding allocations for the Corporate Landlord baseline programmes as (i) asset Investment baseline of £9.888M for 2024/25 and £8.160M

## Cabinet - 9 July 2024

for 2025/26 (ii) compliance baseline of £1.891M for 2024/25 and £1M for 2025/26 and (iii) wellbeing baseline of £1.118M in 2024/25 and £1M in 2025/26.

Cabinet noted the proposed programme themes for the next financial years as outlined at Appendix A of the considered report, understanding that without the investment, buildings would close or be unable to provide residents with the services they need. The report highlighted that before any investment was made, the long-term future of the asset was considered to ensure that it fit with the Council's needs moving forward.

### RESOLVED –

- 1) That the themes of work for 2024/25 – 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix A of the considered report be approved.
- 2) That authority be delegated to Service Director - Development to:
  - (i) Add or delete projects from the programmes without prior approval provided that the total cost of the programmes remains within the approved capital allocations set by Council.
  - (ii) Transfer resources between the Corporate Landlord programmes without restrictions to enable efficient delivery of projects.
  - (iii) Slip, delete or reallocate budget between projects during the two financial years providing that the total cost of the programmes remains within the approved capital allocations set by Council to enable the effective management of the programmes concerned over the two-year period.
- 3) That the virement of £68K in capital funding from the Children's and Families Strategic Priorities Woodley Special School new build to the Corporate Landlord budget be approved.
- 4) That authority be delegated to officers of the Council to identify, design, tender and implement the delivery of projects aligned with the work themes identified.

### 17 **Financial Outturn Report 2023/2024, to include the Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account Outturn Position and Annual Report on Treasury Management**

Cabinet gave consideration to a report, prior to its submission to Council, which set out information on the Council's 2023/2024 financial outturn position for General Fund Revenue, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Plan, including proposals for revenue and capital rollover from 2023/2024 to 2024/2025.

The report advised that the outturn position improved significantly to +£7.3m overspend from a projected overspend at Q1 of £20.3m, due to the spend controls and savings in capital financing costs from a Minimum Revenue Provision review and capital programme slippage.

The slides contained within the considered report provided a detailed breakdown of the outturn financial monitoring position in relation to (i) General Fund revenue outturn position in 2023/24 by service area (ii) General Fund reserves and balances

## Cabinet - 9 July 2024

movements in-year (iii) HRA revenue outturn position including movements in HRA reserves in year (iv) Capital outturn position in 2023/24 (v) the Council's Corporate Risk 'Heat Map' and summary and (vi) Treasury management prudential indicators.

It was noted that, subject to approval, capital slippage proposals and the update of the multi-year capital plan would be incorporated into in year financial monitoring in 2024/25 and reported quarterly to Cabinet from Q1 onwards.

### RESOLVED –

- 1) That in relation to the General Fund, the revenue outturn position of +£7.3m overspend for 2023/24 be noted.
- 2) That the year-end position on reserves and balances of £61.2m (excluding Statutory Reserves), particularly that the level of general reserve at £25m is the desirable level on a risk-based approach as presented to Members in the 2024/25 budget report be noted.
- 3) That the application of the Councils flexible capital receipts strategy to the value of £3.3m applied against eligible transformation costs in 2023/24 be noted.
- 4) That the regular monitoring and review of corporate reserves in 2024/25 to be reported to Cabinet as part of the Quarterly financial monitoring cycle be noted.
- 5) That the year-end deficit position on the Collection Fund of £8m, along with the position on the DSG as part of the Council's Safety Valve agreement be noted.
- 6) That in relation to the Housing Revenue Account, the HRA revenue outturn position of +£1m deficit for 2023/24 and the year-end reserves balance of £33.9m be noted.
- 7) That in relation to Capital, the Council capital outturn position at £148.2m for 2023/24 be noted.
- 8) That the £22.3m capital slippage from 2023/24 to 2024/25 (as outlined at paragraph 3.6.13) of the considered report be noted.
- 9) That the revised capital plan for the period 2024/25 onwards, after taking into account the re-phasing of schemes and additional grant funding assumptions, be noted.
- 10) That it be recommended to 17 July 2024 Council meeting for the £0.75m additional borrowing for the in-house fleet for home to school transport pilot.
- 11) That the extension of the existing Property Investment Fund loan facility for Kingsgate shopping centre for a further 9 months, at the prevailing interest rate (cost neutral for the Council) be recommended for approval to 17 July 2024 Council meeting.
- 12) That the use of £0.14m Libraries Improvement Grant Fund towards spend on the Kirklees Open Access pilot project be recommended for approval to 17 July 2024 Council meeting.
- 13) That the Review of Treasury Management activity for 2023/24 be noted.

- 18 Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24**  
Cabinet considered the mandatory 'Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement' report for 2023/24 along with the Council's self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.



## **Cabinet - 9 July 2024**

Cabinet noted that for 2023/24, the Annual Report, as considered at Appendix 1a of the considered report indicated that complaints had increased from 554 in 2022/23 to 826 last year. In part, this was due to the council making it easier to complaint with more routes to do so, along with promoting the role of the Housing Ombudsman in relevant correspondence. However, the level of complaints that were upheld signalled that, as a landlord, the Council was still not getting things right.

The report included the Annual Self-Assessment for 2023/24, at Appendix 1b, which showed that the council was compliant with the new Code, save for one exception relating to keeping records of reasonable adjustments.

### **RESOLVED –**

- 1) That it be noted the draft Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24, and self-assessment was submitted by 30th June 2024.
- 2) That the draft Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24, which includes the self-assessment against the Code, be noted.
- 3) That the self-assessment against the Code was an accurate reflection of the Council's position and that the areas in which the Council had fallen short, namely 'reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010' was noted and, that plans to rectify this were in place and being progressed.
- 4) That approval be given to publish the final report including Cabinet's response and the self-assessment, on the Council's website, post submission.

This page is intentionally left blank

Contact Officer: Yolande Myers

## KIRKLEES COUNCIL

### CABINET

**Tuesday 13th August 2024**

Present: Councillor Moses Crook (Chair)  
Councillor Beverley Addy  
Councillor Munir Ahmed  
Councillor Tyler Hawkins  
Councillor Viv Kendrick  
Councillor Amanda Pinnock  
Councillor Graham Turner

Observers: Councillor Ammar Anwar  
Councillor Tanisha Bramwell  
Councillor Imran Safdar  
Councillor Mohan Sokhal

Apologies: Councillor Carole Pattison (Chair)

**19 Membership of Cabinet**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Carole Pattison.

**20 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

**21 Admission of the Public**

It was noted that all items would be considered in public session.

**22 Deputations/Petitions**

No deputations or petitions were received.

**23 Questions by Members of the Public**

No questions were received.

**24 Questions by Elected Members (Oral Questions)**

Cabinet received oral questions under Executive Procedure Rule 2.3.

**Question from Councillor T Bramwell**

“Will the administration prioritise the re-opening of the Dewsbury Sports Centre?”

A Response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration (Councillor G Turner)

**Question from Councillor A Anwar**

“What is the administration doing to ensure public safety in light of the recent far right riots?”

A response was provided by the Deputy Leader (Councillor M Crook)

**Question from Councillor I Safdar**

“Are there any plans to celebrate the diverse cultural community in which we live, and what plans are there to tackle misinformation and to promote positive immigration?”

A response was provided by the Deputy Leader (Councillor M Crook)

**Question from Councillor A Anwar**

“What are the administration’s proposals to keep key services active rather than relying on communities?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Corporate (Councillor T Hawkins)

**Question from Councillor T Bramwell**

“The issue of potholes and hedge trimming are becoming a huge issue in North Kirklees. How will the administration mobilise volunteers to work alongside councillors to do more?”

A response was provided by the Deputy Leader (Councillor M Crook)

**Question from Councillor I Safdar**

“Whilst appreciating the pressure on Council budgets, will the portfolio holder for environment and highways attend and visit the play area in my ward to assess what can be done to repair the area and equipment?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor M Ahmed)

**25 Appointment of Cabinet and Portfolios (Notice Under Article 7)**

Cabinet received, for information, the schedule of appointment of Cabinet Members and associated portfolio responsibilities, in accordance with Articles 7.2.4 and 7.3.4 of the Constitution.

**RESOLVED** – That the appointment of Cabinet Portfolios, under the provision of Article 7.2.4 and 7.3.4 of the Constitution, be noted.

**26 Q1 2024/25 Council Plan and Performance Update Report**

Cabinet received a report which provided information on the Q1 Council Plan and Performance against the 2024/25 Council Plan priorities and Key Measures.

Cabinet noted the Key Measures formed a fundamental part of the new quarterly reporting arrangements and represented the most critical and important areas of the Council with consideration of (i) the Council's strategic priorities for 2024/25 (ii) the Council's transformation programmes (iii) the Council's statutory functions and responsibilities (iv) the Council's regulatory requirements (v) risks to the Council and (vi) the Council's resources (finance and people).

The report advised that updates would be shared on a quarterly basis to enable progress to be monitored against key priorities to enact change where needed, and to maximise improvements and outcomes for people and places.

**RESOLVED –** That the Q1 2024/25 Council Plan and Performance Update Report, progress against the 2024/25 Council Plan priorities, and performance against the 2024/25 Council Key Measures be noted.

**27 Corporate Financial Monitoring Report Q1 2024-2025**

Cabinet considered the Corporate Financial Monitoring Report for General Fund Revenue, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Plan as at Quarter 1 2024/25.

Cabinet noted the slides contained within the considered report which provided a detailed background of the projected outturn financial monitoring position in relation to the (i) Forecast General Fund revenue outturn position in 2024/25 by service area (ii) General Fund reserves and balances movements in-year (iii) Forecast HRA revenue outturn position including movements in HRA reserves in-year (iv) Forecast capital outturn position in 2024/25 and (v) Treasury management prudential indicators.

The report advised that the forecast outturn position at Q1 was an overspend of £18.1m which after the use of earmarked reserves and contingencies reduced to £12.9m. Within the position of £18.1m, an estimated £8.5m was due to slippage in the approved savings programme across the Council.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the forecast revenue outturn position at Quarter 1 for 2024/25 (£12.9 m overspend) be noted.
- 2) That the Quarter 1 forecast that the DSG deficit is forecast to increase by £20m in 2024/25 be noted.
- 3) That the Quarter 1 forecast HRA position (£403k deficit) and forecast year-end reserves position of £13.8m be noted.
- 4) That the Quarter 1 forecast capital monitoring position for 2024/25 and approve £62m re-profiling of the 2024/25 capital plan into future years be noted.
- 5) That the Quarter 1 treasury management prudential indicators be noted.
- 6) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director Adults and Health or his authorised representative to receive, host and utilise accelerating Reform

## Cabinet - 13 August 2024

Fund revenue funding (£1.57m) and to transfer to regional partners by way of revenue grants as part of this.

### 28 **Corporate Risk: Quarterly Report 1 2024/25**

Cabinet received the corporate risk management report for Q1 2024/25 which provided information about the assessment of risks faced by the organisation at a significant corporate level.

Cabinet noted the slides, which were appended to the considered report and gave a summary position of new risks, increases in risk score and reductions in risk score. Three new risks had been added to the Corporate Risk Register being (i) Homelessness and Housing Stock Availability (ii) Potential for Industrial Action and (iii) Data Insight for operational delivery of Adult Social Care. No risks were removed in Q1.

Cabinet was advised that monitoring, reporting, and actions as determined through other parts of the councils' governance and management processes, would continue.

**RESOLVED** - That the Corporate Risk Q1 2024/25 report be noted.

<b>KIRKLEES COUNCIL</b>			
<b>COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC</b>			
<b>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>			
<b>Name of Councillor</b>			
<b>Item in which you have an interest</b>	<b>Type of interest (eg a disclosable pecuniary interest or an "Other Interest")</b>	<b>Does the nature of the interest require you to withdraw from the meeting while the item in which you have an interest is under consideration? [Y/N]</b>	<b>Brief description of your interest</b>

Signed: ..... Dated: .....

## NOTES

### Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your disclosable pecuniary interests under the new national rules. Any reference to spouse or civil partner includes any person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or as if they were your civil partner.

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.

Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -

- under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
- which has not been fully discharged.

Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.

Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.

Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) - the landlord is your council or authority; and the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.

Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -

- (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
- (b) either -

the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or

if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.





**Report title:**

*To present Cabinet with findings from recent informal consultation and other relevant details to enable a decision to be made on the future library service*

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (if applicable)	<b>Cllr Amanda Pinnock</b>
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>Yes Yes</b>

**Purpose of Report**

Report to follow the cabinet decision on 20/02/2024 which authorised the commencement of an informal engagement with community partners around the proposed Community Managed Libraries (CML) model and associated service review.

This paper looks to provide insight into the feedback received, provide consideration of an alternative targeted delivery model, set out the requirements for non-statutory public consultation and agree next steps.

**Recommendations**

1. Approve the revised targeted libraries delivery model, retaining some paid staffed hours across all 24 Kirklees library locations, following feedback from community engagement. This alongside a Libraires service management and staffing review will allow the required savings to be achieved
2. Endorse the consultation process on the option of targeted reduction in staffed hours and opening hours that will seek community and partner input through surveys and focus groups, as well as ensure the proposed model meets the legal requirements for a comprehensive and efficient service that meets the needs of the communities served
3. To note the Integrated Impact Assessment before making a decision to consult.
4. For the outcome of the public consultation process to return to cabinet for consideration prior to implementation

**Reasons for Recommendations**

- Revised model was developed after listening to the feasibility engagement feedback on a previously proposed community managed library model. Outcome indicated potential loss of volunteer capacity, community inclusion and resource impacts.
- Public consultation ensures impartial community insight is captured and used to shape any future delivery.

- For cabinet to be sighted on the outcome of the public consultation and endorse the future delivery model prior to implementation

**Resource Implication:**

The decisions recommended in this report will enable the Libraries Service to deliver on the savings agreed at Cabinet in February 2024 in a way that continues to support the community.

Library service resources will be required to project manage the public consultation, evaluation and implementation.

Support will also be required from other corporate services such as:

- I.T – support to communities around Library and public access IT systems
- Legal support in ensuring we meet our statutory requirements and advising on any policy implications.
- Human Resources – support with service change
- Financial Services – support with budget management
- Communications – support with delivery of key messages to all stakeholders throughout the consultation and service change process.
- Data & Insight – support with a formal consultation process
- External resource to deliver and manage consultation process – enabling objectivity and impartiality

**Date signed off by Executive Director & name**

Richard Parry Executive Director for Adults and Health on **02/09/2024**.

**Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?**

Kevin Mulvaney Service Director for Finance **02/09/2024**

**Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?**

Samantha Lawton, Service Director Governance and Commissioning **02/09/2024**

**Electoral wards affected:** All Wards

**Ward councillors consulted:** No

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered** Yes, no personal data has been included in the report.

**1. Executive Summary**

This report outlines the revised plans for a future libraries delivery model following a needs assessment and feedback from an informal engagement exercise. The plan to now retain all 24 libraries with some paid staff hours, aims to keep a comprehensive and efficient library service within budget limits, while responding to community needs, legal requirements, and Council priorities. The original plans for a community managed library model were approved by Cabinet

in February 2024 but have been revised based on the feedback from engagement with community partners.

The depth of feeling from community partners about the Community Managed library model has been listened to in this revised proposal. We heard clearly that volunteers value being part of a council network of libraries (statutory network), and that they think being part of this supports them to deliver effective and safe services, whilst maintaining beneficial support. Therefore, the revised delivery model is based on this feedback, and proposes to keep all the Kirklees Council libraries within the statutory network and reduce rather than remove all Kirklees Council staff. To do this will require a review of opening and staffed hours across all library locations to meet the savings target.

The revised proposed model will also consist of a Library service review to ensure all future staffing and management structures align to the proposed model. Additionally, the proposal will continue to provide support to those locations who do want to become a community managed library. This will only happen where feasible and where risks can be managed.

To ensure the proposed revised model meets the legal requirements for a comprehensive and efficient service, a period of public consultation will be carried out, involving surveys and focus groups. Cabinet is asked to endorse the revised delivery model, the public consultation, as along with the service review process it will deliver the agreed savings.

## **2. Information required to take a decision**

### **Background**

#### *Modern libraries*

Libraries are more than just places to read and borrow books. They are at the heart of our vision for Kirklees, as set out in Our Council Plan ([www.kirklees.gov.uk/councilplan](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/councilplan)). We want Kirklees to be a district with a strong, sustainable economy and a great quality of life, with thriving towns and villages and inclusive communities.

Libraries have become places where communities come together and residents can learn new skills, join learning groups, enjoy songs and music with children, knit and natter, have a coffee, exercise, and pursue personal development.

Libraries are also essential for people to seek support and access public services. They are often closer to residents' homes than other public services and can provide more tailored and localised support.

Volunteers are very much at the heart of our libraries and provide a number of benefits. Volunteers provide extra support to library staff, gain new skills and personal development and contribute to inclusive communities.

Through all these activities and more, libraries support the shared outcomes we seek with our partners, from giving children the best start in life and helping people achieve their ambitions, to supporting people to be as well as possible for as long as possible with control over their lives. The service also works to continually embed the pillars of the inclusive communities framework as key to their engagement with communities.

#### *Our library strategy*

This revised draft strategy facilitates the delivery of the benefits set out above, as well as our aim to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service within budget limits. This will be

done by making sure people can access the right support at the right place and time, building community capacity, partnerships and providing community support.

Libraries follow basic requirements from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) on what counts as a 'comprehensive and efficient' service. To deliver a comprehensive and efficient service, we are required to provide:

1. reading through our book stock and circulation
2. access to information
3. digital inclusion
4. encouragement of the use of service

As set out above, libraries also play an essential role in our wider outcomes. To support these outcomes, we aim to provide the following through our Kirklees libraries:

- Safe and warm spaces, Libraries of Sanctuary
- School readiness and literacy development
- Access to culture and creativity (including makerspace offer)
- Community inclusion (integrated support, early intervention and prevention infrastructure, events, groups, etc.)
- Business support and skills development
- Wellbeing focussing on social connection

To support delivery of all the above, we are increasing our focus on identifying and securing external funding and grants. We will also continue to develop and support volunteering across all our libraries.

## **Original plans**

The original plans were approved by Cabinet in February 2024. The plans were to merge customer service and library functions (learning from the successes and challenges of Huddersfield and Dewsbury), reduce management and frontline staff numbers to save costs, and to engage with community partners on the feasibility of setting up a number of community managed libraries with the removal of council staff from these libraries.

Community Managed Libraries, where communities have the capacity and interest, are great examples of local involvement in maintaining library services whilst also reducing Local Authority costs. They can adapt to local needs, access various income streams, and deliver positive community outcomes. However, they face challenges like building and staff management, sustainable funding, and volunteer coordination. The initial plan was to test the feasibility of this model in selected libraries, which were assessed as having the right foundational characteristics.

## **Engagement outcomes**

Officers have carried out the agreed engagement with community partners, involving informal consultation with staff, volunteers, ward, parish and town councillors at eight libraries across Kirklees. This engagement has shown that communities feel strongly that it is not the right thing to remove council staff from all libraries. We have learnt that although volunteers contribute significant skills, time and commitment to libraries and take on many roles with and without support of council staff, they strongly value being part of a council network of libraries (statutory network). This brings significant benefits and reduces some key risks. For example, volunteers in general were uncomfortable with their capacity and ability to respond handling personal and sensitive information. Volunteers also expressed concerns that removal of paid council staff would present challenges for their abilities to responding effectively and safely to vulnerable

groups who use library services. Moreover, there was a strong view that many did not currently have enough volunteer capacity to deliver the community managed model safely and effectively. Volunteer capacity and sustainability was a common theme raised throughout the engagement that groups felt required the support of council paid staff.

A revised delivery model has been developed that reflects the feedback from the engagement so far.

## **Revised model**

### **Integrating customer service and library functions**

We will continue to integrate customer service and library functions across the district at 10 library locations, as this will support our ambition to enable people to get support closer to home in the right place at the right time. This has been completed at our Huddersfield and Dewsbury locations already. Implementation will continue across the remaining 8 locations.

### **Reducing rather than removing council staff**

We will keep the Kirklees Council library service within the statutory network and reduce rather than remove Kirklees Council staff. Though we will continue to engage with community partners who wish to pursue a community managed library model, this will no longer be a requirement in the eight areas originally identified. However, we will support libraries if they wish to pursue the community managed library model and where this is agreed it is the right time to do so.

The proposal is to achieve the same identified saving of 912K in 2025/2026 through a targeted review of staffed hours across all locations alongside a review of the management structure. What hours, days and times paid staff hours will be retained across the 24 locations will be dependent on the outcome of the consultation (based on the draft needs assessment and IIA) and final needs assessment. A reduction in paid staff will not always result in a reduction in opening hours as some locations currently operate with higher staffing levels than others.

The targeted delivery model will consider the below principles:

- We will retain all 24 existing libraries within our statutory network, and this will support the legal requirement to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' service.
- The service will be made up of 10 Library Hubs which will provide additional technology to support phone and digital access to wider council services and support increased place-based provision. These libraries will have opening hours with a paid staff presence of between an estimated 15 and 50 hours. Reductions in paid staff opening hours will not always result in a reduction of opening hours. There will be a geographical spread and will consider local need.
- Alongside our Library Hubs there will be 14 'Community Supported' libraries. We will work closely with communities to offer volunteer opportunities to work alongside and support paid staff in delivering the service day to day, as many of our locations do already. They will have opening hours with a paid staff presence of between an estimated 5 and 15 hours and will reflect local need.
- The service will ensure learning gained throughout the process of implementation of the new model, as well as from other library services nationally, continues to be considered. Where it is appropriate and feasible to transfer that learning, we will do so

i.e. other library sites integrating technology once we have implemented this across the identified 10 hubs and supporting volunteer development strategies in libraries with no / low numbers.

## **Consultation on the revised delivery model**

A period of public consultation is required to make sure any future delivery meets the legal requirements for a comprehensive and efficient service that meets the needs of the communities served. The consultation aims to be objective and impartial, and its duration is reflective on the scale of change required. This will therefore take place over a minimum of 8 weeks.

The consultation will seek community and partner feedback on the revised targeted delivery model for delivering the library service, for example what days and times people would most like to access the service, which locations do they prefer to access.

We will seek input through surveys (online and paper-based) and focus groups with communities and partners. The consultation will consider the specific roles of stakeholders and the varied and critical roles they have in our libraries

Following the consultation, we will evaluate the results and update our needs assessment and integrated impact assessment based on the results.

## **Final decision and implementation**

The decision around the final proposal sits with Cabinet. However, we will continue consultation with the Department for Culture, Media & Sport who will consider the proposal prior to it being submitted to Cabinet.

The outcome of the consultation will inform the future library delivery model and be presented back to cabinet for agreement prior to any implementation.

## **3. Implications for the Council**

### **3.1 Council Plan**

Libraries are at the heart of our vision for Kirklees, as set out in Our Council Plan ([www.kirklees.gov.uk/councilplan](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/councilplan)). We want Kirklees to be a district with a strong, sustainable economy and a great quality of life, with thriving towns and villages and inclusive communities. Libraries have become places where communities come together and residents can learn new skills, join learning groups, enjoy songs and music with children, knit and natter, have a coffee, exercise, and pursue personal development.

Libraries are also essential for people to seek support and access public services. They are often closer to residents' homes than central customer service centres and can provide more tailored and localised support.

In support of these outcomes, we aim to provide the following through our revised draft libraries strategy:

- Safe and warm spaces, Libraries of Sanctuary
- School readiness and literacy development
- Access to culture and creativity (including makerspace offer)
- Community inclusion (integrated support, early intervention and prevention infrastructure, events, groups, etc.)

- Business support and skills development
- Wellbeing focussing on loneliness and isolation

Through all these activities and more, libraries support the shared outcomes set out the Council Plan, from giving children the best start in life and helping people achieve their ambitions, to supporting people to be as well as possible for as long as possible with control over their lives.

### 3.2 Financial Implications

The decisions recommended in this report will enable the Libraries Service to deliver on the savings agreed at Cabinet in February 2024 of 912K, in a way that matches community feedback and need. If individual libraries do wish to explore a community managed library model, and this is deemed feasible, this could support delivery in the future.

The decision will have positive implications for people living or working in Kirklees considering cost-of-living issues, as the library service will continue to provide free access to information, education, culture, and leisure opportunities for all residents, regardless of their age, background, or income level. The library service also supports the economic and social wellbeing of the community, by offering skills development, employability support, digital inclusion, health and wellbeing promotion, social prescribing, community engagement, and social cohesion activities.

### 3.3 Legal Implications

Section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 imposes a statutory duty on library authorities to "provide a comprehensive and efficient library service" to everyone who lives, works, or attends full time education in the library area. The duty is contained in Section 7(1) which provides as follows: -

"(1) It shall be the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof ...

Provided that although a library authority shall have power to make facilities for the borrowing of books and other materials available to any person it shall not by virtue of this subsection be under a duty to make such facilities available to persons other than those whose residence or place of work is within the library area of the authority or who are undergoing full time education within that area".

Section 7(2) provides further statutory instruction as to the factors which a library authority must take into account in order to fulfil its duty under Section 7(1):

"(2) In fulfilling its duty under the preceding subsection, a library authority shall in particular have regard to the desirability:

(a) of securing, by the keeping of adequate stocks, by arrangements with other library authorities, and by any other appropriate means, that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to, books and other printed matter, and pictures, gramophone records, films and other materials, sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children; and

(b) of encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service, and of providing advice as to its use and of making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required by persons using it; and

(c) of securing, in relation to any matter concerning the functions both of the library authority as such and any other authority whose functions are exercisable within the library area, that there is full co-operation between the persons engaged in carrying out those functions".

The expression "library service" is not defined nor are the concepts "comprehensive" and "efficient". Library facilities are referred to but not defined but they are clearly not the same as library premises which are defined (in Section 8(7)).

The availability of resources is highly relevant to the question of what constitutes a comprehensive and efficient library service and the section 7 duty cannot in law be separated from the savings the Council is required to make to balance its budget.

Section 9(1) confers a power on a library authority to contribute towards the expenses of "any other person" providing "library facilities for the public" and Section 20 empowers local authorities to generate revenue by allowing library premises to be used for holding meetings, performances, and the like in return for payment.

The DCMS is the regulator of the statutory public library service charged with superintending and promoting the improvement of the service and to secure the proper discharge by local authorities of their library functions.

When exercising its functions under the 1964 Act, the Council must act reasonably in public law terms with regard to its fiduciary duties to taxpayers.

The Council has a Best Value duty under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement in the way functions are carried out having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness supported by the DLUCh Revised Best Value Statutory Guidance (March 2015). On 1 July 2023 the Government began consulting on draft revised supplementary guidance and issued revised statutory guidance "Best Value standards and intervention : a statutory guide for best value authorities (8 May 2024 ) this replaces the 2015 guidance .

There is an obligation to consult library users, non- library users and others on the proposed changes to the library service so the council acts fairly.

The principles of a fair consultation require:

- Consultation must be carried out at a formative stage.
- The council must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to enable intelligent responses.
- Adequate time must be given for feedback.
- The product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account before any final decision is made.

The council will comply with its Contract Procedure Rules when procuring a consultant to carry out the consultation exercise.

### **3.4 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

- **Risk**



The council currently has a logged risk on the corporate risk registers, around ad hoc library closures due to the number of held vacancies impacting on staffing levels. These vacancies are being held to mitigate the impact or any potential redundancies due to the service change process. Following the consultation, approval of a new library model and subsequent library service change process, this risk will be mitigated through ensuring the staffing levels and delivery model are adequate to manage the future delivery of the service

- **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

Before deciding, Members must have regard to the Integrated Impact assessment in relation to the proposals. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council in carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need; (a) eliminate discrimination; harassment; victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; and (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it . Section 149(7) of the 2010 Act set out the protected characteristics which are age, disability, gender reassignment: pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

An initial Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out for the updated targeted proposal. This will continue to be developed and updated following public consultation and any subsequent implementation.

The assessments highlight some positive and negative impacts of the proposed changes, however overall, the impacts remain neutral

The full IIA can be found on the Council's website here:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/integrated-impact-assessments>

There will be HR (Human Resources) implications from these changes and staff and trade unions will be consulted in accordance with the usual procedures.

#### **4 Consultation**

While not legally mandated for every library service change, public consultation is strongly encouraged by various legal principles and best practice guidelines.

Local authorities risk legal challenges if they fail to consider public opinion on significant changes. Public consultation plays a crucial role in ensuring library services remain responsive to the needs and aspirations of the communities they serve. Therefore, it is proposed the Kirklees Library Service run a public consultation, for a minimum of 8 weeks on the future library provision for Kirklees.

We need to establish, what the public would like Kirklees Library Service to continue to deliver within the proposed budget constraints, and how they feel they could support and contribute to the delivery of the service. Along with insight on what days and times they would most like to utilise our services.

The consultation should include quantitative and qualitative research approaches, with the aim of ensuring a representative sample of library users and non-users are captured. The process

should also apply the pillars of the Inclusive communities framework ensuring belief, belonging and care can be reflected in responses.

We believe this should include the following elements:

- Self-completion paper/online surveys made available to all residents in Kirklees.
- Face to face surveys
- Targeted focus groups to include stakeholders such as:
  - Library Service Users
  - Friends of groups
  - Staff
  - Library building owners
  - Volunteers
  - Community partners
  - Ward Councillors

DCMS best practice requires us to undertake an independent and objective consultation. The consultation cost will be identified via a procurement process. An independent consultation will ensure we keep central the voices of residents being heard.

As part of the process the overview and scrutiny committee will be briefed on the Revised proposed targeted Library model and seek the views and comments of the committee ahead of decision making at cabinet

## **5 Engagement**

Community engagement to explore the feasibility of developing a community managed library (CML) model commenced in March 2024 following the permission to proceed granted by cabinet on 20th February 2024.

This engagement was underpinned by a set of initial principles derived from Kirklees wide partnership strategies (Policies and strategies | Kirklees Council) and Kirklees Council Access Strategy 2021-26 ([kirklees.gov.uk](http://kirklees.gov.uk)) alongside the inclusive communities framework approaches

- The belief that communities are best placed to lead, shape, and deliver support in communities.
- The council role is more effective as an enabler than as a sole delivery function.
- That communities can find their own solutions with increased access to support and information at local level.

As part of the engagement, 208 people from the range of stakeholders detailed above, attended face to face meetings with the service and subsequent follow up meetings had an attendance of 66 people. See Appendix 1 for details

As part of the meetings held, we:

- Provided detailed information on the proposal around community managed libraires
- Listened to feedback and concerns
- Collated key themes
- Evaluated feedback

### **Outcome of the engagement**

This engagement demonstrated the unique differences and strengths in our communities and the current services abilities to meet these varying needs, whilst highlighting a number of collective themes and concerns.

Themes identified were, communities wish:

- To remain part of the Kirklees Council library service (on statutory network).
- To reduce Kirklees paid staffing rather than remove fully.

Concerns raised were over:

- Aging Volunteers
- Lack of Volunteer capacity to deliver the proposed community managed library model.
- Risk of losing Volunteers
- Risk of locations becoming less inclusive
- Lack of volunteer skills around staff management, safeguarding and GDPR.

The community also demonstrated their depth of feeling around the proposed community managed library model, with the submission of 2 petitions opposing the models implementation.

These were:

- Keep Kirkheaton Library Staffed – submitted on the 07/06/2024 with 703 valid signatures
- Keep Kirklees Libraries Staffed: Say no to management changes – submitted 19/05/2024 with 3120 valid signatures

There was a collective recognition, from the participants taking part in the engagement, of the council's current financial position, with some feeling that they had already made previous steps to support the council financial pressures through supporting the library. It was felt a more equitable approach to reducing costs could be developed to support to retain the current network of 24 libraries across Kirklees and retain a broader reach into our communities, maintaining vital support to those who need it the most.

The Feedback obtained from informal engagement has informed:

- An updated draft Needs Assessment
- A revised draft Libraries Strategy
- An alternative option for consideration in response to feedback received

## **6 Options**

### **6.1 Options Considered**

We had identified 8 libraries that are considered able to broadly meet the foundational characteristics for a successful transition to a community managed library.

The proposed model which was engaged on is set out below:

8-community managed libraries would have sat outside our statutory provision of 16 libraries with paid staffing removed but would have still had access to a package of support, including book stock, IT equipment and infrastructure, plus some management support from the statutory network. This model would have supported us to move to a more strengths-based approach drawing on the knowledge, skills and resources which already exist within our communities.

This was proposed to provide the community the freedom to shape their own offer of support, expand on existing provision and respond to community needs.

However, following the community engagement feedback, we have listened to this and revised the proposed model accordingly whilst balancing the need to achieve financial savings.

## 6.2 Reasons for recommended Option

Following the engagement with key stakeholders on the feasibility of the community managed libraries model, the feedback was overwhelmingly that this was not an option they wished to pursue. This was due to a number of key factors including community capacity and a strong view that they would be best supported by paid staff and to remain part of the Kirklees Library network (statutory network).

It was also identified there could be an increased risk in the loss of provision over the longer term due to the fluctuation in numbers of volunteers and the increasing age of the existing volunteer cohort in some libraries.

As a result, the revised model was developed, which focused on a targeted reduction in staffed hours and opening hours. This is set out above in section 2 *Reducing rather than removing council staff*

This revised model looks to retain the current network of 24 Kirklees libraries all within the current statutory network. Mitigating the risks and concerns raised throughout the engagement and is being recommended for the following reasons:

- Supports to maintain the current place-based footprint.
- Facilitates a community led approach alongside paid staff.
- Maintains a connected library service across all 24 library locations.
- Maintains access and support to IT infrastructure and equipment.
- Maintains access to new books via the book fund and to the book stock across the entire network.
- Maintains management support to facilitate the new strategy.
- Provides service level saving.
- Reduces risks Supports the development of community managed libraries where communities express an interest in developing them.

## 7 Next steps and timelines

Subject to Cabinet approval, next steps would be as follows:

1. Commence public consultation on the revised delivery model set out in this report  
September – December 2024
2. Evaluation of consultation
3. Update needs assessment based on consultation
4. Final proposal produced, informed by consultation
5. Proposal considered by DCMS
6. If supported by DCMS, proposal considered by Cabinet in early 2025
7. If endorsed by Cabinet, implementation of the proposal-April 2025

## 8 Contact officer

Mags Rogerson  
Head of Local Integrated Partnerships  
[mags.rogerson@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:mags.rogerson@kirklees.gov.uk)

**9 Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Cabinet Report – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024 : [CABINET REPORT - Strength Based Integrated Community Library and customer service functions assets.pdf \(kirklees.gov.uk\)](#)

**10 Appendices**

Appendix 1 - - Engagement to explore the feasibility of transition into community managed libraries

**11 Service Director responsible**

Jill Greenfield  
Service Director for Customers and Communities  
[jill.greenfield@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:jill.greenfield@kirklees.gov.uk)

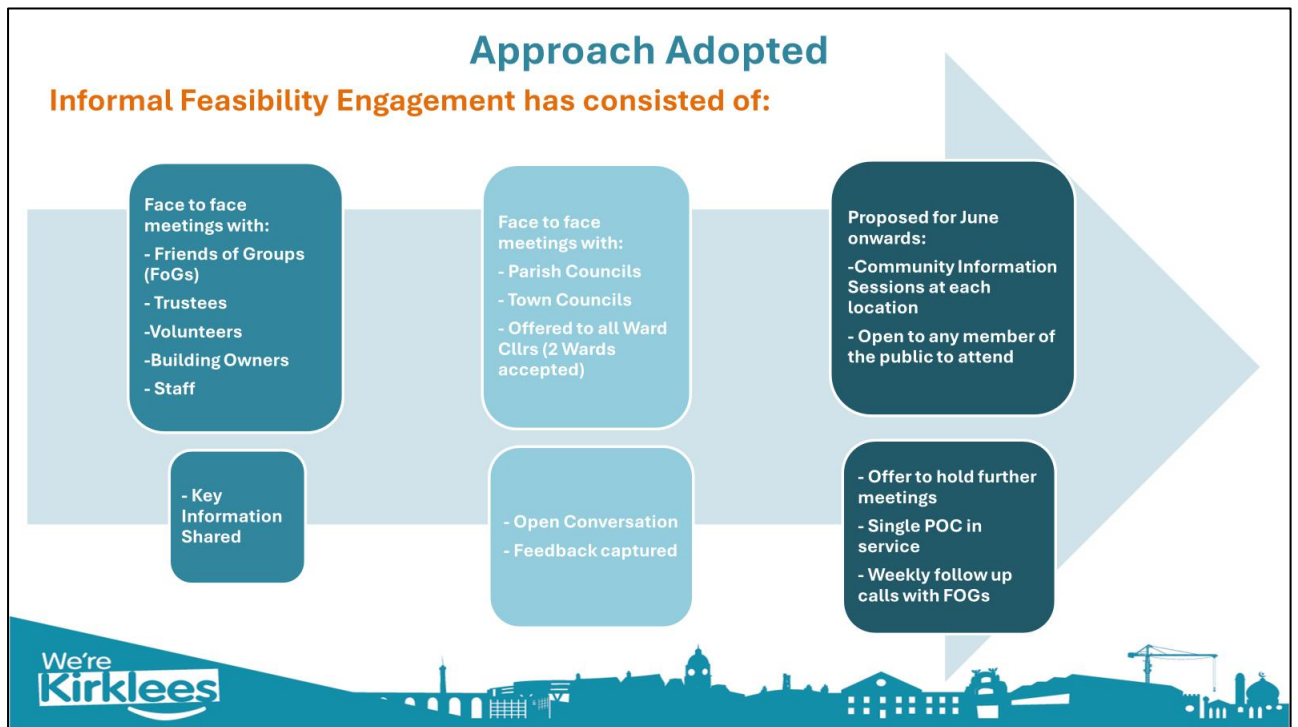
This page is intentionally left blank

**Appendix - Engagement to explore the feasibility of transition into community managed libraries**

Community engagement to explore the feasibility of developing a community managed library (CML) model commenced in March 2024 following the permission to proceed granted by cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

The 8 locations proposed to be developed into a community managed library location were:

- Meltham
- Kirkheaton
- Mirfield
- Honley
- Shepley
- Marsden
- Denby Dale Trustees
- Skelmanthorpe



**Engagement Timeline**

	March	April	May	June
Initial meetings with FoGs/Volunteers/Trustees				
Town/Parish Council Meetings				
Ward Councillor Briefings				
Library Staff Briefings				
Follow up meetings with FoGs/Volunteers/Trustees				

## Initial Meetings with FoGs/Volunteers/Trustees

Invitations were sent to all Kirklees libraries stakeholders and partners. However, only the eight libraries identified as potential Community Managed Libraries (CMLs) engaged in initial feasibility meetings. The purpose was to provide information on CML models, discuss inclusion rationale, and gather community feedback.

### Key Discussion Points:

**Community Strengths:** Discussed current strengths and fundamental characteristics of the community.

**Cabinet Decisions:** Overview of decisions made on 20th February 2024 and associated timelines.

**Feasibility Study:** Explanation of the desktop study identifying the 8 libraries.

**CML Model Introduction:** Presented the proposed model, impacts, and support package.

**Community Feedback:** Gathered thoughts on the proposed model and its potential impact.

**Needs Analysis:** Opportunity for community input to ensure future services are relevant.

**Open Conversation:** Addressed questions and captured feedback to enhance the feasibility study.

**Support Requirements:** Identified community needs to support the model's introduction.

**Next Steps: Informed decision-making about future actions.**

**Further Discussions:** Offered more focused discussions for clarification and additional input.

**Communication:** Provided a single point of contact and frequent follow-up communication.

**Information Packs:** To support informed discussions, information packs aligned with the DCMS Toolkit were provided, covering:

**CML Overview:** Benefits and considerations.

**Support from Kirklees Council:** Available support details.

**Decision-Making Process:** Overview and timelines.

To prevent digital exclusion, 100 printed copies were provided for volunteers preferring printed communication.

### Meeting Facilitation:

All meetings were facilitated by Mags Rogerson (Head of Service, Local Integrated Partnerships) or Jill Greenfield (Service Director for Communities and Access), along with senior library management. A total of 8 meetings were held with Friends of Groups, volunteers, and trustees, with 71 attendees in total.

### Town/Parish Council Meetings

The 8 identified libraries are in the following Town or Parish Councils:

Library	Town/Parish Council
Denby Dale	Denby Dale Parish Council



Skelmanthorpe	
Kirkheaton	Kirkburton Parish Council
Shepley	
Honley	Holme Valley Parish Council
Meltham	Meltham Town Council
Marsden	N/A
Mirfield	Mirfield Town Council

All initial meetings were facilitated by Mags Rogerson (Head of Service, Local Integrated Partnerships) or Jill Greenfield (Service Director for Communities and Access), along with a senior library management team member. Library staff took notes. Five meetings were held with parish councils, with a total attendance of 55 people.

### **Ward Councillor Briefings**

The 8 identified libraries are located in the following Wards:

<b>Library</b>	<b>Ward</b>
Denby Dale	Denby Dale
Skelmanthorpe	
Kirkheaton	Dalton
Shepley	Kirkburton
Honley	Holme Valley North
Meltham	
Marsden	Colne Valley
Mirfield	Mirfield

Councillors of the affected wards were invited to a Teams briefing facilitated by Mags Rogerson (Head of Service, Local Integrated Partnerships) and a senior library management team member. Library staff took notes. Four briefings were held, attended by 8 ward councillors.

### **Library Staff Briefings**

Staff briefings for the affected libraries were held face-to-face and via Teams, facilitated by Mags Rogerson (Head of Service, Local Integrated Partnerships) and a senior library management team member. Library staff took notes. Three briefings were held, attended by 66 staff members.

### **Follow up meetings with FoGs/Volunteers/Trustees**

After the initial feasibility meetings, each library considered for CML status was invited to a follow-up meeting. Six of the eight libraries accepted, resulting in seven meetings with a total attendance of 66 people.

## Key findings overview

Themes identified were,

**To remain part of the Kirklees Council library service** (on statutory network). All 8 locations.

**To reduce Kirklees paid staffing rather than remove fully.** 4 locations. Volunteers value the support paid staff provide

Concerns raised were over:

- Impact on aging Volunteers. All 8 locations.
- Lack of Volunteer capacity to deliver the proposed community managed library model. All 8 locations.
- Risk of losing Volunteers. All 8 locations. Volunteers are reluctant to continue without staff support or to take on additional unstaffed hours.
- Risk of locations becoming less inclusive. All 8 locations
- Lack of volunteer skills around staff management,
- Safeguarding 5 locations
- GDPR. 1 location
- The potential removal of support packages in later years, all 8 locations.

## DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION POLICY

<b>Meeting</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date</b>	10 September 2024
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Moses Crook Deputy Leader, Transport and Housing
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Eligible for Call In</b>	Yes
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	
<p>This report provides information to support the approval and adoption of the Damp, Mould, and Condensation (DMC) Policy v1.5, in response to the Regulatory Notice issued by the Regulator of Social Housing on 6 March 2024.</p>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	
<p>That the Damp, Mould, and Condensation (DMC) Policy v1.5(Appendix A) be approved, adopted and published on the Kirklees Council website.</p>	
<b>Reasons for Recommendations</b>	
<p>The Policy outlines that resident safety is a top priority and the actions the Council will be taking to manage and resolve Damp, Mould, and Condensation (DMC) in its social housing stock.</p>	
<p>By having the Policy Kirklees H&amp;N can demonstrate to the Regulator of Social Housing how we will handle reports of DMC. This policy will meet regulatory requirements and show our commitment to maintaining high housing standards.</p>	
<p>This policy underpins the importance of the resident in their home, and has been designed to ensure engagement, transparency, accountability and to achieve positive outcomes for residents.</p>	
<p>This is part of the introduction of a new strategy for DMC. It removes the previous fragmented approach which did not effectively deal with current cases, did not identify the root causes and provided a poor service and experience for residents.</p>	
<p>This new approach and policy will provide a defined approach for the two key areas of DMC.</p>	
<b>Reactive</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deal with new cases consistently</li> <li>• Prioritise and resolve existing open and older cases</li> </ul>	
<b>Proactive</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify unknown cases (find our silence)</li> <li>• Prevention and reduction of future cases</li> </ul>	

The policy will ensure that Kirklees H&N handles all DMC cases in a consistent way with agreed timescales and clear communication with residents. This means every report will be dealt with thoroughly and fairly.

The policy will ensure that Kirklees H&N handles all DMC cases in a consistent way. This means every report will be dealt with thoroughly and fairly, with equal focus on dealing with the 'current' and also on the future state and prevention/ reduction of DMC.

This policy supports our broader effort of 'Finding our Silence' to systematically address and reduce DMC issues in our properties.

The new policy will help us work more efficiently by focusing on the most urgent DMC cases first. This ensures that we use our resources effectively and address the most serious issues promptly.

The policy will help residents, staff and stakeholders understand DMC better by improving how we communicate. It will clearly outline roles and responsibilities, set expectations, and increase accountability. This transparency will build trust and ensure residents know what to expect from us in managing DMC issues.

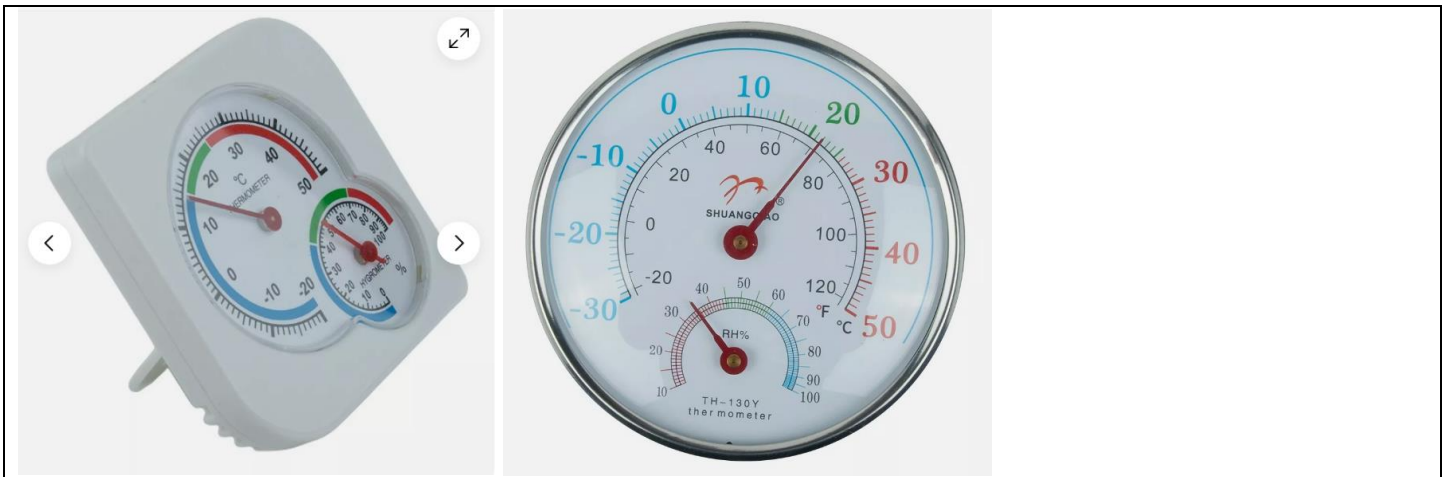
By implementing this policy, the Council will ensure compliance with the new Consumer Standards (in particular, the Building Safety and Quality standard) published by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), improve operational efficiency, and enhance communication with residents. This approach will prioritise resident safety and contribute to our efforts to manage Damp, Mould, and Condensation effectively.

### **Resource Implications**

No additional employee resource has been identified at this stage, in relation to the approval of the DMC Policy document, however, once the supporting DMC procedures and processes have been created, the employee resourcing requirements will be better understood. The DMC Policy articulates a survey first approach to identify the root cause of the damp, mould and condensation reported at a property. Therefore, assets surveying teams have been 'pooled' under to prioritise damp surveys, until an accurate and consistent trend/profile can be forecasted (peaks and troughs) during the different seasonal periods of the year. Asset Surveyors will then be released to other workstreams e.g. stock condition surveys, tenant improvement requests etc. Once this forecast is known and DMC survey levels are at a sustainable level.

The DMC Policy states the requirement to provide residents a free analogue hygrometer (example below), upon the completion of a damp survey, which will help them monitor the relative humidity and temperature of a room, with visual gauges to prompt action. This will be provided along with advice by the Assets Surveyor in attendance, as well as information leaflets to help residents with damp, mould and condensation issues as well as tips on decoration following the completion of a mould treatment.

A budget of £25,000 (approx. £10 per unit) would be required to purchase an initial batch of 2,500 analogue hygrometer units. In May 2024, a request has been submitted to corporate procurement to support the purchase to try and achieve an improved cost per unit and evidence value for money (VFM) for the purchase.



Example Analogue Hygrometers

For 2024-25 a revenue budget of £2m has been allocated for Damp, Mould and Condensation and a capital budget of £1.744m has been set aside for building safety related works.

<p><b>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> &amp; name</b></p>	<p>5 June 2024 David Shepherd, Executive Director for Place</p>
<p><b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b></p>	<p>21 August 2024 Kevin Mulvaney, Service Director - Finance</p>
<p><b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?</b></p>	<p>29 August 2024 Samantha Lawton, Service Director – Legal &amp; Commissioning</p>

- Electoral wards affected:** All.
- Ward councillors consulted:** None.
- Public or private:** Private.
- Has GDPR been considered?** Yes.

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report outlines the policy has been developed to articulate the Council’s approach to managing reports of DMC to ensure we comply with the regulatory agenda and the Regulatory Notice to improve that was served on the Council in March 2024 and is one of the key actions agreed with Regulator of Social Housing as part of the Improvement Plan.
- 1.2 To support the Policy, a procedure document, inclusive of no access processes and associated operational appendices will be developed to ensure staff have the appropriate guidance for implementation and embedding of the policy into business-as-usual operational activity.
- 1.3 This policy has been developed as part of a wider package of improvements to the service delivery in relation to DMC.

## 2. Information required to take a decision

- 2.1 The Council's approach to managing reports of DMC is not currently supported by a standalone DMC Policy. Previously all DMC requests were treated as 'responsive repairs' and hence the approach was detailed in the repairs policy. However, the Government's guidance on 'understanding and addressing the health of risks of damp and mould in the home', published on 7 September 2023, states:

*"[housing providers should have]... clear processes in place to document, manage and act on reports of damp and mould and to identify common issues and trends in their housing stock"*

- 2.2 The DMC Policy aligns with the guidance provided by government, and will be supported by a DMC Procedure, which provides more information regarding the internal operational processes to manage reports of damp, mould and condensation.
- 2.3 This policy has been developed as part of a package of wider improvements to service delivery in relation to DMC. The following information details some initiatives which have been, or are due to be, introduced and are not reliant on the DMC policy to be approved before implementation:

### **Learning and Development**

- 2.4 An eLearning module regarding DMC was produced and shared with Homes and Neighbourhoods colleagues to complete. Online training has also been made available to residents.

### **New case management approach**

- 2.5 In May 2024, a new case management & performance management system has been introduced which supports an improved approach to triaging requests and asset management. This allows each individual property to be monitored from start to completion of all works, track any tasks required, identify who is responsible and include target dates. This can be used for performance monitoring and future KPI's. Most importantly it will ensure that every DMC case will be resolved completely by addressing the root causes of the problem.

### **Survey first and identify root cause**

- 2.6 This removes the focus of any 'blame' on residents for DMC in their homes. Instead, the focus is on a surveyor visiting a property upon receipt of a DMC issue reported to identify the root cause and identifying the necessary treatments, repairs and/or works to prevent the issue from reoccurring. New, consistent survey forms have been introduced and are populated by the surveyors during their visits. Once completed they scan their documents using Microsoft Lens on their smartphones and email the central DMC triage team with associated photos from their survey visit. The DMC triage team will then review the surveys, raise any treatments or repairs identified, and make referrals to where the resident requires additional support.

An example of the new surveyor's report form can be found in **Appendix B**.

### **Weekly damp survey allocation**

- 2.7 There is weekly monitoring of the resource plan to confirm which surveyor will be working in each area of the Kirklees District. From this the case management tracker is reviewed for all available triaged damp orders which require surveying, and these are distributed to all available surveyors considering priority, days since reported, and locality, to ensure maximum productivity within a smaller geographical area. In addition, any live disrepairs are cross referenced and any properties with a live disrepair and outstanding DMC order are allocated to the same surveyor to ensure consistency with the resident, property, and associated circumstances.

## **Strengthening Capacity and Capability**

- 2.8 The surveying resource in the Assets team has been 'pooled' to provide one larger multi-skilled team. This has increased the number of surveyors who are able to complete DMC surveys and allowed for improved prioritisation of workloads. There are also two agency surveyors who are supporting the DMC service, for an initial six-month period, to ensure surveys are reduced to a business-as-usual volume. In addition, a Business Support Officer (BSO) has been drafted into the team to support with the administrative tasks associated with the DMC service, and a recruitment campaign is underway for two additional BSO's to support with the current and expected levels of administration, in anticipation of the upcoming introduction of outbound letters at key DMC stages and post works resident satisfaction questionnaires. By August 2024, recruitment is expected to be finalised on the vacant Team Leader, Property Project Officer, Quality Liaison Officer, and Property Project Assistant posts, to support the DMC service.

## **Communication and engagement with residents**

- 2.9 The new survey form includes a section for the resident to describe the issue and what they think the required solution is. This is captured by the surveyor at the DMC survey visit, and demonstrates our intention to engage, consult and listen to our residents regarding their issue. Residents are also provided verbal advice by the surveyor in attendance as well as information leaflets regarding DMC. The next steps are to introduce outbound letters to residents at key stages of the DMC process, which adhere to the proposed requirements in the consultation on Awaab's Law which has not yet been enacted. No timescales have been proposed for the legislation to become law. The draft letters have been shared with key stakeholders involved in the delivery of DMC services and will be effective from July 2024. Providing residents the analogue hygrometers mentioned above, with supporting instructions will also be introduced to support temperature and ventilation changes in a property.
- 2.10 An example of the new *resident acknowledgement letter* (following survey) can be found in **Appendix C**. This incorporates the key recommendations from the consultation for Awaabs' Law and demonstrates the importance of improved communication with residents. One important point to note is that each case will be allocated an individual officer/ surveyor as their point of contact until the case is resolved. The resident will be notified of this in writing as part of this letter. This will ensure that residents are able to be kept informed regarding the progress of their case.

## **Reporting Framework and improved business intelligence**

- 2.11 New performance dashboards have been introduced into the DMC service, from the information captured in the DMC case management tracker, which allow management to review numerous variables across demand, output, and surveyor performance. Below are examples from the new dashboard showing the levels of information and detail available for reporting
- 2.12 Measures in the dashboard align to recommendations stated in support of the proposed provisions in Awaab's Law e.g., 14d to respond to a report of damp. Trends can be easily identified, which include estates which have high volumes of reported DMC orders, which can be used to influence future capital planned programmes. In addition, a weekly Top 10 to Target framework was introduced in May 2024, to enable the council to prioritise on the oldest 10 DMC orders and identify any scheduled, or unscheduled visits, to the property, outside the DMC service which could be used to gain access and align resources e.g., outstanding repairs, gas services, electrical tests, planned works, disrepairs, and housing visits.

- 2.13 Also, new governance arrangements have been introduced with the Damp Management Action Group (DMAG) and will provide greater insight and ownership regarding the DMC service. The next steps include 'finding your silence' (the term the Housing Ombudsman uses for 'voices seldom heard'), by referencing all known Kirklees Council properties by using the various contact points the service has with tenants e.g. gas servicing, repairs, etc. This helps the service to identify where a DMC survey is required but the resident hasn't reported it.

### **Post Works Inspections**

- 2.14 Upon the completion of any identified treatments and repairs at a property, a surveyor will complete a post works inspection at three month and six-month intervals to ensure that the works completed have been done so to the required standard, and to ensure that the identified root cause has been rectified and no further issues relating to DMC have occurred. Visiting a property in these timescales, will also allow a surveyor to visit in a different climate/season, which is also beneficial. In any instances where DMC issues are identified at the post works inspections, the required treatments and/or repairs will be raised and inspected at three month and six-month intervals thereafter. These will be implemented from August 2024.

### **DMC Procedure**

- 2.15 A supporting operational procedure with processes will be developed to support colleagues regarding the delivery of DMC services, and act as a reference guide for current and future employees. This will also underpin the objectives set out in the DMC Policy and will be available in September 2024.

## **3. Implications for the Council**

### **Council Plan**

- 3.1 Not applicable.

### **Financial Implications**

- 3.2 The current baseline capital plan provides for £249.3m (2024-25 - £39.4m) which includes £9.9m (2024-25 - £1.7m) for specific building safety works. The damp, mould and condensation revenue budget for 2024-25 has been increased to £2m to provide for all revenue funded works.

### **Legal Implications**

- 3.3 There are already in force a number of pieces of legislation that set out the legal obligations of all Landlords when dealing with damp, mould or condensation in homes they own and rent out. Such obligations include social housing providers. In September 2023, updated on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2024, the Government issued Guidance entitled Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home. This suggests that landlords should ensure they have 'clear processes in place to document, manage and act on reports of damp and mould'. The DMC Policy proposed by this report is to assist the Council in ensuring it is complying with the various statutory duties placed upon it in relation to dealing with damp, mould and condensation.

In January 2024 the Government commenced consultation on a new piece of legislation that is to be enacted by virtue of Section 42 Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. There is currently no indication as to when this legislation will be enacted but given the implications for the Landlords it advised that steps be taken now to ensure compliance when the law is in force.

### **Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

- 3.4 New DMC Policy IIA (Case ID: IIA-629410010) has been published - [Integrated Impact Assessments - IntegratedImpactAssessment \(kirklees.gov.uk\)](#).



## 4. Consultation

4.1 Initial discussions regarding DMC have been held with the Tenant Led Panel and the feedback is incorporated in the policy and also in the development of the new procedure guides.

4.2 Internal consultation has taken place with key stakeholders. These include the staff within the service and other services involved in supporting the delivery of repairs and maintenance to DMC cases. The report has consulted with the following groups in 2024:

### **Homes and Neighbourhoods Senior Management Team 1<sup>st</sup> May**

- Provide more information in the report for the 'reasons for recommendations.' More detail required to demonstrate the importance of why this policy is being introduced- **Status: completed**
- Financial approval provided for the funding of the Hygrometers. **Status: completed**

### **Growth & Regeneration Senior Leadership Team 5<sup>th</sup> June**

- Include more information in the report regarding the whole package of improvements that are currently being implemented alongside the policy. **Status: completed**

### **Executive Leadership Team 25<sup>th</sup> June**

- Request to include more focus on residents' safety in the policy. Status: Complete
- Check all legislation with Legal services: **Status: completed**

### **Housing Portfolio Briefing 2<sup>nd</sup> July**

- To provide supporting information – procedure guide in line with new policy & examples of letter templates / survey reports. **Status: completed**

### **Building Safety Assurance Board 9<sup>th</sup> July**

- Include more detailed information around governance- include governance structure in the report. **Status: completed**

### **Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board 22<sup>nd</sup> July**

- Question raised about the requirement for 3- & 6-month post-works checks. Requested that this be discussed at Executive Board. **Status: completed**
- Questions raised about the 'tone' of the sample letters to residents – It was agreed this would be discussed the following week at TLP. **Status: completed at TLP.**
- Board's view was that the three-year review date was too far away with the policy being new and things might change externally in respect of the Housing Ombudsman or Regulator of Social Housing with the policy being an area of focus. It was agreed the policy would be reviewed in twelve months' time, and then three yearly thereafter.
- Board endorsed the DMC Policy and recommended the report to Cabinet subject to the amendment for Cabinet to receive the reviewed policy in twelve months' time.

### **Executive Board 29<sup>th</sup> July**

- Discussion about the 3 & 6month post work checks. It was agreed that the 3-month could be a phone call or check-in with the resident rather than a survey and this would be based on the specific circumstances of that property (scale of work/ risk/ vulnerability). **Status: completed, agreed process for 3&6 months.**

### **Tenant Led Panel 31<sup>st</sup> July**

- Discussion with the Panel and the comms team, agreed that the tone of the letters should be more collaborative and include resident and landlord responsibilities - Chelsea from Comms team is reviewing all letters. **Status: Completed**

## Place Scrutiny 12<sup>th</sup> August

### 5. Engagement

- 5.1 The DMC Policy will be published on the Kirklees Council website and will be part of the updated communications and information strategy.
- 5.2 Resident engagement will be arranged as part of the DMC process review. Homes and Neighbourhoods will formally engage with residents where actions arising from the Procedure and supporting processes result in changes to services.

### 6 Communication

- 6.1 There is an agreed communication strategy and plan for building safety and regulatory response of which DMC is an integral part. All communications will be managed as part of the wider strategy to ensure that all stakeholders are consulted, involved and informed as required.
- 6.2 There have been regular communication with residents regarding DMC and these will continue as any changes to policy or process are agreed.
- 6.3 A key objective of communication in relation to DMC is about 'finding your silence'. This policy and the associated communication are designed to ensure that all efforts are made for H&N to identify and act upon those areas.

### 7 Options

#### Options considered

- 7.1 Not applicable.

#### Reasons for recommended option

- 7.2 Homes and Neighbourhoods Senior Management Team reviewed the DMC Policy on Friday 24 May 2024 and recommended it be presented to Growth and Regeneration (now Place) Senior Leadership Team for approval.

### 8 Next steps and timelines

- 8.1 Purchase the 2,500 analogue hygrometers to support the DMC Policy.
- 8.2 Creation of a DMC Procedure, inclusive of associated appendices used within the service and supporting process maps.

### 9 Contact officer

Neil Hutchinson, Interim General Manager Assets  
Homes and Neighbourhoods  
Email: [neil.hutchinson@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:neil.hutchinson@kirklees.gov.uk)

### 10 Background Papers and History of Decisions

- 10.1 Not applicable.

## **11 Appendices**

11.1 Appendix A – Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) Policy v1.4, July 2024.

11.2 Appendix B – New Surveyors Report.

11.3 Appendix C – New Resident Acknowledgement Letter (following survey).

## **12 Service Director responsible**

Naz Parkar for Homes and Neighbourhoods

Tel: 01484 221000 ext 75312

Email: [naz.parkar@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:naz.parkar@kirklees.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank

## Kirklees Council

### Homes and Neighbourhoods

# Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) Policy

Author: Neil Hutchinson – General Manager Assets

Date: July 2024

Review Date: July 2027

Approving body: Homes and Neighbourhoods, Senior Management Team

#### Policy Approval Details

Approved by:	
Approval Date:	
Minute Number:	
Ref:	DMCMP/24 V5

#### Policy Amendment and Version Schedule

Doc Ref	Version	Version Date	Reviewed by	Version Updates Summary
DMCMP/24	4	July 2024	General Manager - Assets	Full Policy Review
DMCMP/22	5	August	Service Manager Assets	

## Contents

1. Purpose and Objectives.....	2	
2. Scope.....	3	
3. Statutory, Legislative and Regulatory Requirements.....	3	1.
4. Definitions.....	4	
5. The Councils Responsibilities.....	5	
6. Governance.....	6	
7. Reporting DMC.....	7	
8. Prioritising DMC.....	7	
9. Surveying DMC.....	7	
10. Access and Decants.....	8	
11. Asset Management.....	8	
12. Complaints, Claims and Compliments.....	9	
13. Related Policies and Procedures.....	9	

## Purpose and Objectives

- 1.1 The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that Kirklees Council is committed to putting resident's safety is at the core of service delivery. The policy will provide assurance that Kirklees Council will take appropriate action and provide a consistent approach to keeping residents safe when dealing with Damp, Mould & Condensation (DMC). It will ensure that every case will be dealt with thoroughly, fairly and with transparency.
- 1.2 This objective of this policy is to provide an approach to DMC which focuses on the residents as the single most important factor, rather than the buildings.
- 1.3 This policy will provide two key objectives
  1. The reactive approach to dealing with DMC is consistent and effective
  2. The proactive approach will help reduce and prevent future cases of DMC

This policy underpins Kirklees Council's commitment of '*Finding our Silence*' to systematically address current and reduce future cases of DMC issues residents' homes. This includes a proactive approach to identifying cases of DMC including those previously unreported cases.

The policy aims to remove the 'stigma' or negative perception of DMC in people's homes. This includes the removal of 'blame'. It demonstrates that Kirklees Council is taking responsibility will work with residents on an individual basis to find solutions to each case of DMC specific to that home.

The policy has been developed to actively encourage residents to report issues of DMC at the earliest opportunity and is providing the training, information and equipment to do this. This policy is underpinned by a change in procedure which will create significantly easier and more effective reporting mechanisms for residents.

It provides a clear focus on identifying individual resident's specific circumstances and vulnerabilities, which will be considered when working to provide the most effective solutions to DMC in a particular home. This will ensure a bespoke response to each case of DMC based on the specific requirements of the residents.

The policy will put effective communication with residents at the core of the approach. All residents will be asked to tell us what the issues are and how they are affecting their lives. This will be built into the individual response and actions for each case of DMC. The focus of the policy is on the resident in their home, rather than the 'property'

Residents will be kept informed of the progress of their case of DMC through every stage of the process and be provided with accurate timescales for each action (e.g. survey, repairs, mould treatment). They will receive regular updates and all actions will be confirmed in writing to each resident so that they are fully aware of the current position or next actions. Any delays or changes will also be communicated as soon as they arise.

The introduction of follow-up surveys will ensure that residents are assured that their case of DMC has been resolved to their satisfaction and provide them with the assurance that all issues, including root cause, have been resolved.

This policy embeds a coordinated and holistic approach to service delivery, including looking at previous repairs, disrepairs or other works (e.g specialist/structural) carried out to the property.

This policy provides a clear focus on prevention and identification of root causes rather than just treating the symptoms of DMC. The use of existing data, mapping, trends and property type will be used to inform and develop planned programmes of work to help prevent new and repeat occurrences of DMC.

It will introduce a more strategic approach to prevention of DMC In residents' homes and put preventative measures in place- (insulation/ ventilation/ energy advice and support)

This policy will embed a proactive approach to preventing cases of DMC, putting greater emphasis on feedback from residents and 3<sup>rd</sup> party agencies to provide information to inform where issues could arise, and enable preventative measures to be put in place.

Kirklees Council (KC) is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our residents, staff, contractors, and others who may be affected by damp, mould, and condensation (DMC) in the homes that we manage. We will ensure that our residents live in homes that are safe, secure, warm, and free from issues hazardous to health and that the Council's assets are protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp, mould, and condensation.

- 1.2 Kirklees Council has developed this policy to address the management of mould, damp, and condensation in our homes. The policy outlines our responsibilities in relation to completing necessary surveys, identified repairs and remedial works, collecting, reviewing, and managing relevant data as well as how we aim to protect residents' safety and wellbeing and ensure they are provided with a high-quality, responsive customer experience which is tailored to support their individual needs.
- 1.3 The well-being and structural integrity of our residents' homes can be severely affected by the presence of damp, mould, and condensation. Kirklees Council is committed to

meeting the objectives outlined in this policy, as well as adhering to the supporting operational procedures.

- 1.4 We are committed to the equitable treatment of residents experiencing damp, mould, and condensation issues, by ensuring fairness and consistency when addressing concerns. Kirklees Council will consider the Equality Act 2010 and make appropriate provisions for those with disabilities or support needs when implementing this policy. Whenever anyone reports issues with damp, mould, or condensation, we will approach the situation with compassion and respect, refraining from assigning blame or assuming the root cause.
- 1.5 It will ensure that staff, our contractors, and others are aware of, understand, and are equipped with the necessary information to deliver the requirements of our procedures in respect of issues relating to damp, mould, and condensation.
- 1.6 It is the shared responsibility of tenants, staff, contractors, and other relevant stakeholders to make sure that incidents of damp and mould are reported and acted upon in a timely manner. It is also a priority of this Policy to ensure that our residents are made aware of and understand our approach to the management of damp, mould, and condensation, as well as their own responsibilities, in a collective effort to minimise damp and mould in Council homes.

This Policy will meet the following requirements:

- Ensure staff are appropriately trained and this policy and its supporting procedures are adopted and embedded into service delivery.
- Comply with the relevant and applicable statutory, regulatory, and legislative obligations.
- Provide clarity on our overall approach to damp, mould, and condensation.
- Ensure that we are delivering a consistent service to our residents, whilst considering the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensure that residents have access to support, advice, and guidance on preventing, treating, and controlling damp, condensation, and mould as well as information on how to report issues to Kirklees Council.
- Treat anyone reporting damp and mould with respect and empathy and provide support where required.
- Respond effectively to individual reports of damp and mould, focusing on identifying the root cause and implementing the right solution.
- Communicate with our residents who are affected by this process to ensure they are fully aware of our procedures and protocols for taking timely and appropriate remedial action and how we will quickly respond if things go wrong.
- Set out our proactive approach to deal with wider issues around damp, mould and condensation.
- Provide assurance to our stakeholders that our approach to damp and mould is robust and effective.
- Focus on working in partnership by interacting with and listening to feedback from residents, staff, and contractors to help shape improved service delivery.
- Reviewing data to find our 'silence', where residents have not requested services from Kirklees Council, and therefore a proactive approach will be taken to visit such residencies.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This policy relates to all housing stock owned and/or managed by Kirklees Council.



2.2 This policy relates to all stakeholders, inclusive of residents, staff and contractors reporting instances of damp, mould, and condensation.

### 3. Statutory, Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

3.1 This policy supports Kirklees Council in complying with the following requirements:

- Defective Premises Act 1972 (Section 4)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Building Regulations Act 1984
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Housing Act 2004
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Home Standard Regulator of Social Housing 2015
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Pre Action-Protocol for Housing Condition Claims England 2021
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code 2024

The Policy will be reviewed when there are any legislative changes that may impact on its operation.

### 4. Definitions

- 4.1 **Mould** is a fungus which spreads through spores which can quickly grow on surfaces where dampness persists, or moisture has formed on surfaces. Mould can often look like black, white, or green patches and when it is disturbed it can cause allergic reactions and irritations to people.
- 4.2 **Damp** is the presence of unwanted moisture in the structure of a building caused either by the intrusion of water from outside of the building or from internal elements such as leaks or caused by condensation within the structure. Damp can be caused by leaks from plumbing faults, failed appliances and poorly sealed baths and showers, as well as Rising Damp or Penetrating Damp.
- 4.3 **Rising Damp** is the movement of moisture from the ground rising up through the structure of the building through capillary action and can occur if the damp proof course (DPC) of a property has failed.
- 4.4 **Penetrating Damp** is caused by water ingress into properties from the outside. Examples include defective mortar with gaps/holes, broken roof tiles, leaking gutters, blocked drain/gulley, or floods.

4.5 **Moisture** describes very small drops of water, either in the air or on a surface. Every day activities produce moisture in a property, such as:

- Bathing or showering.
- Drying clothes indoors.
- Cooking and boiling a kettle.
- Washing the dishes; and
- Breathing, which also has an impact.

For reference, the average two-person household emits around nine litres of water vapour/moisture each day, and that moisture must go somewhere to prevent condensation.

4.6 **Condensation** is the natural output of the process of moisture in the air meeting cold surfaces like tiles, walls, windows, and worktops, and turns water vapour into liquid, as water droplets. It happens all the time, especially when it's colder outside. When air gets colder, it cannot hold a lot of moisture, so droplets of water may appear near windows or doors, in the corner of rooms, behind cupboards or wardrobes, or on other cold surfaces and in places where there is little movement of air. It mainly occurs during cold weather and its more likely to happen in homes with more people in them.

4.7 **Humidity** is a measure of how much water vapour is in the air and a hygrometer can help measure humidity. A relative humidity rating between 40% to 60% on a hygrometer is considered ideal. High levels of humidity is typically recognised when the environment is warm with excessive water vapour in the air.

4.8 **HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System)** is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. There are 29 categories including the hazard of damp and mould.

## 5. The Council's responsibilities

5.1 The Cabinet and Chief Executive Officer of Kirklees Council retains the overall accountability for the provision and operation of this policy.

5.2 The Service Director for Homes and Neighbourhoods has the responsibility for the consistent implementation and monitoring of this policy.

5.3 The Head of Assets and Development is responsible for the delivery of Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) surveys and for the collating and retention of property data including damp, mould and condensation.

5.4 The Service Manager Assets is responsible for appointing the contractor(s) (includes internal and external workers) to complete repairs and remedial works where building defects and failures have been identified by surveys, as well as the development of planned capital improvement programmes to eradicate the causes of damp and mould.

5.5 The General Manager Assets is responsible for resourcing and co-ordinating HHSRS property surveys, providing residents with hygrometers and information leaflets as well as raising the required repairs and remedial works.

- 5.6 The Head of Property Services is responsible for the delivery of repairs and maintenance services, including the application of mould treatments and the removal of building fabric issues creating damp, mould, and condensation hazards. They will utilise an internal workforce primarily, as well as a robust supply chain of third-party contractors to complete works where specialisms and/or additional capacity is required.
- 5.7 The Service Manager Property Services is responsible for resourcing and co-ordinating the required repairs and maintenance services.
- 5.8 Under delegated authority it is the responsibility of all staff and those working on behalf of Kirklees Council to ensure their work is carried out in accordance with this policy and related procedures.

## 6. Governance

- 6.1 The day-to-day operational governance of damp and mould will be managed by the Damp and Mould Action Group. This group will report to the Service Managers Operational Group and then to the Asset Management & Building Safety Steering Group.
- 6.2 Performance reports will be provided to the Cabinet, Senior Management Team (SMT) and Homes and Neighbourhoods Investment Board (HNIB) Building Safety Assurance Board (BSAB) to monitor the service delivery of damp, mould, and condensation activities.
- 6.2 To measure and monitor the effectiveness of damp, mould, and condensation activities, and provide stakeholders assurance, our performance reports will include the following key performance indicators (KPIs):

### Surveying

- Number of HHSRS hazards identified by severity.
- Number of surveys raised and appointed.
- Number of surveys completed.
- Average E2E (end to end, in days), reported to survey completed.
- Three month and six-month post works surveys raised and appointed.
- Three month and six-month post works surveys completed.
- % of Three month and six-month post works surveys completed.

### Repairs and Remedial Works

- Number of work orders raised and appointed.
- Number of work orders completed.
- Average E2E (end to end, in days), orders raised to works completed.
- Customer satisfaction.

The frequency of submitting the performance reports will depend on the governance forum, as well as the time parameters required i.e., weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually.

- 6.3 Kirklees Council will ensure that budgets are used effectively and efficiently to manage damp, mould and condensation hazards whilst provide a value for money (VFM) service to residents.

- 6.4 Resident satisfaction surveys will be completed to analyse our resident’s perspective of service delivery in relation to damp, mould, and condensation.
- 6.5 Staff and contractor feedback will be used to identify trends, common themes, and opportunities for improvement within service delivery.
- 6.6 Where relevant information is available, Kirklees Council will benchmark our performance against other social housing providers to review the effectiveness of this policy and supporting procedures.
- 6.7 The supporting procedural documents to this policy will provide greater detail, information and context for staff and contractors to deliver a robust and consistent damp, mould, and condensation service.

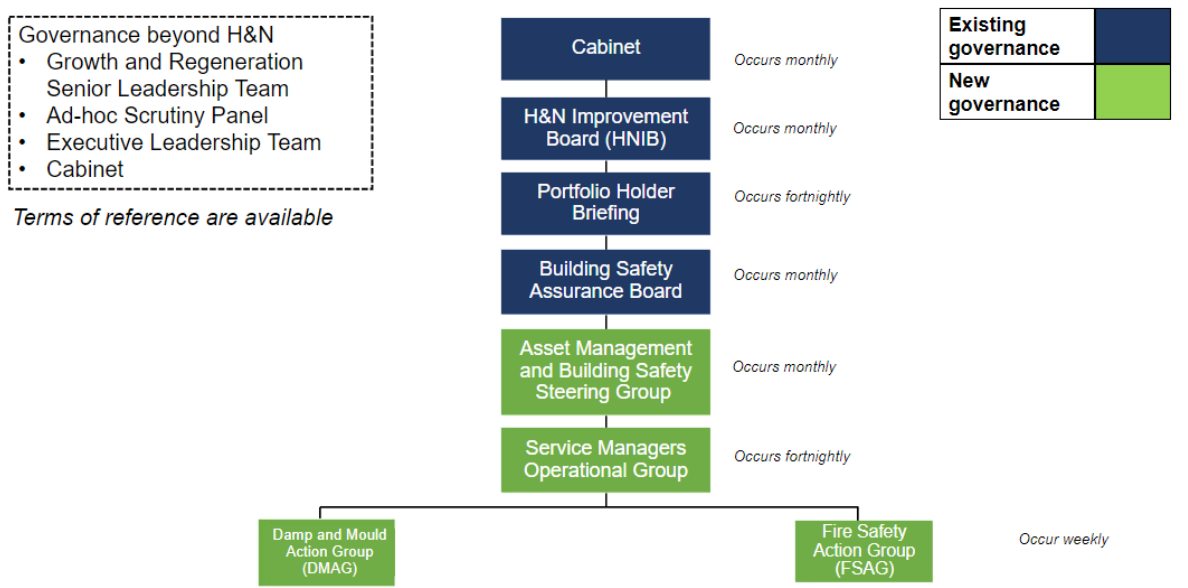
The DMC procedure will amplify the sequencing and delivery of the service, which includes the following elements:

- Reporting DMC.
- Prioritising DMC.
- Surveying DMC.
- Remedial Actions.
- Six-month post works visit.
- Recurring reports of DMC.
- Access.
- Complaints; and
- Asset Management.

6.8 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis; however, it may be reviewed earlier:

- If lessons learned and service feedback identifies changes which need to be adopted and embedded into service delivery; and
- There are changes to existing legislation, statutory or regulatory requirements, as well as the introduction of new requirements.

Below is the current governance arrangement structure



## 7. Reporting DMC

7.1 Anyone will be able to report damp, mould and condensation hazards using various methods:

- Phone - contact 01484 414800 (out of hours emergencies 01484 414850)
- Email – [dmc@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:dmc@kirklees.gov.uk)
- Online – [Report a repair](#)
- Face to face, with Homes and Neighbourhoods staff.

Residents are encouraged to provide as much information as possible to assist with the prioritisation of DMC activities.

## 8. Prioritising DMC

8.1 Staff will be trained to identify and triage the severity of the damp, mould and condensation hazards raised and be able to prioritise surveys effectively.

Residents' individual circumstances and vulnerabilities will be identified at the earliest possible stage and the information used to prioritise and order works accordingly

## 9. Surveying DMC

9.1 Surveys will be completed by competent staff, or suitably qualified independent surveyors, utilising the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to capture information to prioritise any required repairs and remedial works, as well as data to influence future planned capital improvement programmes.

9.2 Whilst at the property, upon the completion of the survey, we will ensure residents have access to:

- Guidance and information leaflets (without apportioning blame) on how to identify and reduce condensation to prevent the growth and spread of mould.
- A link to Kirklees Council's damp, mould and condensation webpage: [Damp, mould and condensation | Kirklees Council](#).
- A free hygrometer, for the resident to measure and monitor the humidity in the property.
- A free moisture absorber and odour neutraliser to assist with any excess moisture and condensation in the property.

9.3 From the survey findings, the necessary treatments and work orders will be raised and commissioned to the relevant contractor(s), who will make access arrangements with the resident.

9.4 An outcome letter from the survey, detailing what was identified, any necessary works and the next steps will be sent to the resident. A copy of the survey and outcome letter will be stored in the appropriate repository on Kirklees Council systems.

9.5 A three month check with the resident and six-month follow-up visit will be arranged with residents who have reported damp, mould, and condensation hazards where

repairs and remedial works have been completed. These will be carried out based on the scale of the original issue, risk and residents individual circumstances

## 10. Access and Decants

- 10.1 Kirklees Council, and its appointed contractors, will follow a robust and consistent access procedure to make reasonable attempts to access a property and carry out a survey, or repairs and remedial works.
- 10.2 All no access attempts will be recorded on Kirklees Council systems to provide evidence and adherence to procedural requirements.
- 10.3 Depending on the recommendations from the survey, the scale of works required, and the complexities associated with the property and resident, it may be identified that decanting the resident(s) would be a reasonable adjustment to eradicate the damp and mould hazard. Residents will be supported by Kirklees Council Homes and Neighbourhoods colleagues in these instances, who will adhere to the Council's [Housing Allocations Policy](#), which includes supporting information regarding decants.

## 11 Asset Management

- 11.1 Kirklees Council aims to identify and rectify the underlying causes of damp and mould, and will work with residents, staff and contractors to ensure that the fabric of its properties are free of defects and protected from deterioration and damage caused by damp, mould, and condensation.
- 11.2 Treatment, repairs and remedial works will be commissioned to suitable and competent contractor(s), who will ensure works are delivered safely and in accordance with this policy, other applicable policies and supporting procedures.
- 11.3 Data from completed DMC surveys, and stock condition surveys, will be collected and analysed to make evidence-based plans for future capital improvement programmes.
- 11.4 Should a property defect be identified through surveys that is either currently recurring or is likely to recur within other homes, works will be identified and carried out as a planned programme. This ensures a proactive approach to tackling defects that may result in damp, mould, or condensation in the future.

## 12 Complaints, Claims and Compliments

- 12.1 The Customer Experience Team handle all compliments and complaints associated to Homes and Neighbourhoods in relation to services provided to council residents and leaseholders. The team can be contacted using:
  - Phone - contact 01484 414800.
  - Online – [Compliments and Complaints webpage](#)
- 12.2 The [Housing Ombudsman code](#) sets out good practice that allows Kirklees Council to respond to complaints effectively and fairly.

## 13 Related Policies and Procedures

13.1 This policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the following internal and external documents.

Internal

- Damp, mould and condensation (DMC) procedure.
- Tenant's guide to DMC.
- Homes and Neighbourhoods Complaints policy and procedure.
- Homes and Neighbourhoods Safety, Health, and Environmental policy.
- Homes and Neighbourhoods Repairs and Maintenance policy.
- Homes and Neighbourhoods, No Access policy and procedure
- Asbestos Management policy and procedure; and
- Decant policy procedure.

External

- Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Gap Analysis
- Housing Ombudsman Special Report on Rochdale Boroughwide Housing

This page is intentionally left blank



## Report

Tenant:

Address:

Tel:

Email:

<b>Job Number:</b>	
<b>Surveyor:</b>	
<b>Date of Survey:</b>	
<b>Time:</b>	
<b>External Temperature:</b>	
<b>Weather Conditions:</b>	
<b>Thermostat Temperature:</b>	
<b>Thermostat Setting / Heating Frequency:</b>	
<b>Number of occupants (inc. pets) at time of visit:</b>	(    )

Room	Relative Humidity	Air Temp.	Dew Point	Wall Temp.	Floor Covering (Yes / No + type)	Window Covering (Yes / No + type)	Extraction / Ventilation (Yes / No + Pass / Fail)
Hallway							
Kitchen							
Dining Room							
Living Room							
Bathroom							
Bedroom 1							
Bedroom 2							
Bedroom 3							
Bedroom 4							

Report

**Tenants' description of the issues and expected resolution (include date and signature):**

<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

**Surveyors' observations:**

--

## Report

**Root Cause Identified:**

Root Cause Definition	✓ / ✗
<b>Condensation:</b>	
<b>Penetrating Damp:</b>	
<b>Rising Damp:</b>	
<b>Leaks:</b>	
<b>Insulation (insufficient or missing):</b>	

**Advice given to tenant:**

Report

**Referrals Required:**

	✓ / ✗	Reason
Energy Advice:		
Money Advice:		
Digital Inclusion:		

**Repairs required:**

Trade	Band	Description	Asbestos?

## Report


**Mould Treatment:**

	2 Stage Ceiling	2 Stage Walls	Reseal	Stripping	Stripping Woodchip	4 Stage Ceiling	4 Stage Walls	Sempatap
<b>Lounge</b>								
<b>Kitchen</b>								
<b>Dining Room</b>								
<b>WC</b>								
<b>Bathroom</b>								
<b>Bedroom 1</b>								
<b>Bedroom 2</b>								

## Report

<b>Bedroom 3</b>								
<b>Hallway</b>								

PO Box 1720, Huddersfield, HD1 9EL

phone: 01484 414800  
email: [dmc@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:dmc@kirklees.gov.uk)  
web: <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk>  
Twitter: @KirkleesCouncil

Date: Monday, 02 September 2024

[insert Resident Name]  
[insert Street Address]  
[insert Town]  
[insert Postcode]

**Our Reference: [insert CaseViewer Reference Number] / [insert JobRef]**

Dear [insert Resident Name],

### **Acknowledgement of Reported Damp, Mould, and Condensation (DMC)**

We can confirm receipt of your reported DMC issue on **[insert date reported]** and a case has been opened on our system, **[insert Job Reference]**.

Since you reported this to us, we have contacted you and triaged your initial report of DMC in preparation of a survey. An Assets Surveyor has been allocated to your case and will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient date and time to survey your home to identify the root cause of your DMC issue.

Please respond to any communications from our Assets Surveyor, who will be arranging access with you via phone or text message, and visits to your home.

Their contact details are:

Assets Surveyor Name;       **[insert name]**  
Assets Surveyor Phone;     **[insert contact number]**  
Assets Surveyor Email;      **[insert email]**

Please note, to ensure that the DMC issue which you have reported can be surveyed at the earliest opportunity, access to your home is a priority.

Please be mindful, it is a condition of your tenancy that you must give our officers, agents, and contractors unobstructed access to inspect your home or do work on it if we have given you at least 24 hours' notice, in writing. Also, we do ask that you ensure the area(s) of your home which require inspecting are clear and accessible; doing so will help to ensure the survey is completed with minimal disruption.

If you would like to find out more information regarding our approach to damp, mould and condensation, you can visit our website [www.kirklees.gov.uk](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk) and navigate to Menu > Housing and Homelessness > Council Housing > Safety and services > Damp, mould and condensation.

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

Yours Sincerely,

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

David Cleaver  
Service Manager Assets





**Report title: Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024-27**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>10 September 2024</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (if applicable)	<b>Cllr A Pinnock</b>
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>Yes Yes</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> To approve the Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) Strategy 2024-27	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the strategy be approved</li> </ul> <p><b>Reasons for Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council is under a statutory duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish one or more equality objectives every four years. To date we have fulfilled this requirement through our Inclusion &amp; Diversity (I&amp;D) Strategy.</li> <li>For several iterations of our I&amp;D Strategy, the Council has also identified various elements of inclusion and diversity as strategic priorities beyond the core requirements of the legislation. For this reason, our recent strategies have all sought to deliver 'beyond compliance', meaning there are commitments in the strategy that relate to our ambitions as an authority and the strategies are decided more frequently than required to ensure they remain relevant to these ambitions.</li> <li>The new strategy appended to this report builds on the learning and progress made in previous strategies and sets out priorities that support a wide set of outcomes for communities in Kirklees and our workforce.</li> </ul>	
<b>Resource Implication:</b> At this point in time the implementation of the strategy will be taken forward within existing resource allocations and draw upon the established capacity across the organisation	
<b>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> &amp; name</b>	<b>Rachel Spencer-Henshall 2/9/24</b>
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>	<b>Kevin Mulvaney 30/8/24</b>
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?</b>	<b>David Stickley 29/8/24</b>

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward councillors consulted:** Members of Executive Board and Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered?** Yes. The strategy and report contain no personal information relating to individuals. Pictures are GDPR compliant.

## 1. Executive Summary

The Council is under a statutory duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish one or more equality objectives every four years. To date we have fulfilled this requirement through our Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) Strategy.

As well as complying with our legal requirements, this strategy is about ambition. The Council has identified various elements of inclusion and diversity as strategic priorities beyond the core requirements of the legislation. For this reason, our recent strategies and this one seek to deliver 'beyond compliance'.

Our vision for inclusion and diversity is to be an organisation that provides equal access to opportunities and resources for our people and those we work with, and that values them for who they are.

We believe that recognising, supporting, and celebrating the diversity of our communities and our workforce will improve our organisational cohesion, innovation, and effectiveness, and deliver better outcomes for everyone. We also believe that inclusion and diversity are vital for our organisational sustainability, by helping us to recruit and retain staff, enable all staff to contribute to organisational success, and helping us engage with our diverse communities.

The proposed strategy sets out the four elements of our role as a Council with inclusion and diversity:

1. **Compliance:** how we comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010
2. **Ambition:** how we achieve our ambitions for inclusion as one of our organisational values (as set out in the Council Plan) through four priority themes from the Local Government Association's Equality Framework:
  - Understanding and working with our communities
  - Leadership, partnership, and organisational development
  - Responsive services and customer care
  - Diverse and engaged workforce
3. **Partnership:** how we enable inclusion more broadly in Kirklees:
  - Being a responsible anchor organisation, recognising our impact as a large, locally-rooted employer and spender and how that affects partners
  - Being a co-ordinator and facilitator, supporting partners' efforts where they align with our own and leading through partnerships
  - Delivering for partners through our services and programmes
  - Representing and advocating for the district through regional and national connections, where this will support better outcomes locally

Underpinning all of these are our 'always on' priorities: understanding impact, understanding diversity, and understanding equity.

## 2. Information required to take a decision Background

The Council is under a statutory duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish one or more equality objectives every four years. To date we have fulfilled this requirement through our Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) Strategy.

For several iterations of our I&D Strategy, the Council has also identified various elements of inclusion and diversity as strategic priorities beyond the core requirements of the legislation. For this reason, our recent strategies have all sought to deliver 'beyond compliance' and are decided more frequently than the four-year statutory requirement.

Our last strategy, entitled Recovery through Inclusion, recognised the adverse impact of the global Covid pandemic and focussed on a recovery phase, ensuring the correct strategic focus to support both communities and the workforce.

Key areas of progress from the last strategy include changes to Integrated Impact Assessments, the creation of the Inclusion Learning Framework, and new approaches to supporting a diverse workforce and employee networks.

### **New strategy**

Our new vision for inclusion and diversity is to be an organisation that provides equal access to opportunities and resources for our people and those we work with, and that values them for who they are.

The proposed strategy sets out the three elements of our role as a Council with inclusion and diversity:

1. **Compliance:** how we comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010
2. **Ambition:** how we achieve our ambitions for inclusion as one of our organisational values (as set out in the Council Plan) through four priority themes from the Local Government Association's Equality Framework:
  - Understanding and working with our communities
  - Leadership, partnership, and organisational development
  - Responsive services and customer care
  - Diverse and engaged workforce
3. **Partnership:** how we enable inclusion more broadly in Kirklees:
  - Being a responsible anchor organisation, recognising our impact as a large, locally-rooted employer and spender and how that affects partners
  - Being a co-ordinator and facilitator, supporting partners' efforts where they align with our own and leading through partnerships
  - Delivering for partners through our services and programmes
  - Representing and advocating for the district through regional and national connections, where this will support better outcomes locally

Underpinning all of these are our 'always on' priorities: understanding impact, understanding diversity, and understanding equity.

### **Always on priorities**

All our objectives depend on continuing to deepen our shared understanding of inclusion and diversity. Our three 'always on' priorities describe what is required and what we will do to do this.

Understanding impact is about how we use data and intelligence to support our decision-making, especially through our integrated impact assessments.

Understanding diversity is about how staff can feel confident engaging with diverse communities, especially when it comes to understanding people's different experiences and perspectives.

Understanding equity is about recognising that some people and groups face more disadvantage than others or different kinds of disadvantage, and this means some people or groups need different support to achieve similar outcomes.

## **Compliance**

### *General duties*

The aim of the Equality Act 2010 is to protect people from disadvantage and harm as a result of having a particular protected characteristic. Every single person has a protected characteristic, so we are all protected through the Act.

The Act sets out three aims that public authorities, including the Council, must deliver in carrying out our activities:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act also stipulates that we must do this by:

- Removing or reducing disadvantages suffered by people because of a protected characteristic.
- Meeting the needs of people with protected characteristics.
- Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life and other activities.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

### *Specific duties*

Public authorities also have specific duties under the Equality Act to help them comply with the public sector equality duty.

Public authorities with 250 employees or more must do the following:

- Publish information on general duty compliance at least once a year to show how they have complied with the equality duty in respect of both people affected by their policies and practices and their employees.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.
- Publish gender pay gap data by 31 March each year.

### *Our compliance*

Our Inclusion and Diversity Strategy sets out our equality objectives as required by the duty, and various forms of reporting show how we are complying with the requirement to publish compliance information.

The information is provided on our website. You can find out more about how we are delivering on our ambitions around inclusion and diversity here:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/inclusion-and-diversity-strategy.aspx>

The Council annually publishes workforce profile data and produces a gender pay gap report. It is also anticipated that both disability and ethnicity pay gap reports will be published in future. An annual report is produced detailing how the organisation has performed against its equality objectives, which is scrutinised by councillors and published online.

### **Ambition: our objectives for 2024-27**

For an effective, innovative, and inclusive organisation, we need a diverse and engaged workforce delivering responsive, accessible services with support from the organisational leadership. This means we have to recruit and retain talented staff as well as enabling all these staff to contribute fully to organisational success. It also means ensuring that we have to weave considerations about inclusion and diversity into everything we do. Alongside this, we need to work with our partners, including local community organisations, to continuously improve our understanding of communities.

Across all this work, we need to work with partners and communities to provide equal access to opportunities and resources for all people and remove barriers, discrimination, and prejudice. Recognising, supporting, and celebrating the diversity of our communities and our workforce will help us do this.

The I&D Strategy includes a set of objectives for achieving our ambitions. They are set against the four themes of the LGA Equality Framework for Local Government. You can find out more about this here: <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/equalities-hub/equality-framework-local-government>.

The themes and objectives are:

#### **Understanding and working with our communities**

- Embedding our commitment to the Inclusive Communities Framework.
- Higher quality integrated impact assessments more broadly used.
- Working closely with ward councillors as local place-leaders, enable place-based responses to the unique challenges and opportunities in each place, such as conversations between faiths and supporting leadership programmes for underrepresented groups.
- Understanding poverty and mitigating the inequitable impact of cost-of-living pressures.
- An inclusive approach to loneliness.
- Enhanced support for care-experienced people.

#### **Leadership, partnership, and organisational development**

- Embedding our commitment to inclusion through Our Council Plan and key partnership strategies.
- Use the social model of disability to promote inclusion for people with disabilities.
- Organisational improvement and transformation of our day-to-day work.
- Developing champions and a community of practice.

- The development and use of data and intelligence, benchmarking, and looking for best practice to inform planning and decision making
- Responding to regional and national opportunities and challenges that affect our objectives, including legislation and funding

### **Responsive services and customer care**

- Embedding our commitment to inclusion through our Access to Services Strategy.
- Developing our data about our residents and customers.
- Promoting inclusive customer access to services.

### **Diverse and engaged workforce**

- Embedding our commitment to inclusion through the People Strategy.
- Promoting inclusion through workforce planning, including pathways for underrepresented groups that enable better representation in our leadership positions
- Enhancing our workforce data, with a focus on race and disability.
- Being an inclusive employer of choice.
- Supporting Employee Networks to play a bigger role in promoting inclusion and supporting the organisation's priorities.
- Continuing to develop our excellent learning and organisational development offer to promote inclusion.

### **Partnership**

The Council has an important role enabling inclusion more broadly in Kirklees, supporting partnership working with other organisations. To summarise, our role is:

- Being a responsible anchor organisation, recognising our impact as a large, locally-rooted employer and spender and how that influences partners
- Being a co-ordinator and facilitator, supporting partners' efforts where they align with our own and leading through partnerships
- Delivering for partners through our services and programmes, from business support and community capacity building through to planning and investment
- Representing and advocating for the district through regional and national connections, where this will support better outcomes locally

All of these create opportunities to promote inclusion and diversity in Kirklees.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Council is committed to its role working with other partners to deliver our shared vision for Kirklees: for it to be a district that combines a strong, sustainable economy with a great quality of life – leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality where people enjoy better health throughout their lives.

We achieve our vision by delivering improvements in our shared outcomes. Our shared outcomes are long-term commitments agreed with partners and which frame our planning in the short to medium term. They help the council and local partnerships focus on the impact we want to have for people and communities in Kirklees, collectively prioritise and plan, and monitor the impact of regional, national, and even international events. More information on these outcomes is available in Our Council Plan:

[www.kirklees.gov.uk/councilplan](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/councilplan).

At the heart of our partnership working is our set of strategic partnership strategies, consisting of the Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Inclusive Economy Strategy, and the Environment Strategy, and supported by the Inclusive Communities Framework, which provides an approach to working with

communities, supporting activity in all areas to contribute to more inclusive communities and a sense of belonging. Interdependences have been mapped across all these strategies. These make it clear that inclusion is a 'golden thread' that runs through all of them. The following shows ways in which our inclusion and diversity commitments support our partnership ambitions:

<b>Inclusive Economic Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our role as an inclusive employer of choice, creating quality jobs for members of our diverse communities</li></ul>
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An inclusive approach to social connectedness leads to improved health outcomes and sense of belonging</li></ul>
<b>Environment Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting fairness, inclusion, diversity and accessibility in areas such as access to greenspace and mitigating the impact of climate change on disadvantaged communities</li></ul>
<b>Inclusive Communities Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• By enabling place-based responses to the unique challenges and opportunities in each place, we can connect better with underrepresented communities</li></ul>

### 3. Implications for the Council

#### 3.1 Council Plan

The I&D Strategy will support the delivery of our overall policy framework, including the Council Plan and our top-tier partnership strategies: Kirklees Inclusive Economic Strategy (once adopted), Environment Strategy (once adopted), the Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Inclusive Communities Framework.

##### *Fair and balanced priority*

Robust I&D plans support fairness in our financial plans.

##### *Transforming services priority*

The 'golden thread' of inclusion is woven throughout many other significant transformation activities across the organisation, such as Our Kirklees Futures, the Access to Services Strategy, the People Strategy, and the Data & Insight Strategy.

##### *Greener and healthier priority*

Climate change is an integral part of the Integrated Impact Assessment process; embedding the new process across the entire organisation and continuing with robust quality assurance measures will be crucial to the success of inclusion becoming more of a reality in service planning and delivery.

##### *Investing for the future priority*

Robust I&D plans can help to ensure our investment plans benefit a wide variety of communities.

##### *People, partners, and place*

The essence of the new strategy is about improving outcomes for those who live and work in Kirklees, particularly those who are impacted by inequalities.

As set out above, working in partnership is one of the three key roles we have in delivering our I&D Strategy. It will be crucial to the effective implementation of the strategy – not least in terms of utilising partnership-based data and intelligence in order to tackle inequalities.

If we are to understand better the needs of our communities and work more collaboratively with them on solutions to inequalities, this will have to be done in a place-based manner, given the district's diversity. This strategy will build on and support the principles in the Inclusive Communities Framework, enabling communities to lead the responses to the unique challenges faced within their places.

### 3.2 Financial Implications

At this point in time the implementation of the strategy will be taken forward within existing resource allocations and draw upon the established capacity across the organisation.

We have undertaken analysis of all the 17 objectives in the strategy. Of these:

- 13 will be delivered from within existing resource allocations.
- Two are partly resourced but require further resources to deliver on our ambitions in this area. These are 'developing our data about our residents and customers' and 'being an inclusive employer of choice'.
- Two are currently not resourced, but we will seek to resource them in the lifetime of the strategy. These are 'use the social model of disability to promote inclusion for disabled people' and 'developing champions and a community of practice'.

### 3.3 Legal Implications

The Council is under a statutory duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish one or more equality objectives every four years. We are fulfilling this requirement through our Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) Strategy. The Equality Act 2010 also sets out a number of other duties and responsibilities. This strategy sets out what we are doing to fulfil these. Further details are provided in the 'Compliance' section of this report and the strategy itself.

### 3.3 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

To deliver our I&D Strategy, ongoing communication and engagement will be essential. To this end, on an ongoing basis:

- We will communicate our equality objectives and outcomes to our staff and other stakeholders. To support this, we will produce a one-page summary of the strategy that highlights the key objectives and outcomes, and how they align with our vision and values.
- We will showcase our achievements and demonstrate our commitment to I&D in everything we do through a series of online success stories that showcase the impact of the strategy on our services, communities, and workforce. These stories will be updated regularly and shared online to respond to our duty to report on progress against the objectives.
- To support the delivery of the strategy we will ensure there is a wide range of engagement activities with our staff and key stakeholder groups, such as the I&D hub, the steering group, and the delivery partners. These activities will involve periodic updates, feedback sessions, and collective problem-solving to support delivery.

This will complement the work of the steering group, responsible for managing the delivery of the strategy.

#### **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

An IIA has been completed and can be found on the council's website here:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/integrated-impact-assessments>

Our assessment is that the I&D strategy will have a positive impact across all the protected characteristics and other groups considered (staff and residents), neutral effects on the environment, and positive benefits for access to services.



## 4 Consultation

Structured consultation has taken place with various leadership teams and employee networks across the organisation, requesting comments on the draft proposals. These have informed this final version of the strategy.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2024, Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee received an earlier draft of the strategy and were asked to provide any comments on the draft strategy to assist in the development and eventual delivery of the strategy's outcomes. The Committee recommended that:

- More detail be provided on how performance and impact will be monitored and understood
- Reference should be made to the role of elected members and how they could contribute and add value in terms of delivery of the aims of the strategy
- That the data in the draft strategy be reviewed, to ensure we have considered and included the latest available data.

Following this feedback, further details on understanding performance and impact have been added to the 'delivery' section of the strategy. A review of the data and intelligence has also taken place, and all figures have been updated where newer data was found to be available. There are now clear references with the data, to provide assurance around this. This has not affected the priorities in the strategy. Finally, there is now an objective under 'understanding and working with communities' around working with ward councillors, referencing their roles as place leaders in enabling place-based responses to opportunities and challenges. How this is done in each place will differ and will be supported by the unique strengths and assets in each area.

## 5 Engagement

This new strategy has been developed through an enhanced engagement process across both internal and external stakeholders. Through this engagement, we were able to add additional context to some of the data around inequalities across the district and explore the practical aspects of the delivery of our priority objectives. By speaking with officers across the organisation, we have gained a broad understanding of the challenges faced in both service delivery and in supporting colleagues. This evidence base has driven the content of our objectives.

## 6 Options

### 6.1 Options Considered

#### ***Scope of the strategy***

1. A basic strategy complying with the legislative requirements
2. A more developed strategy relating to our organisational ambitions.

Option 2 was decided after discussion with the Leader, Portfolio Holder, and senior officers.

We also considered a number of activities for the strategy. The ones chosen are considered the most important and cost-effective.

### 6.2 Reasons for recommended Option

The objectives set out in the strategy were chosen because of their importance and because they are mostly already resourced. In some cases, these actions are legally required.

## 7 Next steps and timelines

- This is the final stage of approval for this strategy.
- If the proposed strategy is approved, an action plan will be finalised in the Autumn setting out the stages of delivery over the lifetime of this strategy
- The strategy will be delivered with monitoring arrangements as set out in the strategy

## **8 Contact officers**

Stephen Bonnell; Head of Policy, Partnerships, and Corporate Planning  
stephen.bonnell@kirklees.gov.uk

Sarah Harris; Policy and Partnerships Officer  
sarah.harris@kirklees.gov.uk

## **9 Background Papers and History of Decisions**

The last Inclusion & Diversity Strategy is available on the Council's website.  
[Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2021-2023 | Kirklees Council](#)

## **10 Appendices**

Appendix 1: Inclusion & Diversity Strategy 2024-2027

## **11 Service Director responsible**

Andy Simcox; Service Director for Strategy & Innovation  
andy.Simcox@kirklees.gov.uk

Kirklees Council

# Inclusion and Diversity

Strategy 2024-27



Achieving our ambitions



# Table of Contents

<b>Our vision for inclusion and diversity</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Our Council Plan – priorities and values</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Health and Wellbeing Strategy inclusion model</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Working with our partners</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Our vision.....	4
Our shared outcomes.....	4
Partnership working through our key strategies.....	4
Within the Kirklees Council ‘Council Plan’ .....	5
<b>The Kirklees context</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Our demographics – key facts</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Disability.....	6
Religion.....	6
Race and ethnicity.....	7
Social isolation and loneliness .....	7
Fuel poverty .....	7
Index of deprivation .....	8
Deprivation by Lower Super Output Area.....	8
Employment and wages .....	9
Post-graduation average earnings (UK).....	9
<b>Key inequalities and challenges</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Loneliness.....	11
Care-experienced people .....	11
Disabled people.....	12
<b>The Council’s Role and Responsibilities</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Our ‘always on’ priorities</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Understanding impact.....	14
Understanding diversity .....	14
Understanding equity.....	14
<b>Compliance: The Public Sector Equality Duty</b> .....	<b>14</b>
General duty.....	14
Specific duties .....	15
How the Council complies with its legal duties .....	15
<b>Ambition: Achieving our organisational ambitions</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Our 2024-27 priority objectives .....	15
Understanding and working with our communities.....	15
Leadership, partnership, and organisational commitment .....	16
Responsive services and customer care.....	16
Diverse and engaged workforce .....	16
<b>Partnership: enabling inclusion across Kirklees</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Delivery</b> .....	<b>18</b>

# Our vision for inclusion and diversity

We want to be an organisation with a culture of inclusion and diversity, where our people and those we work with have equal access to opportunities and resources and feel valued for who they are. This is our vision. Embracing and celebrating the diversity of our workforce and the communities we serve helps us to create a more cohesive, innovative, sustainable, and effective organisation that delivers better outcomes for everyone. A positive and supportive work environment where staff feel valued and respected helps us to attract and retain the best talent and means all staff are better able to contribute to their full potential. Being an organisation that not only values inclusion and diversity but puts those values into action, helps us respond more effectively to the changing needs of communities in Kirklees. That's why we know that inclusion and diversity are not only the right things to focus on, but also the smart things to focus on.



We have made a lot of progress in recent years. We redesigned how we evaluate the impact of our policies and services on inclusion and diversity. We developed (and continue to expand) a suite of inclusion learning opportunities equipping staff to become more culturally competent and confident. We refined what we understand by equity through supporting the further development of our employee networks.

However, we know there is a lot more to do. There are deep and unacceptable inequalities, disadvantage, and discrimination that affect the lives and opportunities of people in our country every day. We have seen many of these become starker recently, including through the global pandemic, ongoing cost-of-living pressures, wars and aggression across the world, and the recent racist violent riots that attempted to create division in our society. These events have reminded all of us of the inequalities that some of us unfortunately know too well.

In this difficult context, we recognise that we have a lot of work to do to ensure that our organisation is truly inclusive and diverse, and that we are not complacent or satisfied with the status quo. We recognise that we need to listen to and learn from the voices and experiences of our diverse communities and employees, and to challenge and change the systems and structures that create and maintain inequality. We also recognise that we have a responsibility and an opportunity to influence and collaborate with other organisations and sectors, such as health, education, and business, to promote and advance inclusion and diversity through our work across Kirklees and the region. If we fail to do this, we risk losing the trust, respect, and talent in our communities and workforce, and we miss the opportunity to create a more inclusive, innovative, and effective organisation that delivers better outcomes for everyone.

This Inclusion & Diversity Strategy is an important milestone in our journey to become a more inclusive organisation. It builds on and renews our commitment to our recent achievements and it seeks to make significant progress as we aim to meet the current and future needs of our diverse communities and employees. The strategy outlines key areas of activity that show our organisational values of kindness, inclusion, and pride in action, which will lead to better outcomes. It is based on engagement with a range of stakeholders, including staff networks and community groups, and the action planning behind the strategy will be regularly refreshed so it remains relevant to the changing contexts and experiences of those we work with and serve.

This strategy is a recommitment to create a more inclusive and diverse organisation, where our people and those we work with have equal access to opportunities and resources and feel valued for who they are. It is a recommitment to enable more inclusive communities, caring about what communities care about and building trust and belonging. Through the path set out here, we can achieve these ambitions and deliver better outcomes for everyone.

Cllr Amanda Pinnock, Portfolio Holder for Education & Communities

# Our Council Plan – priorities and values

Our Council Plan sets the overarching strategic direction for the services and activities relating to the business of the council. It summarises the council's role alongside partners in delivering our vision and shared outcomes and sets out how the council is prioritising our activity in the current context with the resources available. It helps us to prioritise, plan, understand our performance, and communicate with staff, partners, and residents.: Kindness, Inclusion, and Pride.

As set out in the Council Plan, inclusion means:

- We provide equal access to opportunities and resources for all people.
- We achieve inclusion by removing barriers, discrimination and prejudice.
- We value and promote a culture of inclusion and diversity.

This Inclusion and Diversity Strategy sets out the specific areas we are focussing on to deepen our commitment to this value across all our work.

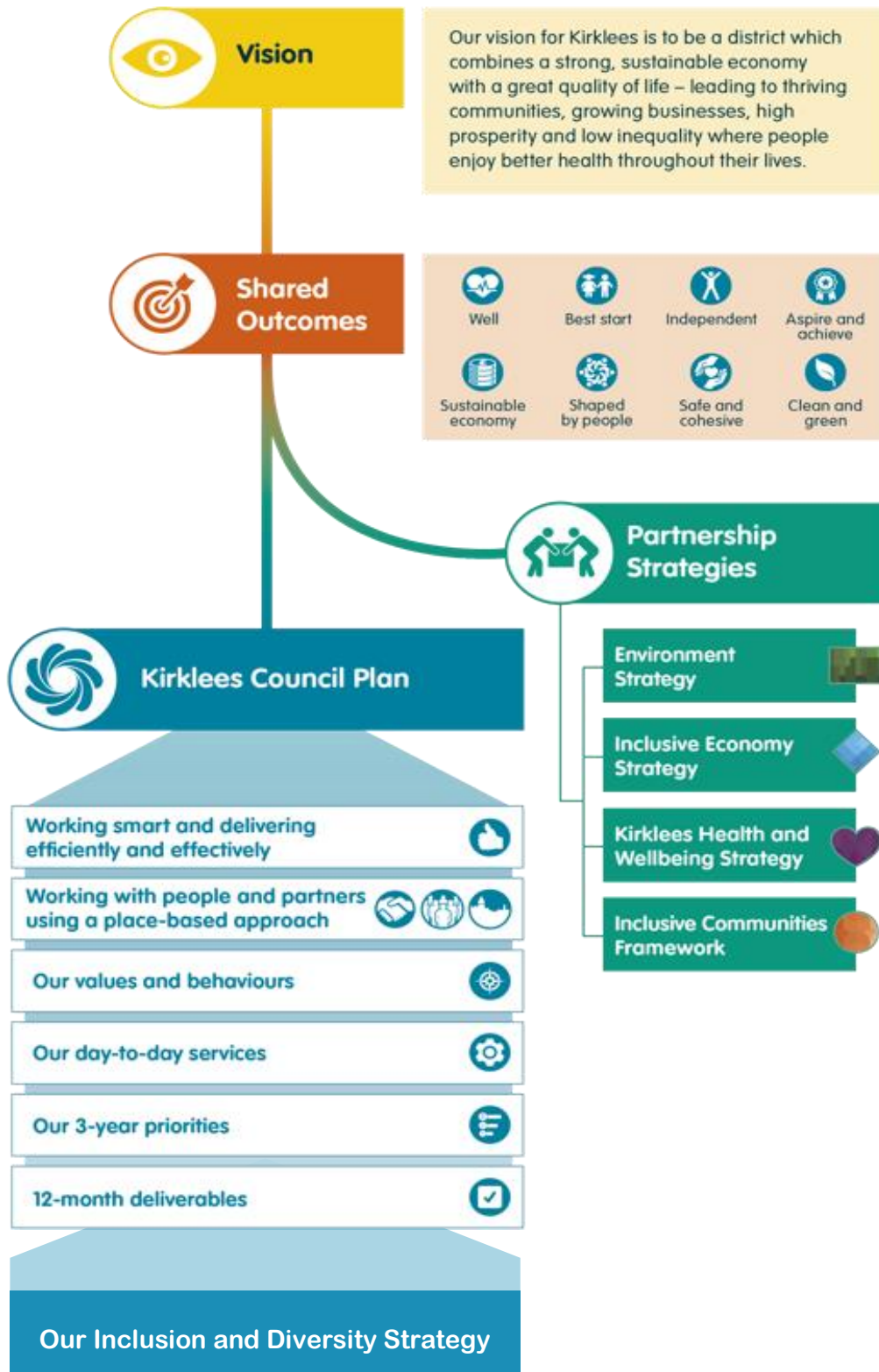
To support us in understanding inclusion, we continue to follow the model set out in the Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which emphasises the importance of removing barriers, so everyone has the opportunity to be included and feels valued and involved.

## Health and Wellbeing Strategy inclusion model



- **Reality** – One gets more than is needed while the other gets less than is needed. Thus, a huge disparity is created.
- **Equality** – The assumption is that everyone benefits from the same support. This is considered to be equal treatment.
- **Equity** – Everyone gets the support they need, which produces equity.
- **Justice** – All three can see the game without support or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.
- **Inclusion** – Everyone is INCLUDED in the game. No one is left on the outside. The barriers have been removed, everyone feels valued and involved.

# Working with our partners



## Our vision

---

*Our vision for Kirklees is to be a district which combines a strong, sustainable economy with a great quality of life – leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality where people enjoy better health throughout their lives.*

---

## Our shared outcomes

---

We remain committed to the shared outcomes we have agreed with our partners. These outcomes describe the impact we want our shared plans and actions to have. They help the council and local partnerships focus on the impact we want to have for people and communities in Kirklees.

Under each outcome we set out our shared day-to-day focus, a description agreed with partners of what we need to focus on to have deliver positive outcomes.

Our shared outcomes are:

- **Shaped by people** – we make our places what they are
- **Best start** – children have the best start in life
- **Well** – people in Kirklees are as well as possible for as long as possible
- **Independent** – people in Kirklees live independently and have control over their lives
- **Aspire and achieve** – people in Kirklees have aspiration to achieve their ambitions through education, training, employment and lifelong learning
- **Sustainable economy** – Kirklees has sustainable economic growth, and provide good employment for and with communities and businesses
- **Safe and cohesive** – people in Kirklees live in cohesive communities, feel safe and are protected from harm
- **Clean and green** – people in Kirklees experience a high quality, clean, sustainable and green environment
- **Efficient and effective** –Kirklees Council works smart and delivers efficiently and effectively.

## Partnership working through our key strategies

---

Our four key partnership strategies are developed and delivered with partners, across the district. In supporting our shared outcomes and vision for Kirklees, they complement each other and our Council Plan. These strategies explain where we are at in Kirklees – what our opportunities and challenges are, what we most need to do to improve, and the role each of us has to make this happen together.

Like our outcomes, success in one strategy depends on the others. For example, a sustainable environment supports a healthy and well population, which in turn supports a stronger workforce and a more inclusive economy. Likewise, inclusive communities support improvements in wellbeing and the environment in local communities.

Our four partnership strategies are:

**Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy:** The Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy (KHWS) sets out our priorities for improving health and wellbeing and what we will do as partners to achieve those improvements. Through the strategy, partners are prioritising good mental wellbeing, connected care and support, and healthy places.



**Inclusive Communities Framework:** The Inclusive Communities Framework (ICF) is a partnership commitment to work better with communities on local issues. Through the ICF, partners are committing to take action showing our belief that communities have solutions to problems, promoting a shared sense of belonging in communities, and caring about what communities care about.

**Inclusive Economy Strategy** (in development): The Inclusive Economy Strategy will outline how the Council and key partners across the district are working to build a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

**Environment Strategy (in development):** The 'Environment Strategy; Everyday, Life' will set out our borough's commitment and ambitious vision for greater action on environmental issues, whilst also addressing the ecological and climate emergencies.

You can find out more about these strategies and more at: <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/policies-and-strategies/index.aspx>

## Within the Kirklees Council 'Council Plan'

---

Our Council Plan sets out:

- The direction for how we work smart and deliver efficiently and effectively
- How we work with people and partners using a place-based approach (people, partners, place)
- Our values and behaviours as an organisation
- Our day-to-day services
- Our 3-year priorities
- Our 12-month deliverables.

This inclusion and diversity strategy is directed by our Council Plan.

You can find out more about our Council Plan at <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/council-plan.aspx>

# The Kirklees context

## Our demographics – key facts

### Disability

According to the ONS Census 2011, 48,702 aged 16 to 74 have a limiting long-term illness in Kirklees. Of these 11,242 (23 per cent) are in employment, 1,373 (2.8 per cent) unemployed, 14,946 (30.7 per cent) permanently sick, 14,410 (29.6 per cent) retired, 1,257 (2.6 per cent) students, and 5,474 (11.2 per cent) otherwise economically inactive.

Amount that day-to-day activities are limited	Kirklees, Number	Kirklees, %	England and Wales, %
A lot	33,162	7.7	7.5
A little	42,428	9.8	10.0
Not limited – not disabled under the Equality Act	357,625	82.6	82.5
<b>Total all usual residents</b>	<b>433,216</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ONS Census 2021

### Religion

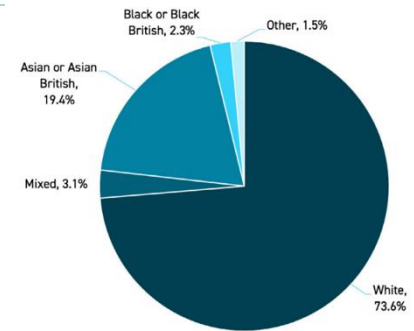
Religious category	Kirklees, Number	Kirklees, %	England and Wales, %
No Religion	150,599	34.8	37.2
Christian	170,577	39.4	46.2
Buddhist	996	0.2	0.5
Hindu	1,723	0.4	1.7
Jewish	187	0.0	0.5
Muslim	80,046	18.5	6.5
Sikh	3,476	0.8	0.9
Other religion	1,633	0.4	0.6
Not answered	23,949	5.5	6.0
<b>Total all usual residents</b>	<b>433,216</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ONS Census 2021

## Race and ethnicity

Demographic split in Kirklees:

- White 73.6%
- Asian or Asian British 19.4%
- Mixed 3.1%
- Black or Black British 2.3%
- Other 1.5%



Source: ONS Census 2021

## Social isolation and loneliness

Social isolation and loneliness significantly increase the risk for premature mortality. Those living in areas of high deprivation and Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups are at higher risk of experiencing frequent feelings of loneliness:

- Of the 20% most deprived people in Kirklees, 31% of them experience frequent feelings of loneliness
- Of the 20% least deprived people in Kirklees, 11% of them experience frequent feelings of loneliness
- Of the BAME group in Kirklees, 34% experience frequent feelings of loneliness
- Of the White British group in Kirklees, 19% experience frequent feelings of loneliness.

Of all adults in Kirklees, 19.7% feel lonely (2019/20).

## Fuel poverty

18.1% of households in Kirklees are in fuel poverty according to the latest data.<sup>1</sup> This compares to 13% as the national average.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, Accredited Official Statistics – Sub-regional fuel poverty 2024 (2022 data), URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2024-2022-data> (accessed August 2024).

<sup>2</sup> Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, Fuel poverty trends 2024, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fuel-poverty-trends-2024> (accessed August 2024)

## Index of deprivation

Index of deprivation 2019 Deprivation in England is measured at Lower Super Output Area using a variety of indicators grouped under seven domains (income, employment, health, education and skills, housing and access to services, crime, and living environment).

In Kirklees 12.2% of the population live within LSOAs which rank within the worst 10% in England; this is higher than the average for England where 9.9% of the population are within the worst 10% LSOAs.

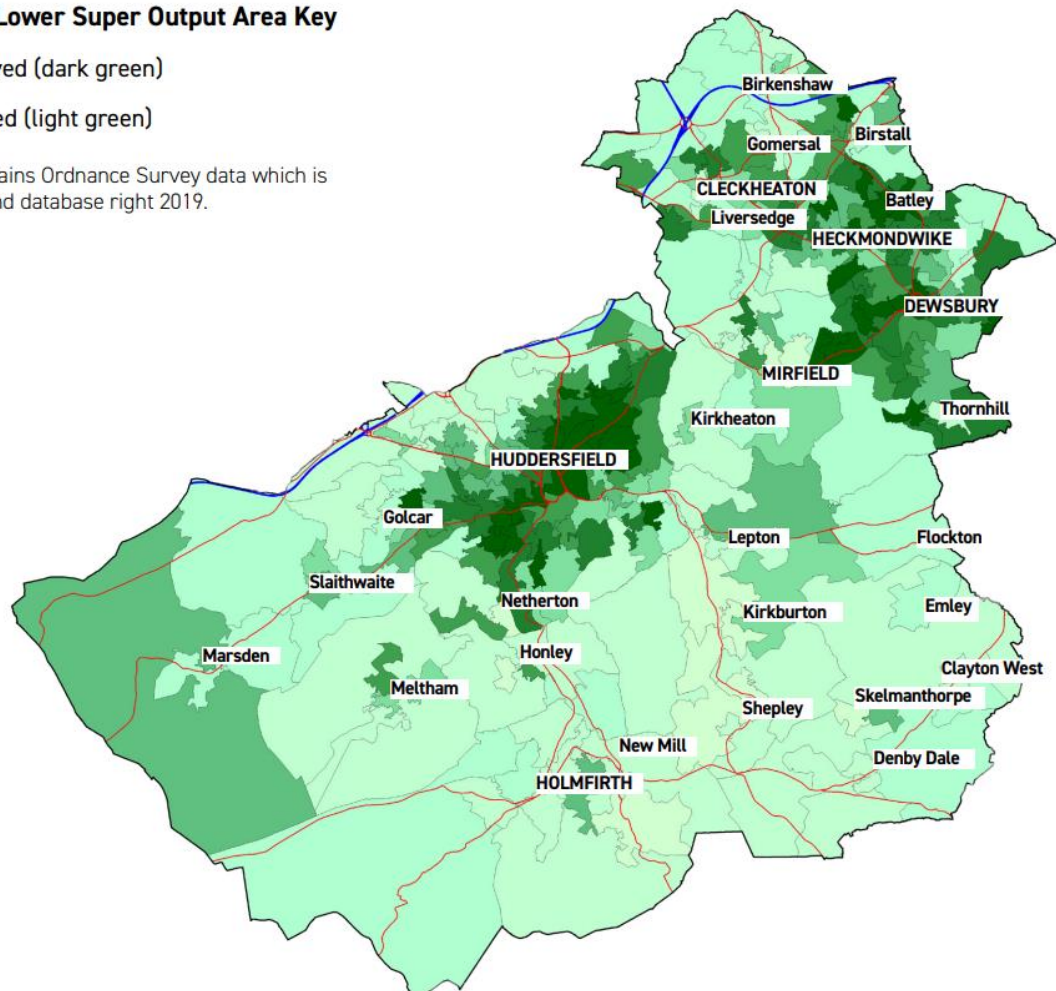
There are pockets of relative deprivation across all parts of Kirklees, with particularly large concentrations in urban areas.

## Deprivation by Lower Super Output Area

### Deprivation by Lower Super Output Area Key

- Worse deprived (dark green)
- Least deprived (light green)

Note: The map contains Ordnance Survey data which is Crown Copyright and database right 2019.



## Employment and wages

The median gender pay gap in Kirklees (19.7%<sup>3</sup>) is higher than nationally (14.3%<sup>4</sup>). Nationally, the gap is small or negative for people in their 20s and 30s in the same employment type (full- or part-time) but 11.5% across all employment types because women are more likely to have lower-paid part-time roles. The gap widens considerably for full-time employees aged 40 or over.<sup>5</sup> This is mostly explained by parenthood, with men's average pay levels mostly unaffected but women's average earnings falling sharply with little growth after.<sup>6</sup> Caring responsibilities can also play a role. The mean gender pay gap in Kirklees Council (8.7%)<sup>7</sup> is more than double the local government average (3.5%).<sup>8</sup>

Nationally, the disability pay gap, the gap between median pay for disabled employees and non-disabled employees, was 13.8% in 2021, widening since 2014 when disabled employees earned 11.7% less.<sup>9</sup>

BAME groups are underrepresented in local government senior officer positions nationally.<sup>10</sup>

For higher education graduates, average earnings across ethnicities differ considerably, as below.<sup>11</sup>

### Post-graduation average earnings (UK)

Ethnicity	+1 year after graduation (£)	+3 years after graduation (£)	+5 years after graduation (£)	+10 years after graduation (£)
All (incl. ethnicities not listed below)	21,600	25,100	28,200	32,200
Indian	23,800	27,800	31,500	35,300
Pakistani	20,100	23,100	24,900	25,600
Black African	22,300	24,500	27,400	30,000
Caribbean	19,800	23,400	26,400	29,300
White	21,600	24,900	28,200	32,200

<sup>3</sup> Kirklees Council Gender Pay Gap Report 2022, <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/information-and-data/pdf/open-data/gender-pay-gap-report-2022.pdf> (accessed August 2024)

<sup>4</sup> ONS (2023), Gender pay gap in the UK: 2023 (using 2022 figures), <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2023> (accessed August 2024)

<sup>5</sup> Francis-Devine, Brigid (2024), 'The gender pay gap' (House of Commons Library) <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN07068/SN07068.pdf> (accessed August 2024). See also ONS (2023), 'Gender pay gap in the UK: 2023', <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2023>

<sup>6</sup> Andrew, et al (2021), 'Women and men at work', (Institute for Fiscal Studies), <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/women-and-men-work> (accessed August 2024)

<sup>7</sup> Kirklees Council (2023), 'Gender Pay Gap Report 2023' <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/information-and-data/pdf/open-data/gender-pay-gap-report-2023.pdf> (accessed August 2024)

<sup>8</sup> Local Government Association (2024), 'The gender pay gap in local government 2023/24' <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/gender-pay-gap-local-government-202324> (accessed August 2024)

<sup>9</sup> ONS (2022), Disability pay gaps in the UK: 2021, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitypaygapsintheuk/2021>

<sup>10</sup> Local Government Association (2023), Local government workforce summary data - November 2023, <https://www.local.gov.uk/local-government-workforce-summary-data-november-2023> (accessed August 2024)

<sup>11</sup> UK Government (2024), 'Work and study after higher education', <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/after-education/destinations-and-earnings-of-graduates-after-higher-education/latest/#by-ethnicity-average-earnings> (accessed August 2024)

## Key inequalities and challenges

There are number of key inequalities and challenges affecting communities and individuals in Kirklees. Some are local issues, but equally a local impact can be felt as a result of national and even global factors.

We have used a combination of data analysis and community engagement in order to establish what we believe are some of the relevant factors which inform the direction of this strategy. The statistics paint a picture of some of the inequalities faced within our communities, but the stories from individuals help us really understand what life is like in Kirklees at the moment.

In this strategy, we have identified four factors that exacerbate and deepen inequalities across all protected characteristic groups. Activity is required across all inequalities, but these are factors on which we will have a particular focus for this strategy:

- Poverty and the cost of living
- Loneliness and social isolation
- Being care-experienced
- Having a disability

People in Kirklees have told us that the double impact of the Covid pandemic and the subsequent cost-of-living crisis has hit them financially and socially. Taking the lead from the most recent Director of Public Health report [12] it is clear that, while many more people are experiencing financial hardship, the cost-of-living crisis is having the most significant impact on people who were already living in persistent poverty, as deprivation levels go deeper.

The poverty rate for working-age unpaid carers in 2022 was 28%, compared to 20% for those without caring responsibilities; and was 31% for disabled people, compared to about 19% for those who are not disabled [13].

Members of the community we spoke to told us that poverty is an overriding factor affecting their wellbeing and happiness. It impacts on their physical health, secure housing, and their mental or emotional health.

The 2022 Director of Public Health Report, "Poverty Matters", had a clear focus on understanding the impact of the cost-of-living crisis,

The threshold at which people experience destitution, where they are unable to meet their barest physical needs to stay warm, dry, clean, and fed, has increased significantly (rising from £70 per week (single person) in 2019 to £95 per week in 2022 (most recent figures, released in Feb 2023)

Where people's characteristics intersect, the impact of poverty can be felt even more deeply. For example, the proportion of working age disabled people living in poverty is 27%, compared to 19% for working age people who have not declared a disability. Other factors such as the employment rate of disabled people (53% as opposed to 82% of non-disabled people) and the disability employment gap

---

<sup>12</sup> [Director of public health annual report 2022/23: Poverty Matters | Kirklees Council](https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/director-of-public-health-annual-report/index.aspx) : <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/director-of-public-health-annual-report/index.aspx> (accessed June 2024)

<sup>13</sup> [Valued: Breaking the link between paid and unpaid care, poverty and inequalities across Britain \(openrepository.com\)](https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621592/bp-valued-paid-and-unpaid-care-poverty-inequalities-160424-en.pdf) : <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621592/bp-valued-paid-and-unpaid-care-poverty-inequalities-160424-en.pdf> (accessed June 2024)

(which typically sees disabled people paid 29% less than their non-disabled counterparts) mean that poverty is felt more acutely by disabled people than those who are not [14].

Similarly, as the cost-of-living crisis has hit our communities, it has become clear that it is not affecting us all equally. For example, the Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) reports that, of the number of people they're assisting with food bank referrals each month, more than twice as many people of Black / African / Caribbean / Black British ethnicity were helped than White people. There are similar figures for access to crisis support, people facing homelessness issues, and private renters helped with 'no fault' eviction support. The average monthly surplus for the CAB's debt clients ranges from -£19 for White clients to -£92 for Asian / Asian British clients [15].

## Loneliness

---

One of the significant impacts of the Covid pandemic was the rise in people experiencing loneliness and a lack of social connectedness. Successive lockdowns and shielding by members of our communities affected their ability to interact and socialise with others. The current cost-of-living crisis further limits some people's abilities to connect with others.

Loneliness is a public health priority that affects people from all walks of life and at various life stages. Taking action to combat loneliness, and putting in place interventions to support people to build connections can reduce the need for health and care services in the future, and have a significant impact on improving sense of belonging within our communities.

Loneliness is a complex and multi-faceted issue, and it is clear that its impact is not evenly distributed across society, instead being more prevalent and persistent among marginalised and disadvantaged groups. Nationally, data tells us that 10-13% of older people feel lonely often or always, with protected and other characteristics becoming risk factors, such as low income, poor health and disability, living in isolated rural or deprived local communities [16]. Local data found that, of respondents to the Current Living in Kirklees (CLiK) survey in 2021, 6% of people feel lonely often or always, here however with a higher prevalence for younger people, transgender people, people of mixed ethnicity and those in the most deprived communities [17]. People in Kirklees told us that isolation was a particular problem for younger people and young families, again exacerbated by pressures from the cost-of-living crisis.

The crossover between loneliness and inclusion is clear. Discrimination, stigma, prejudice and a lack of representation can meet structural exclusion from policies and environments that can create barriers, such as a lack of access to public transport or digital exclusion.

The impact of loneliness can also be felt at work. We will explore the impact of this on our workforce, especially in light of research which indicates that 10% of workers often or always experience loneliness, with the figures being higher for disabled staff, senior managers, or colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds [18].

## Care-experienced people

---

---

<sup>14</sup> [Disability facts and figures | Disability charity Scope UK](https://www.scope.org.uk/media/disability-facts-figures) : <https://www.scope.org.uk/media/disability-facts-figures> (accessed June 2024)

<sup>15</sup> [CA cost-of-living data dashboard | Flourish](https://public.flourish.studio/story/1634399/) : <https://public.flourish.studio/story/1634399/> (accessed July 2024)

<sup>16</sup> [Combating loneliness: a guide for local authorities](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e_march_2018.pdf) : [https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e\\_march\\_2018.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e_march_2018.pdf) (accessed June 2024)

<sup>17</sup> Kirklees Council, 'Current Living in Kirklees 2021: Summary of Key Findings' <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/involve/publisheddoc.aspx?ref=cikoju7p&e=1021> (accessed June 2024)

<sup>18</sup> [Loneliness at work report | research | British Red Cross](https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/we-speak-up-for-change/loneliness-at-work) : <https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/we-speak-up-for-change/loneliness-at-work> (accessed June 2024)

Care-experienced people can face significant barriers, stigma and disadvantage that impact them throughout their lives. They disproportionately experience homelessness, loneliness, unemployment, poverty, and a range of other disadvantages [19].

## Disabled people

---

Disabled people in Kirklees have told us that the services they access do not always place their needs first, and often use a 'deficit mode' focussing on what their impairments limit in everyday life. They want any barriers they face to be understood, mitigated, and removed where possible, and would like a focus on offering disabled people independence, choice and control.

The CLiK survey results showed that disabled people were more likely to experience discrimination, had lower self-rated mental health, were more likely to feel lonely, less likely to use local green spaces, and were struggling financially [20].

---

<sup>19</sup> The Care Leavers' Association [The Needs of Adult Care Leavers – The Care Leavers Association](#)

<sup>20</sup> [publisheddoc.aspx \(kirklees.gov.uk\)](#)



# The Council's Role and Responsibilities

Our role and responsibilities in relation to inclusion and diversity have three elements:

- **Compliance** – Our legal requirements and compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- **Ambition** – How we achieve our own organisational ambitions as an employer and key local anchor
- **Partnership** – How we can enable inclusion across the district



## Our 'always on' priorities

All of our objectives depend on continuing to deepen our shared understanding of inclusion and diversity. Our three 'always on' priorities describe what is required and what we will do to do this.

### Understanding impact

---

- We will strive to be more data driven in our approach to developing and delivering services, and to inform our decision making.
- We will support the widespread use of Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) to look for positive impact, and to mitigate negative impact.
- We will have a robust quality assurance process to constantly drive the quality of our impact assessments.
- We will use the data from our IIAs to:
  - take an evidence-based approach to understand the cumulative impact of our decisions
  - positively influence intended outcomes

### Understanding diversity

---

- Promote cultural confidence and competence, by incorporating inclusion into professional development, continuous learning, and self-evaluation for individuals, teams, and for the Council as a whole with the support of our inclusion learning resources.
- Building diversity into customer-facing and service-user centred operations.

### Understanding equity

---

- Building empathy with people who face disadvantage.
- Develop a shared understanding of how we can work together to support people who are underrepresented in our workforce or face barriers or discrimination within society.
- Accept that people need to be treated differently for us to be meaningfully inclusive.

## Compliance: The Public Sector Equality Duty

### General duty

---

The Equality Act 2010 sets out three aims that public authorities, including the Council, must deliver in carrying out our activities:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act also stipulates that we must do this by:

- Removing or reducing disadvantages suffered by people because of a protected characteristic.
- Meeting the needs of people with protected characteristics.

- Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life and other activities.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The aim of the Act is to protect people from disadvantage and harm as a result of having a particular protected characteristic. Every single person has a protected characteristic, so we are all protected through the Act.

## Specific duties

---

Public authorities also have specific duties under the Equality Act to help them comply with the public sector equality duty.

Public authorities with 250 employees or more must do the following:

- Publish information on general duty compliance at least once a year to show how they have complied with the equality duty in respect of both people affected by their policies and practices and their employees.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.
- Publish gender pay gap data by 31 March each year.

## How the Council complies with its legal duties

---

Our Inclusion and Diversity Strategy sets out our equality objectives as required by the duty, and various forms of reporting show how we are complying with the requirement to publish compliance information.

The information is provided on our website. You can find out more about how we are delivering on our ambitions around inclusion and diversity here: <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/inclusion-and-diversity-strategy.aspx>

The Council annually publishes [workforce profile data](#) and produces a [gender pay gap report](#). It is also anticipated that both disability and ethnicity pay gap reports will be published in future. An annual report is produced detailing how the organisation has performed against its equality objectives, which is scrutinised by councillors and published online.

## Ambition: Achieving our organisational ambitions

### Our 2024-27 priority objectives

---

Our objectives go beyond compliance and are based on our ambitions. We set them out against four themes from the Local Government Association's Equality Framework.

### Understanding and working with our communities

- Embedding our commitment to the Inclusive Communities Framework.
- Higher quality integrated impact assessments more broadly used.
- Working closely with ward councillors as local place-leaders, enable place-based responses to the unique challenges and opportunities in each place, such as conversations between faiths and supporting leadership programmes for underrepresented groups.
- Understanding poverty and mitigating the inequitable impact of cost-of-living pressures.

- An inclusive approach to loneliness.
- Enhanced support for care-experienced people.

## **Leadership, partnership, and organisational commitment**

- Embedding our commitment to inclusion through Our Council Plan and key partnership strategies.
- Use the social model of disability to promote inclusion for people with disabilities.
- Organisational improvement and transformation of our day-to-day work.
- Developing champions and a community of practice.
- The development and use of data and intelligence, benchmarking, and looking for best practice to inform planning and decision making
- Responding to regional and national opportunities and challenges that affect our objectives, including legislation and funding

## **Responsive services and customer care**

- Embedding our commitment to inclusion through our Access to Services Strategy.
- Developing our data about our residents and customers.
- Promoting inclusive customer access to services.

## **Diverse and engaged workforce**

- Embedding our commitment to inclusion through the People Strategy.
- Promoting inclusion through workforce planning, including pathways for underrepresented groups that enable better representation in our leadership positions
- Enhancing our workforce data, with a focus on race and disability.
- Being an inclusive employer of choice.
- Supporting Employee Networks to play a bigger role in promoting inclusion and supporting the organisation's priorities.
- Continuing to develop our excellent learning and organisational development offer to promote inclusion.

## Partnership: enabling inclusion across Kirklees

The Council has an important role enabling inclusion more broadly in Kirklees, supporting partnership working with other organisations. To summarise, our role is:

- Being a responsible anchor organisation, recognising our impact as a large, locally-rooted employer and spender and how that affects partners
- Being a co-ordinator and facilitator, supporting partners' efforts where they align with our own and leading through partnerships
- Delivering for partners through our services and programmes, from business support and community capacity building through to planning and investment
- Representing and advocating for the district through regional and national connections, where this will support better outcomes locally

All of these create opportunities to promote inclusion and diversity in Kirklees.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Council is committed to its role working with other partners to deliver our shared vision for Kirklees: for it to be a district that combines a strong, sustainable economy with a great quality of life – leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality where people enjoy better health throughout their lives.

We achieve our vision by delivering improvements in our shared outcomes. Our shared outcomes are long-term commitments agreed with partners and which frame our planning in the short to medium term. They help the council and local partnerships focus on the impact we want to have for people and communities in Kirklees, collectively prioritise and plan, and monitor the impact of regional, national, and even international events. More information on these outcomes is available in Our Council Plan: [www.kirklees.gov.uk/councilplan](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/councilplan).

At the heart of our partnership working is our set of strategic partnership strategies, consisting of the Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Inclusive Economy Strategy, and the Environment Strategy, and supported by the Inclusive Communities Framework, which provides an approach to working with communities, supporting activity in all areas to contribute to more inclusive communities and a sense of belonging. Interdependences have been mapped across all these strategies. These make it clear that inclusion is a 'golden thread' that runs through all of them. The following shows ways in which our inclusion and diversity commitments support our partnership ambitions:

<b>Inclusive Economic Strategy</b>	• Our role as an inclusive employer of choice, creating quality jobs for members of our diverse communities
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy</b>	• An inclusive approach to social connectedness leads to improved health outcomes and sense of belonging
<b>Environment Strategy</b>	• Supporting fairness, inclusion, diversity and accessibility in areas such as access to greenspace and mitigating the impact of climate change on disadvantaged communities
<b>Inclusive Communities Framework</b>	• By enabling place-based responses to the unique challenges and opportunities in each place, we can connect better with underrepresented communities

# Delivery

The Inclusion & Diversity Strategy is the connecting thread that links and supports other key strategic commitments that guide the council's work to deliver our vision for inclusion and diversity. These include the Council Plan, the Access to Services Strategy, the Inclusive Communities Framework, and the People Strategy. It also aligns with the wider work of the Health & Wellbeing and Communities Boards. The strategy does not duplicate the objectives and actions of these other commitments and partnerships, but rather enhances and complements them.

We will monitor the progress of this strategy through an I&D strategy action plan, which provides an overview of:

- Key activities, milestones, challenges, and opportunities for each theme and across all four themes
- The agreed success criteria and indicators for each theme
- Our regular staff survey and other staff engagement activity, to assess the staff perception and experience of inclusion and diversity in the workplace
- A variety of qualitative engagement tools and activities, especially through various teams' work with ward councillors, use of the Inclusive Communities Framework, and other forms of engagement. This will enable us to engage with and record the feedback and insights of different stakeholders

This will help us assess our ability to deliver on our ambitions and support progress.

A steering group of lead council officers for each of the four priority themes will advise, coordinate, and drive progress on the overall objectives of the strategy and identify and facilitate any cross-cutting issues or synergies with other relevant work. They will report regularly to the relevant boards and senior management groups as well as to the relevant portfolio holders. This currently includes the I&D strategy steering group, the Public Health & Corporate Resources Senior Leadership Team, and the Inclusion & Diversity Hub, where all council directorates and employee networks are represented and engaged.

Some of the indicators we use reflect the wider social and economic factors that affect inclusion and diversity, and for these we share responsibility and influence with our partners, such as the police, health, and education sectors. Other indicators are more directly linked to our own performance and actions as an organisation, and we will use those to monitor and improve our own practices and policies, ensuring that they are adequately resourced and prioritised.

We will review and update the action plan periodically based on progress made and monitoring information, to ensure it aligns with the experiences, ambitions, and challenges of residents, employees, and communities in Kirklees. We will also share and celebrate the achievements and successes of the Inclusion & Diversity Strategy and the action plan through the council website, which will also fulfil our legal requirement to report on progress made.

ACHIEVING INCLUSION

This page is intentionally left blank





**Report title:** Council Budget Strategy Update: 2025/26 and future years

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup>September 2024</b>
<b>Cabinet Member (if applicable)</b>	<b>Cllr Graham Turner</b>
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<p><b>Purpose of Report</b>                  To determine the Cabinet’s approach to the annual update of the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). This is reported to Full Council each year and sets a framework for the development of draft spending plans for future years by Officers and Cabinet.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b>                  Cabinet recommend the following for approval by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• note the key risks to the delivery of the budget in 2024/25 and that these will be subject to consideration as part of the Budget Monitoring reports submitted to the Cabinet on a quarterly basis;</li> <li>• note the continued uncertainty with the future funding outlook for the Council;</li> <li>• note the update and the revised budget gap to the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30 as shown at <b>Appendix A</b> and that in view of the uncertainty with some of the assumptions upon which the Strategy is based, that it will remain under review as the Council’s budget process progresses;</li> <li>• note that there is a significant gap of c£30m in 2025/26 which requires either reduction in budget pressures or increased savings proposals to be brought forward at pace.</li> <li>• note the scenario analysis shown at <b>Appendix C</b> which models ‘worst’/‘best’ case scenarios around the baseline MTFP as part of the assessment of potential risks facing the Council;</li> <li>• agree the Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in the report;</li> <li>• note that as delegations allow, and in view of the significant financial challenge faced by the Council, early action will be taken to identify and implement budget reduction measures (consistent with the Medium Term Financial Strategy set out above) as a means of reducing the funding gap set out in this report;</li> </ul>	

- in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members, request Officers to identify and bring forward proposals consistent with the Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in this report for consideration by Cabinet (and then Council) as part of their development of the budget for 2025/26;
- note the timetable set out in **Appendix E** of the report for the development of the Council's Budget for 2025/26;
- agree that, subject to consideration by respective Portfolio Holders, any budget proposals arising from the work above be considered by the Cabinet in due course (and subject to the proposal on consultation below);
- note that it is proposed to undertake consultation on the budget proposals in late 2024 with a view to informing decisions on the Council's budget for 2025/26.
- subject to the continuation of the Business Rates Pooling arrangements, give delegated authority to the Chief Executive and the Service Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader and the Finance and Regeneration Portfolio Holder, to determine whether the Council should continue as a member of the Leeds City Region Business Rates Pool in 2025/26

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- To ensure that the Council has a sustainable budget over the medium term to deliver the Council's priorities.

#### **Resource Implications:**

This report develops the financial planning framework for the 25/26 budget and all relevant financial implications are contained in the report and appendices.

**Date signed off by Strategic Director & name**

**Rachel Spencer-Henshall – 2 September 2024**

**Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?**

**Kevin Mulvaney – 2 September 2024**

**Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?**

**Sam Lawton – 2 September 2024**

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward Councillors consulted:** All

**Public or private:** Public

Have you considered GDPR: Yes – there is no personal data within the budget details and calculations set out in this report and accompanying Appendices

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 Under the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet is required to submit a provisional Budget Strategy Update to the Council no later than October in each year. Commonly known as the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), this report sets out a framework for the subsequent budget setting process and future financial planning.
- 1.2 At the meeting of the Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, the Council approved its Budget for 2024/25. As part of this, approval was also given to the MTFS for the period to 2026/27. The MTFS sets out the Council's financial plans detailing income and expenditure over the medium term. Acknowledging that the Council is operating in a dynamic environment and that the assumptions underpinning the MTFS are subject to change, it is good practice to review and update the Strategy on a regular basis to ensure that the Council has a good understanding of its forward financial forecasts and to support planning for the development of the budget in 2025/26 and subsequent years.
- 1.3 The update to the MTFS is also necessary in the context of the Council's outturn for 2023/24, reported to Cabinet/Council on 9<sup>th</sup> /17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and the Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring position for 2024/25 reported to Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024. The outturn position on the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget was an overspend of £7.3m and the latest monitoring position indicates the Council is forecast to overspend by £12.8m in 2024/25. Should the forecast outturn position for 2024/25 be sustained until the year end, the Council's Unallocated Reserve could fall below the minimum level. This means that for the purposes of planning the budget for 2025/26, there is no scope to use these reserves and the funding gap must be bridged by reductions in the base budget, whether that is less expenditure, more income or a combination of the two.
- 1.4 In response to the Budget Monitoring for 2024/25, a series of additional mitigating measures are being considered to reduce the Council's net expenditure. At the same time, a review of the Council's Capital Programme is underway. These actions are being implemented in the context of the Council Plan priorities so that the Council's activities continued to support the delivery of services towards the shared outcomes set out in the Plan.
- 1.5 There is a forecast deficit on the Medium Term Financial Strategy of £40.9m by 2029/30 with the most immediate issue being a funding gap in 2025/26 of £29.3m. This is partly caused by the continuation of the overspend in 2024/25 as a result of the continuing impact of the cost and demand pressures particularly in the social care sector, shortfalls in income and the rising cost of temporary accommodation.
- 1.6 In view of this significant funding deficit, the Council must identify ways to achieve a sustainable budget at the earliest opportunity. Given the significant reduction in reserves over recent years, there is also a need for the Council to ensure it can maintain an adequate Minimum Working Balance and start to build back reserves to provide the Council with financial resilience and capacity.
- 1.7 It is important that the development of the MTFS is undertaken in the context of the Council Plan, which was approved by Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 alongside the 2024/25 Budget. It sets out the ongoing commitment to a vision and shared outcomes over the medium term

but in the context of the economic and financial challenges currently facing the Council and the Borough. The four key Council priorities are:-

- Address our financial position in a fair and balanced way;
- Strive to transform council services to become more efficient, effective, and modern;
- Continue to deliver a greener, healthier Kirklees and address the challenges of climate change;
- Continue to invest and regenerate our towns and villages to support our diverse places and communities to flourish.

## 2. Information required to make a decision

### Budget Strategy for 2024/25

2.1 In setting the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2024/25, the Council agreed the following key matters are part of the budget strategy:-

- net budget growth of £33.1m to reflect increases in demand for services, structural deficiencies in some income budgets and inflationary pressures;
- savings totalling £42.6m to be implemented so that the full effect of the saving impacted in 2024/25;
- drawdown of £11.4m from Earmarked Reserves to support expenditure in the budget.

### Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring

2.2 At the last meeting of Cabinet in August 2024, Councillors considered a report on the Council's Quarter 1 General Fund Revenue Budget monitoring position. This estimated that the Council is forecast to overspend by £12.8m in the current financial year as summarised in the Table below:-

**Table 1: Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring 2024/25**

	Revised Budget £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Forecast Variance £m
Children and Families	80.6	86.3	5.7
Adults and Health	120.1	122.1	2.0
Growth and Regeneration	42.1	48.8	6.7
Corporate Strategy, Comm and Public Health	57.4	61.1	3.7
Central Budgets	64.8	64.8	-
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>365.0</b>	<b>383.1</b>	<b>18.1</b>
Demand Reserve Drawdown	3.0		(3.0)
Social Care Contingency Budget Release		(2.0)	(2.0)
Waste Inflation Budget Release		(0.3)	(0.3)
<b>General Fund Net Revenue Budget</b>	<b>368.0</b>	<b>380.8</b>	<b>12.8</b>

2.3 Executive Directors have been asked to bring forward proposals to bring the projected overspend back into a balanced position. Should the forecast overspend remain unchanged, the Council's balance of Unallocated (General) Reserves could fall below what is considered to be the minimum working balance level of £15m, although as part of the

Budget setting process the minimum working balance will be reviewed to ensure it is still the correct level.

2.4 Members will be aware that several actions have already been taken to control net expenditure. These include:-

- cessation of all but priority expenditure (limiting spending to maintaining health and safety, meeting statutory service requirements, fulfilling contractual obligations, preventing further costs and to helping generate income);
- stricter controls on recruitment whereby all posts subject to release are approved by the relevant Executive Director and the Council's People Panel, but stopping short of a total recruitment freeze;
- an ongoing review of all discretionary fees and charges to seek to ensure full cost recovery in line with the Council's approved fees and charges policy.
- accelerating the sale of assets that the Cabinet has already agreed to dispose of and bring forward further options for assets disposals (both to reduce the operating cost of the Council's Estate and to generate capital receipts);
- continuing to explore all external funding opportunities to bring additional income into the Council;
- undertaking a review of the Council's Capital Programme to determine to what extent schemes can be rephased, deferred, stopped or not started at all to the reduce the cost of borrowing to the Council and to free up capital receipts so that they can be reallocated to essential spending commitments. To date over £62m of spend has been slipped from 2024/25 into future years which has reduced Council borrowing requirements to be in line with the budget.

2.5 Whilst these actions are having some effect in helping to mitigate the Council's financial position, it is evident that these actions need to go further and quicker to reduce the in year overspend and the potential impact on reserves.

2.6 In the view of the Service Director Finance, these actions remain necessary to avoid the need to issue a report under s114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. The need to issue such a report will remain under review depending on the success or otherwise of the implementation of the actions set out above.

2.7 In summary, the Budget Strategy for 2024/25 and the forecast overspend for the year continues to provide the backdrop for the significant ongoing financial challenge faced by the Council and many other authorities across the country.

### **Overarching Principles of the Financial Strategy**

2.8 A sustainable financial plan is required to help ensure the Council is well placed to achieve its ambitions as set out in the Council plan.

- 2.9 The Council will become more sustainable by reducing the reliance of one off funding sources, such as reserves, to fund recurring expenditure and it must to continue to make an appropriate provision to top up its unallocated (general) reserve to ensure that on a risk based approach this reserve is always above a minimum level.
- 2.10 The strategy will also provide specific funding for the creation of certain earmarked reserves to continue to fund transformation costs that will be required to deliver service change across the Council. This change can help deliver its ambition of being modern efficient Council.
- 2.11 The strategy also recognises the need to provide the Council's agreed contribution to the SEND Safety Valve plan at c£10m.
- 2.12 This financial plan aims to provide funding to address known pressures in the base budget and will make appropriate provision for inflation (pay and prices) and a reasonable assessment of demand pressures based upon the latest available information. In the main these are the demand pressures being reported in Q1 financial monitoring.
- 2.13 In general, fees and charges to the public are assumed to be increased annually by 3%; however where costs rise beyond this, for example in those traded services who may be impacted more acutely by National Living Wage increases, or services who have not yet achieved full cost recovery, services will continue to seek to recover full costs in line with the Council policy on fees and charges so as to not to create additional burdens on the general fund. Charges for users of Adult Social Care services will continue to be based on assessment of a clients ability to pay.
- 2.14 The Capital plan, currently £1.29bn over five years will continue to be subject to review and presently no new schemes have been added to those already in the plan. It is likely that as part of the ongoing review, some schemes will need to be slipped or removed from the capital plan. At Quarter 1 2024/25, around £62m (£23m of general fund borrowing) has been slipped from the current financial year into future years which has brought this year's Treasury budget into balance.
- 2.15 New capital schemes will be considered for inclusion in the Capital plan if they deliver ongoing revenue savings against the base budget; or are required to meet health and safety priorities or on the basis that new bids are assessed as a greater priority than existing Council funded schemes which would subsequently be removed.
- 2.16 Collectively, these principles are designed to create a more stable base budget from which Members can make decisions on savings proposals that will be required to delivered a balanced budget and set the framework for the setting of the 2025/26 budget to be considered at Cabinet in December 2024 and subsequently approved at Budget Council in early 2025.
- 2.17 Had there been little or no recognition of ongoing pressures, there is an increased risk that a budget for 2025/26 may not have been considered robust with the resulting implication that it could not be signed off by the S151 officer.

## **Risk and Uncertainty within the Financial Strategy**

- 2.18 The Government's future spending plans for 2025/26 will not be known until the Autumn of 2024 and those plans may differ from the assumptions made in this strategy. The new Government has indicated it will undertake a spending review in the Spring of 2025 with a view to providing multi year settlements to Council's. Whilst this will not directly influence the 2025/26 budget, the offer of certainty a multi year settlement will bring will aid financial planning beyond 2026.
- 2.19 There is a risk that the political priorities of the Government continue to direct resources towards the traditionally protected departments of Health, Defence and Education and that unprotected departments face budgets being capped either in cash terms or increases limited to CPI. This Council along with its partners continues to lobby to ensure local government is seen as a priority.
- 2.20 There remain uncertainties around Business Rates Reform and the Fair Funding Review meaning funding allocations to Councils will continue, at least in the short term to reflect spending needs from 2013/14 and will continue to not take account of how those needs have changed (in relative terms) since that time. Financial modelling indicates that Kirklees could benefit from an additional £18m per annum, although any gains/losses would almost certainly be subject to a cap and collar.
- 2.21 Pay and inflationary pressures remain a risk over the longer term. Whilst inflation is now nearing the Bank of England target level of 2% which should reduce the impact of the inflation within the sector, the impact of pay awards, national living wage increases and ongoing inflation within those budgets subject to significant demand variations rising beyond the assumed levels in the financial plan will add to the gap.
- 2.22 There are a number of significant budgets particularly in social care and certain income budgets which are subject to demand and demography changes. Whilst this plan tries to adequately reflect those pressures based on the latest information, there is a risk that these pressures are understated.
- 2.23 There is a risk that the predicted reductions in interest rates are not realised which increases the cost of the capital plan to levels which are not affordable within the overall funding envelope. This would result in a potential reduction in the total capital plan from the current £1.2bn level.
- 2.24 Whilst no new burdens responsibilities are assumed in this plan, should any arise it is expected that these will come with the appropriate level of funding.

## **Update of Medium Term Financial Strategy (Revenue) 2025/2030**

- 2.25 Since the meeting of Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 work has continued to update the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period to 2029/30. A summary of the updated MTFS is provided in the Table 2 below with an analysis by Directorate shown at **Appendix A**:-

**Table 2: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/30**

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m
<b>Opening Balance</b>	-	29.3	34.7	43.5	41.6
<b>Funding &amp; Reserves Changes</b>	(7.6)	(30.6)	(12.9)	(20.6)	(19.6)
Add back 24/25 savings fall out	2.6	-	-	-	-
Demand pressure	16.5	7.9	7.8	7.8	7.6
Inflation/pay pressure	18.0	15.6	13.2	13.5	13.8
Treasury management pressure	10.9	16.2	2.9	1.9	2.2
Other pressure - expenditure	5.7	(0.7)	2.7	4.8	-
Funding fall-out	2.3	0.9	-	-	-
Other pressure - income	1.6	-	-	-	-
Funding increase	(4.4)	(1.7)	(4.6)	(9.0)	(4.7)
Existing Approved Savings	(16.3)	(2.2)	(0.3)	(0.3)	-
<b>Total Spend Changes</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>18.9</b>
<b>Funding 'Gap'</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>40.9</b>
<b>In Year Funding Gap</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>(1.9)</b>	<b>(0.7)</b>

See Appendix A

- 2.26 As the table indicates, the forecast funding gap for the period to 2029/30 is now estimated to be £40.9m with the most immediate issue being a funding shortfall in 2025/26 of £29.3m.
- 2.27 To put these variations into context, the net base budget for 2024/25 is £363.4m. For 2025/26 specifically, total available budget is forecast at £371.1m with an initial assessment of spending need identified by Directorates at £400.4m which creates 'the gap' of £29.3m. Further details of the assumptions and main pressures are outlined below.
- Specific Funding Assumptions (£7.6m)**
- 2.28 The Council's net revenue budget is primarily determined from the amount of Council tax collected and funding provided from the Government Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) with adjustments made with either contributions to or from reserves to support the overall total base budget for service provision.
- 2.29 Given the funding settlement for 2024/25 is for one-year only, and the limited details provided in the Local Government Finance Policy Statement, it remains difficult to estimate with any certainty the likely level of funding the Council will receive onwards.
- 2.30 In respect of Council Tax and the Adult Social Care precept, this plan assumes an annual increase equivalent to 4.99%. This is based on the increases of core council tax (2.99%) and the social care precept of 2%. A reduction of 1% would result in a reduction in council tax funding of c£2.4m per annum and would have a compounding effect if this was applied in the early years of the plan.
- 2.31 There is an assumed increase in the Council tax base of 0.7%, equivalent to circa 800 Band D homes per annum.



- 2.32 The Government SFA, which includes Revenue Support Grant, is assumed to increase by c2% per annum for the duration of the MTFs. Retained Business Rates income and associated grants are uplifted by the same percentage.
- 2.33 Other un-ringfenced grants, including New Homes Bonus and Services Grant, are assumed to remain relatively stable over the MTFs period.
- 2.34 It is also assumed that the Social Care grant funding provided to the Council and which are budgeted for in the Directorates, totalling around £69.3m in 2024/25 and including grants such as the Improved Better Care Fund, Social Care Support Grant, Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund will be c£4m higher than the levels currently provided. Further announcements on specific government funding in relation to social care are expected as part of the upcoming budget.
- 2.35 The 2024/25 base budget is supported by the use of £11.4m of one off reserves which will no longer be available
- 2.36 The table below summarises the total and assumed variations in funding available to support the budget next year.

2025-26 FUNDING BUILD UP (£000)	COUNCIL TAX INCOME	BUSINESS RATES RETAINED INCOME	GOVERNMENT FUNDING	COLLECTION FUND REPAYMENT	USE OF RESERVES	TOTAL
<b>24-25 FUNDING</b>	<b>(236,391)</b>	<b>(63,169)</b>	<b>(70,684)</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,795</b>	<b>(363,449)</b>
FUNDING INCREASE	(14,790)	(708)	(1,725)			(17,222)
FUNDING FALL-OUT			135		4,650	4,785
OTHER					4,759	4,759
<b>25-26 FUNDING</b>	<b>(251,181)</b>	<b>(63,877)</b>	<b>(72,274)</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>13,204</b>	<b>(371,128)</b>

## Executive Director Portfolio Assumptions:

### Children & Families

- 2.37 As part of the MTFs approximately £6m of additional funding is proposed to be invested into Children's Services for 2025/26 (prior to savings targets). A large part of this (£3.9m) is to support demand led sufficiency pressures such as External Residential Placements, Leaving Care Supported Accommodation 18+, Special Guardianship Orders and Educational Psychology. Inflationary pressures are also proposed to be supported at a cost of £1.4m and a further £0.7m is to be invested to support Corporate Parenting pressures.

### Adults & Health

- 2.38 As part of the MTFs approximately £14.2m is added in relation to Adults demand led pressures. Of this, £7.6m is related to demand and £6.6m is inflationary (around CPI and the impact of the National Living Wage). However, as part of last years budget, the Directorate has significant savings targets c£12.7m to deliver in

2025/26 which will need to be reviewed to test whether they can be delivered or whether alternative proposals are required.

## **Place**

- 2.39 Significant pressures have been identified in the Place Directorate and various measures have been put into action to mitigate these wherever possible. However, there are still a number of budget pressures that require specific funding by adding to the base budget.
- 2.40 A total of £3m is proposed to be added to the Waste Management budget for 2025/26 primarily for Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPS) at £0.7m, Landfill tax £0.3m, Chemical treatments costs £0.3m, £0.9m for the extension of the Suez contract and £0.8m to provide the required vehicle hire budget pending the arrival of new fleet vehicles.
- 2.41 A sum of £0.8m has been added to reflect the costs of maintenance and other costs in the Core Estate, £1.1m for specific operational demand issues across the Directorate including increased budgetary provision for expected increases in costs of Home to School transport and maintenance of fleet vehicles.

## **Public Health and Corporate Resources**

- 2.42 The council currently has a significant pressure relating to Housing Benefit Subsidy, linked to homelessness activity and the use of bed and breakfast and other forms of temporary accommodation for which Councils are unable to reclaim full subsidy. An amount of £4.6m has been added to bring the base budget up current spending levels. A homelessness board has been established to try and reduce spending pressures (subsidy loss) and it is expected actions agreed by this Board can help reduce this pressure going forward.
- 2.43 In addition, the Welfare and Exchequer base budget had assumed Household Support Funding would continue, but this is looking less likely adding a further pressure of £0.8m. Other significant base budget pressures include a reduction in court cost fee recovery relating to Council tax and business rates at £0.5m and a fall out of the one-off saving in Public Health of £0.9m.

## **Other Cost Pressures**

### *Pay Awards*

- 2.44 As the Cabinet may be aware, the pay award for 2024/25 has not yet been agreed and given the position of both the National Employers Organisation and the Trade Unions, it appears it is unlikely to be agreed until later in the year. The current pay offer, a flat rate of £1,290 per FTE, made by the employers is in line with the amount provided for in the 2024/25 budget at c£10m.
- 2.45 Looking ahead, and with CPI inflation currently at 2.2% (August 2024) and near to Bank of England target levels, the MTFs assumes pay awards of 3% for each of the

remaining years of this plan. Each 1% costs broadly £2.5m per annum on the Council's existing payroll costs.

- 2.46 Budgets for pay awards and inflation continue to be held centrally until they are agreed nationally or are contractually committed.

#### *National Living Wage and Impact on Pay Structure*

- 2.47 In broad terms, the change in the National Living Wage (NLW) impacts the Council in the following ways:-

- the Local Government Employers Organisation, which represents most Local Authorities in pay negotiations with the Trades Unions, is committed to pay staff above the NLW. Given the current NLW is only marginally below the lowest hourly rate paid to Local Government staff, in recent years the increase in the NLW has required increases in the lowest hourly rates that, when applied to the whole pay spine, are not affordable.

Consequently, in the last 3 years, the National Employers Organisation has offered flat rate pay awards on each point of the Local Government Pay Spine which, whilst progressive, is leading to a flatter pay spine. This is not considered sustainable and may require a complete review of the Pay Spine (akin to a national job evaluation exercise) which could have significant implications for pay costs for all Councils;

- the Council uses the National Living Wage as one of the key components in its determination of the amounts payable for Adult Social Care commissioned services. Given the value of the commissioning arrangements, which is c£104m net annually (c£141m gross), and that wages represent on average c70% of Providers Costs, the change in the National Living Wage has a significant bearing on the cost of these services to the Council. The change in the NLW for 2025/26 will not be known until later in the year but is assumed in the MTFP to increase by c3.9% (mid-point of the potential envelope being considered by the Low Pay Commission).

#### *Treasury Management*

- 2.48 Updated Treasury management budgets assume that the Bank of England base rate of 5.00% (as at 1st August 2024) is estimated to fall towards 3.00% by the end of 2025/26. The updated MTFP reflects an assumed an average consolidated borrowing rate of 4.69% in 2025/26. This is based on the continuation of current borrowing strategy, which combines the use of both short and long term borrowing as set out in the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy report so as not to expose the Council to significant changes in interest rates in any given year.
- 2.49 Treasury management budgets also take account of updated capital plan borrowing requirements and associated annual revenue resources to be set aside to service Council debt. A 20% potential slippage factor (previously 30%) has also been applied to borrowing across all schemes over the updated multi-year capital plan, with the exception of the Cultural Heart scheme which is assumed to be delivered

in line with projected timelines. This is considered a reasonable assumption at this stage given the nature and scale of strategic priority investment, and potential range of factors that can cause such programmes/schemes to slip over such a protracted timeline. However, best practice is that Treasury budgets should be based upon the most realistic timeline of capital plans and not simply assume a level of slippage. It is intended that this strategy will be developed over time.

#### *Other Matters which may impact the Strategy*

2.50 As well as the range of pressures affecting the Council's financial position overall set out above, there are some specific service related matters that may equally have a bearing on the Council's financial position. These include, but are not limited to, for example:-

- **Social Care Reforms (including Market Sustainability and the Fair Cost of Care)** – although the Government has cancelled the implementation of reforms on social care (including the cap on maximum amount a person would spend in their lifetime) there is, nevertheless, a need for the Council to ensure the sustainability of the local care market and to plan for increases in demographics and in complexity of care need. Whilst funding continues to be available from the Government to support Social Care, this may not be sufficient to cover increased demand. Equally, much will depend on the integration of health and social care and what that might deliver in terms of efficient and effective services;
- **Preparing for Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection** – the Cabinet has received various updates on the CQC's mandate to independently review and assess the quality of care provided by Local Authorities. It is not clear when the Council will be subject to this review, but significant work has been undertaken to be prepared. Again, from the updates provided, the outcome of the review is uncertain and with that the extent of any actions, and therefore resources, that may be necessary in response to the review;
- **Managing Demand in Children's Social Care** – the Council has invested in early intervention in Children's Social Care which has meant the numbers of Looked After Children are low in relative terms when compared to other 'like' Councils. However, both the mix of placements and associated costs are creating pressure on the budget which will need to be actively managed to ensure expenditure remains within the resources available. This is particularly the case with the SEND service where there is significant transformation activity being driven by a need to reduce the historic deficit on the High Need DSG budget.
- **Environment Act 2021** – The Act has a wide range of changes that will impact on the Council, generally in relation to environmental matters and more specifically as both waste collection and waste disposal authority. This includes, for example: -
  - the collection of glass, metal, plastic, paper/card, film/foil and cartons from households for recycling.

- Councils will be legally required to have separate food waste collections at least once a week for recycling and composting.
- the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (where consumers pay a deposit for a single-use container at the point of purchase which is then refunded to the consumer when they return the container for recycling).
- the Extended Producer Responsibility which makes sure producers pay the 'full net cost of recovery' for the packaging that they produce (considered by MHCLG to be a substantial new income source for the Council, although this has yet to be verified)

The implementation of some measures in the Act is due for most authorities in April 2026, however, this Council has an exemption until April 2028 due its specific issues regarding the Waste Management contract. For those with the April 2026 date, capital funding has been provided by Government for new food waste vehicles and receptacles, although revenue funding has yet to be announced. On this basis it is reasonable to assume that New Burdens funding will be provided to meet the requirements of the Act and therefore no provision is included in the Medium Term Financial Plan for the impact of the Environment Act 2021 at this time.

## Balances and Reserves

- 2.51 Any consideration of the Council's Medium Term Financial position needs also to consider what reserves and balances are available and whether they are adequate. The Council holds both "earmarked" and "general/unallocated" reserves. The strategy for the use of these is outlined below; with forecast reserves balances illustrated in Appendix B.
- 2.52 **Earmarked Reserves** (for discretionary use) will only be used for the purposes for which they have been set aside and will be subject to annual review. The updated MTFs assumes a net transfer of £11.7m into Earmarked Reserves in 2025/26 to support specific spend requirements, including DSG Safety Valve repayments and replenishment of the Service transformation reserves and insurance provisions.
- 2.53 **General Reserves** are balances held as contingencies against risks such as emergency events. A risk assessment of the Council's level of reserves is carried out each financial year, when setting the budget and updating the financial plan. It is updated regularly during the financial year as part of the formal financial management reporting process. The risk assessment is based on the following key factors and an underlying presumption that significant risks need an appropriate level of cover: -
- a) a review of known provisions and contingent liabilities;
  - b) the likelihood of overspend for either revenue or capital;
  - c) the likelihood of any additional income that would be credited to reserves;
  - d) the robustness of the Council's revenue budget proposals;
  - e) the adequacy of funding for the Capital Programme; and
  - f) any potential significant expenditure items for which explicit funding has not yet been identified.

2.54 Appendix F provides the risk assessment of the Council's level of general reserves, which estimates the value of the risks at £15.0m. Therefore, a current **Minimum Working Balance** of at least £15.0m needs to be maintained throughout the life of the current MTFP. The **Desirable Balance** calculation is £25m which is the current level of the reserve. As part of the budget setting process the risk assessment on the level of reserves will be refreshed.

2.55 The below table shows the projected level of General/Unallocated Reserve over the duration of the MTFP and reflects an assumption of annual contribution of £1.5m to the reserve. These figures include the Minimum Working Balance as outlined above.

31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2027 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2028 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2029 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2030 £m
(25.0)	(25.0)	(26.5)	(28.0)	(29.5)	(31.0)	(32.5)

2.56 The Council will ensure the reserves remain at an adequate level to manage effectively all future risks and liabilities, in particular whilst operating in the current volatile and uncertain environment.

2.57 The assessment of general and usable reserves is used by MHCLG, CIPFA and the Council's external auditors as a key measure of the Council's ability to deal with pressures that could not be reasonably anticipated when setting the budget

2.58 It is worthwhile reiterating that the reserves are a finite source of funding and should not be relied upon to support the Council's budget other than as part of the clear strategy to achieve a sustainable budget in the medium term. Acknowledging this, the Cabinet should note that any use of reserves will only be permissible with the agreement of the Service Director Finance.

### **General Fund Revenue Budget - Scenario Planning (Sensitivity Analysis)**

2.59 As mentioned above, the MTFP is based on a range of assumptions which impact on both income and expenditure. Changes in these assumptions can have a fundamental effect on the Council's funding gap and the level of savings the Council will be required to make.

2.60 The Cabinet will appreciate that it is good practice to model scenarios based on changes to some of the key assumptions in the MTFP. The purpose of this sensitivity analysis is not to predict or forecast the future, but rather test and understand the Council's sustainability into an uncertain future given alternative plausible scenarios for the key drivers of costs, service demands, funding and key risks to which the Council is exposed. Such 'stress testing' is considered to be good practice and acts as an indicator of the Council's financial sustainability.

2.61 The sensitivity analysis gives some indication of the likely range of the Council's deficit position bounded by realistic worst- and best-case scenarios. The key variables that have been modelled with the results of this analysis are provided at **Appendix C** and summarised in Table 3 below:-

**Table 3: Scenario Analysis**

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m
Best Case	26.7	32.0	40.7	38.7	37.9
<b>Base Position (Table 2 above)</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>40.9</b>
Worst Case	36.8	49.2	65.0	70.1	78.8

See Appendix C

2.62 As the table indicates, the range of potential positions is a deficit of c£26.7m to a deficit of £78.8m. These scenarios are provided to reflect the level of potential volatility in the assumptions and reinforces the uncertainty with future budget estimates..

### Update of Medium Term Capital Plan 2024/29

2.63 At the last meeting of Cabinet, Members considered an update position on the Councils capital plan. Around £62m of spend has been slipped from 2024/25 into future years. The current budget of £278.7m for 24/25 remains under review. The latest Medium-Term Capital for 2025/26 onwards is summarised in the table below and the funding breakdown is provided in more detail at **Appendix D**.

**Table 4: Medium Term Capital Plan 2025/26**

	2024/25 £m		2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 – 31/32 £m	Total £m
Children and Families	19.0		41.0	15.2	4.7	3.0	82.9
Adults, Housing & Health	8.1		3.3	8.2	2.0	0.4	22.0
Regeneration & Growth	191.9		196.5	113.3	80.1	217.1	798.9
Corporate Strategy, Commissioning & Public Health	11.9		13.3	1.1	0.9	3.1	30.3
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>230.9</b>		<b>254.1</b>	<b>137.8</b>	<b>87.7</b>	<b>223.6</b>	<b>934.1</b>
							-
<b>HRA</b>	<b>47.8</b>		<b>53.0</b>	<b>73.7</b>	<b>70.9</b>	<b>110.6</b>	<b>356.0</b>
<b>Council Total</b>	<b>278.7</b>		<b>307.1</b>	<b>211.5</b>	<b>158.6</b>	<b>334.2</b>	<b>1290.1</b>

2.64 Notwithstanding the economic growth aspirations of the Council, there is need for the Council's Capital Programme to remain prudent, affordable and sustainable. This is particularly in the context of the significant pressure on the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget as set out above and as described above, specifically the significant increase in treasury management charges.

2.65 As referred to above a review of the Capital Programme has commenced. Given the extent of borrowing that underpins the Programme, and the current and forecast cost of that debt, the focus of the review is to consider what scope there is to reduce the

Capital Plan for the Council. This is being balanced against the future investment needs of the Council, both in maintaining the delivery of essential services, providing match funding where it is necessary to leverage external funding and to deliver ambitions around growth and regeneration.

- 2.66 Without pre-empting the outcome of the review, it is inevitable that the projects within the Programme will need to be reduced, deferred or even stopped. Further details of the review and, indeed, the proposed Medium Term Capital Programme for 2025-2032 will be brought forward for consideration by the Cabinet in due course.

## **Collection Fund**

### *Collection Fund – Council Tax*

- 2.67 The Collection Fund – Council Tax accounts for the income and expenditure associated with the collection of Council Tax. Council Tax receipts from residents are paid into the Fund. Precept payments to the Council, Major Preceptors (Police, Fire) and Parish Councils are paid out of the fund. Any surplus or deficit on the Fund is distributed to the Council and Major Preceptors.

- 2.68 In relation to Council Tax, it is assumed that the Council Taxbase will grow by 0.8% (c800 Band D Properties) annually over the life of the MTFP. This will be reviewed as more information becomes available around the impact of any changes in Government policy with regard to planning and housebuilding. The ultimate collection rate is assumed to remain constant at 98.5%.

### *Collection Fund – Business Rates*

- 2.69 The Collection Fund – Business Rates accounts for the income and expenditure associated with the collection of Business Rates. Business Rates receipts from businesses are paid into the Fund. Payments to the Government (50% of net debit collected), the Council (49%) (otherwise known as locally retained rates) and Fire Authority (1%) are made from the Fund. Again, any surplus/deficit on the Fund is distributed to the aforementioned bodies in the proportions set out.

- 2.70 The Council's share of locally retained Business Rates is supplemented by both a top up payment and section 31 grant payments from Government, with the latter compensating Councils for any loss of income relating to changes that affect retained business rates. This includes the impact of freezing the business rates multipliers (or uplifting them by less than CPI). For the purposes of the MTFP it is assumed that together, the Council's share of locally retained Business Rates plus these grant payments from Government will increase by 2% per annum.

- 2.71 As Cabinet will be aware, the Council is currently part of the Leeds City Business Rates Pool in 2024/25. That arrangement applies for 1-year only given the Government's tendency to seek applications to renew such agreements as part of the annual Local Government Finance Settlement. The benefit of the Pooling arrangement to the Council is the opportunity to receive a share of the retained levy on business rates growth across all Councils in West Yorkshire (the Council's share is estimated to be £0.4m for 2024/25).



2.72 Whilst no such request for applications to renew the Pooling arrangement for 2025/26 has yet been published, and subject to other Councils in West Yorkshire agreeing, it is assumed for the purposes of the Medium Term Financial Plan that the Pooling arrangement will continue in its present form. As this is the case, and to ensure the Council is in a position to respond accordingly if a request for applications is made, it is recommended that Cabinet given delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Service Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader and the Finance and Regeneration Portfolio Holder to consider options and determine whether (or not) the Council should continue as a member of the Pool in 2025/26.

### **Dedicated Schools Grants (DSG)**

2.73 As Cabinet may be aware, Dedicated Schools Grant is paid to the Council in support of the Local Authority's Schools budgets. It comprises four blocks of funding – the Schools Block, the Central School Services Block, Early Years Block and High Needs Block. It is the responsibility of the Council, in conjunction with their local Schools Forum, to determine the split of funding between their own expenditure and the Individual Schools Budget.

2.74 A more detailed report on Schools Funding arrangements will be presented to the Cabinet once details of the DSG Settlement are known for 2025/26.

2.75 In the meantime, in relation to the High Needs DSG Block and the Council's accumulated funding deficit, the Cabinet is aware from previous reports on this matter that the Council is part of the national Safety Valve Programme with the Department for Education. Under the Agreement with the DfE, which aims to bring back into balance the annual budget for High Needs provision and to reduce the historic deficit to nil, the Council will receive funding of £33.5m. The Safety Valve agreement for Kirklees has been extended from 2026/27 until 2029/30 as a result of increasing pressures relating to demand and complexity. Payments in relation to the agreement have been re-profiled to equal annual payments of £2.3m across 2024/25 – 2029/30 - £19.7m of safety valve funding has been received by 31/03/24.

2.76 The Council's SEND Improvement Plan includes significant capital investment in District SEND placement sufficiency over the next 5 years; including the re-location and placement expansion of two existing special schools (includes £9m Government capital grant contribution and c£28m Council prudential borrowing), alongside Government further capital funding of £8.2m to support Alternative Resource Provision across the District's maintained schools. The Improvement Plan also includes a Council-contribution of £10.8m and annual Council savings against High Needs spend which by year 2029/30 should see the budget in balance. The Improvement Plan resourcing assumptions described here are incorporated into the updated baseline MTFP and funding assumptions in this report as appropriate.

## Kirklees Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

### Background

- 2.74 The Council is required to maintain a self-financing Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which is ring-fenced from the Council's other budgets and is a record of all revenue expenditure and income relating to the authority's own housing stock. It is the responsibility of all councils with an HRA to ensure it sets a balanced budget and make provision for adequate resources to invest in council properties. This is to keep tenants safe and ensure that they are living in properties that meet a decent home standard including energy efficiency which will support tenants with the cost of living.
- 2.75 The Council regularly reviews and updates the HRA business plan with the aim to produce a self-financed and balanced budget position over the 30-year plan that delivers the key objectives. Over the next five years there is a cumulative deficit of £4.7m.

### Medium Term Financial plan 2025-2030

SERVICE ACTIVITY	24-25 BUDGET AMENDED	25-26 BUDGET PROPOSAL	26-27 BUDGET PROPOSAL	27-28 BUDGET PROPOSAL	28-29 BUDGET PROPOSAL	29-30 BUDGET PROPOSAL
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Total Expenditure	112,332	113,039	113,451	115,014	116,935	119,625
Total Income	(107,837)	(108,321)	(111,605)	(115,134)	(117,825)	(120,515)
Net Operating Expenditure	4,495	4,718	1,846	(120)	(890)	(890)

### Key Income Assumptions

- 2.76 Rental Income - In February 2019 the Government confirmed that a return to a rent formula of CPI+1% for 5 years from 2020/21 and therefore 24/25 was the last year of this agreement. It is worth noting that in 2023/24 Government did intervene and capped rent increases at 7% when inflation was 10.1%.
- 2.77 It is expected that the Government will announce the continuation of CPI +1% policy for allowable rent increases and as such this plan makes that assumption on rent increases over the period. The total forecast rental income is also adjusted for the impact of decanting tenants from Berry Brow and Sycamore Grange (236 properties totalling £1.02m) and the net difference between forecast Right to Buy (RtB) sales and additional housing stock from buy backs and new build properties in the Housing growth programme.
- 2.78 Right to Buy Sales - The current plan assumes 200 sales per year for the rest of the plan. RtB discounts remain a considerable incentive for many people when considering when to purchase their Council home, however there has been a slowdown in sales recently which may result in diminishing RtB sales in the future.

2.79 Other Income - The financial plan assumes service charges will rise in line with rental income. A review of service charges is being carried out where the aim is, following consultation to move to a full cost recovery position over a three-year period.

2.80 PFI Grant - This grant remains fixed at £7.9m over the life of the PFI contract.

### Key Expenditure Assumptions:

2.81 Pay Award and Price Inflation – A pay award of 3% for the period 2025-26 to 2030/31. Price inflation is generally assumed at CPI levels in the plan.

2.82 Energy Costs - Gas and electricity are forecast based on the latest assumptions from the energy team.

2.83 Repairs - An additional £2.1m has been added to the repairs budget to carry out stock condition surveys and water quality assessments over a three-year period, the repairs budget is assumed to be inflated by CPI and adjusted to reflect the forecast changes in stock numbers.

2.84 Disrepair Provision - Resolving disrepair remains a priority for the service. The financial plan assumes an annual budget of £1m for legal costs including disrepair.

2.85 Provision for Bad Debt - A bad debt provision is provided for based on 90% of former tenant arrears and 20% of current tenant arrears. A budget of £1m is provided to maintain the provision at this level. It is assumed that this level of provision will remain static and will be kept under review.

2.86 Capital Programme - (Annual Investment). The annual capital investment requirement in the HRA is over £50m per annum. The table below outlines the initial capital plan, however, due to limited resources within the HRA, this will need to be reassessed and reprofiled with regard to its affordability.

Capital Plan	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	2030/31 £000	Total £000
Strategic Priorities Total	14,152	14,059	35,225	32,299	7,471	1,292	2,204	106,702
Baseline Total	33,688	38,894	38,469	38,595	36,110	35,521	28,045	249,323
Overall Total	47,840	52,953	73,695	70,894	43,581	36,813	30,249	356,025
<b>FUNDING SUMMARY</b>								
Borrowing	8,708	9,111	23,990	17,465	3,813	646	1,102	64,835
Grants	870	1,509	8,228	5,486	545	226	226	17,089
Contributions	322	-	-	-	-	-	-	322
Capital Receipts	2,152	1,356	3,233	9,575	3,340	646	1,102	21,403
HRA RCCO	11,013	15,702	12,468	12,094	9,109	8,520	1,044	69,951
HRA MRR	24,775	25,275	25,775	26,275	26,775	26,775	26,775	182,425
Overall Total	47,840	52,953	73,695	70,894	43,581	36,813	30,249	356,025

2.87 Additional interest on borrowing charges - The plan reflects increased costs associated with servicing the HRA's debt to fund the Council's Housing Growth Programme (CHGP). The table shows the planned spend and the need to borrow circa £41.8m over the next 3 years. Maximum use of RtB receipts (now 50% of any scheme) will be made to minimise the impact of borrowing. The borrowing figures reflect the assumptions used by the Council's Treasury team with regard to the

interest rates (less 0.4% for any borrowing undertaken before June 25). Whilst there is a risk that interest rates will be higher than assumed and will add further pressures to the current gap within the HRA, this is considered relatively low at this stage of the economic cycle.

2.88 Recharges to the HRA - Recharges to the HRA relate to services provided from other parts of the Council on behalf of the HRA. These include, for example, back-office services such as HR, Finance, and IT as well as front facing services such as the contact centre, hubs, community safety and environmental services. All these costs are subject to an annual review.

2.89 **HRA General Reserve** -The level of the HRA general reserve is forecast to be £10.5m on 31st March 2025 which is approximately 10% of total spend and averages c£500 per property (Based on 21,729 properties on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024). Discussion with a HRA Finance peer group indicate this figure is in line with other Councils. However, a review of the risk based approach to the calculation of the required level of general reserve will be undertaken ahead of the budget proposals in December 2024.

HRA RESERVES	Balance at 31 March 2024	Contributions to reserves	Contributions from reserves	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Set aside for business risks	(15,000)	-	4,495	(10,505)
Set aside to meet investment needs	(18,942)	(24,775)	35,788	(7,929)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(33,942)</b>	<b>(24,775)</b>	<b>40,283</b>	<b>(18,434)</b>

2.90 **Major Repairs Reserve** - The major repairs reserve is estimated to reduce to c£8m by the year end following the impact of significant annual investment in the existing stock (annual spend of over £25m]. To maintain this level of annual investment may require further borrowing which can only be afforded by reducing spending elsewhere within the HRA.

2.91 The strategy to mitigate this cumulative deficit (£4.7m over the next 5 years) on the Housing Revenue Account is in line with the approach being taken for the rest of the Council. Options for balancing will include savings that can be generated from business-as-usual proposals and those that require more specific service reviews to deliver savings.

2.92 All areas of HRA spend and income will be considered when finalising the detail of the 2025/26 budget with appropriate consultation:

- Rental income increases will be adjusted to reflect any changes in CPI, government cap and consultation with Elected Members.
- Service charges will be reviewed with an option to increase these above the current assumptions to get closer to full cost recovery of these costs from the tenants that benefit from the additional services.
- The annual investment programme will be reviewed with options presented to reduce or realign the programme. Should additional funding become available, then this could be used to reduce the HRA revenue contributions.
- Other capital programmes could be delayed or reduced.
- A review of staffing levels and removal of budgeted vacant posts will be considered.

- All expenditure lines, including repairs, will be reviewed to ensure resources are directed into priority areas of the budget.
- A review of HRA earmarked reserves will be completed as a mechanism to help smooth out specific one-off pressures to be paid back later.

### **3. Implications for the Council**

#### **3.1 Working with people**

Whilst there are no specific proposals from this report, proposals to bring the budget into balance are considered likely to have some effect upon the workforce and the total number of staff employed by the Council. Each savings proposal brought forward by services will clearly identify if there any staffing implications.

#### **3.2 Working with partners**

There are no specific proposals in this report which affect partner organisations. However, savings proposals brought forward by services may impact on these organisations. Where this is relevant, partners will be consulted.

#### **3.3 Place based working**

N/A

#### **3.4 Climate Change & Air Quality**

N/A

#### **3.5 Improving outcomes for children**

N/A

#### **3.6 Financial Implications**

The financial implications for the Council are as set out in the report.

The report identifies a significant funding gap in 2025/26 (and over the medium term) that the Council must address. Given it is not prudent to use reserves to help meet the funding gap, the Council must identify ways of reducing its net expenditure either through less spending, more income or a combination of the two to comply with its statutory obligation of setting a robust balanced budget

#### **3.7 Legal Implications**

The Council is under a statutory obligation (s31A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992) to set a balanced budget on an annual basis. Considering the financial challenge described in this report, a proposed MTFS is set out which, if implemented, provides a framework for the Council to comply with its statutory obligation in this respect.

The Service Director Finance is required under s25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to provide the Council with a report on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves when considering the Council's budget for the forthcoming financial year. As is normally the case, that report will be provided alongside the main report on the Budget for 2025/26 as part of the Budget/Council Tax setting for 2025/26.

Once the budget is agreed, s28 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to monitor its income and expenditure against the agreed budget. This legislation supports the requirement for the Council to monitor performance against budget during the year.

Section 65 Local Government Finance Act 1992 and regulations thereunder require the council to consult non-domestic ratepayers; and the Council's Budget and Policy Framework set out in part 4.3 of the Constitution further requirements about consultation with service users, residents and stakeholders on the budget proposals.

### 3.8 Other (eg Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

The development of the MTFs is set against a backdrop of a range of strategic, tactical and operational risks faced by the Council. The Council has in place good arrangements for both identifying and mitigating those risks. Details of the Council's Strategic Risk Register are reported to Cabinet on an ongoing quarterly basis.

Further work is required to develop and implement proposals that will allow the Council to bring its net expenditure in line with its income. There may be legal implications arising out of these proposals that will, as required, be considered as part of the development and implementation of those proposals. Where it is considered necessary to do within the bounds of the Council's Constitution, details of these legal implications will be shared with Cabinet as required. In particular, the Council has an obligation under s149 of the Equalities Act 2010 to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty when developing budget proposals. To this end, Integrated Impact Assessments will be produced as required to ensure decision makers have due regard to the Council's equality duty.

### 3.9 **Consultation**

This report has been prepared by the Service Director - Finance, in consultation with the Executive Leadership Team.

## 4. **Engagement**

The Council's overall financial planning framework includes consideration of wider engagement, consultation and timetabling on residents and other stakeholder views on high level priorities in resource allocation, including consultation with representatives of non-domestic ratepayers.

In addition, there may be a requirement for more detailed service consultations, led by the relevant services, on specific service budget proposals. These will engage service users as early as possible and target the groups most likely to be affected

It is good practice for Councils to consult on proposals that may affect the delivery of services including those related to budget savings and/or income generation. Indeed, the Value for Money Assessment undertaken by the External Auditors specifically questions whether the Council has asked '*Are stakeholders consulted during the development of savings plans? Depending on the nature of the savings plans, stakeholders could include staff, local residents, service users, the voluntary sector and local businesses*'.

Further to that, the Budget and Policy Framework at Section 3 of the Council's Constitution does provide for the Cabinet to set out its arrangements for consultation of budget proposals and that at the end of any such consultation, the Cabinet will draw up proposals having regard to consultation responses.

In compliance with this requirement, and subject to budget proposals coming forward, it is proposed that, as in previous years, some form of public consultation on the budget proposals should take place later in 2024 with a view to informing decisions on the Council's budget for 2025/26. The form and content of such a consultation will be determined in due course.

**5. Options**

**5.1 Options Considered**

N/A

**5.2 Reasons for Recommended Option**

N/A

**6. Next Steps and timelines**

6.1 Subject to the Cabinet agreeing the MTFs as set out above, work will be undertaken on the identification and development of draft budget proposals and options (with supporting documentation) within the framework set out. Budget Planning Totals for Directorates have been developed to facilitate this work.

6.2 Where existing delegations set out in the Council's Constitution allow, and in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members as appropriate, early action will be taken to implement proposals to reduce the funding gap identified in this report. Where this is not possible, proposals will be developed in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members and will be brought forward for consideration by Cabinet and, where it is necessary to do so, ultimately by Council as set out in the Constitution.

6.3 The culmination of this work on the development of proposals will be that Cabinet will bring forward its initial budget proposals in December 2024 for consideration. The final budget for 2025/26 will be at Budget Council in February/March 2025.

**7. Contact Officer and Relevant Papers**

Kevin Mulvaney	Service Director – Finance
Jacqui Fieldhouse	Head of Finance
John Bartlett	Acting Head of Commercial Services
James Anderson	Head of Accountancy

**8. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

- [Annual Financial Outturn Report and Rollover Report 2023/24 \(Item 12\)](#)
- [Annual Budget Report 2024/25 and future years \(Item 7\)](#)
- [Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 \(Item 9\)](#)

**9. Appendices**

Appendix A – Updated Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/30  
Appendix B – Balances and Reserves 2025/30  
Appendix C – Best/West Case Scenario Analysis  
Appendix D – Capital Programme to 2031/32  
Appendix E – Outline Corporate Budget Timetable  
Appendix F – Minimum Working Balance

**10. Service Director Responsible**

Kevin Mulvaney      Service Director – Finance



## GENERAL FUND SUMMARY 2025-30

## APPENDIX A

	2024-25 CONTROLLABLE GROSS EXPENDITURE	2024-25 CONTROLLABLE INCOME	2024-25 NET CONTROLLABLE BUDGET	2025-26 NET CONTROLLABLE BUDGET	2026-27 NET CONTROLLABLE BUDGET	2027-28 NET CONTROLLABLE BUDGET	2028-29 NET CONTROLLABLE BUDGET	2029-30 NET CONTROLLABLE BUDGET
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Directorate Budgets</b>								
Children & Families	408,607	(328,554)	80,053	85,445	86,523	87,892	89,261	90,630
Adults & Health	281,848	(165,308)	116,540	113,295	122,967	130,767	137,017	143,267
Place	139,592	(84,574)	55,018	60,181	59,881	59,481	59,481	59,481
Corporate	184,408	(136,226)	48,182	55,442	55,917	55,682	56,287	56,387
Central	70,781	(7,125)	63,656	86,068	111,210	124,393	134,941	146,089
<b>Total Budgets</b>	<b>1,085,236</b>	<b>(721,787)</b>	<b>363,449</b>	<b>400,431</b>	<b>436,498</b>	<b>458,215</b>	<b>476,987</b>	<b>495,854</b>
<b>Funding and Reserves</b>								
Council Tax Income			(236,391)	(251,180)	(265,560)	(280,764)	(296,838)	(313,831)
Retained Business Rates			(63,169)	(63,877)	(64,592)	(65,316)	(66,047)	(66,787)
Government Funding			(70,684)	(72,274)	(74,025)	(75,820)	(77,655)	(79,533)
Collection Fund Repayment			3,000	2,999	999	999	-	-
Net Transfer to Reserves			3,795	13,204	1,400	6,150	5,150	5,150
<b>Total Funding/Reserves</b>			<b>(363,449)</b>	<b>(371,128)</b>	<b>(401,778)</b>	<b>(414,751)</b>	<b>(435,390)</b>	<b>(455,001)</b>
<b>Budget Gap</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>29,303</b>	<b>34,720</b>	<b>43,464</b>	<b>41,597</b>	<b>40,853</b>

This page is intentionally left blank

**GENERAL FUND RESERVES**

**APPENDIX B**

	Reserves position as at 31st March 2024	Budget report Approved Movements	Revised reserves position at 1st April 2024	Estimated Movements In-Year	Reserves position as at 31st March 2025	Estimated Reserves position as at 31st March 2026	Estimated Reserves position as at 31st March 2027	Estimated Reserves position as at 31st March 2028	Estimated Reserves position as at 31st March 2029	Estimated Reserves position as at 31st March 2030
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Statutory (School Reserves)</b>										
Schools Balances	(11,597)	-	(11,597)	369	(11,228)	(11,228)	(11,228)	(11,228)	(11,228)	(11,228)
Public Health	(1,119)	-	(1,119)	560	(559)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Statutory (School Reserves)</b>	<b>(12,716)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(12,716)</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>(11,787)</b>	<b>(11,228)</b>	<b>(11,228)</b>	<b>(11,228)</b>	<b>(11,228)</b>	<b>(11,228)</b>
<b>Earmarked</b>										
Ward Based Activity	(693)	-	(693)	347	(346)	-	-	-	-	-
Place Standard	(556)	-	(556)	278	(278)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub Total (member led)</b>	<b>(1,249)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,249)</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>(624)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Apprenticeship Levy	(3,574)	-	(3,574)	500	(3,074)	(2,574)	(2,074)	(1,574)	(1,074)	(574)
Transformation	(3,067)	-	(3,067)	1,534	(1,533)	-	-	-	-	-
Demand Reserve	(3,000)	-	(3,000)	3,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Development Funding	(621)	-	(621)	621	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revenue Grants	(9,020)	-	(9,020)	4,510	(4,510)	-	-	-	-	-
Stronger Families Grant	(784)	-	(784)	392	(392)	-	-	-	-	-
Other	(1,953)	-	(1,953)	977	(976)	-	-	-	-	-
Specific Risk Reserves	(3,500)	3,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
WYCA Returned Levy	(9,424)	9,400	(24)	-	(24)	(24)	(24)	(24)	(24)	(24)
Voluntary Revenue Provision	-	(15,195)	(15,195)	-	(15,195)	(25,999)	(25,999)	(25,999)	(25,999)	(25,999)
<b>Earmarked reserves sub-total</b>	<b>(36,192)</b>	<b>(2,295)</b>	<b>(38,487)</b>	<b>12,159</b>	<b>(26,328)</b>	<b>(28,597)</b>	<b>(28,097)</b>	<b>(27,597)</b>	<b>(27,097)</b>	<b>(26,597)</b>
<b>General Balances</b>	<b>(25,045)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(25,045)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(25,045)</b>	<b>(26,545)</b>	<b>(28,045)</b>	<b>(29,545)</b>	<b>(31,045)</b>	<b>(32,545)</b>
<b>Total usable reserves</b>	<b>(61,237)</b>	<b>(2,295)</b>	<b>(63,532)</b>	<b>26,779</b>	<b>(51,373)</b>	<b>(55,142)</b>	<b>(56,142)</b>	<b>(57,142)</b>	<b>(58,142)</b>	<b>(59,142)</b>
<b>Grand Total All Reserves</b>	<b>(73,953)</b>	<b>(2,295)</b>	<b>(76,248)</b>	<b>26,779</b>	<b>(63,160)</b>	<b>(66,370)</b>	<b>(67,370)</b>	<b>(68,370)</b>	<b>(69,370)</b>	<b>(70,370)</b>

## Glossary of Reserves

RESERVE	DESCRIPTION
<b>School Balances</b>	Statutory reserves relating to both individual schools' balances/deficits carried forwards.
<b>Public Health</b>	Timing issues on Public Health grant spend commitments (Public health grant is statutorily ring-fenced)
<b>Ward Based Activity</b>	Set aside reflecting timing issues on ward-based activity spend commitments
<b>Place Standard</b>	Set aside to support the resourcing of emerging Place Standard action plans.
<b>Apprenticeship Levy</b>	Set aside to fund future payments into the Apprenticeship levy
<b>Transformation</b>	Set aside for strategic transformation developments over the next 12 to 24 months.
<b>Demand Reserve</b>	Set aside to mitigate the impact/volatility of a range of potential demand risks on statutorily provided service activity
<b>Development Funding</b>	To address the scale of development costs required to support targeted development and the upscaling of capital investment activity and major project activity over the MTFP.
<b>Revenue Grants</b>	Represents grants and contributions recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement before expenditure has been incurred.
<b>Stronger Families</b>	Set aside reflecting timing issues on expenditure commitments supporting a range of Stronger Families activity, funded from external grant.
<b>Other</b>	A range of smaller reserves earmarked for specific purposes.
<b>Specific Risk Reserves</b>	Set aside to manage specific risks, including the potential risk of future loan defaults and managing the volatility surrounding treasury management budgets with respect to both potential changes in interest rates and the level of delivery of the capital plan.
<b>WYCA Returned Levy</b>	Returned levy income from WYCA that will be drawn down in 2024/25 (as per the approved 2024/25 Annual Budget Report).
<b>Voluntary Revenue Provision</b>	To fund voluntary overpayments of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).
<b>Unallocated Reserves</b>	General reserve to support Council working capital and cashflow requirements, and unbudgeted/financial resilience risks highlighted in the Council's corporate risk register.

BEST CASE SCENARIO	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>BASELINE BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>40.9</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>					
Government Funding 2025/26 onwards: SFA uplift increased to 2.2% (compared to 2% baseline level)	(0.1)	(0.2)	(0.3)	(0.4)	(0.5)
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>	<b>(0.3)</b>	<b>(0.4)</b>	<b>(0.5)</b>
<b>SPEND</b>					
Pay Uplift 2024/25: reduce to 4% (compared to 5% baseline level)	(2.5)	(2.5)	(2.5)	(2.5)	(2.5)
<b>TOTAL SPEND</b>	<b>(2.5)</b>	<b>(2.5)</b>	<b>(2.5)</b>	<b>(2.5)</b>	<b>(2.5)</b>
<b>TOTAL CHANGES FROM BASELINE</b>	<b>(2.6)</b>	<b>(2.7)</b>	<b>(2.8)</b>	<b>(2.9)</b>	<b>(3.0)</b>
<b>BEST CASE SCENARIO - BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>37.9</b>

WORST CASE SCENARIO	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>BASELINE BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>40.9</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>					
Council Tax 2025/26 onwards: Overall referendum limit at 4% p.a.; compared to 5% baseline level	2.4	4.8	7.2	9.6	14.4
Government Funding 2025/26 onwards: SFA uplift decreased to nil (compared to 2% baseline level)	1.4	2.8	4.2	5.6	7.0
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>21.4</b>
<b>SPEND</b>					
Pay Uplift 2025/26 onwards: Increased to 4%; compared to 3% baseline level	2.5	5.0	7.5	10.0	15.2
Social Care Demand Pressures 2025/26 onwards: additional 10% compared to baseline level	1.2	1.9	2.6	3.3	4.0
<b>TOTAL SPEND</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>16.5</b>
<b>TOTAL CHANGES FROM BASELINE</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>37.9</b>
<b>WORST CASE SCENARIO - BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>70.1</b>	<b>78.8</b>

This page is intentionally left blank

Capital Plan Expenditure Summary

Capital Plan Expenditure Summary	Revised Capital Plan					Total £'000
	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29- 2031/32 £'000	
<b>General Fund:</b>						
Children and Families	19,008	41,022	15,219	4,684	3,000	<b>82,933</b>
Adults, Housing & Health	8,100	3,291	8,196	1,995	400	<b>21,982</b>
Regeneration & Growth	191,898	196,476	113,236	80,131	217,119	<b>798,860</b>
Corporate Strategy, Commissioning & Public Health	11,863	13,314	1,116	876	3,144	<b>30,313</b>
<b>General Fund Capital Plan</b>	<b>230,869</b>	<b>254,103</b>	<b>137,767</b>	<b>87,686</b>	<b>223,663</b>	<b>934,088</b>
<b>HRA Capital Plan</b>	<b>47,840</b>	<b>52,953</b>	<b>73,695</b>	<b>70,894</b>	<b>110,643</b>	<b>356,025</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>278,709</b>	<b>307,056</b>	<b>211,462</b>	<b>158,580</b>	<b>334,306</b>	<b>1,290,113</b>

## Capital Plan Funding Summary

## Appendix C

General Fund Funding Summary	Revised Capital Plan					Total £'000
	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29- 2031/32 £'000	
<i>Direct / Earmarked Contributions to Schemes</i>						
Capital Grants/Contributions	139,344	121,190	37,747	48,835	72,344	419,460
Earmarked Capital Receipts	5,998	2,990	16,691	990	390	27,059
Service Funded Prudential Borrowing	20,956	7,736	100	140	2,050	30,982
Revenue Contributions	35	0	0	0	0	35
<i>Pooled Resources</i>						
Non-Earmarked Capital Receipts	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	20,000
Corporate Prudential Borrowing	60,536	118,187	79,229	33,721	144,879	436,552
<b>GENERAL FUND FUNDING</b>	<b>230,869</b>	<b>254,103</b>	<b>137,767</b>	<b>87,686</b>	<b>223,663</b>	<b>934,088</b>

Housing Revenue Account Funding Summary	Revised Capital Plan					Total £'000
	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29- 2031/32 £'000	
Capital Grants/Contributions	1,191	1,509	8,228	5,486	997	17,411
Earmarked Capital Receipts	2,153	1,356	3,233	9,574	5,087	21,403
Reserves / Revenue Contributions	19,496	196	0	0	0	19,692
Reserves - MRR	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000	175,000
Corporate Prudential Borrowing	0	24,892	37,234	30,834	29,559	122,519
<b>HRA FUNDING</b>	<b>47,840</b>	<b>52,953</b>	<b>73,695</b>	<b>70,894</b>	<b>110,643</b>	<b>356,025</b>





This page is intentionally left blank

## Appendix E – 2025/26 Budget Timetable

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Cabinet considers Medium Term Financial Strategy	This report
18 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Council considers Medium Term Financial Strategy	
September -November 2024	Budget Savings Proposals produced	
	Review of Existing Pressures	
	Review of Funding Assumptions	
October 30 <sup>th</sup> 2024	Autumn Budget – Chancellor	
	Consideration of impact of budget	
December 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2024	Cabinet/Council Report on 2025/26 Budget Proposals	
	Cabinet/Council considers HRA Budget including Rent and Service Charges	
	Cabinet / Council Report on School Funding Reports	
December 2024-January 2025*	Public consultation on Budget Proposals	
Mid December*	Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement	
January 2025*	Council Tax Base Report (Delegated to S151 Officer)	
January 2025*	Scrutiny Panels consider budget	
February 2025*	Final Local Government Finance Settlement	
11 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Cabinet considers budget and Council Tax	
February 2025*	Opposition Budget Amendments	
5 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Council sets budget and Council Tax	

- **Precise dates tbc**

This page is intentionally left blank

### Assessment of the level of the Council's General Fund Working Balance

1. Reserves are sums set aside to meet possible future costs where there is no certainty about whether or not the costs will actually be incurred. The requirement for financial reserves is acknowledged in statute. Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require billing and precepting authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.
2. When reviewing their medium term financial plans and preparing their annual budgets local authorities should consider the establishment and maintenance of reserves. These can be held for three main purposes:
  - a working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing – this forms part of general reserves;
  - a contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies – this also forms part of general reserves;
  - a means of building up funds, often referred to as earmarked reserves, to meet known or predicted requirements; earmarked reserves are accounted for separately but legally remain part of the General Fund.
3. Local authorities also hold other reserves that arise out of the interaction of legislation and proper accounting practice. These are reserves, which are not resource-backed and cannot be used for any other purpose. An example is the Revaluation Reserve which is a reserve that records unrealised gains in the value of fixed assets. The reserve increases when assets are revalued upwards, and decreases as assets are depreciated or when assets are revalued downwards or disposed of. Reserves of this type do not form part of the annual review of the adequacy of reserves.
4. Section 25(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Director of Finance to report to the Council on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. Guidance is published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) on the establishment and maintenance of local authority reserves and balances. The level and utilisation of reserves will be determined formally by the Council, informed by the advice and judgement of the Director of Finance.
5. In support of this requirement, and as part of the development of the budget for 2025/26, a risk assessment has been carried out to establish the minimum level of the General Fund Working Balance for Kirklees. Details of this assessment are provided below in **Table 1** which indicates that the minimum working balance should be **c£15.0m**.

## Appendix F

**Table 1: Risk Assessment for General Fund Working Balance – 2025/26**

Minimum £000	Desirable £000	Area of expenditure / Explanation of risk / Justification for Reserves
1,200	2,500	<p><b>Pay</b> – the opening MTFP includes annual provision for a 4% pay award for 24/25 and 2% thereafter. This has been increased by 1% across all years as part of the current MTFP update and the budget gap updated accordingly.</p> <p>As future pay awards within the MTFP period are not yet agreed, there is a risk of the current assumptions on pay being at variance to the budget as the pay claim received by the employees' side is often in excess of the budgeted provision. An increase of 1% in the annual pay award would result in an increased cost of £2.5m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £0-2.5m    Medium £2.5m    High £6m-£6.5m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Medium</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £1.2m</b></p>
1,000	1,500	<p><b>Prices</b> – the budget assumes that, in the main, price inflation can be managed by Departments within a zero cash-limited increase or specific inflation allowances for designated expenditure (e.g. National Living Wage, IT software, Utilities). Inflation is now nearing the Bank of England target level of 2% which should reduce the impact of the inflation within the sector. Inflation contingency in central budgets only covers the waste contract and energy inflation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £0.5m    Medium £1.0m    High £1.5m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Medium</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £1.0m</b></p>
500	500	<p><b>Litigation Claims</b> – as the Council faces reductions in resources for future provision of services, there is an increased risk of litigation beyond that which would otherwise be covered by insurance arrangements.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £1.0m    Medium £2.0m    High £3.0m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Low</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £1m</b></p>
1,000	1,000	<p><b>Income from Fees and Charges</b> – With continuing impact of the cost of living crisis combined with a relatively benign outlook for economic growth, the Council's income streams may continue to be impacted. Whilst some budgets have been reduced to reflect more realistic income levels, it is the case that a number of services are also price sensitive and delivered in competition with other providers (e.g. trade waste / building control).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £0.5m    Medium £1.0m    High £2.0m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Medium</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £1.0m</b></p>

## Appendix F

Minimum £000	Desirable £000	Area of expenditure / Explanation of risk / Justification for Reserves
4,000	5,000	<p><b>Demand Led Pressures on Services</b> – the most significant is likely to be the ongoing impact of the cost of living and how this could potentially create additional demand for Council services and/or place pressure on the Council's income.</p> <p>Both Adult and Children's Social Care can be subject to significant demand-led pressures. This can vary from one year to the next and both have been significantly impacted by post Covid-19 'bounce' and the continuing backlog of pressures in the Health Service, alongside recent increased costs for refugees (incl Ukraine).</p> <p>Both Housing and Council Tax Support may also come under pressure given the prevailing economy and associated risk of increasing unemployment due to both the cost of living crisis and the potential for a downturn in the economy. The Council spends c£60m on Housing Benefits whereas the cost of Council Tax Support (applied as a discount on council tax bills) is estimated at c£36m.</p> <p>Qualifying expenditure on Housing Benefit is <i>generally</i> matched by Government subsidy in full, however, an increase in, say, supported services (referred to below) at a lower rate of recovery, can increase the overall net cost to the Council.</p> <p>In recent years, the Council has experienced an increase in Supported Accommodation enquiries and applications. The rate of subsidy for this category of accommodation is 60% and not 100% if the landlord is not a Registered Social Provider. Notwithstanding, an estimate is provided in the budget, if this trend continues this additional provision will not be sufficient to cover the Council's financial risk exposure. Pressures in current year are c £4.4m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £3.0m Medium £4.0m High £5.0m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Medium</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £4.0m</b></p>
500	500	<p><b>Grant income</b> – there is a risk that the MTFs is built on optimistic assumptions of income that may prove unsustainable over the life of the plan; especially assumptions on growth in Adults grant income.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £0.5m Medium £1.0m High £2.0m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Low</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £0.5m</b></p>

## Appendix F

Minimum £000	Desirable £000	Area of expenditure / Explanation of risk / Justification for Reserves
3,000	4,000	<p><b>Non-achievement of Savings</b> – the scale of savings required by the Council to achieve a balanced budget in 2025/26 (and across the rest of the MTFS period) is such that it will require a fundamental shift in how the Council operates which may not be possible in the time available. Whilst arrangements are in place to manage the implementation of the savings it is recommended that additional cover be provided to mitigate the risk of some not being realised or implementation lead in times being longer. This recognises the amount of savings achieved since 2010 and the fact that decisions on budget savings may become increasingly difficult. It should be noted that this MTFP does not contain any future years where the core funding level of the Council is known, so increasing the degree of uncertainty within the budget assumptions made on high value budgets.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £2.0m    Medium £3.0m    High £4.0m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Medium</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £3.0m</b></p>
500	500	<p><b>Unforeseen / emergency expenditure</b> – there is a risk that unexpected events may occur which require expenditure to be incurred or income to be foregone that has not been budgeted. Examples might include, adverse weather, flooding, business continuity linked to loss of key service/building (to the extent not covered by insurance)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £500k    Medium £1,000k    High £1,500k</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Low (assuming Bellwin scheme would apply in certain cases)</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £500k</b></p>
1,000	1,000	<p><b>Unbudgeted borrowing costs</b> – there is a risk that unbudgeted in-year financial losses are funded by a reduction in reserves. This may necessitate the Council having to undertake external borrowing at a time when interest rates are rising (as the Council cannot borrow internally). The interest cost of a £20m loan at 5% would be £1m per annum.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £500k    Medium £1m    High £2m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Medium</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £1m</b></p>



## Appendix F

Minimum £000	Desirable £000	Area of expenditure / Explanation of risk / Justification for Reserves
1,000	1,000	<p><b>Delay in repayment or default on loans made by the Council</b> – there is a risk on loans made by the Council to third party organisations (including: 103 New Street £12.2m, KSDL £3.8m, Kirklees College £13.3m, Kingsgate £5.5m at 31.3.24) potentially resulting in the need to write off the loans, or to agree to extend loan repayment periods, with a resulting cashflow cost.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b> Low £500k    Medium £1m    High £2m</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Medium</b> <b>Minimum reserve needed: £1m</b></p>
0	0	<p><b>Changes in fair value of Council long-term investments</b> – there is a risk that the deterioration in the capital value of the Council's investments (in the CCLA) that, without the statutory override, would otherwise have to be charged to the Council's revenue account. The cost on the initial investment was £10m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b> Low £0    Medium £1m    High £2m</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Low</b> <b>Minimum reserve needed: £0m</b></p>
0	5,000	<p><b>Safety Valve Programme</b> – there is a risk that if the savings on the High Needs Budget are not achieved in line with the requirements of the Safety Valve Agreement, it may be withdrawn and once the statutory override allowing Councils to carry the High Needs Budget deficit on the Balance Sheet (rather than charge it to revenue) expires, the Council will have to fund it. Depending on the scale of the deficit at the time, it would likely result in a s114 notice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b> Low £0m    Medium £5m    High £10m</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Low</b> <b>Minimum reserve needed: £0m</b></p>
0	0	<p><b>Receipt of Capital Resources/ Capital Plan Funding</b> – the overall capital programme assumes a level of income from asset disposals / grants – as the timing of these can sometimes be uncertain it is sometimes considered prudent to set provision aside for additional revenue to help offset any shortfall if expenditure cannot be delayed.</p> <p>The current Capital Strategy reflects substantial levels of capital receipts each year to fund the capital programme (2024/25: £12.2m, 2025/26: £8.4m, 2026/27: £23.9m; 2027/28: £14.6m; 2028/29: £5.9m). Further borrowing or revenue contributions could be required in lieu of capital receipts being realised (unless other funding sources can be found or expenditure delayed), with the risk that further borrowing is not prudent, sustainable or affordable as required by the Prudential Code.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b> Low £0k    Medium £1.0m    High £2.0m</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Low</b> <b>Minimum reserve needed: £0k</b></p>

## Appendix F

Minimum £000	Desirable £000	Area of expenditure / Explanation of risk / Justification for Reserves
0	0	<p><b>VAT- Partial Exemption</b> – If the PE limits are breached there is a risk that c£3m could be potentially lost (based on £60m input tax in 2022/23 &amp; a 5% PE limit). Anything above that would depend on the VAT incurred on the project(s) that was the cause of the partial exemption breach. There is the possibility a breach could be managed through HMRC’s averaging rules which looks at partial exemption over 7 years (which can be a combination of actual and forecast) – if the average over 7 years is less than 5%, repayment to HMRC is not required.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £0m    Medium £0m    High £3m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Low</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £0m</b></p>
1,300	2,600	<p><b>Collection Fund –</b>            Business Rates: Given the volatility inherent in the current rates retention system and the regime’s imminent overhaul, it is considered prudent to set aside a level of funding within the working balance to help manage the associated risks.            Taking into account Collection Fund monitoring to date, the provisions made to cover the risk of appeals and bad debts and an amount held for the volatility in Business Rates, it is proposed to set aside a minimum amount for 2024/25. A 1% reduction in collection equates to c £0.5m for Business Rates.</p> <p>Council Tax: alongside potential shortfalls in new build projections in the Council Tax base there is an increased risk of bad debts as a consequence of the ongoing cost of living crisis. A 1% reduction in collection equates to c £2.1m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment: Degree of risk / reserve needed:</b>  <b>Low £1.3m    Medium £2.6m    High £3.9m</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Likelihood of risk occurring: Low</b>  <b>Minimum reserve needed: £1.3m</b></p>
15,000	25,100	<b>Total</b>



## Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 - 2029 & Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2024

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>10 September 2024</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Cllr Moses Crook</b> Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Transport and Housing.
<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>Yes</b> Affects all wards
<b>Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<p><b>Purpose of Report</b></p> <p>This paper seeks Cabinet approval for the draft Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2029, as set out in Appendix 1 and summarised in sections 1 and 2 of this report.</p> <p>This paper also seeks Cabinet approval for the refreshed Kirklees Council – Housing Solutions Service Temporary Accommodation (TA) Placement Policy 2024, as set out in Appendix 2 and summarised in sections 1 and 2 of this report.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the draft Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, 2024 – 2029 (Appendix 1) be approved.</li> <li>• That the draft Kirklees Council – Housing Solutions Service Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy, 2024 (Appendix 2) be approved.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reasons for Recommendations</b></p> <p>The Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2029 will enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty to formulate and publish such a strategy every five years.</p> <p>The Strategy will also provide a framework for service development, resource prioritisation and partnership support, and thereby enhance outcomes for Kirklees residents who are vulnerable to or facing homelessness.</p>	
<p><b>Resource Implications:</b></p> <p>The Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets the strategic framework for the allocation of resources to homelessness and rough sleeping prevention. It also sets out how we will work with partners to make the best use of all available resources.</p>	

The Council has statutory duties to prevent and relieve homelessness, which give rise to direct resource implications. Over recent years, difficulties in sourcing sufficient housing options for homeless households against a backdrop of rising demand has resulted in a significant increase in costs to the Council particularly relating to much greater use of temporary accommodation. Indicative net costs for temporary accommodation in 2023/24 were up to £6.9 million, with hotel spend alone (gross) rising from £3.1 million in 2022 to £7.2 million in 2024 – although not all this spend relates to homelessness temporary accommodation placements.

The costs relating to delivering homelessness services and temporary accommodation are met through a variety of sources. Government grant(s) and partnership funding is utilised, but the majority of costs fall on the General Fund. The delivery of the priorities within the Strategy will therefore be crucial to the Council's aim to contain / reduce the growth in costs which has occurred over recent years.

Whilst the Strategy includes a commitment to looking for further funding to support homelessness prevention and support activities, it does not commit the local authority to provide or expand further funding to external partners. Partners have fed back that a stronger commitment from the local authority would help to ease uncertainty across the sector, and would enhance delivery of some of the priorities identified in the Strategy.

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward councillors consulted:** Engagement has now taken place with all party groups, who have provided feedback on the proposed direction of travel of both the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy.

**Public or private:** Public Cabinet report

**Has GDPR been considered?** Yes. Consent documents for case stories have been filed and shared with the Communications Team for holding centrally. The names of all people featured in case stories have been anonymised.

## **1. Executive Summary**

### **1.1 Summary of the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 - 2029, presented at Appendix 1**

The Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2029 sets out the key issues around homelessness in Kirklees, the challenges we face, and the priorities that we aim to focus on over the next five years.

It is informed by local data and intelligence and aims to address changes at an operating level, including significant increases in the number of households in need of temporary accommodation at a time of on-going budget challenges.

In line with the Council's shared outcomes, the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy focuses on achieving better outcomes for vulnerable children, providing high quality, joined-up and accessible services that safeguard children and adults from harm, and working collaboratively to support people to live in suitable and affordable homes in attractive places within a supportive community.

## 1.2 Summary of the Kirklees Council – Housing Solutions Service Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2024, presented at Appendix 2

The Kirklees Housing Solutions Service Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy sets out how homeless households will be prioritised for temporary accommodation, both inside and outside of the district.

## 2. Information required to take a decision

### 2.1 Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

The refresh of the Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy brings our cross-sector response to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in the Kirklees district up to date, so that we are able to focus activities where they are needed most.

The 2024 Strategy updates our vision for Kirklees; placing greater emphasis on the importance of partnership working to achieve our shared goals. And in response to feedback during engagement, we have developed four new key themes which better reflect our joint priorities. These are set out in more detail below.

Early identification of any threat of homelessness, targeted interventions and the provision of high-quality advice and assistance ensures people have the best chance of staying in their home.

Working collaboratively with key partners and other stakeholders in the sector – including people affected by homelessness and rough sleeping – a deep dive has taken place into what's working well, achievements since the publication of the last Strategy, areas that need to be addressed, as well as future challenges, opportunities, and threats.

*Our vision is for Kirklees to be a place where we work collaboratively to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, where those most in need are able to access the right help, in the right place, at the right time.*

We recognise that this vision can only be achieved by working with key partners and other stakeholders in the sector. Collaborative partnership working has also informed the objectives set out in this Strategy and helped to shape its four overarching priorities:

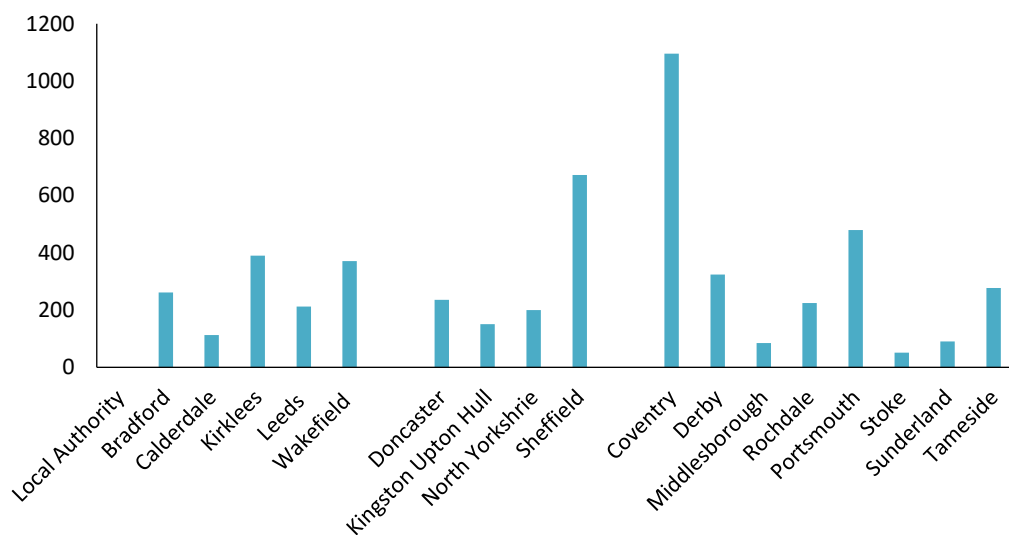
1. Strengthen partnership working to address homelessness and secure the right accommodation.
2. Rapid early help and intervention to prevent homelessness from occurring.
3. Access to long term, settled homes and temporary accommodation, which is safe, decent, accessible and affordable.
4. Tackle rough sleeping, to ensure that it is rare, brief, and not recurring.

Meeting the housing needs of vulnerable people by preventing homelessness and supporting rough sleepers off the street and into appropriate housing with the right level and type of support are key priorities for this Strategy. As is actively working to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation for prolonged periods.

Local authorities have a duty to accommodate homeless families or individuals who are assessed as meeting a 'priority need' criteria until they are able to secure long-term housing. These households are initially offered temporary accommodation, which is intended be a short-term option for people when there is no other accommodation available to them.

Many local authorities across the country are experiencing rises in demand for temporary accommodation. Year on year comparisons show a significant increase in temporary accommodation need across Kirklees over the last five years.

The graph below shows a comparator snapshot of the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of December 2023, across a range of local authorities. The other local authorities in the graph are a mix of near neighbours, other authorities with similar statistical characteristics (according to LG Inform) and a selection of other Key Cities.



With a growth in the requirement to provide temporary accommodation, and lack of available suitable options to enable households to move on quickly, the length of stay in temporary accommodation in Kirklees is too long for many, and there has been a significant increase in the number of households who have had to be accommodated in bed and breakfast hotels. 2% of residents in all types of temporary accommodation are still awaiting a long-term home after 24 months – this is both inappropriate for the household and expensive for the public purse.

All four of the priorities within this Strategy will directly or indirectly explore ways to reduce temporary accommodation usage whilst still ensuring that statutory duties are met. The Strategy sets out how we will aim to encourage partners to use a strengths-based approach with residents to prevent homelessness from occurring in the first place; encourage those who find themselves in that predicament to present as early as possible rather than during immediate crisis and work to increase the accommodation options available to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

There is a need to work with partners including Registered Providers to increase the range and suitability of affordable social and private rented sector housing - exploring new ways to diversify accommodation and support. Accessing greater numbers of tenancies through Registered Providers and private landlords will bring about significant benefits for homeless households through diverting from or shortening stays in temporary accommodation.

Additional objectives have also been built into the strategy which focus specifically on Kirklees residents who have the greatest housing need to ensure we are prioritising those at their most vulnerable but also making best use of resources. This includes maintaining and expanding, where possible, dedicated pathways and/or housing priority for care leavers (in support of our corporate parenting duties), supporting ex-offenders

who are homeless at the point of leaving prison, households who have been subject to domestic abuse, those serving or who are veterans of our armed forces and those at risk of rough sleeping.

The overall success of the Strategy will be measurable through a positive direction of travel in these areas:-

- More positive homeless prevention outcomes
- Greater use of private rented sector accommodation
- Less reliance on bed and breakfast for temporary accommodation
- Reduced length of stay in all types of temporary accommodation; and
- Reduction in rough sleeping

This Strategy refresh has been undertaken during a period of unprecedented demand for homelessness support, and against a backdrop of uncertainty about future national policy, funding, and economic conditions, all of which impact upon delivery of the strategy's priorities. The priorities and actions linked to the Strategy may therefore require more comprehensive review in a timeframe that is earlier than the full five years.

## **2.2 Housing Solutions Service Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2024**

This document sets out Kirklees Council's Policy for how homeless households will be prioritised for temporary accommodation, both inside and outside of the district.

The policy covers both interim placements made under Section 188 of the Housing Act 1996, while enquiries are made into a customer's homeless application and longer-term temporary accommodation placements for customers owed the main housing duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Council prioritises customers who have the greatest need to be in or close to a particular location or need to move away from a particular location for safety reasons. Consideration will be given to the size of the household and the type of temporary accommodation available at the time.

The Policy sets out key principles, factors to be considered when making placements, along with how the Policy will be monitored and reviewed. The Policy confirms the Council's commitment to offering temporary accommodation within the Kirklees district, wherever possible, but acknowledges this is likely to depend on the availability of accommodation within Kirklees. Sourcing temporary accommodation within Kirklees rather than out of district is preferable both in terms of securing best value and also providing better customer outcomes.

## **3. Implications for the Council**

### **3.1 Council Plan**

#### Working with people, partners and place

The Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 - 29 will be centred on working with people affected by homelessness, enabling and empowering them to develop the skills, resilience and improvements in their health and wellbeing that they need to move on to a more settled, happy and stable situation.

Our priorities will primarily focus on those who are in the greatest housing need and will ensure a strengths-based approach is taken to work with people to achieve outcomes.

A collaborative approach has been taken in developing the Strategy. This means that the strategy is informed by a range of partners' perspectives and contributions. All of the

objectives within the Strategy include actions which partners commit to developing and delivering, and the action planning and monitoring of the Strategy over the next five years will be undertaken through partnership collaboration.

The strategy recognises that Kirklees is a diverse community and that in addressing issues of homelessness and rough sleeping, a Place Based approach is needed. This includes consideration of people's local support networks, and where and how they access services.

The Strategy will highlight work taking place to ensure compliance with Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and help to reduce energy bills, which contributes to ensuring people can remain living in their homes sustainably.

#### Improving outcomes for children

For young people at risk of homelessness, there is a long-standing partnership approach between Housing and Children's Services which ensures that no young people are unduly at risk as a result of losing their home. Joint protocols and pathways have been developed and we have seen continued success with 16 -17-year-olds presenting as homeless, with most returning home safely.

The Strategy also highlights the significance of early help and intervention, and tailored support which is key in addressing the housing needs of care leavers. The joint housing pathway in place for Kirklees care leavers has been developed to support the Council's corporate parenting duties.

The Strategy highlights the positive work taking place with Children's Services, and support being provided to our young people to prevent them from becoming homeless. In addition, the strategy includes objectives to improve outcomes for homeless households with children, in relation to securing more appropriate temporary and move-on housing options.

### **3.2 Financial Implications**

The demand pressures arising from homelessness and in particular use of temporary accommodation are significant.

Enhancing homelessness prevention options, securing more sustainable accommodation outcomes for residents, along with a reduction in B&B usage will have a direct positive impact on the Council's financial position.

Current spend on homelessness, in particular temporary accommodation, is inefficient and perpetuates a lower standard of service provision below what we expect.

The objectives within this Strategy aim to enhance homeless prevention, secure more sustainable and suitable housing outcomes, and thereby slow down further growth in temporary accommodation use and reduce the amount of time households need to stay in temporary accommodation.

### **3.3 Legal Implications**

The Housing Act 1996, the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, places a number of duties on local authorities to prevent and deal with homelessness in their boroughs. The 2002 Act created a duty on Local Authorities to carry out homeless reviews and publish a Homelessness Strategy. Section 1(4) of the 2002 Act requires a revised strategy to be published within the period of 5 years beginning on the day the current strategy was published.



The statutory Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities gives guidance on how reviews should take place including the need to consult with relevant partners including Social Services, public or local authorities, voluntary organisations, service users, specialist agencies who provide support to homeless people in the borough, or other persons, as they consider appropriate before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy. Under section 2(1) of the 2002 Act, a homelessness review means a review by a housing authority of:

- a. the levels, and likely future levels, of homelessness in their district;
- b. the activities which are carried out for any the following purposes (or which contribute to achieving any of them):
  - i. preventing homelessness in the housing authority's district;
  - ii. securing that accommodation is or will be available for people in the district who are or may become homeless; and
  - iii. providing support for people in the district who are homeless or who may become at risk of homelessness; or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again; and,
- c. the resources available to the housing authority, the social services authority for the district, other public authorities, voluntary organisations and other persons for the activities outlined in (b) above.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a set of duties on housing authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas and to take reasonable steps to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants, not just those that have priority need under the Act. These duties include a duty to refer which should be incorporated into their homelessness strategy and establish effective partnerships and working arrangements with agencies to facilitate appropriate referrals.

The Homelessness Strategy proposed by this report is to ensure the Council is complying with the various statutory duties placed on it in relation to dealing with homelessness.

The Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2024 is also subject to the Homelessness Guidance. The Policy should be read in conjunction with the Guidance to ensure its operation meets the statutory requirements. In addition, a Supreme Court judgement in 2015 (Nzolameso Vs Westminster City Council) introduced a requirement that all Local Authorities should have a policy for allocating temporary accommodation (TA) to homeless households. One of the key drivers for this requirement is for LAs to minimise making TA placements 'out of borough' as far as practicable. Every LA's TA Placement Policy should be 'approved by democratically accountable members of the Council' and be made 'publicly available'.

Kirklees previously included its TA Placement Policy embedded within the Housing Allocations Policy, however during the recent refresh of the Allocations Policy it was decided to instead treat a refreshed TA Placement Policy as a standalone document, as it does not relate to the allocation of long-term social housing. An internal review of the TA Placement Policy has therefore been undertaken to reflect the current pressures on TA and current practice, and the draft refreshed policy is attached.

### **3.8 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

An IIA has been undertaken as part of the development of the Strategy. The case I.D is IIA-602315164.

The key challenges outlined in the Strategy identify the main risks we face in relation to homelessness pressures, in particular rough sleeping, use of temporary accommodation and the landscape for housing demand and support services. These risks are

incorporated in and reviewed regularly by the Housing Services risk register. In light of the severity and likelihood of some of these risks, they are also subject to review at Corporate Risk Panel. The development of the Strategy is considered to be one of the mitigants for these risks, as the Strategy is designed to be a long-term framework for prioritising objectives and actions which in turn will address some of the homelessness pressures once implemented effectively.

In terms of the Armed Forces Covenant, this Strategy reflects the Council's commitment in relation to additional priority within the Housing Allocations Policy for homeless armed forces personnel/veterans. The priorities within the Strategy, particularly early help and prevention, access to long term homes and tackling rough sleeping will ensure appropriate homelessness advice and support is available.

#### **4. Consultation**

Consultation has taken place with both Political and Officer Groups as well as the Portfolio Holder for Housing on both the Policy and the Strategy.

During engagement it was suggested that greater emphasis be placed on how the Strategy will address increasing demand for temporary accommodation, by securing more sustainable accommodation outcomes for residents, along with a reduction in B&B usage - enhancing our tenancy relations function, for example, to support this aim.

A request was also made for more information on the sources of funding to help tackle homelessness and rough sleeping, including grant funding and cost pressures on the general fund, and for more detailed evidence from the data review to be included in the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Comments and feedback have been used to help further develop and enhance both documents and are also reflected in the priorities and objectives set out in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

#### **5. Engagement**

It is a statutory requirement to consult public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy. We have therefore worked collaboratively across the sector to develop the Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2029; consulting extensively with partners, who have been instrumental in the process of developing the priorities and objectives in this Strategy and who will play a crucial role in its delivery.

In preparing this strategy and developing the priorities and objectives, we have engaged with a number of key stakeholders, including:

- Kirklees Homelessness Forum (KHF).
- Registered Providers.
- People with lived experience of homelessness.
- Kirklees Health Inclusion Group (KHIG).
- Colleagues from across the Council, including Homes and Neighbourhoods, and social services (Childrens and Adult Services).
- DLUHC specialist homelessness advisor.

## **6. Options**

### **6.1 Options Considered**

Cabinet is asked to consider and approve the draft Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, 2024 – 2029 and the Kirklees Council – Housing Solutions Service Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2024.

### **6.2 Reasons for recommended option**

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory duty on all local housing authorities to formulate, agree and publish a homelessness and rough sleeping strategy at least every five years.

The Council's current [Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy](#) was approved by Full Council in July 2019 and expires this year.

## **7 Next steps and timelines**

It is proposed that the priorities set out in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be delivered through an action plan to be developed once the strategy is approved. The action plan will then be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that actions remain relevant and to capture any emerging issues, as well as policy and legislative change.

Action plan monitoring will include regular review of key performance indicators associated with homelessness and rough sleeping.

## **8 Contact officer**

Sarah Holmes  
Housing Services Strategic Manager  
76014 (01484 221 000)  
Sarah.holmes@kirklees.gov.uk

## **9 Background Papers and History of Decisions**

The current Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was approved by Council on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019: [Item 10 1.pdf \(kirklees.gov.uk\)](#)

## **10 Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Draft Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2029
- Appendix 2 – Draft Kirklees Council – Housing Solutions Service Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2024

## **11 Service Director responsible**

Joanne Bartholomew  
Service Director, Development  
75303 (01484 221 000)  
Joanne.bartholomew@kirklees.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

# Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

**A partnership approach**

**2024 - 2029**

# Table of Contents

<b>Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Foreword .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Background .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping in Kirklees .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Legal Context .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Local Picture .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Strategic Vision and Priorities .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Priority 1: Strengthen partnership working to address homelessness and secure the right accommodation: .....	14
Priority 2: Rapid early help and intervention to prevent homelessness from occurring .....	16
Priority 3: Access to long term homes and temporary accommodation which is safe, decent, accessible and affordable .....	19
Priority 4: Tackle rough sleeping to ensure it is rare, brief and not recurring .....	21
<b>Action planning and measuring success .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Engagement .....</b>	<b>23</b>

# Foreword

---

*I am pleased to introduce this refresh of the Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which sets out how, working collaboratively with our partners, we will tackle homelessness and rough sleeping across the Kirklees district.*

*The Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy supports both the shared outcomes for Kirklees, set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, as well as the delivery of priorities in our key partnership strategies, including the Health and Wellbeing Plan.*

*Through the implementation of the Strategy we hope to increase prevention of homelessness, reduce rough sleeping and ensure that our residents have access to high quality, joined-up services and the right help, in the right place, at the right time.*

*It is well documented that homelessness services across the country are under pressure. A lack of affordable private rented properties, in addition to an acute shortage of social housing and a squeeze on household budgets as a result of rising prices, is leaving some households vulnerable to or facing homelessness.*

*In Kirklees we are seeing an increase, year on year, in the numbers of households at the point of crisis before approaching the Council for help with rehousing, resulting in a significant rise in temporary accommodation demand – something we must address as a priority action.*

*Despite the challenges and pressures the sector faces, we have seen a number of notable achievements over recent years which are acknowledged in this Strategy.*

*We are committed to driving forward, alongside partner organisations, the delivery of services that have a real impact on the lives of some of our most vulnerable residents.*

***Cllr Moses Crook, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Transport and Housing***

---

## Introduction

The Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2024 – 2029 sets out the key issues around homelessness in Kirklees, the challenges we face and the priorities that we aim to focus on over the next five years. In Kirklees, we recognise that early identification of

any threat of homelessness, targeted interventions and the provision of high-quality advice and assistance ensures people have the best chance of staying in their home.

We also recognise that our vision for preventing homelessness and rough sleeping can only be achieved by working with key partners and other stakeholders in the sector – including the Kirklees Homelessness Forum, health colleagues and Registered Providers operating across the area.

---

***Our vision is for Kirklees to be a place where we work collaboratively to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, where those most in need are able to access the right help, in the right place, at the right time.***

---

This refresh of the Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy brings our cross-sector response to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in the Kirklees district up to date, so that we are able to focus activities where they are needed most.

Collaborative partnership working has informed the refresh of this Strategy and helped to shape its four overarching priorities:

- Strengthen partnership working to address homelessness and secure the right accommodation
- Rapid early help and intervention to prevent homelessness from occurring
- Access to long term, settled homes and temporary accommodation, which is safe, decent, accessible, and affordable
- Tackle rough sleeping to ensure it is rare, brief and not recurring

The Strategy sets out some of the key achievements that have contributed to preventing homelessness, securing accommodation, providing support and resources, and minimising the risk of rough sleeping across our district since the last Strategy was published in July 2019.

And it highlights the increasing challenges and pressures we face in supporting some of our most vulnerable residents.

To support this Strategy refresh, and in line with government guidance, a review of homelessness and rough sleeping across the Kirklees district has taken place. In addition, a deep dive has taken place into what's working well, areas that need to be addressed, as well as future opportunities and threats.

The views of service users have also been central to shaping our priorities and objectives. Their lived experiences can be found in the case studies that run throughout this strategy.

Our shared approach aims to build on successful collaborative working across the statutory and voluntary sectors, as well as the private rented sector.

Moving forward, this Strategy will support decision-making and the monitoring and delivery of priorities. It will help us to draw in resources behind the priorities and provide assurance that we are acting on homelessness and rough sleeping; maximising homelessness prevention and enabling access to appropriate advice and support when homelessness and rough sleeping does arise.



The priorities set out in this Strategy will be delivered through an action plan which will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that actions remain relevant and to capture any emerging issues, as well as policy and legislative change.

This Strategy refresh has been undertaken during a period of unprecedented demand for homelessness support, and against a backdrop of uncertainty about future national policy, funding, and economic conditions, all of which impact upon delivery of the strategy's priorities. The priorities and actions linked to the Strategy may therefore require more comprehensive review in a timeframe that is earlier than the full five years.

## Background

There are a number of different definitions of the term 'homelessness'. Whilst it is often a term identified with people who are sleeping rough on the streets, this group of people only account for a very small proportion of all homeless households.

In this Strategy, the term 'homelessness' includes those who are staying temporarily with friends or family, sofa-surfing, staying in a hostel, squatting or at risk of violence in their home. It also includes those who are living in such unsuitable conditions it is unreasonable to occupy or those who have no legal right to occupy where they are living.

Homelessness affects many households, including those who have accommodation but are unable to continue to live there due to their individual circumstances, such as financial hardship, relationship breakdown or legally compliant repossession by a landlord.

## Homelessness and Rough Sleeping in Kirklees

### Overview of current homelessness challenges

Housing insecurity and levels of homelessness are increasing right across the country, with Kirklees being no exception. This is compounded by the lack of availability of social housing as well as the availability and affordability of private rented sector accommodation.

- Local authorities and partners face increasing demand with fewer housing options available to help people in to. As of January 2024, there were over 18,400 households on the Housing Register across the Kirklees District (compared with 11,000 in 2018). The number of lettings per year by the Council, and through nominations to housing associations, is approximately 1,800.
- More people are presenting as homeless at the point of crisis, limiting the ability to explore preventative options.
- Many of those who present as homeless or in housing need have a range of complex vulnerabilities, which compound the difficulties faced in securing appropriate accommodation for them and also the specialist support they require.

- Year on year comparisons show a significant increase in temporary accommodation need across Kirklees. The rising demand for temporary accommodation has meant that there is not enough self-contained temporary accommodation available to meet that demand, leading to greater use of bed and breakfast hotels for temporary accommodation placements, which are unsuitable for many households.
- In Kirklees, we have seen more families with children presenting as homeless (or at risk of) and due to the reduction in longer-term housing options, this results in additional challenges in terms of the suitability of temporary accommodation. The number of families with children who are temporarily placed in Bed & Breakfast hotels is too high.
- The cost of temporary accommodation is placing significant financial pressures on the Council's budget.
- Welfare reform and cost of living increases have further impacted the ability of households on low incomes to find suitable, affordable accommodation.
- Right to Buy has exacerbated the challenges the Council faces, since the receipts are not sufficient to acquire or build new stock and hence the reduction in property numbers is not matched by the number the Council can afford to replace.
- Whilst the Government's decision to return Local Housing Allowance (LHA) (the maximum amounts of housing support claimants of Universal Credit and Housing Benefit can usually get for private rented homes of different sizes) to the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of local market rents from April 2024 is welcome, disparities between median rent prices and LHA rates in the district has made private renting difficult and unaffordable for many low income households receiving benefits.
- The table below shows rental market data and demonstrates the disparity between market rents and LHA levels in the Kirklees district.

	<b>Median monthly rental prices, October 2022 to September 2023 (£pcm)</b>	<b>Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate 2023/24 (£pcm)</b>	<b>LHA Shortfall (£pcm)</b>
'Room'	370	245.5	124.50
1 Bed	495	369.5	125.50
2 Bed	595	450	145
3 Bed	725	550	175
4 Bed	995	705	290

- Rough sleeping in Kirklees is a big challenge. In line with national trends, the number of rough sleepers has increased over the last 18 months, despite the efforts of the dedicated rough sleeping team and partners. Most rough sleepers in Kirklees are males over age 25, and from the UK or Eastern Europe.

- As an asylum dispersal area, there will always be a number of former asylum seekers in Kirklees who find themselves homeless. Homeless presentations from refugees who receive positive asylum decisions in Kirklees have increased in line with Government decisions on asylum dispersal processing policies.
- There is significant uncertainty over future funding and viability for a range of public and third sector services which have a role to play in supporting homeless prevention and meeting people's housing and support needs. This presents a significant challenge to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping effectively.
- Moving into temporary accommodation can be extremely disruptive and unsettling for individuals and families. Without the right support, tenancies for those who were homeless can break down easily. Wraparound support is key to addressing this but the ability to provide this is diminishing.
- The need for essential repair works at key sites makes it necessary to move households out of their properties on a temporary or permanent basis - placing additional pressure on resources.

## Overview of key homelessness and rough sleeping data

---

To support this refresh of the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, a review of homelessness and rough sleeping across the Kirklees district has taken place, including:

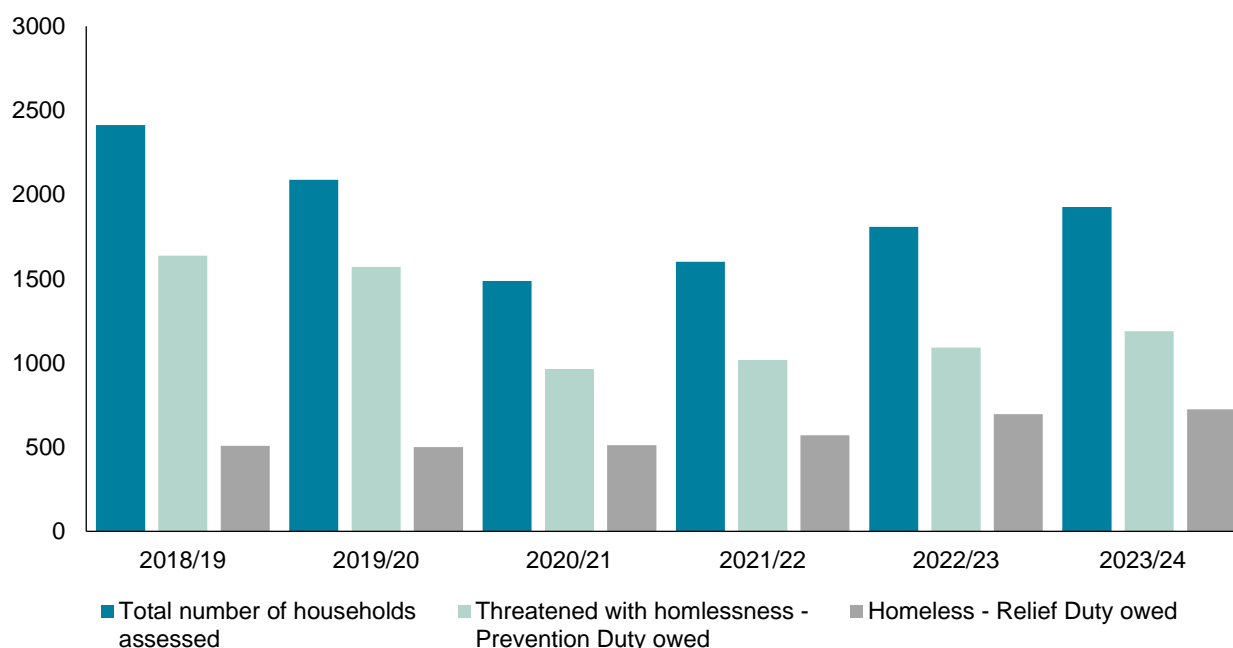
- Current homelessness trends
- Activities for preventing homelessness
- Activities for securing accommodation
- Activities for providing support
- Resources available to prevent and tackle homelessness

The top three reasons why households in Kirklees find themselves homeless are because they are asked to leave by family or friends, or after being subjected to domestic abuse, or because their private rented tenancy has ended. These top three reasons are common to most local authorities across the country.

Between April 2018 and September 2023, 10,286 homelessness assessments were undertaken by Kirklees Housing Solutions Service, triggered by people presenting to the Council as homeless or threatened with homelessness. The number of assessments peaked in 2018/19, at 2,414 that year and then reduced during the years affected by the COVID pandemic. Figures started to increase in 2022/23, however, and in 2023/24 the number of homeless assessments was 1,926.

In 2022/23, the Council dealt with significantly more households at the 'relief' stage of homelessness (39%) i.e. when the household was already homeless, compared to 2018/19 when only 24% were at the relief stage. This indicates there has been a reduction in recent years in the ability to secure homeless prevention options.

## Homelessness Assessments



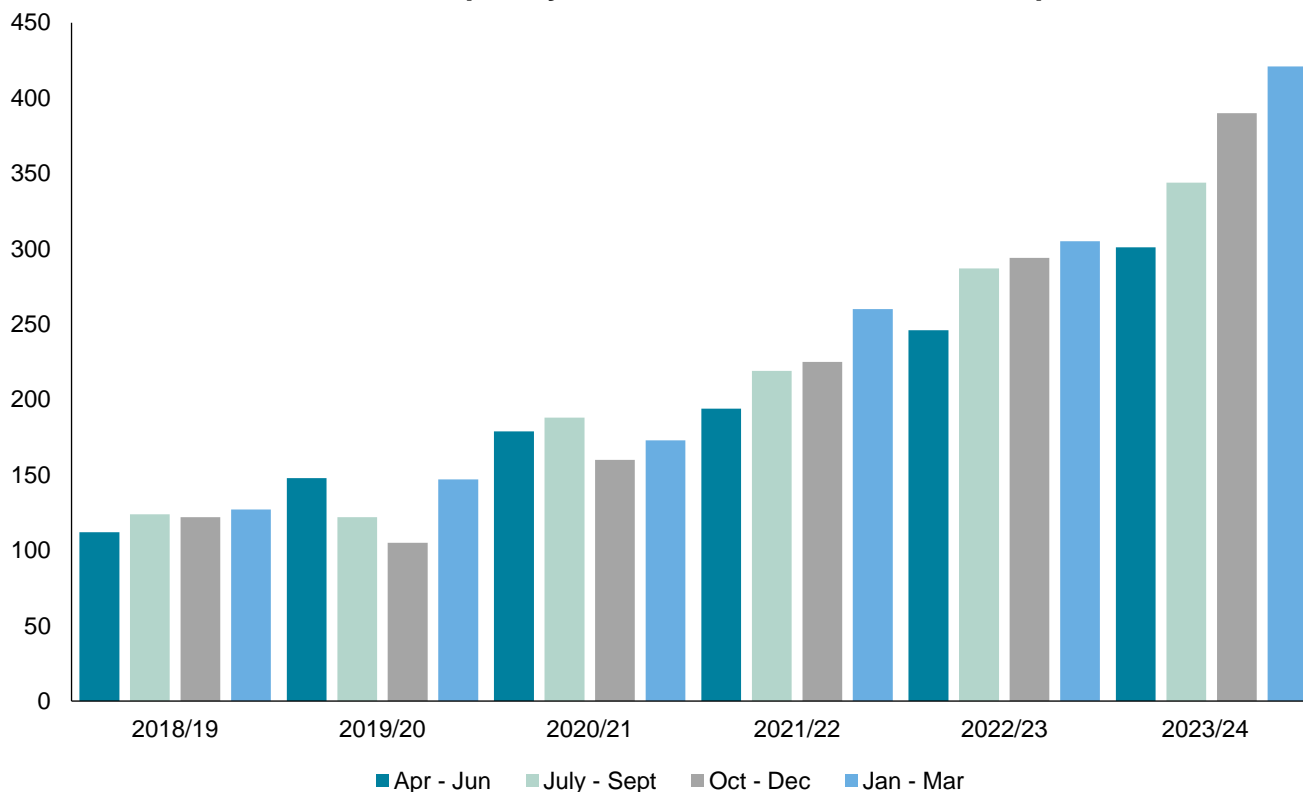
In recent years, when households have had their homelessness prevented, the majority of positive housing outcomes have been through securing a social rented tenancy. However, the number of those who have secured either a social rented tenancy or a private rented tenancy has reduced each year, which indicates growing pressures on availability of either social or private rented affordable housing options.

Positive accommodation outcomes for prevention cases	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Social rented sector	573	672	421	394	399
Private rented sector	184	257	159	127	153
Staying with family	132	115	41	27	47
Staying with friends	45	78	41	20	21
Owner-occupier	8	3	1	4	5
Other	20	6	7	6	18
Not known	6	10	4	5	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>1141</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>650</b>

The number of homeless households who have needed to be placed into temporary accommodation in Kirklees has risen very significantly since 2018/19, by at least 168%. This steep rise is indicative of the difficulties faced in sourcing affordable housing and is in line with national trends. Temporary accommodation placements rose from around 125 in 2018/19

(snapshot figures at the end of each quarter) to around 300 at the end of 2022/23. Figures have risen again during 2023/24, to over 400 at the end of each quarter.

**Households in temporary accomodation at end of each quarter**

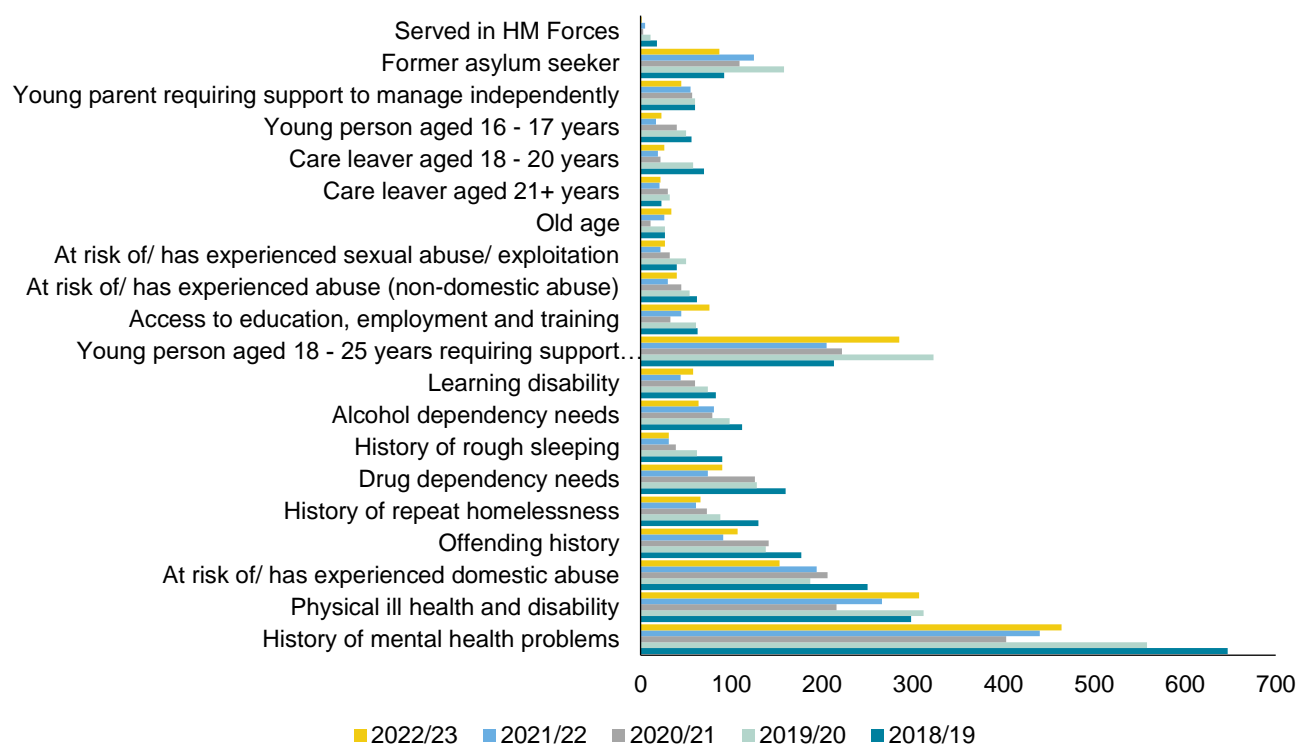


In Kirklees, over 30% of homeless households fall into the 25 – 34 age profile. The ethnicity profile of homeless households largely mirrors the overall profile of the Kirklees district. However Black African, Caribbean, and Black British residents account for 4.7% of homeless households, compared to just 2.3% of the overall population in Kirklees, indicating this is an at-risk group.

The review confirmed that many of Kirklees’ homeless households have vulnerabilities which give rise to support needs.

In 2022/23, 77% of homeless households had at least one identified support need, with the most common support need being mental health. Other prevalent support needs include physical ill health and disability, young people aged 18 - 24 requiring support to manage independently, domestic abuse, drug or alcohol dependency and offending history.

## Support needs



Rough sleeping numbers across the Kirklees district peaked at 16 in 2019/20, in the one-night snapshot count which is reported annually to Government. Since then, numbers fell to 4 in 2021/22, then 3 in 2022/23. However, in more recent months figures have started to increase, with the last snapshot figure from November 2023 being 14, spread across the district.

## Legal Context

All local authorities have a number of statutory duties in relation to homelessness and housing allocations. These duties are set out in legislation which includes the Housing Act 1996, the Homelessness Act 2002, the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

In addition, a number of prescribed public sector partners also have duties in relation to referring homelessness households to local authorities, as set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

### What are our duties toward homeless people?

The Council has a duty to provide information and advice about homelessness and a duty to investigate where we have reason to believe that someone is, or is threatened, with homelessness.

- Prevention duty - requires that local authorities take reasonable steps to try and prevent homelessness from occurring for anyone at risk or threatened with homelessness within 56 days.
- Relief duty - where a household is homeless and eligible, the Local Authority must work with them to relieve their homelessness (assist in securing suitable alternative accommodation) within 56 days.
- Interim duty to accommodate - where the applicant is homeless, eligible and in priority need, the Council has a duty to provide interim accommodation.
- Main housing duty – following the relief duty if someone is still homeless, eligible, has a priority need and is not intentionally homeless the Council has a duty to find them suitable accommodation.

Local Authorities can discharge the main duty through an offer of accommodation with the Council, or a Registered Provider, or with an offer of a private rented tenancy.

Further guidance which local authorities should adhere to in relation to homelessness is contained within the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities. Not all homeless households will be owed the same duties in terms of the provision of emergency housing or an offer of long-term housing – a more detailed explanation of the different duties which are owed can be found here: [Homeless duty and eligibility criteria | Kirklees Council](#).

## Local Picture

### What we've achieved since the publication of the last Strategy

In addition to maintaining a productive homelessness service which fulfils its statutory duties, the Council and its partners continued to work collaboratively to enhance existing provision, deliver new initiatives, and strengthen positive working relationships.

At the time of the last strategy, several initiatives were in the development stages or newly created and have since become established and are achieving positive outcomes.

### Housing allocations and housing options

A recent refresh of the Housing Allocations Policy determined how best to ensure that households with the greatest housing needs can access social housing, including those who are threatened with or experiencing homelessness. The refreshed policy is deemed good practice by sector-recognised experts and includes additional priority for care leavers, those in the armed forces/veterans and people fleeing domestic abuse. An open housing register has been retained alongside the refreshed policy to allow anyone wishing to join the register to be able to do so albeit the council's ability to rehouse all applicants is severely limited by the availability of suitable affordable housing options.

Following a need to further focus on accommodation options in the private rented sector, the Private Rented Partnership Team, established in 2022, is working with landlords to increase the

provision of private rented good quality, affordable accommodation available for long term tenancies for homeless households - assisting 85 households into private rented accommodation in its first two years to date.

An innovative pilot to use empty student accommodation increased the number of temporary accommodation units available to us, particularly self-contained accommodation for families. A considered approach has also been taken to using additional Council stock as temporary accommodation units, including re-profiling the number of family-sized temporary units available.

Currently we utilise 208 Council-owned units as temporary accommodation along with an additional 14 former student houses that we lease separately.

The Temporary Accommodation team (Housing Solutions Service) has access to 90 one-bed units, 83 two-bed units, 20 three-beds and 13 bedsits. At the student accommodation site being leased there are an additional 12 six-bed units and 2 larger properties that are used as Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs). A further 34 larger self-contained apartments are also utilised on a nightly paid basis.

The additional leasing initiatives have helped minimise costly/unsuitable bed and breakfast placements.

The Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP) team was established, via dedicated government funding. The team is working to ensure that supported housing in Kirklees is of a good quality, is meeting the needs of residents, and that Value for Money can be evidenced and monitored. The team is also working with other SHIP teams in West Yorkshire to ensure a consistent approach is applied for providers.

Preventative work continues operationally to ensure people can remain living independently and with as little intervention from homelessness pathways as possible. This includes our ongoing work around home adaptations including facilitating access to Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) as well as working with private sector landlords to ensure they comply with any new legislation e.g. Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards to improve homes for tenants to support reductions in energy bills.

We are also focussing our efforts, across services, on tenancy sustainment - looking at the most effective ways to support households to remain and thrive in their tenancy once they secure a home, to ensure that homelessness does not arise. Joint work with early support teams and anti-social behaviour teams for example, is helping to prevent tenancy breakdowns, and a range of different partners undertake bespoke tenancy sustainment actions including Housing Solutions, Homes and Neighbourhoods, other Registered Providers (Housing Associations) Children's Services and housing support agencies.

## **People sleeping rough**

The Council's Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Team is now well established. The team is working alongside homelessness partners and street outreach groups throughout the year to assist those at risk of sleeping rough. This includes facilitating access to emergency accommodation and support with addressing poor health and wellbeing, substance misuse and tenancy sustainment. The team includes a dedicated substance misuse worker and an Adult Social Worker, ensuring that complex vulnerabilities can be identified and supported in a holistic



way. A trauma-informed and personalised approach is taken to ensure the team build trust with the individual for the best possible outcomes.

Our strong voluntary sector continues to play an invaluable role in the provision of immediate relief to assist those in need, including via street outreach.

### Excerpt from Patrick's Story

Patrick was asleep on one of the benches in St Peter's Gardens. He was in his 50s. He was invited to the Mission to get warm and to have some food. Patrick accepted happily and enjoyed a free breakfast in the Mission Café.

One of the Mission's advice officers assessed that the best course of action would be for Patrick to meet with one of the Council's RSI team which he did later that morning in a private room at the Mission. The RSI officer established that Patrick was homeless and sleeping rough after losing his job which came with accommodation included. The RSI team managed to find Patrick temporary accommodation in a Bed and Breakfast whilst he started making a claim for benefits and the Council established his eligibility for Housing within the Kirklees area.

**Your voice matters so we will...**continue to ensure Voluntary and Community Sector agencies remain key partners and continue to undertake and promote the significant value of outreach work.

Three properties have been acquired under the Government-funded Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) and provide dedicated temporary accommodation for those sleeping rough (or at risk of) with additional wraparound support provided alongside by the RSI Team. The properties give individuals a stable foundation to help them become longer-term tenancy ready.

The Council successfully re-tendered the supported housing contract for the purpose-built homeless hostel in Huddersfield, ensuring a consistent and dedicated approach to hostel placements for single homeless people, including rough sleepers.

The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) continues to be used appropriately and flexibly, ensuring that everyone who is given a bed through SWEP receives a visit by a housing officer the next morning to talk through options and discuss how they can get longer term help.

## Vulnerable cohorts – specialist support

For young people at risk of homelessness, there is a long-standing partnership approach between Housing and Children's Services which ensures that no young people are unduly at risk as a result of losing their home. New joint protocols and pathways have been developed and we have seen continued success with 16 -17-year-olds presenting as homeless, with most returning home safely. Whilst a significant focus is on care leavers and those aged 16-17 where the Council has a statutory duty, the pathways incorporate support for all young people aged 16 to 24. Priority activities have been undertaken to maintain and expand appropriate support for young homeless people.

The Kirklees Welcomes Partnership is now well established – ensuring support is available at any stage of a household’s resettlement or migration journey. Within this partnership, the Refugee Resettlement Team in Housing Services, formed in 2022, works with and supports households on government-established refugee resettlement schemes as well as those who have received a positive decision to remain. Close links are in place with health, third sector and community language partners to best support these cohorts.

The support programmes for the main refugee schemes have achieved very positive rehousing and homeless prevention outcomes, particularly with Ukraine and Afghan cohorts. Also, we have maximised the funding opportunities under Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) made available for these groups.

Kirklees Better Outcomes Partnership (KBOP) - developed in 2019 – is a collaborative partnership aiming to prevent homelessness and deliver better outcomes through working to empower people so they can overcome barriers to finding or sustaining suitable accommodation. The KBOP model of delivering floating support services has reached more than 6000 people over the last five years, helping to prevent homelessness and achieve a range of wider outcomes including better health, employment, and better resilience for many clients.

#### Excerpt from Darren’s Story

*“My situation was different. I was one of the Windrush generation and I became redundant after 11 years in a job to find I had no status and no access to benefits, so I lost everything. I wasn’t supported by anybody until somebody at the social justice team at the benefits office put me in touch with citizens advice who contacted the home office. I can’t remember when I was referred into KBOP, but it was luck more than anything coherent that saved me. The lady at the job centre and my KBOP worker, Katie, have been amazing.”*

**Your voice matters so we will...**continue to promote the importance of Duty to Refer and ensure support is provided in a person-centred way.

We have worked with relevant partners to establish a clear protocol for prison-leavers who are threatened with homelessness when their sentences are ending. There is now a clear route to undertaking homeless assessments and providing housing advice for prison leavers, at the earliest opportunity. We are supporting ex-offenders at risk of rough sleeping into private rented accommodation to reduce reoffending and homelessness, through the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders Scheme.

A partnership approach is also taken to tackling homelessness as a result of domestic abuse. Housing services play a key role in multi-agency responses to domestic abuse presentations, with appropriate emergency housing provided where necessary, either in specialist refuges or in other forms of temporary accommodation. One of the four key priorities in the [Kirklees Domestic Abuse Strategy](#) is supporting victims to maintain or access safe and stable housing, with housing and homelessness sector partners playing a key role in delivering against this priority.

## Other homeless prevention support

The Council and its partners offer a range of cost-of-living support, including financial support and debt and budgeting advice, as well as support with the cost of food and help to keep homes warm and reduce energy bills.

There are also many resources available for those experiencing mental health problems or who need urgent help [Mental health support | Kirklees Council](#).

There are a number of charities and organisations operating across the district that help the homeless and those experiencing poverty. Some of the services provided by charities and third sector organisations include:

- cheap or free food
- laundry room
- washing facilities
- activities
- advice on finding accommodation and benefits
- access to medical treatment

The Council's [Local Welfare Provision team](#) run a non-cash scheme, which provides support like food parcels, furniture and debt advice.

The Pathways to Employment service co-ordinates training, education and job opportunities for people who have been homeless. They also run a range of courses for people to improve their skills.

Kirklees Employment and Skills are committed to developing life and work skills for all, enabling better employment opportunities for those who live in Kirklees. They are available to support residents in breaking down any barriers that they may face when moving into employment, progressing within their career, and developing skills.

The Employment Kirklees programme offers information and guidance for those looking to improve their job status, and helps by sourcing better work opportunities, and ensuring people have the skills needed to develop and thrive.

## Strategic Vision and Priorities

Our vision is for Kirklees to be a place where we work collaboratively to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, where those most in need are able to access the right help, in the right place, at the right time.

We have identified four strategic priorities that will support us in driving our Strategy and achieving our vision:

- Strengthen partnership working to address homelessness and secure the right accommodation.
- Rapid early help and intervention to prevent homelessness from occurring.

- Access to long term homes and temporary accommodation which is safe, decent, accessible and affordable.
- Tackle rough sleeping to ensure it is rare, brief and not recurring.

In line with the Council's shared outcomes, set out in the Council Plan, this Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy focuses on achieving better outcomes for vulnerable children, providing high quality, joined-up and accessible services that safeguard children and adults from harm, and working collaboratively to support people to live in suitable and affordable homes in attractive places within a supportive community.

Meeting the housing needs of vulnerable people by preventing homelessness and supporting those who are homeless including rough sleepers off the street and into appropriate housing with the right level and type of support are key priorities in the overall strategy for housing in Kirklees. Delivery of the Kirklees Housing Strategy is one of the keys to preventing homelessness, by enabling housing growth, particularly of affordable housing, in order to meet population growth and demand across the district.

This Strategy also aligns with, and supports the delivery of our key partnership strategies, including the Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Plan; by setting out how we will work with partners to enable access to the right care and support and make the best use of all available resources.

## **Priority 1: Strengthen partnership working to address homelessness and secure the right accommodation:**

The needs of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness often stretch across different services, including housing, mental health and children's services, in addition to the voluntary and charity sectors.

The way we work collaboratively across services and agencies is fundamental in helping to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

### **Excerpt from Ebrahim's Story**

*"I am very grateful to have been placed in temporary accommodation following being in a war-torn country and experiencing being tortured. I had lost my family, lost my dream and lost my hopes! At times when I was sleeping rough, I felt that my life was no better than a dog's – at least a dog had a home...I hope that I shall now begin to feel human again and be able to give something back to others who need help as I once did."*

**Your voice matters so we will...**promote the importance of having a proactive partnership approach to ensure timely assessments and support/ advice for people leaving asylum seeker accommodation.

Key to effective partnership working is communication, as well as the sharing of information and best practice, in order to learn from others working across the sector.

We acknowledge the vital role that existing relationships and ways of working play in addressing homelessness and securing accommodation for households across the Kirklees district.

However, during engagement, partners highlighted the need to go further, recognising that more can be done to improve and build on joint working practices.

### Feedback from Mohammed and Paolo's Stories

Both Mohammed and Paolo received a positive decision to remain in the UK following their asylum seeker claim being assessed. They have fed back separately that increased communications would be useful between the Home Office commissioned accommodation provider and the Council including to help receive speedier advice before the accommodation notice expires. This was not only in relation to finding alternative accommodation but also in relation to being able to open a bank account to support their registration for Universal Credit.

**Your voice matters so we will...**continue to maintain and aim to improve all communications between partner agencies.

We will therefore take steps to enhance the way we work together; combining skills, resources, knowledge, and experience to provide the best support we can and help people achieve outcomes and overcome barriers to prevent homelessness and tackle rough sleeping.

### Feedback from Jason and Paul's Story

Both Jason and Paul have experienced homelessness and slept on the streets. They are both in their 50s. Both gave feedback about shared accommodation as a housing option.

Jason's experience was mixed *"...you had your own room, communal kitchen, bathroom but because this was communal, there was someone who lived there who used to eat my food that I left in the fridge, so from there I moved in with my [family member] and fell off the scene with Kirklees Housing."*

When asked about gaps in support, Paul said *"Not expecting a grown man of 52 to be sharing or opting for student accommodation."*

**Your voice matters so we will...**aim to help people overcome barriers to using shared accommodation and continue to explore alternative housing options.

## To address this priority, we will:

- Close the gap in knowledge around what partners are doing (day to day operations and pipeline work)
- Promote greater awareness among relevant staff, organisations and agencies of support and services available, including the Council's own Support Offer, to maximise referrals
- Develop approaches to improving information and data sharing to support informed decision-making and collaborative working
  - Improve the way information is shared between Housing Solutions and Registered Providers

- Examine supported housing evictions data to develop a district wide approach to eviction prevention
- Carry out a review of nomination agreements and systems, drawing on best practice examples from elsewhere
- Align approaches (with Registered Providers) to nominations and data submission
- Look to create more joined up messaging for the residents of Kirklees, including but not limited to those who are already customers
- Refresh key partnership forums – including the Homelessness Forum - to improve links between the Council, the voluntary sector, and Registered Providers
- Strengthen partner relationships with registered provider partners, to further build on their contribution to helping provide both long term and temporary accommodation for homeless households
- Introduce a mechanism to gain and share customer feedback to support continued learning and reflection
- Develop our understanding of supported housing needs and provision
- Continue to support the provision of a range of quality supported housing options across the Kirklees district
- Look for further funding to enhance the direct support options available to those living in supported housing
- Work with the Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP) to create both a Supported Housing Charter and a Quality Assurance Framework to ensure partner provision best meets local needs
- Work with partners to enable access to services to improve education, training, and employment as well as access to support linked to increases in the cost of living.
- Agree a process with partners on how we can make better use of resources through joint funding applications where appropriate
- Embed joint housing pathways and protocols for target cohorts of vulnerable homeless households, ensuring that partners and customers understand their commitments

## **Priority 2: Rapid early help and intervention to prevent homelessness from occurring**

---

The earlier people approach the Council and its partners for assistance, the more opportunity there is to prevent homelessness occurring.

The most effective way to avoid homelessness is to intervene before people's situations reach crisis, and to connect them to the right support when this is needed.

Where people continue to struggle before finally approaching the Council for help and advice, their housing situation can become more difficult to resolve and a sustainable, successful outcome is harder to achieve.

### Excerpt from Christine's Story

*"Options of housing are very limited, but it leads to other massive stresses. You need jobs, training, money, deposits. How is this all possible when someone is struggling to just survive daily."*

**Your voice matters so we will...** continue, as a partnership, to work with people using a strengths-based approach and in a holistic way which considers all aspects affecting their housing options.

Kirklees Council's Housing Solutions Service is the front door to receiving housing advice and support for members of the public who are at risk of becoming homeless. The service provides universal housing advice, alongside homeless assessments and housing related support for some cohorts. The service also provides and manages temporary accommodation for those homeless household to whom the Council owes a duty to accommodate.

Early identification of problems, rapid early help, and early targeted interventions, as well as the provision of high-quality advice and assistance is essential if we are to ensure people have the best chance of staying in their home.

### Excerpt from Steve's Story

When asked what could have been done earlier or better, Steve responded:  
*"People who listen to our problems and have the power to understand our problems so that they can better identify who is prioritised and qualified for more help."*

**Your voice matters so we will...** promote the importance of having a proactive partnership approach to ensure timely assessments and that support/ advice is undertaken using a strengths-based and person-centred approach.

Promoting the services available to residents, building knowledge within communities, and ensuring information is easy to find and accessible to all, so that households know where to turn to and who to contact before they reach crisis point is also critical if we are to prevent people becoming homeless in the first place.

### To address this priority, we will:

- Continue to ensure individuals receive rapid access to housing advice, targeted interventions, and tailored support, including those individuals with multiple and complex needs
- Continue to ensure that health needs of homeless households are met, through flexible service provision, outreach and identifying and addressing health inequalities
- Explore as a partnership what options are available where funded services can no longer continue at the same level or in the same format
- Continue to support people at risk of becoming homeless to stay in their existing home or make a planned move to alternative accommodation

- Encourage households to present at the earliest opportunity to reduce the pressures associated with crisis-based intervention and increase the opportunity to prevent homelessness from occurring
- Encourage all partners to commit to the Duty to Refer including partners outside the mandatory framework
- Encourage partners to use a strengths-based approach with all customers, enabling resources and targeted intervention for those who are most vulnerable and/or with multiple complex needs
- Focus further on the links between health and homelessness by helping to address housing issues which are impacting on tenants and putting them at risk of homelessness
- Raise awareness of support options available, including the role of the Housing Compliance Team and other partners in supporting landlord/tenant mediation and helping to prevent private rented evictions occurring.
- Look to secure resources to enhance our tenancy relations function, to further support both private sector landlords and tenants when approaches are made to the Council. All partners to link in with benefits advice, employment and training support and access to other local specialist support provision to enable individuals to develop resilience and thereby avoid homelessness
- For those in council tenancies, provide support 'on the ground' to help households to better integrate into communities, put roots down, and build informal support networks, introducing them, for example, to community groups and Tenant and Residents Associations
- Complete pre tenant checks to ensure tenancies are successful, sustainable, and supported
- Review the information available on the Council's website to ensure that it is clear and easily accessible
- Encourage partners to adopt consistent messaging and signposting as appropriate to the Council's website
- Continue to explore and pursue bids for government and other external funding for preventing homelessness initiatives
- Work with colleagues in public health and other partners on the 'Core 20+5' funded programme to provide income maximisation support
- Review how customers currently access services to ensure that our housing solutions service is genuinely accessible to all
- Continue to share best practice on homeless prevention with the regional partners including the West Yorkshire Local Authority Homelessness Forum and those working on the SHIP programme (supported housing)
- Maximise the creative use of incentives to encourage homeless prevention through maintaining existing living arrangements
- Continue to strengthen joint working to ensure prison leavers are given the appropriate advice well in advance of coming out of prison
- Continue our commitment to those experiencing domestic abuse as set out in statutory duties and the Kirklees Domestic Abuse Strategy. Ensuring we work together to create and maintain a range of housing options, choice, and information available
- Review and embed homelessness pathways for specific cohorts, including young people, mental health hospital discharge etc
- Review and implement best practice approaches to front-door homeless presentations, building on learning from peers and expert advisers



## Priority 3: Access to long term homes and temporary accommodation which is safe, decent, accessible and affordable

---

Securing access to long term homes in either the social rented or private rented sector has become much more difficult over the last five years. As well as a reduction in successful social and private rented outcomes, those homeless households who could previously stay longer with family or friends are also now approximately 60% less likely to be accommodated – primarily due to the increase in the general cost of living and the pressure this is having on extended households.

Local authorities have a duty to accommodate homeless families or individuals who are assessed as meeting a 'priority need' criteria, until they are able to secure long-term housing. These households are initially offered temporary accommodation, which is intended to be a short-term option for people when there is no other accommodation available to them. In Kirklees, the types of temporary accommodation that is used includes self-contained council homes, bed and breakfast hotels, shared accommodation and supported housing managed by a range of partners.

With a growth in demand for temporary accommodation, and lack of available suitable options to enable households to move on quickly, the length of stay in temporary accommodation is too long for many, and there has been a significant increase in the number of households who have had to be accommodated in bed and breakfast hotels. The longer someone is homeless, the greater the risk of worsening physical and mental health problems. At present, 2% of households in temporary accommodation are still awaiting a home after 24 months.

### Excerpt from Adam's Story

*“Considering my wife's condition, she was pregnant and had diabetes, so proper nutrition is very important. And every meal of eating fast food and not eating healthier and more nutritious foods, this will definitely increase the stimulation of diseases. In my opinion, staying in a hotel despite these problems was not the right thing to do and we should have moved into a temporary or council house sooner.”*

**Your voice matters so we will...** find the most suitable temporary accommodation available at the time based on household need. We will continue to aim to have people in temporary accommodation for as little time as possible by exploring all housing options open to them.

It is essential that we work to increase the accommodation options available to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This includes working alongside partners to increase the range and suitability of affordable social and private rented sector housing - exploring new ways to diversify accommodation and support.

Registered Providers of social housing have a key role to play here, by for example, aligning with the Council's Strategic Tenancy Policy, maximising the potential of nominations agreements

by working with the Council to rehouse people on the Social Housing Register, and ensuring a flexible and affordable tenancy approach for residents.

The private rented sector also has a key part to play in meeting housing need, including for homeless households. The Council and its partners are working actively and positively with private landlords and letting agents in order to enhance and incentivise access to private rented tenancies.

### Excerpt from Samantha's Story

*“The Council need to be aware of the disparity between the price of private rental properties and the Local Housing Allowance. When you are on the lowest benefits then the gap between these amounts is not sustainable. Landlords seem to be able to charge whatever they want. The amount of people going after one property is ridiculous, they expect you to view it and then be told that it has already gone to someone else. The amount of people with bad credit scores also means that private renting is not an option, so where are these people supposed to live?”*

**Your voice matters so we will...**continue to work directly with landlords to incentivise or facilitate the offer of a property to customers. We will also continue, as a partnership, to try and influence government policy affecting housing options.

Increasing the supply and suitability of temporary accommodation options, and endeavouring to use less bed and breakfast hotels must also be a key objective of this Strategy to ensure that homeless households access more suitable temporary accommodation, and to reduce the cost to the Council.

### To address this priority, we will:

- Ensure that homelessness issues and demands are factored into strategic plans for increasing the supply of affordable housing in Kirklees
- Continue to develop ways of working with the private rented sector to ensure it plays its role in both preventing homelessness and rehoming households
- Ensure greater accountability in relation to nominations; working with Registered Providers to prioritise nominations from local authorities where households are homeless
- Reduce the length of time it takes to turn around empty council properties when they become vacant
- Explore how lettable void properties might enhance our temporary accommodation offer.
- Work towards maintaining an adequate supply of good quality, suitable temporary accommodation, including leasing and partner provision
- Work towards containing further growth in the number of households in temporary accommodation
- Minimise the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, looking at best practice examples from elsewhere
- Improve the way we communicate and manage expectations by ensuring households understand that the Council has reduced duties to help if suitable accommodation is rejected

- Work with Registered Providers to secure more temporary accommodation and move-on support
- Explore options for the conversion of underused buildings into homes and bring empty homes back into use
- Continue to encourage those who are no longer in need of a larger property to consider a move - helping people right-size to free up valuable properties
- Continue work to prevent right to buy fraud by ensuring the Council's housing stock is only sold to those who legally qualify as well as actively investigating reports of abandonment, to prevent rent arrears and disrepair caused by unoccupied properties, ensuring that social housing stock is fully utilised
- Continue to review the sufficiency of, identify gaps in and where appropriate commission or encourage specialist housing e.g. supported accommodation for young people

## **Priority 4: Tackle rough sleeping to ensure it is rare, brief, and not recurring**

---

Rough sleeping is the most visible and acute form of homelessness. The government defines rough sleeping as: sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments) and also people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or 'bashes' which are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes).

The Government committed to ending "the blight of rough sleeping in England" when it published the national Rough Sleeping Strategy in September 2022. The strategy included a £2bn investment over the next three years, including an expanded £500m Rough Sleeping Initiative.

During the COVID pandemic the 'Everyone In' initiative sought to ensure that anyone who was sleeping on the streets was immediately provided with safe and secure accommodation, this led to a reduction in rough sleeping during 2020 and 2021 and in Kirklees, number of rough sleepers found in the annual count had reduced to 3 in 2022. However, since then, in line with national trends, the numbers rose to 14 in the latest snapshot figures from Autumn 2023.

Prolonged periods of rough sleeping have a significant impact on someone's mental and physical health. The longer someone experiences rough sleeping for, the more likely it is they will develop additional mental and physical health needs, substance misuse issues and have contact with the criminal justice system.

### Excerpts from Michael's Story

*"I had nowhere to go and therefore started sleeping rough again. I didn't approach the Council this time but don't really know the reason for this. I thought I needed to get my head straight and having slept rough in the past I thought that this would be a way of getting myself together again, disconnecting from the stresses of responsibilities in everyday life. When I was in my tent, I didn't have anyone or anything else to worry about initially but that changes quickly ...[I] bought a tent, went near the canal, saw some bad things under the bridge, crime, people being taken advantage of, it has affected me mentally." ... "I needed to sort my head out and felt the best way to do that was by cutting myself off..."*

**Your voice matters so we will...**continue to work in a person-centred and trauma-informed way, giving people space and time to engage and keeping them as safe as possible wherever they are.

In Kirklees, a range of partners provide holistic and person-centred support for rough sleepers, or anyone in danger of rough sleeping, to help them get the appropriate support to access accommodation and improve their lives.

The Council and our partners engage directly at an individual level with people who sleep rough. Our approach is proactive, personalised and tailored to the individual, their specific issues, circumstances, and experiences.

### Excerpt from Jason's Story

*"It was [Rough Sleeping Team officer] that first started engaging with me, he would come down and visit me when I was in tent, he'd come down in all weathers early in the morning and encouraged me to start looking at my options, as in temporary accommodation, sorting out my benefits, trying to help with health issues....I've been supported into a new property now and still receiving support from the council. Dealt with the same person all the way through we have a good relationship, he understands me and what I'm like, what help I need. He knows my needs and has got others involved to assist where needed too."*

**Your voice matters so we will...**continue to build trusted relationships with people, working with them in a trauma-informed and individualised way.

We aim to reduce the numbers of people sleeping rough in Kirklees and ensure that rough sleeping is rare, brief, and not recurring.

### To address this priority, we will:

- Continue to provide, alongside our partners, a range of advice, accommodation, and support services to people sleeping rough so they can move away from the streets and access and sustain long term, settled accommodation

- Continue to engage across partner agencies on rough sleeping cases, to ensure the multi-agency approach is maintained
- Continue to offer a wraparound support service for rough sleepers with a trauma-informed approach, whether on the streets or within accommodation
- Ensure that health needs of rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping are met
- Explore options to maintain and expand dedicated rough sleeper accommodation units, operating on Housing First principles
- Build upon drug/alcohol and adult social care specialisms developed for rough sleeper client groups
- Embed a targeted prevention approach to prevent the flow of new rough sleepers on to the street
- Update the homelessness and rough sleeping directory and refresh and broaden out the Good Practice Guide for Street Outreach, with input from service users
- Continue to explore and pursue bids for government funding for rough sleeping initiatives
- Influence government policy to commit to the long-term funding of the Rough Sleeper Initiative.
- Continue to use and build upon trauma-informed and person-centred approaches for all interactions with individuals who are homeless and/or sleeping rough
- Develop links with the West Yorkshire Adversity, Trauma and Resilience Network

## Action planning and measuring success

The priorities set out in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be delivered through an action plan, which will be developed alongside our partners, and monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to demonstrate the progress we are making, ensure that actions remain relevant, and to capture any emerging issues, as well as policy and legislative change.

Action plan monitoring will include regular review of key performance indicators associated with homelessness and rough sleeping.

The overall success of the Strategy will be measurable through a positive direction of travel in these areas:-

- More positive homelessness prevention outcomes
- Greater use of private rented sector accommodation
- Less reliance on bed and breakfast for temporary accommodation
- Reduced length of stay in all types of temporary accommodation
- Reduction in rough sleeping

## Engagement

We have worked collaboratively across the sector to develop the Kirklees Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2029; consulting extensively with partners, who have been instrumental in the process of developing the priorities and objectives in this Strategy and who will play a crucial role in its delivery.

In preparing this strategy and developing the priorities and objectives, we have engaged with a number of key stakeholders, including:

- Kirklees Homelessness Forum (KHF)
- Registered Providers
- People with lived experience of homelessness
- Kirklees Health Inclusion Group (KHIG)
- Colleagues from across the Council, including Homes and Neighbourhoods, Childrens and Adult Services
- DLUHC specialist homelessness advisor
- Elected Members, through attendance at both Party Group meetings and the Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel

A selection of partner agency highlights are below (all of whom are part of the Kirklees Homelessness Forum), outlining the work they undertake in relation to homelessness and rough sleeping.

### **Kirklees Housing Solutions Service**

The service works collaboratively with partners to ensure intervention takes place as early as possible with households who are at risk of becoming homeless, to prevent homelessness wherever possible, achieve better outcomes for people, and avoid costly and crisis interventions. Bespoke homelessness support pathways are in place for vulnerable cohorts including:

- Rough Sleeping Initiative team
- Refugee Resettlement Team
- Young People & Support Team
- Temporary Accommodation team
- Hospital discharge cases (general and mental health)
  - Prison leavers

### **Fusion Housing**

Fusion Housing is a registered charity working across Kirklees with a focus on reducing the impact of homelessness and food poverty through the provision of supported and temporary accommodation, legal housing and welfare benefits advice, employment support and a Food Bank service. Fusion Housing aims to ensure that individuals and families have access to suitable, affordable accommodation along with the skills needed to successfully manage and keep that accommodation, also helping them to overcome the barriers that can prevent them from achieving this. Most clients accessing their services are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

## **Huddersfield Mission**

Huddersfield Mission supports people experiencing poverty in Huddersfield and wider Kirklees. Their advice and support are available to all, but they are best known for their work with people experiencing significant poverty, homelessness, addiction, or poor mental health. They work with about 1000 different people every year and 30% of the customers are homeless or in some form of temporary accommodation

Over the last 2 years the Mission has significantly increased the practical support on offer. Additionally, they have expanded the range of health and wellbeing services they provide directly or in partnership with others. This includes free haircuts, health checkups, podiatry, wound clinic, health screening and testing (Hep C, HIV, TB etc). They also provide practical support through the provision of clothing, furniture grants, referrals for food parcels, sim cards, mobile phones, and utility vouchers.

## **Helping the Homeless (part of One Big Family)**

Helping the Homeless have been working in Huddersfield for 7 years. They do street outreach on a Monday night offering food, drinks, hygiene items, underwear, and clothing to those who are both homeless and vulnerably housed. They work with the Rough Sleeping Initiative team to identify and assist people in need and offer ongoing support where needed once housed.

In the last couple of years they have seen the need to offer support to those who are in housing with food support, on occasion gas/electric top ups and also ongoing appointments. They do this to try and stop the revolving door of homelessness.

## **Together Housing**

Together Housing is a registered provider of social housing and has 591 general needs properties across Kirklees plus a small number of supported housing schemes which are run in partnership with Horton Housing. The supported housing schemes contribute to homelessness prevention, giving residents stable and supportive accommodation until ready to move on and live independently. Tenancy sustainment is also key for the organisation. They have developed a pre-tenancy sustainability assessment involving their internal teams to ensure welfare benefits are in place alongside support and action plans where needed. A 'tenancy prediction model' is also used, assessing risk factors of a tenancy and the potential of it failing and learning from failed tenancies are also regularly reviewed. Together Housing has also signed up to commit to Duty to Refer even though this isn't a mandatory requirement.

## **Kirklees Council Public Health Team**

Public Health focus on improving the physical, mental and social health and wellbeing of individuals and communities living, working and studying in Kirklees. The Wider Determinants of Health specifically focus on Housing, Poverty, & Place (Healthy Urban Design/Active Travel etc). Recently secured external funding under the 'Core 20+5' Programme will commission four providers across Kirklees to increase their internal capacity to provide people with income maximisation support-which directly and indirectly can mitigate against homelessness and the causes including debt. Within this will be an additional 2.5 posts with specific homelessness/housing remits to support people to sustain their tenancies

## **Incommunities**

Incommunities Group is one of the largest social housing providers in Yorkshire. The Incommunities Money Matters team can provide support and advice for customers on welfare benefits, income maximisation, budgeting, utilities, debt management, access to food parcels and opening a bank account. There are 3 main support routes for their customers: rent arrears, energy hardship and food hardship, with bespoke support provided through each of these routes.

## **Yorkshire Housing**

Yorkshire Housing is a registered provider of social housing with circa 1850 properties in Kirklees across various tenures – the majority are social housing general needs homes. Customers are subject to an assessment which ensures the property suits their needs, in an attempt to avoid repeat homelessness. They also have a strategy and budget for sustainment, the aim of which is to ensure that the customer can remain in their property long term and to ensure the tenancy doesn't fail within the first 12 months



## **Kirklees Council Housing Solutions Service Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2024**

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This document sets out Kirklees Council’s policy for how homeless households will be prioritised for temporary accommodation, both inside and outside of the district once a determination has been made that the applicant is eligible. The policy covers both interim placements made under Section 188 of the Housing Act 1996 (HA96), while enquiries are made into a customer’s homeless application and longer-term temporary accommodation placements for customers owed the main housing duty under Section 193 of the HA96.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Council prioritises customers who have the greatest need to be in or close to a particular location or need to move away from a particular location for safety reasons. Consideration will be given to the size and composition of the household and the type of temporary accommodation available at the time.

### **2. Introduction**

- 2.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation in their own area “so far as is reasonably practicable”. Statutory guidance requires local authorities “where possible” to try and secure accommodation as close as possible to where an applicant was previously living (HA96, Part vii, Section 208(1)), although local authorities are not constrained by the preference of the applicant. The average length of time a household spends in all forms of temporary accommodation can be up to 24 months, dependant on the household circumstances. Households may need to consider making alternative arrangements for education or employment during their stay in temporary accommodation before a longer-term solution can be provided.
- 2.2 The Council acknowledges that with a growth in homeless applications and acceptances, there are pressures on providing sufficient suitable accommodation in the district to households owed a statutory duty. The Council currently may use the following types of temporary accommodation:
- Managed accommodation – self-contained within our own stock
  - Nightly paid accommodation, Bed and breakfast hotels, both inside and outside of the district
  - Self-contained and shared (HMO) accommodation in partnership with private suppliers – either nightly paid or privately leased properties
  - Commissioned and non-commissioned supported housing managed by third party providers.

### **3. Legal Framework**

- 3.1 This policy has been developed in accordance with the relevant sections of the following legal and statutory guidance material:
- S188 Housing Act 1996 - [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/section/188)

- S193 Housing Act 1996 - [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/193)
- S208 Housing Act 1996 - [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/208)
- Homeless (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2012 - [The Homelessness \(Suitability of Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1011)
- Localism Act 2011 - [Localism Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/22)
- S11 Children Act 2004 - [Children Act 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31)
- Equality Act 2010 - [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15)
- Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2018) - [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities)
- Associated Case Law

3.2 Supplementary guidance to the homelessness changes in the Localism Act 2011 and the Homeless (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2012 states the following:

*“Where it is not possible to secure accommodation within the district, and an authority has secured accommodation outside their district, the authority is required to take account of the distance of that accommodation from the district of the authority. Where accommodation which is otherwise suitable and affordable is available nearer to the authority’s district than the accommodation which it has secured, the accommodation which it has secured is unlikely to be suitable unless the authority has a justifiable reason or the applicant has expressed a preference.”*

3.3 **Nzolameso v Westminster City Council [2015]**– the Supreme Court Judgement included a set of requirements that local authorities need to consider when allocating temporary accommodation to homeless households. These include:

- A requirement that local authorities need to explain their decisions as to the location of the properties offered.
- Each local authority should have, and keep up to date, a policy for allocating temporary accommodation to homeless households.
- The policy should reflect the authority’s statutory obligations under both the Housing Act 1996 and the Children’s Act 2004.
- Where there is an anticipated shortfall of accommodation in the District, the policy should explain the factors to be taken into account when making decisions on where a household is placed.

3.4 **Birmingham City Council v Ali, Moran v Manchester City Council [2009]**, the court observed that ‘what is regarded as suitable for discharging the interim duty may be rather different from what is regarded as suitable for discharging the more open-ended duty in section 193(2).’ This confirms the Code of Guidance’s approach that, accommodation that would not be suitable in the long term may be suitable in the short term.

3.5 In exercising these functions, the Authority will have due regard to S149 Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate any form of unlawful discrimination.
- advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics.

- adopt good relations between people with protected characteristics and those who do not.

#### 4. Key Principles

- 4.1 The Council will wherever possible offer temporary accommodation within the Kirklees district. However, this is likely to depend on availability of accommodation in Kirklees.
- 4.2 There are occasions when demand for temporary accommodation exceeds the number of available commissioned units, or there are other constraints in finding suitable commissioned accommodation. In these circumstances, if there is a duty to accommodate a household, the Council will as a last resort place a household in bed and breakfast/hotel/guesthouse accommodation until more suitable temporary accommodation becomes available.
- 4.3 Any accommodation provided to 16/17-year-old must be suitable. The Secretary of State considers that bed and breakfast is never suitable under any circumstances for this category of applicants.
- 4.4 The Council will take account of all relevant need factors when assessing the suitability of location for temporary accommodation. These factors are listed in Section 5 below.
- 4.5 When assessing the suitability of location for temporary accommodation, the Council will take account of need but will not always be able to accommodate the applicant's preference.
- 4.6 If it is not possible to provide temporary accommodation within the District, the Council will offer accommodation in another district, considering the distance of that accommodation from the Kirklees District.
- If this should prove necessary, the Council will endeavour to provide accommodation with good transport links.
- 4.7 Households who are accommodated under the Council's interim duty pursuant to Section 188 HA96 may initially be placed in emergency accommodation, including bed and breakfast and short-term shared or self-contained accommodation, while enquiries are carried out. This accommodation may be outside of the district. If the Council decides it has a duty to house a customer, the Council will move them to longer-term self-contained accommodation as soon as suitable accommodation becomes available.
- 4.8 Households placed into temporary accommodation will be responsible for paying the relevant costs associated with the accommodation they have been provided. This may include, rent, service charges, utility costs, council tax liability. If households require assistance to pay the rent costs, they are responsible for making a housing benefit claim if they are eligible. In cases where they do not qualify or the benefit does not meet the full cost, the household will be responsible for covering the costs.

- 4.9 Where the Council decides that households housed under Section 188 HA96 are not owed the main housing duty, they will be required to leave the accommodation. The household will be given reasonable notice dependant on the household's individual circumstances.
- 4.10 Households will be given one offer of interim or longer-term temporary accommodation, and they will be asked to accept it straight away. Households may also be expected to move from one temporary accommodation to another at short notice. There is no obligation on the Council to allow households to view the accommodation prior to accepting an offer. The individual circumstances of a household will be considered when making an offer of temporary accommodation.
- 4.11 If a household rejects an offer, they will be asked to provide their reasons for refusal. This applies to households to whom the Council has an interim duty to accommodate under Section 188 HA96 and those to whom the Council has accepted the main housing duty under Section 193 HA96. The Council will consider the reasons given and undertake further enquiries as necessary. If the Council accepts the reasons for refusal and agrees the offer is unsuitable, the offer will be withdrawn and a further offer will be made.
- 4.12 Where a household refuses suitable interim (Section 188 HA96) accommodation, which may include out of district placements and the reasons for refusal are not appropriate, no further accommodation will be offered. This would result in the Council's interim duty being discharged and the household will be required to make their own arrangements. There is no right of review against the suitability of accommodation offered to households under Section 188 HA96 (interim duty) although they can apply for judicial review through the courts. Households to whom the Council has accepted the main housing duty under Section 193 HA96, (S193 duty) have a right to request a review of the suitability of accommodation, pursuant to Section 202 HA96.
- 4.13 If a household is entitled to and exercises their right to a review of the Council's offer of temporary accommodation but did not move into the accommodation, they will only be accommodated during the review period in exceptional circumstances. This is a discretionary decision. Each case will be considered on an individual basis; considering the overall merits of the review request, any new information or evidence that may alter the original decision, the personal circumstances of the household and the potential impact of the loss of accommodation.

Should the outcome of the review determine that the original offer was suitable, and the household did not move into the accommodation offered, the S193 duty will be discharged. If the household moved into the accommodation and requested a review but the outcome determined that the original offer was suitable, the S193 duty will remain. If discretion was granted and the household is accommodated in other accommodation or they are already in longer-term temporary accommodation, they will be required to vacate the property. This will be within 28 days of receiving the review decision letter and advised that no further assistance will be provided.

Should the outcome determine that the original offer was unsuitable, then

alternative temporary accommodation will be offered and the S193 duty will remain. This process is summarised in the diagram at [Appendix A](#).

- 4.14 In circumstances when the customer has no right to a review, the interim duty will be discharged. If the customer is already resident in temporary accommodation, they will be required to vacate the property. Interim accommodation is usually provided under licences excluded from the Protection from Eviction Act 1977. Therefore, the Council will provide reasonable notice to the customer and do not need to apply for a possession order from the court. The customer will still be entitled to receive a decision on their homeless application and so the temporary accommodation duty could be reactivated if the main housing duty is later owed.
- 4.15 In accordance with the Homelessness Code of Guidance, customers in temporary accommodation under the interim duty (S188) are subject to the relief duty (Section 189B); this means that the Council should help customers to secure accommodation for themselves. In the event that the relief duty is ended following a customer refusing a final accommodation or Part 6 offer, and the customer requests a review as to the suitability of the accommodation offered, the section 188(1) duty will continue until a decision on the review has been notified to the customer.

## **5. Factors to be considered when making placements**

- 5.1 *Children's education*  
Whilst the Council will have due regard to where children are attending school, attendance at local schools may not be considered a reason to refuse accommodation, although some priority may be given to special educational needs for in-district placements. Households have the option to contact the local education authority to discuss whether they are entitled to any assistance with transport costs.
- 5.2 *Children's needs*  
In accordance with Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, we will consider the needs of all children in the household and any arrangements for safeguarding those needs. The key areas that will be considered are risks to health, safety, to enjoyment and achievement and economic wellbeing. Households with children at risk, on the Child Protection Register or significantly disadvantaged, will be prioritised for an offer of temporary accommodation within Kirklees district. In such cases Children's Services will be consulted about making a temporary accommodation placement outside of the Kirklees district.
- 5.3 *Health and support needs*  
Households which contain person(s) suffering from a terminal illness or having a severe disability and receiving regular treatment under the care of a Kirklees hospital will be prioritised for an offer of temporary accommodation within the Kirklees district. Any other specialist medical or support needs can be considered, including any existing health or support services provided. The Council can also consider whether moving the client's healthcare or support services would have a detrimental effect. Any need for accessible accommodation will be addressed.
- 5.4 *Risk*

Where a household is perceived to be at risk from others, or where there is a history of risk to others, the extent, nature, likelihood and gravity of the risk will be assessed and taken into consideration. Consideration will always be given if a customer needs to be moved to a particular location or cannot remain in a particular location because of a risk to safety.

5.5 *Transport links*

Where accommodation is sourced outside of the Kirklees district for temporary accommodation placements, the distance of the property from Kirklees together with services, amenities and transport links in the new area may be taken into account. The potential impact of the location on family members will be considered.

5.6 *The temporary accommodation available in the district*

Temporary accommodation will be offered in the district if suitable accommodation is available. This will allow a customer to maintain any established links with services or social/support networks. However, there may be circumstances when there is a lack of suitable temporary accommodation or there are higher priority customers awaiting accommodation in the district and out of district temporary accommodation will be used to meet the Council's duty.

5.7 *Size and condition of the property*

Temporary accommodation should provide adequate space and room standards for the customer and be fit to occupy. If self-contained accommodation is provided customers will typically be expected to use a living room as a bedroom. If there are any concerns raised regarding the condition of the temporary accommodation these will be raised with the accommodation provider to investigate and resolve. The quality of the decoration/furniture, the layout/type of accommodation, provision of parking and access to a garden are not ordinarily acceptable reasons for refusal. However, personal circumstances of the household can be considered.

5.8 *Equality Act 2010*

The Council will take into consideration the requirements of the Equality Act and associated legislation including the Public Sector Equality Duty when exercising its obligations.

5.9 *Any special circumstance*

The Council can consider any other circumstances described by the customer when making an offer of suitable temporary accommodation.

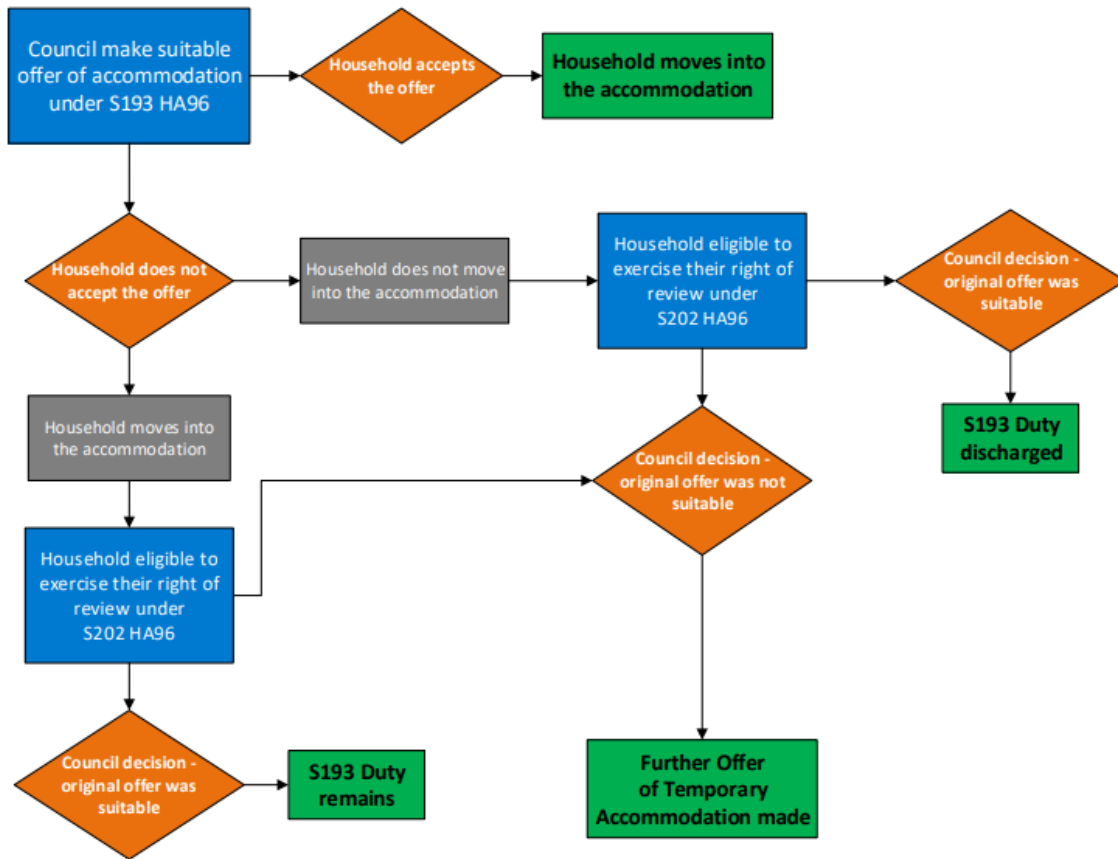
## **6. Monitoring and review**

6.1 The Council will keep records of what vacancies, or units are available and assess the best use of vacancies or units based on the needs of all households requiring accommodation.

6.2 A light-touch desktop review of this policy will be undertaken annually, considering patterns of demand for temporary accommodation and the availability of both commissioned and non-commissioned sources of temporary accommodation

DRAFT

**Appendix A - Process for Suitable Accommodation Offer made under S193 HA96 (see para 4.13)**







## Kirklees Major Transport Capital Schemes; Annual Report 2024

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>10 September 2024</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (if applicable)	<b>Cllr Moses Crook</b>
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>Yes Yes</b>
<p><b>Purpose of Report</b></p> <p>To provide an update on delivery and governance of the Council’s major capital transport infrastructure projects and seek the delegated authorities required to progress delivery.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note the annual update on the Council’s major transport capital programme.</li> <li>• To approve the necessary delegated authorities to progress the schemes as set out in this report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Delegate to Service Director Skills and Regeneration in consultation with the Service Director Legal, Governance and Commissioning to enter into any procurement, funding or contract documentation to enable individual projects and schemes to proceed as set out in this report and in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules.</li> <li>(2) Delegate to Service Director Skills and Regeneration in consultation with the relevant Portfolio holder(s) and Service Director Finance (S151) to enable changes to individual projects and funding allocations in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules to facilitate efficient delivery of this programme and spend of available budgets to allow the outcomes to be realised.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Reasons for Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain effective progress towards delivery of the Council’s major transport infrastructure schemes.</li> <li>• To avoid delays to awarding contracts where tender prices are timebound and the build programmes have been agreed for a set start date.</li> </ul>	

**Resource Implication:**

The vast majority of the cost for the Major Transport Capital schemes is funded by various external funding streams, as set out in Section 2. This includes all development costs and staff time.

Within the Transforming Cities Fund Programme, the Council has previously committed £6.45million of Council capital borrowing as match funding. This is part of the Council's approved Capital plan.

**Date signed off by Executive Director & name**

**David Shepherd** 19.08.24

**Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?**

**Kevin Mulvaney**

**Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?**

**Samantha Lawton** 02.09.24

**Electoral wards affected:****WYTF Programme:**

- Ashbrow/Mirfield/Liversedge & Gomersal – A62 Cooper Bridge
- Lindley/Greenhead – A629 Phase 5
- Holme Valley South – Holmfirth Town Centre Action Plan
- Mirfield, Dewsbury West & East, Batley East - Mirfield to Dewsbury to Leeds Corridor Scheme (M2D2L)
- Crosland Moor & Netherton/Newsome – Huddersfield Southern Corridors
- Dalton/Newsome - A62 Smart Corridor
- Newsome – Huddersfield Rail Station Gateway
- Newsome, Dalton, Almondbury - A629 Wakefield Road Sustainable Travel Corridor
- Ashbrow/Greenhead - A641 Calderdale Scheme

**CRSTS (+TCF) Programme:**

- Dalton – Dalton/Deighton Active Travel
- Liversedge & Gomersal/Mirfield - A62-A644 Bus Enhancements
- Dewsbury East, Batley West, Heckmondwike, Liversedge and Gomersal – A638 Dewsbury to Cleckheaton Sustainable Travel Corridor
- Dewsbury East – Dewsbury Walking and Cycling
- Dewsbury East, Batley East – Dewsbury Batley Chidswell Sustainable Travel Corridor
- Heckmondwike – Heckmondwike Bus Station
- Newsome – Huddersfield Bus Station
- Newsome, Greenhead – Huddersfield Rail Station Connections

**Active Travel Fund**

- Colne Valle, Golcar, Dewsbury East, Dewsbury West, Cleckheaton/Liversedge & Gomersal - Primrose Lane and Huddersfield Canal
- Colne Valley - Huddersfield Narrow Canal
- Newsome, Dalton, Ashbrow - Huddersfield Broad Canal

**Ward councillors consulted:** All Ward Councillors are consulted where schemes are being planned and at various points throughout a scheme's development.

**Public or private:** Public.

**Has GDPR been considered?** Yes.

## 1. Executive Summary

In line with the Council's key priorities of investing in our towns and villages to support our diverse places and communities and delivering a greener, healthier Kirklees that addresses the challenges of climate change, the Council has an ambitious programme of transport and active travel investments. These investments are overwhelmingly funded from external sources that come via the West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority.

All projects have previously been brought to Cabinet through a series of reports but given the pace of delivery and the time it takes for projects to move from inception to completion, it is proposed to bring an annual report to Cabinet that updates on progress and seeks the necessary delegations to allow projects to move through to delivery.

This report therefore:

- Provides a brief update on progress to date towards delivering major transport projects;
- Seeks the delegated authority needed for the year ahead in order to progress project delivery, as set out in this report.

## 2. Kirklees Transport Portfolio

A safe, efficient and well-functioning transport system helps underpin many of the Council's shared outcomes such as independence, aspiration, sustainable economy and clean and green.

The Kirklees transport programme covers a wide range of transport benefits which include:

- Promoting active travel (walking and cycling).
- Congestion relief; unlocking economic growth via interventions on the highway network.
- Bus improvement, prioritisation and reform.
- Supporting modal shift and decarbonisation.

Note that this excludes the Highways Capital and Maintenance programmes that is dealt with separately.

The Kirklees Transport Capital Programme is largely funded via monies devolved to the West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority.

- The **West Yorkshire Transport Fund (WYTF)** is designed to facilitate long term economic growth and is funding made available to West Yorkshire from the Department for Transport. A number of strategic transport projects were originally put forward by Kirklees, often related to addressing key infrastructure constraints identified in the Local Plan.

- The **Active Travel Fund (ATF)** is a funding opportunity to support the uptake of active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) for everyday trips.
- The **Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)** was a devolved programme of transport infrastructure investment secured as part of the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal, designed to support more accessible, affordable and attractive green transport options, connecting people to economic and education opportunities and healthier communities for the future. The Transforming Cities Fund has since been incorporated into the City Regional Sustainable Transport Fund.
- The **City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)** is the most recent, multi-year, tranche of devolved transport funding to West Yorkshire, focussing on public and sustainable transport investment.

### 3. Progress to Date

The last few years have been periods of considerable preparation work, to take the list of schemes previously agreed by Cabinet and progress them through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) Assurance Process. This generally involves developing an Outline and a Full Business Case. The schematic included at Appendix 1 outlines the key stages. Given their scale and complexity, transport schemes of this nature can typically take several years to deliver and each Kirklees project is at a different stage, depending on its level of maturity.

The Kirklees Transport Capital Programme is made up of a number of projects. Table 1 sets out briefly the stage of each project, progress to date and expectations for the next 12 months. Projects are classified as either;

- **Delivered** – substantially completed
- **In Delivery** – on site, construction underway
- **Preparing for delivery** – contractor procurement underway or complete, preparing to start on site
- **In Development** – progressing through the WYCA Assurance Process
- **Pipelined** – not being progressed to delivery at this time (see below)

At West Yorkshire level, these funding programmes have required regular review given their scale and the impact of inflation. These reviews ensure the projects remain affordable within a given funding pot. Often projects extend their initial indicative funding allocation which can result in other projects needing to be deprioritised or paused. These deprioritised or paused projects are intended to form part of a future pipeline of projects that will be considered when additional funding becomes available. These have been the subject of previous decisions but are identified for completeness in Table 1 as “pipelined.”

**Table 1 – progress to date summary**

No.	WYTF Projects	Summary progress and next steps
1	<p><b>A62 to Cooper Bridge</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £53.5m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Apr 2027</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Sep 2028</p>	<p><b>In Development</b></p> <p>This project will deliver traffic capacity and cycling infrastructure along the A62 between Leeds Road / Bradley Road and Leeds Road / Wakefield Road junctions incorporating Cooper Bridge roundabout. This additional capacity was identified in the Local Plan as needed to accommodate growth in north Kirklees.</p> <p>A phased approach was approved by Cabinet on 23-01-24 which would seek to deliver Phase 1 improvements between Cooper Bridge roundabout and the Leeds Road / Wakefield Road junction. A change request has been submitted to WYCA accordingly and this is progressing through their assurance process.</p> <p>Options for Phase 1 are now being developed with further stakeholder engagement and public consultation expected in late 2024. A revised Outline Business Case will be brought to Cabinet in due course setting out more detail.</p>
2	<p><b>A629 Halifax Road (Phase 5)</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £13.88m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Spring 2025</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Autumn 2026</p>	<p><b>Preparing for Delivery</b></p> <p>This project, between Birkby Road and Ainley Top, is designed to speed up public transport and cars journeys, unlock key development sites and deliver improved cycling and walking facilities to facilitate Local Plan delivery.</p>
3	<p><b>Holmfirth Town Centre Access Plan</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £10.49m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Stared July 2024</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Dec 2025</p>	<p><b>In Delivery</b></p> <p>Holmfirth Town Centre Access Plan (HTCAP) supports economic growth through investment in improvements at key junctions which focus on reducing current and forecast congestion, improving journey time reliability and widening sustainable travel opportunities.</p> <p>Improvements to public realm, pedestrian facilities and the creation of riverside seating and links to the river within the area will improve the quality of life for residents, whilst improving the visitor / tourist experience.</p>
4	<p><b>Mirfield to Dewsbury to Leeds (M2D2L)</b></p>	<p><b>Pipelined</b></p> <p>The Mirfield to Dewsbury to Leeds (M2D2L) scheme spans the area from west Mirfield, through Ravensthorpe and</p>

	<p>Forecast cost: £1.34m (development to FBC)</p> <p>Anticipated start date: n/a</p> <p>Anticipated end date: n/a</p>	<p>around Dewsbury Town Centre, extending northwards through Shawcross and Tingley on the A653 Leeds Road through Beeston (Ring Road / Dewsbury Road) into South Leeds. The scheme aims to resolve a number of transport issues along this corridor through the introduction of a blend of transport, highway-based and active mode interventions to improve people's modal choice, the local environment, and capacity of the network to help to enable economic growth.</p> <p>Full Business Case was submitted to WYCA in September 2023 but is pipelined until new funding opportunities arise.</p>
5	<p><b>Huddersfield Southern Corridors</b> (A616 Chapel Hill/Albert Street/Bridge Street Jct. and A62/Longroyd Lane Jct.)</p> <p>Forecast cost: £13.62m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Sep 2024</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Jul 2026</p>	<p><b>Phase 1 (Folly Hall) - Delivered</b> <b>Phases 2 and 3 - Preparing for Delivery</b></p> <p>The Huddersfield Southern Corridors (HSC) comprises a package of four highway and active travel improvements on the A62 and A616 corridors in the southern parts of Huddersfield at Folly Hall, Longroyd Lane, Lockwood and Queensgate.</p> <p>Delivery was recently completed at Folly Hall and delivery is expected to commence at Longroyd Lane in Autumn this year with Lockwood junction following on around 12 months later. Queensgate was pipelined in 2023 due to rising costs.</p>
6	<p><b>A62 Leeds Road Smart Corridor</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £21M</p>	<p><b>Delivered</b></p> <p>This scheme has delivered, walking, cycling and traffic capacity improvements along the A62 between the ring road and Old Fieldhouse Lane. Construction works were completed June 2023. A post-completion monitoring/evaluation is now underway including the final road safety audit.</p>
7	<p><b>Huddersfield Rail Station Gateway</b></p> <p>Forecast Cost: £0.5m (Development cost to OBC only)</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Business Case in progress</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Business Case end Jan 2026</p>	<p><b>In Development</b></p> <p>A scheme to regenerate the Station Gateway area which includes Huddersfield Railway Station, St George's Warehouse, the George Hotel, Estate Buildings, and St George's Square to maximise the regeneration benefits of the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU); act as a catalyst for further investment in buildings and infrastructure; and connect active, public, and private modes of travel to help meet climate change commitments.</p> <p>WYCA approved £500,000 from the West Yorkshire Transport Fund for the Council to develop an outline business case based on a station area masterplan which is currently being drawn up in partnership with Network Rail, TransPennine Express and HD1 Developments Ltd.</p>

8	<p><b>A629 Wakefield Road Sustainable Transport Corridor</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £0.75m (development costs to OBC)</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Business case in progress</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Business Case end Oct 2024</p>	<p><b>To Pipeline at OBC</b></p> <p>The scheme aims to improve public transport and active travel (walk and cycle) mode provision along the A629 Wakefield Road between Shorehead Roundabout and Fenay Lane junction.</p> <p>Submission of the Outline Business Case is anticipated Winter 2024 at which point the scheme will be pipelined until new funding opportunities arise.</p>
9	<p><b>A641 Bradford-Calderdale -Kirklees</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: n/a</p> <p>Anticipated start date: n/a</p> <p>Anticipated end date: n/a</p>	<p><b>To Pipeline</b></p> <p>A Calderdale Council led cross boundary project that would deliver, walking and cycling improvements on and off road between Huddersfield town centre and the Calderdale boundary and similar schemes within Calderdale and Bradford. Due to delivery costs exceeding budget the Kirklees and Bradford elements will now be pipelined.</p>
<b>No</b>	<b>CRSTS(TCF) Projects</b>	
10	<p><b>Dalton-Deighton Active Travel</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £7.5m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Spring 2026</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Summer 2027</p>	<p><b>In Development</b></p> <p>This project will see an existing public right of way between Dalton Bank Road and Ashgrove Road transformed to improve accessibility for walkers together with permitting cyclists. Improvements will also be made to Ashgrove Road to provide walking and cycling links to A62 Leeds Road and the Huddersfield Broad Canal.</p> <p>A Strategic Outline Business Case was submitted June 2024. Upon successful outcome of submission, work will commence on the Outline Business Case.</p>
11	<p><b>A62-A644 Bus Enhancements</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £0.24m (development costs to SOC)</p>	<p><b>Pipelined</b></p> <p>This scheme has investigated opportunities for improving bus priority infrastructure on A62 Leeds Road between Far Common Road and A62/A644 junction but it is not feasible to deliver meaningful improvements within the existing highway boundaries.</p>

	<p>Anticipated start date: n/a</p> <p>Anticipated end date: n/a</p>	<p>A Strategic Outline Business Case was submitted July 2024 but will be pipelined, pending further consideration of the need and justification for a more comprehensive scheme.</p>
12	<p><b>A638 Dewsbury-Cleckheaton</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £15.8m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Nov 2024</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Oct 2025</p>	<p><b>Preparing for Delivery</b></p> <p>The scheme proposes to improve cycle links between Dewsbury and Cleckheaton, improve bus journey times through modal shift and network capacity improvements.</p>
13	<p><b>Dewsbury-Walking &amp; Cycling</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £12.3m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Apr 2025</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Jan 2026</p>	<p><b>In Development</b></p> <p>To introduce new cycle/ walking links on the ring road and in the town centre. Improving active travel connectivity between station to station.</p>
14	<p><b>Dewsbury-Batley-Chidswell</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £10.0m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Apr 2025</p> <p>Anticipated end date: May 2026</p>	<p><b>In Development</b></p> <p>Introducing new cycle links from Dewsbury to Chidswell via Batley. Outline Business Approval granted in 2024. Progressing detail designs for Full Business Approval late 2024.</p>
15	<p><b>Heckmondwike Bus Hub</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £10.5m</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Sep 2024</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Sept 2025</p>	<p><b>In Delivery</b></p> <p>A new state of the art bus station with new waiting and welfare facilities, increasing bus stands from 4 to 6. Enabling work has commenced June 2024 to undertake the statutory diversion works. The existing bus facility has been decommissioned. Currently assessing contract prices with contractor; finalising planning/building consents.</p>



--	--	--

16	<b>Huddersfield Bus Station</b>  Forecast cost: £8.0m  Anticipated start date: Apr 2025  Anticipated end date: Mar 2027	<b>In Development</b> To improve surrounding public realm areas, a new cycle hub and a new building canopy to enhance the existing gateway. Outlines Business Case approved in 2022. Aiming for Full Business Approval in late 2024.
17	<b>Huddersfield Rail Station Connections</b>  Forecast cost: £19.15m*  Anticipated start date: Apr 2025  Anticipated end date: Mar 2027	<b>In Development</b> To introduce new cycle/ walking links across the ring road and in the town centre. Outline Business Approval granted in 2024. Progressing detailed designs for Full Business Approval late 2024. Construction start Spring 2025 subject to WYCA approval and being able to accommodate works alongside Trans Pennine Rail Upgrade (TRU) and other town centre regeneration schemes.  * This includes £0.45m to complete all necessary closure reports for the previous Rail Station Access project (delivered).
<b>No</b>	<b>Active Travel Funds (ATF)</b>	
18	<b>Primrose lane and Huddersfield Narrow Canal (ATF2)</b>  Forecast cost: £1.98m  Anticipated start date: in construction  Anticipated end date: Nov 2024	<b>Preparing for Delivery and In Delivery</b> Primrose Lane in delivery. This project will improve the existing bridleway between Bradford Road and the Spen Valley Greenway to make it more accessible for walking and cycling. Works on Huddersfield Narrow Canal is currently being procured.
19	<b>Huddersfield Narrow Canal (ATF4)</b>  Forecast cost: £0.914  Anticipated start date: Mar 2024  Anticipated end date: Jun 2024	<b>In Development.</b> A third phase of development will see improvements between Slaithwaite and Marsden to make it more accessible for walking and cycling. Designs being progressing. Construction start Spring 2025.

20	<p><b>Huddersfield Broad Canal (ATF4)</b></p> <p>Forecast cost: £1.31</p> <p>Anticipated start date: Mar 2025</p> <p>Anticipated end date: Jun 2025</p>	<p><b>In Development</b></p> <p>Surface improvements will be undertaken along the Huddersfield Broad Canal between Aspey basis and Cooper Bridge to make it more accessible for cycling and walking. Designs being progressed.</p>
----	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**4. Looking Ahead; delivery in 2024/2025**

The next 12 months will see further projects move into delivery, requiring the necessary delegated authority to progress. The projects where this is necessary are listed below (please note these are all within the CRSTS-TCF Programme).

There will be time limited disruption on the Council’s highway network during these build periods, the impacts are being mitigated with discussions with local businesses, communities and other key stakeholder like bus operators and blue light services. Mitigation proposals that are considered include phasing, restrictions to off-peak working and/or limiting the extent of traffic management on the network at one time. A balanced solution will be sought to ensure safety of the operatives on site, construction duration and in maintaining suitable safe access/egress to homes and businesses.

**4.1 A638 Dewsbury - Cleckheaton STC**

Walking and cycling scheme from Dewsbury to Cleckheaton via Heckmondwike Town Centre with both on and off-site highway works. Consultations have been undertaken at various WYCA approval stages of the scheme. The works are being undertaken under permitted development and no prior approvals are required from Planning. The designs are currently being finalised.

The main highway works element of the project are in the process of being procured through YorCivils Framework with an Approval to Proceed from WYCA and subsequent contractor appointment expected in October 2024. The construction works are anticipated to start in November 2024.

A main part of the scheme will make improvements on the Spen Valley Greenway (National Cycle Route 66). The Spen Valley Greenway is owned and maintained by Sustrans and forms part of the public accessible national and local active travel infrastructure.

It is proposed that Sustrans will be issued a direct award contract to undertake the necessary design and delivery of the project on their own land, as the Council does not generally carry out works on private land. This award will be undertaken in compliance with the Council’s Financial Procedure Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules.

Sustrans is a national walking, wheeling and cycling charity, and in its governing document as registered by the Charity Commission includes the following statement:

*“to promote and encourage, both in the UK and overseas, for the public benefit the development in the community of, and the provision of safe routes, paths and facilities for, cycling, walking and other forms of low energy transport”*

#### **4.2 Dewsbury Walking & Cycling**

Walking and cycling scheme on outskirts of Dewsbury Town Centre with some elements within the Town Centre. Consultations have been undertaken at various WYCA approval stages of the scheme. The works are being undertaken under permitted development and no prior approvals are required from Planning Services. The detail designs are currently being progressed.

The works will be procured through YorCivils Framework with an Approval to Proceed from WYCA and subsequent contractor appointment expected in March 2025. The construction works are anticipated to start in April 2025.

#### **4.3 Dewsbury-Batley-Chidswell Sustainable Travel Corridor**

Walking and cycling scheme from Dewsbury Town Centre to Chidswell Estate in Batley running on major highways in Dewsbury and Batley. Consultations have been undertaken at various WYCA approval stages of the scheme. The works are being undertaken under permitted development and no prior approvals are required from Planning. The details designs are currently being progressed.

The works will be procured through YorCivils Framework with an Approval to Proceed from WYCA and subsequent contractor appointment expected in March 2025. The construction works are anticipated to start in April 2025.

#### **4.4 Huddersfield Rail Station Connections**

Walking and cycling scheme from St. John's Road and Trinity Street in Huddersfield to Huddersfield Rail Station via John William Street and Northumberland Street. Consultations have been undertaken at various WYCA approval stages of the scheme. The works are being undertaken under permitted development and no prior approvals are required from Planning. The designs continue to be progressed.

The works will be procured through YorCivils Framework with an Approval to Proceed from WYCA and subsequent contractor appointment expected in March 2025. The construction works are anticipated to start in April 2025.

#### **4.5 Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Broad Canal Projects (Grant Award)**

Both these schemes will make walking and cycling improvements along existing towpaths. The land is owned by the Canals and River Trust. Canal & River Trust is a charitable operator and guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales with the purpose to ensure they remain available for the public to enjoy.

For the Active Travel Huddersfield Narrow Canal (HNC) and Broad Canal (HBC) schemes, Canal and River Trust will be awarded grants to undertake the necessary design and delivery of the projects. These are grants will be for £1,195,346 (HBC) and £832,718 (HNC).

The outcomes of these works will align with the Council's objectives to enhance and improve the active travel network. It is important to note the Council as a matter of course does not carry out works on private land. These grants will be awarded in accordance with necessary Financial Procedure Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules.

For each of the projects above, this report requests Cabinet to delegate authority to the Service Director of Skills and Regeneration in consultation with the Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning to award contracts to facilitate delivery and to enter into any funding agreements to enable this project to proceed in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules; and to delegate to Service Director Skills and Regeneration in consultation with the relevant Portfolio holder(s) and Service Director Finance (S151) to enable changes to individual schemes and projects and funding allocations in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules to facilitate efficient delivery of the project and spend of available budgets to allow the outcomes to be realised.

## **5. Implications for the Council**

### **5.1 Council Plan**

This Capital Programme as a whole supports regeneration through infrastructure investment on roads and transport hubs in our district. This helps to set the course to invite and attract partner investment into our communities, towns and villages.

These projects will improve connectivity within the district to important destinations like employment, education and our green spaces. They look to enhance our public transport active travel offer in promoting modal shift to a greener Kirklees.

### **5.2 Financial Implications**

A summary of the project budgets and the future forecast spend profiles is provided at Appendix 2. The future spend profiles are estimated and are subject to achieving the necessary consents and approvals to award contracts, and subject to agreement of final contract sums.

Within the TCF Programme, £6.45million of Council capital borrowing has been committed as match funding against the following projects:

- Dewsbury Walking/Cycling £2m
- Huddersfield Bus Station £1m
- Huddersfield Rail Station Connections and Access £3.45m

As part of previous capital plan reviews, the Council's match funding commitment to WYTF projects was removed. That was done on the understanding that match funding for TCF would be retained because match funding was an important part of the original TCF funding award.

## **6. Legal Implications**

### **6.1 Funding Agreements**

The Council has the power to enter into funding agreements with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority; together with the statutory powers to carry out the projects referred to in this report. The Council will comply with its' Financial Procedure Rules, Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulation and The Procurement Act 2023 and Regulations as applicable.

### **6.2 Grant Award to Canals & River Trust**

Under the Financial Procedure Rules, the Council has the power to accept a grant offer of any value from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA). It may also make a grant of any value where it has been approved by Cabinet. Further, in accordance with FPR 22.10(a), the Canal and Rivers Trust will be required to undertake competitive procurement aligning with the council's Contract Procedure Rules in respect of any goods, works or services obtained.

The grant to the Canal and Rivers Trust (CRT) has been considered against the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and the Statutory Guidance. It is not deemed that the funding amounts to the Council making a subsidy for the following reasons:

- The funding has to be distributed in accordance with the funding objectives set by WYCA. The Council is simply administering the money and applying a set of objective criteria, therefore WYCA is the public authority responsible for the purpose of the Subsidy Control Act and the local authority is an intermediary.
- In addition, the grant will be provided to carry out works to the towpaths which will be freely accessible to the public. Such infrastructure, delivering general public benefit, is not considered to be economic activity and will therefore not fall within the scope of the Subsidy Control Act.

Upon Cabinet approval of grant funding for this project, it is intended that the Council will enter into a formal Grant Agreement with CRT. The Grant Agreement will incorporate appropriate provisions which reflect the terms of the Council's agreement with WYCA and which will allow the Council to make payments in stages as the works progress and in line with milestones and outputs.

The Council will work with the Canal and River Trust (a registered charity) to develop and deliver the project and will ensure that further subsidy control assessments are carried out if and when necessary.

## **7. Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

### **7.1 Risk**

The Service Risk Register has been reviewed. An important part in seeking the Delegations set out in this report is to allow the timely award of contracts within the timeframe that contractors will guarantee their tender prices. This thereby enables the effective delivery of the Transport Programme, ensuring the transport benefits are realised. and protects the Council's reputation in meeting its delivery programme.

Successfully delivery schemes of the nature require the right skills and professional teams to be in place which effectively manage the Council's risk. Construction project management is either delivered via the Council's Highways function or brought in from outside professionals, depending on the project.

All cost liabilities outside a grant funding agreements with West Yorkshire Combined Authority rest with the Council. Project budgets have made inflation allowances and include risk and contingency sums as standard in order to minimise the risk of cost overruns, however unforeseen ground conditions, weather impacts, unrecorded utilities can have significant impact on final project costs.

## **7.2 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

All projects were required to undergo an Integrated Impact Assessment and these are reviewed to ensure we maintain a high consistent standard and our schemes align with the Council's wider strategies on inclusion, diversity, inclusion and on our environmental/climate strategies.

## **7.3 Human Resources**

None.

## **8. Consultation**

Consultation is a key part of the development of these projects and will continue through various stages as part of our quality assurance process. Many of the projects are now at stage where much of the general consultation is complete.

## **9. Engagement**

Engagement is a key part of the development of these projects and will continue through various stages as part of our quality assurance process. Many of the projects are now at stage where much of the general consultation is complete.

## **10. Options**

All projects within the Transport Programme go through an optioneering exercise in determining which scheme will achieve the best outcome. This is done at two key stages within the projects business justification case. The first is the Strategic Outline Case where a number of proposals are made at a very high-level. These are then further narrowed down to typically around three which are then further detailed at the Outline Business Case to help determine a preferred solution. The preferred solution gets further detailed during the Full Business Case ready for delivery. During which the value for money of these projects is determined and the routes that will ensure best value is achieved.

In reviewing project governance and approval process across the Council's Transport Capital Programme two methods have been considered. Method 1 is to simply continue to bring separate papers for each project to Cabinet for decision. Method 2 is to bring a single Annual Transport Capital Programme paper to Cabinet seeking approvals for all the projects.

Given that key decisions to develop these individual projects under the current Transport Capital programmes were granted in a series of Cabinet meetings dating back to 2017. The authority we now often seek is to simply allow Council's Officers to progress the projects so that we can implement the decisions Cabinet has made. Therefore, in view of efficiency and effectiveness, Method 2 is being recommended to Cabinet.

There will be cases where individual projects will need to be brought to Cabinet separately especially for new projects or funding programmes for decision.

## **11. Recommendations**

In order to maintain effective progress towards delivery of the Council's major transport infrastructure schemes, Cabinet is recommended to:

- Note the annual update on the Council's major transport capital programme.
- Approve the necessary delegated authorities to progress the schemes as set out in this report:
  - (i) Delegate to Service Director Skills and Regeneration in consultation with the Service Director Legal, Governance and Commissioning to enter into any procurement, funding or contract documentation to enable individual projects and schemes to proceed as set out in this report and in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules.
  - (ii) Delegate to Service Director Skills and Regeneration in consultation with the relevant Portfolio holder(s) and Service Director Finance (S151) to enable changes to individual schemes and projects and funding allocations in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules to facilitate efficient delivery of this programme and spend of available budgets to allow the outcomes to be realised.

## **12. Next steps and timelines**

Officers to continue in progress the projects as set out in this report in accordance with internal and West Yorkshire Combined Authority quality assurance processes.

Cabinet authority is sought to formally receive grant funding and to award contracts once all necessary tender reviews, West Yorkshire Combined Authority assurance processes and Kirklees financial procedures are completed. Incur expenditure in line with this report and the grant funding rules to progress each project.

## **13. Contact officers**

Rashid Mahmood  
Head of Major Projects  
01484 22 1000  
Rashid.Mahmood@Kirklees.gov.uk

Ilyas Ramjan  
Strategic Partnership Lead  
01484 221000  
Ilyas.ramjan@kirklees.gov.uk



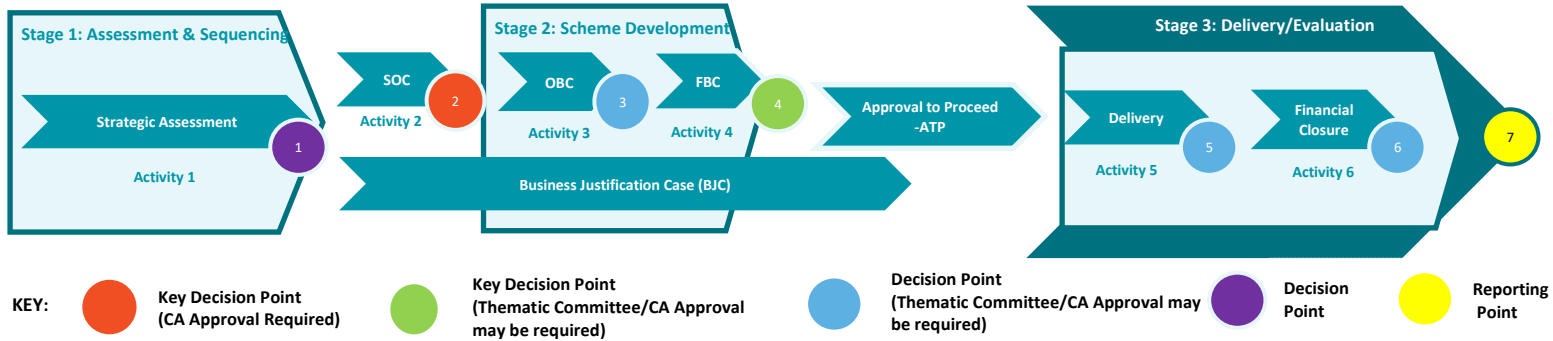
#### **14. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Cabinet Report – 19 December 2017 WY + Transport Fund Scheme update  
Cabinet Report – 18 September 2018 Huddersfield Town Centre Works  
Cabinet Report – 16 October 2018 A629 Phase 5 scheme approval/CPO  
Cabinet Report – 13 November 2018 WY plus Transport Fund Scheme update  
Cabinet Report - 26 May 2020 HSC Scheme Approval/Land Acquisition  
Cabinet Report – 28 July 2023 Transport Major Scheme Approvals/Update  
Cabinet Report – 01 September 2020 Transforming Cities Fund Programme  
Cabinet Report – 22 June 2021 Kirklees Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2)  
Cabinet Report – 22 June 2021 Huddersfield Station Gateway/Trinity St. Access  
Cabinet Report – 12 October 2021 A62 Cooper Bridge Improvement Scheme  
Cabinet Report – 16 November 2021 A62 Cooper Bridge Call In/Additional Information  
Cabinet Report – 05 July 2022 Holmfirth Town Centre Access Plan.  
Cabinet Report – 23 January 2024 Kirklees Major Transport Schemes; West Yorkshire  
Transport Fund (WYTF) and City Region Sustainable Transport  
Settlement (CRSTS) Programmes

#### **15. Service Director responsible**

Edward Highfield – Service Director, Skills and Regeneration

# Appendix 1 - WYCA Assurance Process



Appendix 2 – financial summary	Total Project Budget (£m)	Funded by:			Spend to 31/03/2024 (£m)	Forecast Spend (next 3 years only) (£m)			Future Years Spend (£m)
		Council Capital (£m)	WYCA (£m)	Other (£m)		24/25 (£m)	25/26 (£m)	26/27 (£m)	
<b>TRANSPORT FUND</b>									
A62 Cooper Bridge	53.50	0.00	53.50	0.00	2.70	1.30	8.90	2.08	38.52
A629 Phase 5	13.88	0.00	13.80	0.08	3.70	0.35	6.10	0.75	2.98
Holmfirth Town Access	10.49	0.24	10.25	0.00	2.20	3.90	3.90	0.30	0.19
M2D2L	1.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.32	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
Huddersfield Southern Corridors	13.62	1.53	12.09	0.00	6.00	1.40	3.20	2.10	0.92
A62 Leeds Rd Smart Corridor	21.00	4.39	15.42	1.19	19.38	0.50	1.02	0.00	0.10
Huddersfield Rail Station Gateway	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.22	0.12	0.13	0.03	0.00
A629 Wakefield Rd	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>115.08</b>	<b>6.16</b>	<b>105.06</b>	<b>1.27</b>	<b>36.12</b>	<b>7.74</b>	<b>23.25</b>	<b>5.26</b>	<b>42.71</b>
<b>CRTSTS FUND</b>									
Dalton-Deighton	7.50	0.00	7.50	0.00	0.23	0.32	1.20	2.40	3.35
A62-A644 Bus Improvements	0.24	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.14	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.01
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7.74</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>7.74</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.37</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>1.20</b>	<b>2.40</b>	<b>3.36</b>
<b>TCF FUND</b>									
A629 Wakefield Road	0.70	0.00	0.70	0.00	0.65	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00
A638 Dewsbury-Cleckheaton	15.80	0.00	15.30	0.50	2.40	9.00	4.35	0.05	0.00
Dewsbury Walking/Cycling	12.30	2.00	10.30	0.00	1.40	0.70	10.10	0.10	0.00
Dewsbury-Batley-Chidswell	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	1.50	2.00	6.45	0.00	0.05
Heckmondwike Bus Hub	10.50	0.00	10.50	0.00	1.90	4.40	4.18	0.00	0.02
Huddersfield Bus Station	8.00	1.00	7.00	0.00	0.70	1.60	5.70	0.00	0.00
Huddersfield Rail Station Connections	18.70	3.00	15.70	0.00	1.40	1.20	12.90	3.20	0.00
Huddersfield Rail Station Access	0.45	0.45	0	0	0	0.45	0	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>76.45</b>	<b>6.45</b>	<b>69.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>9.95</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>43.68</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>0.07</b>

Scheme	Total Project Budget (£m)	Funded by:			Spend to 31/03/2024 (£m)	Forecast Spend (next 3 years only) (£m)			Future Years Spend (£m)
		Council Capital (£m)	WYCA (£m)	Other (£m)		24/25 (£m)	25/26 (£m)	26/27 (£m)	
<b>ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDS</b>									
ATF 2 (Primrose Lane/HNC)	1.98	0.00	1.98	0.00	1.10	0.83	0.05	0.00	0.00
ATF4 Huddersfield Narrow Canal	0.91	0.00	0.91	0.00	0.02	0.04	0.85	0.00	0.00
ATF4 Huddersfield Broad Canal	1.30	0.00	1.30	0.000	0.02	0.05	1.20	0.03	0.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4.19</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>4.19</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>2.10</b>	<b>0.03</b>	0.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>203.46</b>	<b>12.61</b>	<b>186.49</b>	<b>1.77</b>	<b>47.58</b>	<b>28.47</b>	<b>70.23</b>	<b>11.04</b>	<b>46.14</b>